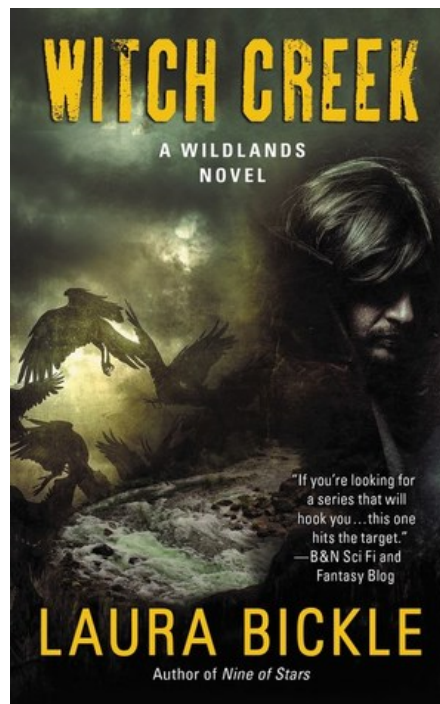




Witch Creek

Laura Bickle

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In the backcountry of Yellowstone, evil moves below the surface . . .

Following *Nine of Stars* comes the next chapter in Laura Bickle's critically acclaimed Wildlands series

As the daughter of an alchemist, Petra Dee has battled supernatural horrors and experienced astonishing wonders. But there's no magic on earth that can defeat her recent cancer diagnosis, or help find her missing husband, Gabriel. Still, she would bet all her remaining days that the answer to his disappearance lies in the dark subterranean world beneath the Rutherford Ranch on the outskirts of Temperance, Wyoming.

Gabe is being held prisoner by the sheriff and heir to the ranch, Owen Rutherford. Owen is determined to harness the power of the Tree of Life—and he needs Gabe to reveal its magic. Secretly, the sheriff has also made a pact to free a creature of the underground, a flesh-devouring mermaid. Muirenn has vowed to exact vengeance on Gabe, who helped imprison her, but first . . . she's hungry. Once freed, she will swim into Yellowstone—to feed.

With her coyote sidekick Sig, Petra must descend into the underworld to rescue Gabe before it's too late . . . for both of them.

Witch Creek Details

Date : Published February 27th 2018 by Harper Voyager

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Author : Laura Bickle

Format : Kindle Edition 389 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Urban Fantasy, Adult, Magic

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From Reader Review Witch Creek for online ebook

Carien says

Laura Bickle is an auto-buy author for me, and with Witch Creek she once again shows why she is.

This is a cool read, and I finished it in one sitting. I just didn't want to put it down. Now I'll have to reread her books to get my fix until her next book releases.

Petra is seriously ill and Gabe has been imprisoned. I must say I wondered how things ever would turn out for them. It seemed a very hopeless situation. Luckily there was Sig to cheer Petra up a bit, and Petra also gets help from her friends Maria and Nine.

Where I could sympathize with Owen in the last book, I didn't much care for him in this one. I also couldn't bring myself to feel for the mermaid, however long she might have been trapped before Owen finds her. She is seriously creepy! There was one other viewpoint character who I really liked, and his storyline was interesting and sad.

All in all this is a great read with lots of things going on. The ending was satisfying, but also hints at lots more trouble coming Petra's way. I'll be stalking Laura Bickle's feeds for news about the next book in this series.

Vickie says

Laura Bickle is on the get-as-soon-as-released section of the WWBL, especially this series. Crazy wild west fantasy as opposed to urban fantasy I reckon. Good versus evil, magic, shape shifting, alchemy, a rugged setting....just excellent storytelling.

Petra has leukemia and Gabe, her husband, has disappeared. She is trying to come to grips with imminent death and trying to find Gabe.

The story is told via different voices which could be distracting, but really isn't. It helps give the reader a good view of everything going on. The bartender, Lev, even chimes in. He is intriguing as heck.

The evil that is out there is in a unique form. I could kind of see why she was doing what she was, but *shudder*

CLIFFHANGER! That is the ending of this superb book. There will be more Petra and Sig!

I LOVE THIS SERIES!

I can definitely recommend this book, series and author.

Jennifer says

So I was a little disappointed with this installment of the series, but that's probably more because of my high expectations from the previous books than it actually being a bad read. It was entertaining but it didn't really fulfill the need I had for an addicting page turner with a fair amount of romance (like the previous 3 books had). But that's to be expected (I guess) it definitely followed the formula for a middle book in a series. I felt like I had to wait SOOOOOO long for this book, I'm hoping that I won't have to wait so long for the next one because I am definitely looking forward to it!

OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/wi...>

Witch Creek

Wildlands, Book #4

By Laura Bickle

ISBN: 9780062567314

Author's website: laurabickle.com

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Omar

Summary

In the backcountry of Yellowstone, evil moves below the surface . . .

Following *Nine of Stars* comes the next chapter in Laura Bickle's critically acclaimed *Wildlands* series

As the daughter of an alchemist, Petra Dee has battled supernatural horrors and experienced astonishing wonders. But there's no magic on earth that can defeat her recent cancer diagnosis, or help find her missing husband, Gabriel. Still, she would bet all her remaining days that the answer to his disappearance lies in the dark subterranean world beneath the Rutherford Ranch on the outskirts of Temperance, Wyoming.

Gabe is being held prisoner by the sheriff and heir to the ranch, Owen Rutherford. Owen is determined to harness the power of the Tree of Life—and he needs Gabe to reveal its magic. Secretly, the sheriff has also made a pact to free a creature of the underground, a flesh-devouring mermaid. Muirenn has vowed to exact vengeance on Gabe, who helped imprison her, but first . . . she's hungry. Once freed, she will swim into Yellowstone—to feed.

With her coyote sidekick Sig, Petra must descend into the underworld to rescue Gabe before it's too late . . . for both of them.

Review

The story starts with Petra Dee in her hospital bed as she battles through her chemotherapy all alone and instead is getting worse. Even though life seems to be escaping Petra's hands every day it passes, she instead decides to stop her treatment to go find her missing husband, Gabriel. Given the events that occurred in the past book, Gabe and Petra were betrayal and Gabe was taken by the new owner of the Rutherford ranch, Owen Rutherford. In hopes of obtaining the all the power from the Tree of Life, the Lunaria, Owen partnered up with a creature created by alchemy over 100 years ago, by the alchemist Lascaris the first owner of the Rutherford ranch. The creature is a mermaid, Muirenn, who is using Owen to get her freedom and vengeance for what was done to her and her imprisonment. At the same time, other things are happening across the town of Temperance that at the end will all come together.

Witch Creek is the fourth book in the *Wildlands* series. This is the first book that I have read of the series and the author, and I can say that I have become a fan of this series, I really like *Witch Creek*. I didn't know what I was expected when I read the summary of the book, but once the story starts to go in deep about the major story of the series and it narrates it well enough that a new read, like me, will be able to follow along and enjoy the book.

At first, I thought that the topic of this series was magic, given the type of genre that the book is, but instead, I found out that is more interesting by being Alchemy. I have read other books and series that feature the topic of alchemy before, but in the Wildlands series, author Laura Bickle explains it better and makes it more interesting. Most of the characters know what they are talking about, but they still explain it with their thoughts for the reader to follow along. If you have a small knowledge of alchemy or have read it before, you can see where the character of Alchemist Lascaris was trying to get and the goal of his experiments. At the same time, I liked how magic and alchemy are blended in this story and help the small stories come together and make a bigger picture at the end.

The story had a lot of interesting characters, I really like Petra as the main characters, but there was one more sub-character that I really liked, Lev. At first, I thought that his POV was just a way to help Petra's story to progress, but instead, his storyline was one that I really liked and was sad as how it ended. I hope that we can see his character in the future.

As I mentioned before, this was my first time reading anything in the Wildlands series, and I wasn't so sure how the author was going to handle Petra's cancer and deterioration. It was a different experience to read about the main character having a terminal disease and still having a lot of things to do or the series to continue, but it was exciting to learn how the author will solve this problem, and I was shocked at how Bickle did it and how well it was tied up with other things happening in the town.

Over the course of the book there were small hints of future problems that will arise in the series and potential enemies of Petra and Gabe, and by the end of the book, we learn who is behind the problems with the Lunaria. I also believe that the book gives hints as to what the future villain actually wants, and I have the theory that he is related to Petra without her knowing it. Alchemy is a great way to hide a person and there is a lot of it in the Wildlands series.

If you are a fan of Laura Bickle or other of her books, then I recommend you, Witch Creek. In this book, a woman that has so little left to give tries her best to find her husband before her time runs out and comes to terms with her death.

OBS would like to thank the publisher for supplying a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review

Craig says

This is the fourth suspenseful and intriguing volume concerning geologist Petra Dee, her pet coyote Sig, and their friends and associates. It's a very enjoyable series with excellent characterization and lots of clever bits and pieces, but I believe it would be necessary to read the earlier volumes in order to get much out of this one. This volume ends with some questions left unanswered, but enough is resolved from the previous volume that it felt like a complete story. Pretty good stuff all around.

Roxanne Rhoads says

A page turning adventure I could not put down. I started the book right before midnight on Saturday and finished it around 11:30 pm Sunday night. I just couldn't stop reading.

This is book four of Petra and Gabe's story- and the most emotional and in depth one yet.

This book pulled no punches when it came to making you feel the story. Witch Creek proves that Bickle's strengths are definitely character development and world building as she takes us deep into the wild and weird world of Temperance from the current mess involving Owen the latest Rutherford heir, all the way back to the town's dark beginnings with Lascaris.

We finally get Gabe's backstory in bits and pieces as Petra searches for him while he's being held prisoner by Owen Rutherford. Petra fears the worst, that she may never see her love again and that heartbreak will yank at your emotions as you ache for the two of them to be reunited.

We are introduced to new characters and we see a couple characters fleshed out that were previously just in the shadows. We learn a lot about Lev, the bartender, who becomes an integral player in Petra's story. We learn about his past and we suffer his heartbreak. I wonder how he'll play into future books. I wouldn't mind seeing him become Petra's ally.

And Sig, Petra's coyote sidekick, we learn a little more about him in each book. I love how Bickle usually incorporates an animal sidekick into her books- and slowly reveals that the animal is much more than what they appear to be.

The most gripping part of Witch Creek is that it takes the reader on a roller coaster of emotions as characters deal with death and rebirth from different perspectives.

Petra faces death from cancer. Gabe faces death at Owen and The Mermaid, Muirenn's hands.

Other characters deal with the death or impending death of loved ones. Even the Tree of Life, The Lunaria, is dealing with its own version of death and rebirth.

Parts of this book are truly heart wrenching. It was so well written, so deep...I was in tears several times.

The Wildlands Series is the perfect blend of alchemy, folklore, and magic with Petra and Gabe's love story at the heart of it. Urban fantasy, contemporary fantasy, with touches of horror and romance. This multi genre mash up is a must read.

Angi Burns ~Rabid Readers Book Blog says

Witch Creek by Laura Bickle

Reviewed by Angi

Love love love this series! I've said it before but I can not get enough of Laura's books!

Witchcreek picks up shortly after Nine of Stars. We visit our friends from the last installment. Petra is dealing with her leukemia, doing chemo and feeling all of the hell that comes with it. Gabe is missing. Maria is the doting yet sensible mother figure. Owen is still....well Owen just barely straddling the crazy line. Nine is still here and settling in the best she can. And let's not forget coyote! Possibly my favorite.

We learn more about the mermaid. Let me tell you not the mermaid you grew up wanting to be.

We also get to know more about Lev. I feel sorry for him and his struggles. I hope to learn even more about him and his ghosts, both personal and actual ghosts that reside in his bar that ironically used to be a church.

The best is the look into the past when Temperance was just a young developing town in the West. The history is written by Gabe from the time he first came to Temperance as a Pinkerton.

The thing about Laura's writing is at different points in the book you will both hate and feel sorrow for the bad guys. You are so fully invested in every character that you forget who you are rooting for.

Her creativity in her creatures will give you the creeps. The mermaid here and the creature in *Flesh* kinda make me wonder what made her think these things up. (Also a book you need to check out)

This is yet another 5star in my opinion for Laura.

Bonnie says

Short Summary: Petra Dee won't let a little thing like cancer stop her from finding her husband who she fears is lost to the darkness that lies under her town, but the Tree of Life is growing strong again and the power behind it won't be stopped.

Thoughts: Petra's perseverance to find her husband was admirable, but quitting chemo halfway through to go in search of him was fairly asinine and this installment, the weakest so far, could and should have been more about her search for Gabriel.

Verdict: I love this magical series and despite this weak installment, the cliffhanger means there are more installments to come and I'm still definitely on board for more Petra (and 100% more of her coyote side-kick Sig.)

I received this book free from Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Lis Carey says

Petra Dee is fighting cancer, and looking for her missing husband, Gabriel. This is even more complicated and difficult than it might appear. There's considerable backstory here, this being Book 4, but Gabriel is a former Hanged Man, once tied to the Tree of Life that grows in this little town near Yellowstone. He's now the prisoner of Owen Rutherford, local sheriff, and new heir to the Rutherford Ranch, where the Tree of Life is. He wants Gabe to teach him all he knows about the Tree of Life and the magic of the Rutherford Ranch.

He's also talking to Murienn, a flesh-devouring mermaid whom Gabe helped imprison, and whom Owen has unwisely freed. She's determined to have vengeance on Gabe, the last of the Hanged Men still around.

Petra decides chemo isn't doing her any good, and what pass for local law enforcement authorities, even aside from Owen, think Gabe just took off and aren't making much effort to find him. So she check out of the hospital, goes to her friends Maria and Nine, and with their help and the help of her coyote, Sig, starts a search that takes into account the magical aspects both of Gabe, and of the town of Temperance.

Nine, it seems, is a former coyote, now in human form, for reasons no doubt elaborated on in previous books. It gives her a different perspective on things.

Meanwhile, the local bar, the Compostella, is run by Lev, another kind of magical creature, a guardian of hearth and home. The family he tended for centuries was wiped out in one of the 20th century's wars, and

after a period of wandering, he settled in Temperance, buying an abandoned church, and making a home with two ghosts there. He's going to get his own shock in the course of the book, and the plot lines come together, as he and Petra clash and then have to make common cause.

Life, death, and magic are all a bit fluid here, but it all makes its own kind of sense. I want to know more about all these characters, both their backstories, and what happens next.

Recommended.

I received a free electronic galley of this book from the publisher, and am reviewing it voluntarily.

Nicole Luiken says

Book four in series (or two, depending on how you count it). Nine of Stars ended on a cliffhanger with Gabe kidnapped by a madman and Petra facing cancer treatments so the book starts quickly and is a fast read. Even though I knew that this wasn't the last book, Petra's cancer added a lot of tension and poignancy to the story--she needs to find Gabe before she dies and she doesn't have a lot to lose so takes chances she might not otherwise.

I was especially impressed by the story's subplot, featuring Lev the bartender. At first I was puzzled how the events (Lev unexpectedly finds out he has a son) would connect to the main story of Petra and Gabe. And then when I realized the mermaid villain was about to take a hand instant dread and super tension and then BOOM a plot twist I wasn't expecting at all but was so PERFECT... Yeah. Me like. It boosted the book from 4 stars to 5.

Laura Thomas says

So much drama. Petra is in treatment for cancer. Sig, her coyote sidekick, is lost without her. And her husband, Gabriel, is still missing. And now there's a flesh eating mermaid on the loose.

Petra is such a strong woman. She's overcome some truly crazy obstacles in the world of alchemy and finally married her true love. It all sounds rosy, but the Big C is kicking her butt. Never in her wildest dreams did she imagine cancer as her deadliest foe. As she weakens and all things point to a bad ending, she uses her remaining time and strength to find Gabriel. And nothing, not a crazy would be alchemist or a deadly mermaid, will stop her.

Witch Creek was an emotional rollercoaster for me. I adore Petra and always pictured her as a fierce warrior, strong and unstoppable. But cancer has weakened her. My heart went out to her. Her once strong body so gaunt and weak. The face staring back at her from the mirror, a stranger. She may be down but don't count her out, though. I loved that she still had a trick or two up her sleeve. And when the unthinkable happened, I had to stop, go back, and read it again, stunned.

Sig still brings a smile to my face. A loyal companion to Petra and always looking out for her. But he's still a wily coyote and up to some fun antics.

And the mermaid, Muireen. She's a nasty one. Tricky and not too pretty to look at, she likes her meals raw and wriggling. Don't get too close. She lurks just beneath the surface. Hungry. Waiting.

While not as fast moving as the previous books, Petra's story is still a strong one and the saga is still addictive.

I received a complimentary copy. My review is voluntarily given.

Tammie says

As the daughter of an alchemist, Petra Dee has battled supernatural horrors and experienced astonishing wonders. But there's no magic on earth that can defeat her recent cancer diagnosis, or help find her missing husband, Gabriel. Still, she would bet all her remaining days that the answer to his disappearance lies in the dark subterranean world beneath the Rutherford Ranch on the outskirts of Temperance, Wyoming.

This is the fourth book in the Wildlands series (previously titled the Dark Alchemy series). With the exception of book two I've felt like this series has gotten better and better. The story was very engrossing and I had a hard time putting this book down. However, this book was not perfect. There were some things that seemed a little contrived and too convenient, but I think the fact that I'm enjoying this series so much made those things more tolerable.

All the characters that I liked from previous books are back; Petra, Maria, Gabe, Nine, and Sig. Petra is fighting cancer in this book and her friend Maria is acting the mother hen. I have to admit that annoyed me a little. I could understand Petra's feelings about the Chemo and the hospital and Maria's feelings about wanting her friend to take better care of herself, but they both still annoyed me a little bit.

Gabe is dealing with his own circumstances perpetuated by Owen and Petra sets out to find him. Besides the cancer, there are several obstacles along the way, one being the mermaid-like creature that has been living in the underground lake beneath the Rutherford ranch. Then there is the bar owner Lev, who gets more page time in this installment and his character gets expanded upon. I did enjoy finding out more about him, but I almost thought there was a little too much going on. In the end it ended up all being tied together. I won't say how so as not to spoil anything.

As I said before, it felt a little contrived and too convenient, but it was still very enjoyable. I was left with a few big questions at the end of the book. (view spoiler) I'll definitely be reading the next book in the series to find out the answers.

Review also posted at Writings of a Reader

Janet Robel says

A gripping supernatural thriller! I have not had the pleasure of reading the other books in this series, but had no trouble following the storyline whatsoever. Petra Dee is a strong heroine. Despite the fact that she has cancer, barring death, nothing will stop her from searching for her husband, Gabe. Petra and her friends, along with her coyote Sig, go on a quest to find him. Meanwhile, Gabe is trying desperately to find a way back to Petra. Muirenn is one ancient and crafty mermaid who will do anything for freedom and vengeance.

Get ready for a well-plotted novel with just the right touch of paranormal elements. You'll enjoy this from beginning to end. Be sure to check out the previous books to fully appreciate this one.

Shelley says

Source Publisher

Genre Urban Fantasy

Rating 4.0

Thoughts

Witch Creek is the fourth installment in author Laura Bickle's Wildlands series. This book takes place 9 months after Petra Dee arrived in Temperance, Wyoming looking for clues to her father's disappearance. Her "main" job is actually that of a geologist, but she's been interrupted by the strangeness and the people who call Temperance home. A home that was pretty much created by Lascaris by using alchemy.

Full Review @ Gizmos Reviews

<http://gizmosreviews.blogspot.com/201...>

GothicMom'S Reviewers says

A gripping supernatural thriller! I have not had the pleasure of reading the other books in this series, but had no trouble following the storyline whatsoever. Petra Dee is a strong heroine. Despite the fact that she has cancer, barring death, nothing will stop her from searching for her husband, Gabe. Petra and her friends, along with her coyote Sig, go on a quest to find him. Meanwhile, Gabe is trying desperately to find a way back to Petra. Muirenn is one ancient and crafty mermaid who will do anything for freedom and vengeance.

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Reviewed by Janet of the GothicMoms Review Team
