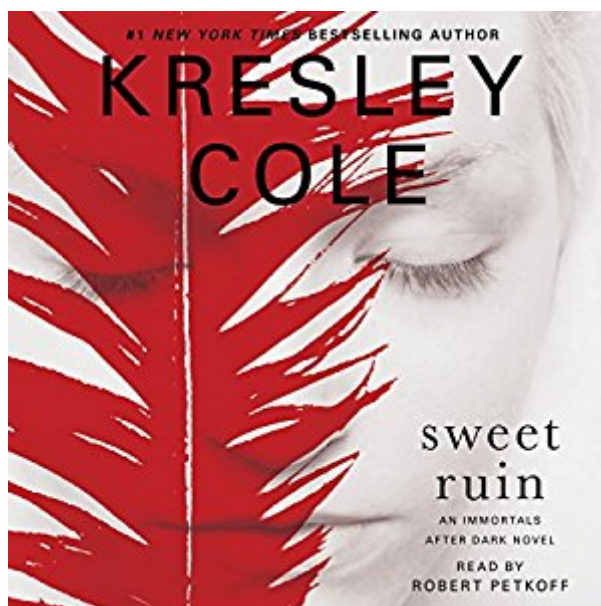


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# Sweet Ruin: Immortals After Dark, Book 16



## Synopsis

An immortal assassin is caught between desire and duty in this sizzling new novel from Kresley Cole's number-one New York Times best-selling Immortals After Dark series. A foundling raised in a world of humans Growing up, orphaned Josephine didn't know who or what she was - just that she was "bad", an outcast with strange powers. Protecting her baby brother, Thaddeus, became her entire life. The day he was taken away began Jo's transition from angry girl...to would-be superhero...to enchanting villain. A lethally sensual enforcer on a mission Whether by bow or in bed, archer Rune the Baneblood never fails to eliminate his target. In his sights: the oldest living Valkyrie. Yet before he can strike, he encounters a vampiric creature whose beauty mesmerizes him. With one bite, she pierces him with aching pleasure, stealing his forbidden blood - and jeopardizing the secrets of his brethren. A boundless passion that will lead to sweet ruin... Could this exquisite female be a spy sent by the very Valkyrie he hunts? Rune knows he must not trust Josephine, yet he's unable to turn her away. When Jo betrays the identity of the one man she will die to protect, she and Rune become locked in a treacherous battle of wills that pits ultimate loyalty against unbridled lust.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I know a lot of people were disappointed by Kresley Cole's decision to feature two new characters in this book. They want Furie and Kristoff. Or Nix and somebody. Cole has created such a vast landscape of characters already, we're all greedy to get their stories. But this book does something important. It broadens the scope of the series and

~f~ ~ ~ œin my opinion~f~ ~ ~ ramps up the Ascension more than any book that~f~ ~ ~s come before it. It also introduces the guy who I think will be Nix~f~ ~ ~s HEA, but I~f~ ~ ~ll get back to that in a minute. Since book 1, we~f~ ~ ~ve gotten to know the Vertas, the ~f~ ~ ~ “good guys~f~ ~ ~ ~ in the coming war. What this story does, is kind of turn our preconceptions on their ear, because we~f~ ~ ~re getting an inside look at the Morior. And they~f~ ~ ~re not the villains of the story, at least not this story. In fact, one of them is our hero. Rune is a Dark Fey, part fey and part demon. His blood is poisonous to anyone who comes in contact with it. He has been maligned and enslaved for much of his long life. Now he owes his loyalty to the leader of the Morior, Orion, the enigmatic and powerful being who freed him. He uses his sultry sexuality to extract valuable information for his allies, and serves as an assassin when needed. Now, he~f~ ~ ~s tasked with the death of Nix the Everknowing. Our heroine is Josephine. We~f~ ~ ~ve never met her, but she is connected to our main cast of characters in that she is the long lost sister of the young vampire, Thaddeus. She raised him from the time he was a baby, even though she was just a young girl herself. She had no memory of their lives before she was eight years old and was found carrying him in the streets. What she knew instinctively was that Thaddie was her life, and everyone else be damned. She learned to be tough and streetwise, but it all came crashing down when she got a little too tough and ended up in the crosshairs of a gang-banger. Thaddius was raised by an adopted family when it appeared as if Jo was dead. But, obviously, those bullets didn~f~ ~ ~t keep her down. They only revealed her true nature. She is something more. She can become insubstantial and she craves blood, but she has no one to help her understand what that means. So she ends up with a pretty lonely life. Until her path crosses with Rune. For the first time, she~f~ ~ ~s found a man who is as unusual as she is. She craves his body and blood, but he can~f~ ~ ~t imagine a life with just one woman. How could he when he is convinced he can never have a mate? All that matters is his loyalty and his revenge on the family who enslaved him all of those years. Jo tempts him with her attitude and her mystery. And he spends the book trying to get into her pants, while she tries to convince him they could have something more. I liked Jo. Kresley Cole does a great job crafting strong women with a sense of self-worth. My only complaint is that sometimes, they feel too much alike. They all have different circumstances and motivation, but most of them think they~f~ ~ ~re awesome; they~f~ ~ ~re always telling the hero that they~f~ ~ ~re awesome; they~f~ ~ ~re strong and sexually empowered~f~ ~ ~| and they have the same voice. It~f~ ~ ~s a good voice. But it~f~ ~ ~s the same one. Her powers and

species are cool, though, as is her devotion to her brother. Rune has some issues, as you would expect after years of forced prostitution. But I enjoyed the tension between him and Jo. I appreciated his loyalty to Orion and the Morior, even as it put Nix on his hitlist. He has one big Really Stupid Moment, but otherwise, I liked him. The romance is sexy and fun and I liked seeing him finally finding the love he never thought he'd have. I'll admit I was a little confused about Jo's nature even after the details were revealed. Like, did she keep aging after she "died"? She was only 10 years old. Does her survival mean she can never die? And I didn't forget what I said about a man for Nix. I don't want to spoil it, but I think I know who he is now! This book is definitely a bridge to the next major arc of the series. I'm ready to learn more about all of the primordials we met here and see their impact on the storyline. Who knows where it will all go next? I know there are some people who may feel like too much is changing, we're branching out too much, but I would rather that than a rehash of the same stuff, risking the possibility of such a vibrant series going stale. Rating: B+/A-

Pure awesomeness! Jo (phanpire - phantom/vampire) and Rune (Dark Fey/Demon) were the perfect match for each other. Their story will forever linger in my heart and mind. The Imortals After Dark series continues to fascinate me with the lore and all their suffering before they find their true mate. Maybe that's why these stories are so good because there is nothing like a happy ending for eternity. I look forward to the next book - hopefully we find out if Thad (Jo's Brother) gets a mate and if Jo and Thad learn who their vampire father is and how their meeting with the morier Orion goes and how their roles will play out with the accession. Overall I really enjoyed this story - nothing like great heated romance that curls your toes and gets your heart beat a racing with lots of suspenseful and engaging twist and turns. Heat level: 4 flames Rating: 5 stars

I've been reading IAD for almost 10 years and devoured each book. Fell in love with every character, the Lore, and the quirky, fun of the Valkyries. Each character was memorable, lovable (even when they weren't), and had a story that had me hanging on edge for the fated couples to "make it"- lots of, "OMG", "NOOOO!", "YES!", "Oh thank God!" Moments in all IAD books. Spoilers ahead: It felt like I wasn't reading an IAD novel, almost (almost!) a stand-alone series. When familiar characters entered a scene, it wasn't jaw-dropping or funny (Nix!), almost like KC is switching sides to the Morior, but I'm not sure since there are so many plot holes surrounding Rune/Orion/Jo & her

home. But I'm not done with the Vertras yet!!! I'm still holding out, but it feels like a turn from my beloved Valkyries/Lykae/Vamp/demon to an additional universe (change of arc?) This one just didn't do "it" for me. Jo was a bit...annoying? She was headstrong, which I liked, but not headstrong like some of the heroines from other IAD novels. I wasn't able to "pinpoint" her character's character? She had an "f it" attitude that was so severe that it made me question Jo's desires. Jo was just floating around for all eternity by herself, ghosting into shells forever? I don't know why, but her lack of purpose in life-ish was unnerving. Loved Rune. But I felt for him, Jo was crazy childish at times (even if he was a whore). The whole "my mate" thing didn't pull me in this time like it did for all other IAD books. It was kind of matter-of-fact, let's just see. Part of me was waiting for this bada--, thousands-of-years-old dark fey/demon to be like, "f the fey" and annihilate them with his archery skills instead of his seduction skills. He ended up doing it anyways, but it wasn't as glorious as I was expecting. Overall, I did enjoy it, just not as much as my beloved (previous) IAD novels.

I have loved this series from the first book. Interesting characters, intriguing storylines - like everyone else I love Nix. However, I'm confused about what the author is hoping to accomplish. Sweet Ruin actually rekindled my interest in the series. Because it has been WAY TOO LONG to move this series along and I have become bored and lost interest. I refuse to read another book until there is some real movement towards resolution on the MANY OPEN ISSUES identified by other people - I won't restate them here. The author should bring to closure the major story lines, then branch off into a new, related series. Not DRAG OUT FOREVER some of the key, interesting story lines. I am extremely disappointed in the author. I would have rated the book a bit higher if not for the overall irritation I feel about how Kresley Cole has handled the IAD series.

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