



Divinity and The Python

Bonnie Randall

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Divinity - Where desire and deception both hide in the dark

The Cards Forecast Work

Shaynie Gavin is so much more than the sexy siren who mixes cocktails at The Python. A carpenter with a business plan, Shaynie is trying to amass enough funds to launch her own dream - Divinity, a place where up-cycled furniture from the past is sold alongside Tarot readings forecasting the future - and all in a setting that could not be more perfect: a former funeral parlor. Shaynie's belief that Divinity is attuned with the passions, the loves, and even the lies of its departed souls, allow her to feel satisfied when the cards she draws there reveal Wands, the Tarot's symbol for work. And yet...Shaynie would be so grateful if the Tarot would also, just once, illuminate a Hellnight from her past. A lost evening whose scars still slither over her skin, Hellnight haunts Shaynie. Yet when she calls the question of that chilling evening into her deck...

The Cards Forecast Love

...and love appears in the form of pro hockey star Cameron Weste. Weste is haunted by scars and superstitions of his own, and he wants Shaynie's Tarot to answer far deeper questions than she first guesses this sexy lothario to be capable of. Who knew Weste was this intense? The Tarot, apparently. And yet...

The Cards Forecast The Devil

When Cameron Weste lands in her life, a stalker surfaces too, dropping clues to a connection between Shaynie, Cameron, and her lost, brutal Hellnight. Suddenly every card warns of deception, and nowhere feels safe. Shaynie and Cameron have to fight for their love - and their lives - as The Devil, their stalker, is determined to turn the Death Card for them both.

Divinity and The Python Details

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From Reader Review Divinity and The Python for online ebook

Jon says

First the legalese: I'm on the Panverse street team (free EARC's for an honest review? Yes please!), so if it seems I'm putting up a review awfully fast, well, I read it last month. :) And so...

Hockey and Tarot, two things I know almost nothing about but which figure prominently in this book. Luckily, the author keeps things pertinent to the plot, so I never felt out of my depth and was able to enjoy the story.

Although New Age Paranormal Romance isn't my genre of choice, I actually liked D&tP. Certain aspects of the mystery kept me guessing, and the characters engaged me enough to -want- to keep reading.

Although this review sounds like a serious case of "damned by faint praise", I can honestly say the book earned the four stars given, and I will be looking forward to Bonnie's future work.

Stuart says

Man, I loved this book! I became fully invested in the characters and the plot immediately and was thankful for the attention to detail that Randall provided. If you have never had the pleasure of experiencing Edmonton in the middle of winter, Divinity and The Python can take you there, frozen toes and all!!

I started out planning on reading it just one chapter per sitting but it turned out to be much too thrilling and compelling to put down and I finished it in one glorious (and very late) night. This was my first experience with the paranormal subject matter and it has become my gateway to the genre.

Divinity and The Python will feature prominently in my Christmas shopping as I know it will be a "can't miss" gift!

I'm looking forward to Randall's next book and am preparing for another full night of reading.

Samantha says

4.5. I'm not sure what exactly it was about this book that couldn't get me to put it down. At times it was confusing as I tried to make sense of what the cards meant right along with everyone else, wondering if all that Shaynie saw and felt was real or just in her head. But it kept me engaged the entire way through. I loved the characters and felt they were all well written. It was a great suspenseful thriller (which I don't usually read) with a dash of the paranormal, the romance I'm so fond of, and New Age connections that I don't see enough. It was just really good and incredibly engaging.

And it made me want to pull out my own tarot deck again.

Andrea Cunningham says

What an intricate and delightfully spiritual story. I truly enjoyed this book and will be following the career of Ms. Randall.

The character Shaynie stayed with me for weeks after I finished the book. She is strong, funny, conflicted and shows us her "underbelly". I felt her emotions clearly and understood many of the decisions she made.

The male lead was very easy to imagine and fall for, which made the romance inside of the mystery all the better.

I'm a fan...point blank. Thank you!

P.redman says

I thoroughly enjoyed every page of this book! It was so fun to read a book in a familiar Canadian setting! I read it in one sitting, as I couldn't put it down. I fell for the main characters Shaynie and Cameron! The pictures painted by this talented author were so real and intriguing! I loved the twists and turns, along with all of the paranormal, which I didn't think I was as into, but really enjoyed in this book! Getting to know the characters and their story, left me wanting more and I can't wait to read more of Bonnie Randall's books!!

Jennifer says

This was a real page-turner for me! I used to live 2 blocks off Whyte Avenue and know the area well (very well, for most of my 4 years there I did not own a car). Jasper Ave and 109th street I can visualize and place Divinity right there in my mind's eye. To write a book about a real locale and place the setting in the depths of a Canadian winter takes skill and an intimate knowledge of the details that make up the 'winter experience'. Well done, Bonnie! I want to shop at Divinity and meet my mom and sisters there for a reading like we have done at The Silk Hat & Russian Tea Room (are they both still there....?) in downtown Edmonton. I also want my 22 year old self to go to the Python (but with my 40-something head on my shoulders!) - I imagine it to be around the same area as Barry T's or Goose Loonies (do those clubs even still exist?! Thank you for a great tale, for introducing me to the genre (I haven't read anything quite like it), and for helping me to fondly remember my time spent living and learning in, what my dad affectionately calls, The Big Smoke (Edmonton).

Wendy S. Delmater says

Understand, Tarot is not my thing; in fact, it's against my religion. It's therefore astounding that I simply could not put Divinity & the Python down.

I will admit that the Tarot is a wonderful device for foreshadowing, misdirection, theme, atmosphere and characterization. And protagonist Shaynie Gavin is a student of the Tarot, who lives a double life. Half of her time is spent making enough money to keep body and soul together as a barmaid at a club called The Python. The club has a holographic snake that winds its way through the place, and it's a place she'd rather not be

since that hologram is a fair representation of The Python's soul.

Shaynie would rather be at the business she is building, mainly with sweat equity, in an old morgue. This place has a soul too, a friendly, protective one, and she's named that palpable presence "Divinity." She's added a woodshop to the lower level near the morgue drawers, and a showroom for her wood-crafted creations on the main floor, where she also plans to have a bar and a place for Tarot readings.

But Shaynie has a secret, one that she'd rather not confront, about a time when she was in so much pain she went out seeking oblivion in shameful behavior. And it's a smallish group of people who know her, mainly in the circles of hockey-mad Edmonton. Who of them saw her shame... and do they know more about it than she does?

This is a FIRST RATE mystery, people, with enough twist and turns for a serious roller coaster ride of intrigue, hints, reversals, and reveals. Add to that a seriously hot romance and all the paranormal help—and hindrances—she gets from various spiritual agencies, and it was electrifying.

RECOMMENDED

Kerri says

Divinity and the Python is a paranormal suspense romance novel set in Edmonton, Alberta, a city well-known for its cold winters and famous Edmonton Oilers hockey team. (Of course, they are not mentioned by name, but you know who they are)

When we meet the main character Shaynie, you can tell immediately that she is not your traditional romantic main character. She is an independent, not afraid to get her hands dirty carpenter who builds one-of-a-kind furniture pieces that are works of art. In addition to being a carpentry artist, Shaynie has a dream of transforming an old downtown morgue into a Tarot lounge which she calls Divinity. Shaynie and Divinity share an interesting 'relationship' and the building definitely shows up as a character in the story.

Unfortunately, to finance her dream for Divinity, Shaynie must supplement her income with her job as a bartender in the popular (yet sleazy) nightclub, The Python, which is owned by her long-time friend Jude. Jude and his cousin Gray, who is the DJ at the club, have been Shaynie's friends since childhood – ties that also make it difficult for her to leave The Python.

Working at The Python is a double-edged sword for Shaynie – she definitely needs the money, but it also makes her feel like someone she is not. The Python too, has a personality all its own, and Shaynie feels vulnerable to it - especially since 'Hellnight' – a night of which she has only vague memories but those memories have shaken her to her core.

When Shaynie meets Cameron Weste, handsome star of the city's famous hockey team, there is a definite connection between the pair. But word on the street is that Weste isn't a fan of the frigid city and is campaigning to be traded to a team in California.

All the while, there is a mysterious person in the shadows following Shaynie, breaking into her apartment leaving reminders of 'Hellnight'. There is also vandalism happening at Divinity. Who is trying to sabotage her plans for Divinity? Are the two connected? Shaynie's brother Andrew, a city police detective is trying to solve the case and protect Shaynie – a role he is now reluctantly sharing with Cameron.

In addition to the main characters, Randall has created a very interesting supporting cast, including Shaynie's metaphysical mentor, Cele and her partner Barnabas. There is also Cameron's jealous team-mate Noel Nelson, who also seems to carry a bit of a torch for Shaynie. Other characters include a jilted ex-boyfriend, a 'puck bunny' Chrystal, who might be more dangerous than she seems, and a pair of red-headed Amazon bartenders who would be more than happy to take all the tip money for themselves.

You can tell that the author has a great love for the city of Edmonton. Alberta readers will enjoy reading about familiar streets and landmarks mentioned as Shaynie travels about the city.

Olivia Leigh Blacke says

Divinity and the Python is pure magic!

Mysteries and deaths going back a decade are revealed as a group of old friends rediscover itself and experiences love, loss, and betrayal.

Perceptions and loyalties are challenged as secrets from Shaney's past are finally exposed. On the brink of getting everything she ever wanted - her dream business and an unlikely new love - Shaney finds herself struggling against sabotage and a psychotic stalker determined to make her re-live the worst night of her life, which threatens to destroy the new balance she's created.

Julie Christine says

Bonnie Randall's writing is electric. It moves, it grooves, it rocks and it rolls. *Divinity and the Python* is like a strobe light on a disco round--colors and sounds in constant motion, shadows taking shape for a moment before dissolving into the floor.

Divinity and the Python is not my usual reading fare, so it's the appropriate time to insert a Note of Disclosure: The publisher provided a free copy in exchange for an honest review. It's healthy to step outside of one's own zone and see what's happening in other writers' and readers' worlds--in this case, psychological and paranormal thrills with some sexy bits thrown in for good measure. But this is not a novel that can be pigeon-holed and I love that. I love that Bonnie flips a double-bird to genre classification and does her own thing, staying true to the story she wants to tell. In the hands of a less-skilled writer, I would not have gone past the word Go to read a story of hockey players, tarot cards, and a seedy nightclub in Edmonton, Canada, but Bonnie's writing makes the ride well worth the price of admission.

This is one of the talkiest novels I've read and for that, the pacing is fast and furious. Her dialogue is crisp and realistic, the voices unique and engaging. There's a hard-boiled edge to Shaynie Grace and her posse of men--some threats, some protectors--worthy of good *crime noir*.

I was distressed by "Hellnight" -- as much by the incident as by reactions to it and what led up to it. I'm flirting with spoiler territory here, so I'll only say I felt the style of the book too light to treat this kind of violence with the gravity it deserves. But a smart, sassy, strong-willed heroine kickin' ass and takin' names in the rough and tumble prairies of Alberta, Canada is something to behold.

Jo-Anne says

Finished this book in only a couple sittings. It was hard to put down (sadly, I found I did not want to let go of this book's main characters, Shaynie and Cameron at the end of the book). This was a fabulous, well paced storyline and unique plot. I LOVED the Canadian perspective and the symbolism of the good/evil, light/dark, divinity/python...well researched in the metaphysical aspects and I give this book a FIVE STAR!!! LOVED it! Can't wait for another book from this talented author! Well done Ms. Randall!!!

Ann Meier says

Just finished Bonnie's Randall's Divinity & the Python. I thoroughly enjoyed this book for several reasons. First, it's a beautiful love story. Well actually, it's multiple love stories. You may see it described as a paranormal romance, but the cool thing is the primary romance is between real people. Shaynie Gavin has many loves and this makes her very interesting. She falls hard for Cameron Weste. He's described by Shaynie's friend and mentor Cele, as a hockey god, an ice deity. In other words, he's hot. And he plays professional hockey. Shaynie isn't a typical puck bunny. She's a new age gal who tends bar in the Python, a very trendy club, in order to make enough money to launch her dream – Divinity - a new business venture where she'll offer Tarot card readings and sell her handcrafted furniture. She loves Divinity and Divinity, a repurposed morgue, loves her. Really. Shaynie also shares a strong sibling bond with her brother detective Andrew Gavin. And Shaynie loves her friends. One of these loves will betray her and one will save her. The book's setting Edmonton, the City of Champions, in Alberta, Canada is fresh. Ms. Randall's descriptions show that she too has many loves and one of them is this city. Beautifully written with evocative images, I offer this warning – expect tears - in a good way. Not just a love story, there's suspense, mystery, and paranormal elements. I'm looking forward to more from Ms. Randall.

Susan Luljuraj says

Love can happen in any number of ways, even when it's the last thing you want. Even when the world is screaming at you that love is just around the corner, it can be hard for people to accept.

Shaynie Gavin finds herself in that moment when Divinity and The Python starts. She's a young Canadian woman who is connected spiritually to nature. She's senses things around her from the way the wind blows or a candle moves, and allows nature to guide her.

Shaynie doesn't seem to want to listen to the part where it says that local hockey hero Cameron Weste is the one for her. Although, he's known to get around the party scene, it seems much of her reluctance has a lot to do with self-loathing from what she calls "Hellnight," an alcohol-induced night that Shaynie can only grab bits of memories.

Bonnie Randall created an interesting heroine. She's not perfect. She's independent. Even when she makes the wrong choices, it seems Shaynie does so knowing there will be consequences. However, her independent streak is tough to shake.

Shaynie finds herself falling in love in the middle of being harassed by a mysterious person. The book turns

into a whodunit with interesting twists along the way. Randall provides clues and adds elements but leaves enough suspense until the end when the Big Bad is revealed.

One of the biggest drawbacks for me was the overuse of the mystical elements. I enjoyed Shayine being in tune with nature. Little clues as to how the things around us can take on a life of their own and help us when needed most. I enjoyed the subtlety of it.

However, toward the end of the book, it was became obvious ad too much in your face.

Overall, it was an enjoyable book and one I was happy to have had a chance to read.

I received this book from NetGalley for review.

Emily Sandoval says

I believe the publisher calls this book a paranormal romantic thriller (note: not paranormal romance, which is a related but different corner of the genre). I'd have to agree. It's sexy, it's spooky, and the tension keeps ratcheting up all the way to the end.

Our heroine is Shaynie Gavin, a carpenter—an artist, really—who's making money tending bar at the Python while fixing up Divinity, an old morgue, to be a Tarot parlor and New Age lounge. While the romance is great, the most important relationship in Shaynie's life through most of the book is with Divinity. Like it says on the cover, all things have a soul, and Divinity is most definitely a character. For those not open to the paranormal, Divinity's interactions give off a creepy vibe, but for Shaynie, Divinity is protection, friendship, home. From the sound of the furnace to the well-timed unlocking of doors and switching of lights, Divinity is imbued with personality.

Shaynie herself is great. Though I don't believe in it, it's nice to see a Tarot-reading character who absolutely believes and whose belief permeates every aspect of her life. The Tarot descriptions are subtle, and the only time the fortune-teller-fraud or flaky-new-ager clichés show up are when Shaynie is bracing herself to face them. I found it interesting that while the Tarot may have helped Shaynie stay on her guard, it also nearly ruined her romance. I suppose whether you believe or not, a Tarot reading is really about knowing yourself, and even the most self-aware of us has blind spots.

The dialogue sparkled, the looming threat sent chills up my spine, and I got some serious shivers when the romance started to heat up. The obstacles keeping them apart were very real, nothing that felt like it could be waved away with a single conversation.

Two big thumbs up, and I'll be looking for the follow-up in 2014.

Linsy says

This book was completely beyond anything I have ever read before. It was a **really intriguing mystery/romance** all wrapped up in a very different take on what I can only think to describe as **paranormal**.

On that note, however, I must say that **I spent a rather large portion of this book utterly perplexed.** I could not for the life of me figure out if the main character, Shaynie Gavin, was **schizophrenic** or if there was **something else** really going on. Several times I had to refer back to the book blurb to see if I was just being completely daft or Shaynie was a little bit crazy. And for the first part of the book, the schizophrenic assumption fit the bill much better.

There were two reasons why I thought this:

1. **Shaynie keeps thinking someone is following her**, but there really is not any proof of this, just what appear to be her delusions (at least for a good while into the book). She'll just be walking along and then think, "Eyes." No shadow following her. No sound in an otherwise quiet alley. Nothing but "Eyes." I think if one of the main themes of the book is a stalker, there should be no doubt (for the reader) of this fact after so many pages. And it went way past that point for me.
2. **Shaynie keeps talking to a building.** And the building keeps replying. But, this idea of a personified building (a morgue she is repurposing and has named Divinity), is not explicitly laid out. It basically has to be inferred; and having never read a book with such a premise, I had no idea that is what I was supposed to interpret. So, naturally, I again turned to the conclusion that she was schizophrenic.

Now that I have read the book and know better, I can tell you the idea of assuming her schizophrenic is completely inaccurate and way off track. I do not believe it is meant to be a mystery that Divinity is "alive" in its own way, given the tagline for the book is that "*Everything has a soul.*" But I think it could have and should have been made clear exactly *what* that means.

All that initial confusion aside, this really is a very good, very well written, and very different book.

Shaynie works at a bar, The Python, with her longtime best friends where she brings in pretty good tips as a bartender, but all at the expense of working somewhere that just is *not her* -- a bar where the town's hockey stars show up in all their fame and glory. She wants her own place, Divinity, and is working to open it up, but she just doesn't have the full start-up funds without her tip money.

However, her dream to open Divinity and her efforts to do so are continually thwarted by someone who appears to have a personal vendetta against her. And to make matters worse, there is the **hunky hockey heartthrob**, Cameron Weste, who shows up and won't quite leave her alone. And she does not know how she feels about that. Or him.

In fact, Shaynie does not know how to feel about anything really, because she is still haunted by the events of a year prior -- events which she cannot quite remember, but terrify her nonetheless. And because she cannot remember, **she really does not know who she can trust.**

Yet, in the midst of her fears, her uncertainties, and what she dubs her "burdens," Shaynie still has Divinity. And Divinity she can trust.

What follows is a "whodunit" type mystery that I am sad to say is really very obvious. I mean, the culprit becomes rather blatantly so, to me, when (view spoiler) I was a little saddened by this, as I was hoping for a bit more of a twist.

It should be noted that the mystery of finding "whodunit" is really not one of any great suspense or thrill. Aside from Shaynie frequently feeling like someone is watching her and a little vandalism, nothing really happens. It is still a good story and a good book; **I just mention this to warn anyone looking for a good action-packed, suspense thriller.**

While I think it could have used those more suspenseful moments, it was still a really well-written book with

an incredibly different premise from anything I have read before. In fact, I enjoyed it so much, I read it straight through the night and into the dawn. **Clearly, thus, it was a gripping story even without the nail-biting suspense.**

I will say, as a major fan of a good romance, I was **quite fond of this love story**. I think it was all in the nickname given to Shaynie by the love interest. **I got butterflies** (*or shall I say faeries*) in my tummy almost every time he used that endearment. Totally sweet. While I wish he had been a touch more (physically) protective, I did like his need to protect her while he was away. I also liked the slow build of the romance. **The love story did not happen overnight and I thought its progression felt very natural.**

In addition to a little trimming (the story did drag a little at times), **I think what this book really needs, what would really save it in a lot of ways, is a prologue** of sorts. I can think of two different prologues, and both go along with my two reasons for assuming schizophrenia:

1. A prologue written from the **stalker's perspective** on Hellnight. Or any other night for that matter. Something that really solidifies this creep to the reader well ahead of time and lets the reader know just how dangerous they are... even when Shaynie doesn't. That would add suspense as well as alleviate a little confusion. The reader would know the second she feels "Eyes" that she is not crazy and that she should definitely be afraid.
2. This one is a little more strange, but a prologue told from the **perspective of Divinity**. This could be the first time Shaynie walked in with a realtor or at any point over its years. Just something to solidify to the reader that the building is in fact "alive" in its own way. This way when Shaynie talks to it, we know she isn't, well, crazy. Hell, it could be told at a time Shaynie is there with her stalker (without identifying them) and could mention how it knows the stalker's true intentions. Two birds, one stone.

Thank you Panverse Publishing and NetGalley for the opportunity to read this book!
