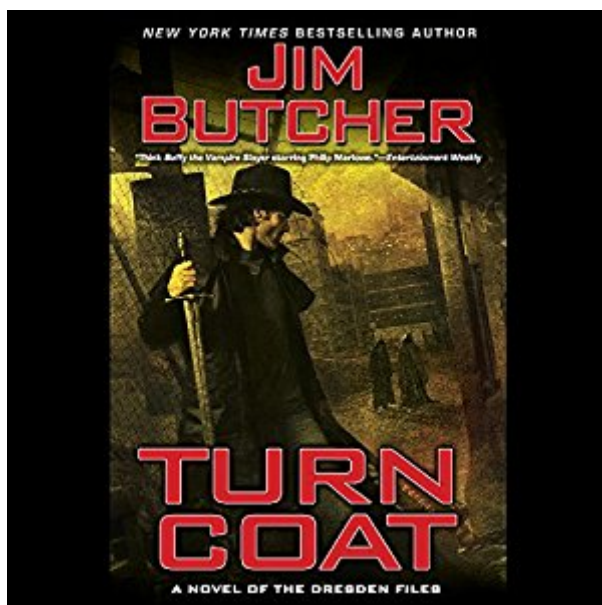


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Turn Coat: The Dresden Files, Book 11



Synopsis

Jim Butcher's Breakthrough #1 New York Times bestseller The Warden Morgan has been accused of treason against the Wizards of the White Council-and there's only one final punishment for that crime. He's on the run, he wants his name cleared, and he needs someone with a knack for backing the underdog. Like Harry Dresden. Now, Harry must uncover a traitor within the Council, keep a less-than-agreeable Morgan under wraps, and avoid coming under scrutiny himself. And a single mistake could cost Harry his head... --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Over the course of the last few books, the Dresden Files has been steadily upping the ante for our pal Harry Dresden. He has become a Warden, picked up an Apprentice, triumphed over Hellfire, captured the attention and respect of an Archangel and shown significant signs of growth as a Wizard. Harry has grown so much that by Turn Coat, the series has really come full circle in many ways. In Storm Front, Harry was the suspected Warlock who had to prove himself to the Wardens, specifically Morgan. It was Morgan who had to pull Harry's butt out of the fire. Now, ten books later and at roughly the halfway point in the Dresden Files (according to info at his site), it is Morgan who is the suspected Warlock/traitor to the White Council, and it is Harry he comes to to pull his butt out of the fire. Morgan shows up on Harry's door, looking like death warmed over and barely able to speak, but what he does say is like a bombshell dropping: he is a hunted man, accused of murdering a member of the Senior Council. So begins the best Dresden Files book yet. Turn Coat is everything I expected, and more, it is everything I hoped for. It has been the worst kept secret of the

series that a traitor was lurking in the highest echelon of the White Council, and the unveiling of that traitor is very well done. The highest compliment I can pay to Butcher is that he genuinely kept me guessing until he wanted us to know. The ultimate reveal is handled with complexity and a laudable maturity of authorship. Many of the usual faces return for Turn Coat. Molly, Mouse, Thomas, Murphy, Morgan, Ebenezar, Luccio, the Alphas and Toot-Toot!! all have feature supporting roles, (though Ramirez is surprisingly absent since the book is so much about the Council) and of course, they are all as excellent as ever. Other characters we have already met, but know little about, such as The Gatekeeper and Injun Joe, are explored in more detail. I do not know about anyone else, but this book is worth it for Listens-to-Wind alone. He is just an amazing Wizard, and I look forward to seeing him more in later books. Add in some quality Gatekeeper conversations and a real look at what just some of the Senior Council can do in action, and you really have as much Wizard action as ever before. And they are really only a very small fraction of the goodness that is Turn Coat! Ultimately what I am most impressed by is how much Butcher is willing to change the "status quo". There are some major shakeups in Turn Coat, and somewhat of a change in direction for the series. As Bob the Skull says, Harry has really started playing in the Big Leagues. His power and abilities are increasing, but so are the threats he has to face, as the world around him is getting nastier and more perilous every day. I compared Grave Peril to the second season of Buffy once, similar in how both characters really grew up all at once. I would compare Turn Coat to the fourth season of Angel: a movement away from the more singular storytelling and the beginning of piecing together the larger tapestry. Both characters somewhat outgrow their PI status, still utilizing the talents but focused more directly on the larger scale. Both face enormous powers behind the scenes as they are caught up in the whirlwind, losing friends and allies along the way, but they shall Not Fade Away. This one has it all: good philosophical debate, fascinating new insight into some characters we thought we knew, moral and ethical quandaries that exceed mere "black and white" bordering into grey, killer action, quality one-liners and a deepening sense of maturity to the series as a whole. 418 pages has never felt so short. 5 out of 5 stars

Morgan has always been a major thorn in Harry Dresden's side. So of course, he appears on Harry's doorstep, half dead and convicted of murder. But that's only one of the problems facing Jim Butcher's wizard PI in the eleventh Dresden Files Book, . The aptly named "Turn Coat is half whodunnit and half magical thriller, with plenty of explosive magic, hard-nosed wizards, deadly conspiracy and plenty of grotesque monsters and vampires. What's more, Butcher pulls some brilliant plot twists out of his hat, including some that are sure to wrench the heart. An injured Morgan

turns up at Harry's door, hunted by Wardens and convicted of murdering Aleron LaFortier for the Red Court. Even worse, it's an airtight case against him. But Harry can't bring himself to believe that Morgan could ever do something treacherous (even if Morgan is a big bottom-pain). His investigations take him on an unpleasant tightrope to vampire hangouts and the Council HQ, where he learns that LaFortier's death could -- if left unpunished -- lead to a very messy civil war between the weakened wizard factions. In other words, the Black Council is making a move. And Harry has problems close to him as well -- a price on Morgan's head, the Binder's ectoplasmic hordes, and a chilling immortal monster of Native American legend called a naagloshii (skinwalker). When the naagloshii kidnaps Thomas and trashes the Raith mansion, Harry must find a way not only of saving his brother and Morgan from certain death -- but unveiling the traitor within the Council as well. Hard to do when everyone is very, very mad at you...

"Turn Coat" is definitely a turning point in the Dresden Files series, where the Black Council becomes a widely-known -- though not widely-acknowledged -- reality, and Butcher is clearly setting up a massive conflict. Relationships are shattered, alliances are strained, personalities are changed, a traitor is revealed and the White Council is more openly threatened by the Black Council. A few people even die. And Butcher does a pretty brilliant job meshing together fantasy, political thrillers and Agatha Christie-style murder mystery. He fills the story with sharp dark-edged noir prose, fun dialogue ("Mission accomplished, my lord of pizza!"), and some literally explosive action scenes (including a pitched battle on a rainy magical island). But despite the dark, grim cast of the plot, Butcher doesn't forget to add some humor to the mix. Where else can you find a spell that uses Silly String? What's more, he fleshes out the rather mysterious Council, and shows the motivations and sacrifices that it has been built on, as well as its reasons for being so strict and reclusive. The one problem is that the murderer is a bit obvious, and I expected someone a bit more... important. Harry proves himself to be the right kind of guy simply by wanting to prove Morgan innocent, and by forging ahead with some really risky magic that even the Gatekeeper blanches at. But his quest for justice takes away some people that he cares about as well, leaving some terrible long-term repercussions for his brother Thomas. And Butcher takes great care to show that while Morgan is annoying and self-righteous, he's also strong and honorable. And once he was more like Harry.

"Turn Coat" also fleshes out the Council considerably, showing them more as real people -- the Merlin eats sandwiches, Mai is revoltingly rigid, and there are even bureaucromancers. And "Injun Joe" shows the incredible range of his power, as well as the sadness of his past. Butcher needs to show a bit more of this awesome old wizard, because he rules. "Turn Coat" is a brilliant turning point for the Dresden Files series, as well as a painful series of lessons for Jim Butcher's wizard anti-hero. And the battle is hardly over yet.

#11 in the Dresden Files paranormal mystery series in which wizard Harry Dresden is sought by Donald Morgan, one of the elite of the Wizard's White Council--and certainly no friend to Harry in the past--to protect him. He shows up on Harry's doorstep seriously wounded and bloodied with the story that the White Council is after him as he is believed to have killed another wizard, which he swears he didn't do, and he figures that seeking solace from Harry would be the last place the Council would expect him to go. Harry believes Morgan and sets out to solve the crime, as he also believes this ties in to his certainty that there is a "Black" Council with someone very high up on the inside feeding information to the Council's enemies. With fingers in multiple pies--protecting Morgan, gleaning information about the murder, and also trying to locate his brother Thomas who's been kidnapped by a skinwalker (whom Harry calls Shagnasty--ha ha ha!)--it's not easy for Wizard Dresden to get done what needs doing and as usual it means sacrificing sleep and pissing a few people off along the way. Another wild tale across Chicago, through the Never-Never, to Edinburgh (where the White Council's headquarters are currently located) and with unexpected alliances, strange creatures, and an impossibly entangled set of twisty circumstances that leaves you wondering what's going to happen right up til the end. Very skillfully narrated by James Marsters, who seems to capture instinctively the heart, soul and the essence of Harry, and who does quite a wide variety of accents and voices very well. I started out reading this series in print, but after listening to the last few in audio, I doubt I would go back now. Very enjoyable!

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