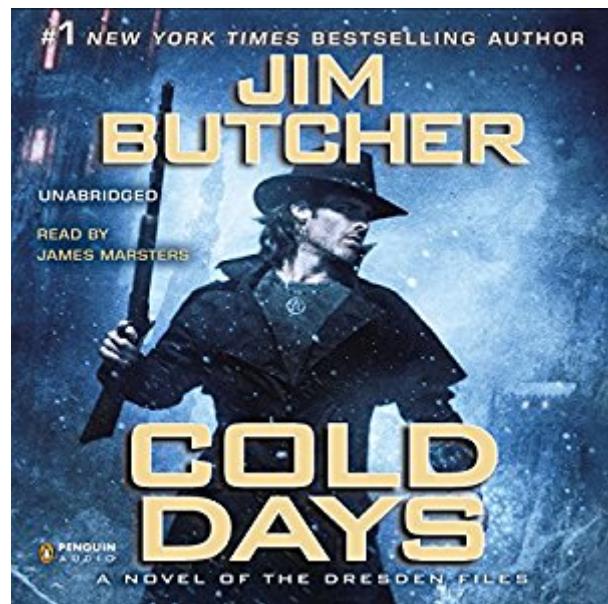


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# Cold Days: The Dresden Files, Book 14



## Synopsis

Harry Dresden lives! After being murdered by a mystery assailant, navigating his way through the realm between life and death, and being brought back to the mortal world, Harry realizes that maybe death wasn't all that bad - because he is no longer Harry Dresden, Chicago's only professional wizard. He is now Harry Dresden, Winter Knight to Mab, the Queen of Air and Darkness. After Harry had no choice but to swear his fealty, Mab wasn't about to let something as petty as death steal away the prize she had sought for so long. And now, her word is his command, no matter what she wants him to do, no matter where she wants him to go, and no matter who she wants him to kill. Guess which one Mab wants first? Of course, it won't be an ordinary, everyday assassination. Mab wants her newest minion to pull off the impossible: kill an immortal. No problem there, right? And to make matters worse, there exists a growing threat to an unfathomable source of magic that could land Harry in the sort of trouble that will make death look like a holiday. Beset by enemies new and old, Harry must gather his friends and allies, prevent the annihilation of countless innocents, and find a way out of his eternal subservience before his newfound powers claim the only thing he has left to call his own... his soul.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful novel that rewards longtime Dresden followers with callback after callback to previous events in the series (it especially demands a re-reading of *Summer Knight* in particular in order to fully understand who's who in its large cast of background characters, both present and

deceased), and although it would be a poor idea for new readers to jump in at book 14 of a series as long as this one, the cast of characters are so well fleshed-out, the adventure so intriguing, the story so flat out entertaining, they wouldn't necessarily have to know absolutely everything about what occurred in previous stories to feel let in on the fun. Jim Butcher's Dresden Files have always contained a wonderfully manic combination of screwball comedy, High Urban fantasy, and the detective genre. As is traditional in a good noir story, our lead is a capable protagonist who finds himself in a dangerous situation that is rapidly spinning out beyond his ability to control, thanks mostly in part to a cadre of dangerous women who run the gamut from murderous matron to femme fatale to a literal Ice Queen. Expounding upon his troubles are Harry's increasing list of character flaws. Although Harry possesses magic, he isn't particularly wise; Although he's intelligent, he's not a very good deductive reasoner; and even though he's become powerful due to deals brokered in previous books in the series, he's hardly an invincible combatant. What he is, is a man as prone to making things worse for himself through accident as well as intent.

Since the book just came out, I will try to keep this review as spoiler-free as possible. I've read every book in the Dresden series and I feel that Jim Butcher is really starting to come into his own . . . especially in terms of how he handles the world-building/exposition aspects of the story. Ever since the events of "Changes" forced both the writer and his protagonist to stop relying on a variety of metaphorical (and literal) crutches, I've found the series to be re-energized. Personally, I was getting a little tired of stock descriptions of the Blue Beatle and hearing Harry pontificate on the mechanics of lifting an engine block. However, there are still some minor issues with the pacing - I found that "Ghost Story" dragged a bit, while "Cold Days" is more akin to a relentless steamroller of plot developments. This installment reunites Harry with a number of his rag-tag band of allies (although a significant portion of the early chapters are devoted to events that take place in the Nevernever). However, a couple of key reunions are left for future books (hopefully). I am still concerned about the issue of "power creep" as Harry continues to gain access to more and more power, to the point that the Outsiders may be the only remaining threat that has any real weight to it. Granted, the mantel of Winter Knight is borrowed power and Harry makes a point of repeatedly mentioning how outclassed he is by his opponent(s), but I think he doth protest too much. Butcher has repeatedly stated his intention to turn the Dresden Files into a 20-book series, and I have some reservations about his ability to continue to find new and compelling challenges for Harry & company to face.

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