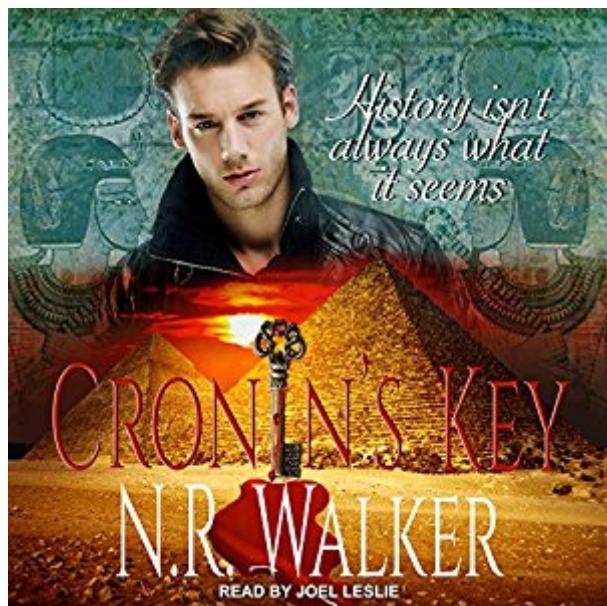


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# Cronin's Key: Cronin's Key Series, Book 1



## Synopsis

NYPD Detective Alec MacAidan has always been good with weird. After all, his life has been a string of the unexplainable. But when an injured man gives him cryptic clues, then turns to dust in front of him, Alec's view on weird is changed forever. Cronin, a vampire Elder, has spent the last 1,000 years waiting for Alec. He'd been told his fated one would be a man wielding a shield, but he didn't expect him to be human, and he certainly didn't expect that shield to be a police badge. Both men, strong-willed and stubborn, are still learning how to cope with the push and pull of being fated, when fate throws them another curveball. Rumors have spread quickly of turmoil in Egypt. Covens are fleeing with news of a vampire who has a talent like no other, hell-bent on unleashing the wrath of Death. Alec and Cronin are thrown into a world of weird Alec cannot imagine. What he learned in school of ancient pharaohs and Egyptian gods was far from the truth. Instead, he finds out firsthand that history isn't always what it seems.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was a bit hesitant about this book at first, because vampires? I haven't read any vampire books in years (my brain just can't cope with anymore... thank you, Hollywood, for ruining my first love with the recent influx of lame-ass vampire romances you've been obsessively making into movies). But three things swayed my heart: the blurb, the cover, and oh yeah, the fact that it's written by N.R. Walker. Let me skip the summary and go straight to what I loved about this: 1. NOT INSTA-LOVE (despite other claims that it is) - that's not what I got from this, even with the whole

Cronin-and-Alec-are-fated-together thing. My definition of insta-love might be different from others, but I always think of it as "don't question the why, we're destined to be together so everything will be all stars and roses from now on." I think maybe Cronin did expect it to be like that, but I loved that Alec took a tiny step back and kinda said, "Whoa, slow down there." They had a few bumps, just like any new couple settling into a new relationship, and despite the "I can't be without you for long because it makes me ill" moments, there were no clingy, whiny meltdowns that I just can't stand. Cronin and Alec are together, yes, because destiny made them so, but they are also separate. I hope to God I'm making sense because I'm half drugged with painkillers. Blame the perco- if this is all coming out incoherent...2. ALEC IS NOT A DUDE IN DISTRESS - he's got the bad vamps after him, all wanting a piece of the key. In other words, he's had his world turned upside down in quite a short amount of time. There was a bit (okay, maybe more than a bit) of info-dumping in the beginning when Cronin and the others were explaining everything to him, and my head would have exploded already if I were him, but Alec took it all in stride. He wasn't content to stay in the background having Cronin coddle him. He took charge. He was smart enough to put the pieces together and was the one who figured it all out in the end. I love intelligent characters.3.

SUPPORTING CAST - besides the villain, everyone else was likeable. No one was just along for the ride. Jodis and Eiji are epic.4. EGYPT - Egypt has a special place in my heart because my aunt is an Egyptologist and I grew up with more knowledge of pyramids, mummies, and mythology than any normal grade-schooler had (I was a geek back then... come to think of it, I probably still am). I remember Wilbur Smith's Ancient Egypt series (River God, Seventh Scroll, etc...) being the books I read when every one of my peers were reading Sweet Valley High in middle-high school. Reading this book made me nostalgic, though I dare say I'll never look at Egypt the same way again. In fact, as my aunt lives there now, I think I may need to warn her about vampire mummies \*wink\*5. SLOW BURN - not a fan of slow burn, usually, but I hate it even more when the characters fall into bed as soon as they lay eyes on each other. Not that there's anything wrong with that, and I've occasionally hunted down books with that kind of thing, but there's a time and place. Last but not least:6. I LOVED IT - isn't that what matters the most? I read a book that I enjoyed. So, thank you, N.R. I'm sure you loved writing this book as much as I loved reading it. I can't wait to for more of Alec and Cronin in the (hopefully not so distant) future.

This is the first book I have read from this author and I am extremely pleased to say it won't be the last. I love the way she weaved these characters and how each one overlaps and entwines with the others to draw in the bigger picture. It was brilliantly crafted and you can tell by the accuracy of

terms and wording, that much time went into research here. I was totally impressed. Not only was I drawn in from the MC's, Alec and Cronin, which were smoking hot from the get go and beautifully dedicated to each other, but it pulls in all sides of family, histories, etc and was just a perfectly written story. I am definitely diving into book two. Kuddo's to the author, woo hoo for the diverse cast of characters, and squee for me being able to find a book like this. I would recommend this to anyone who likes a bit of real life, entangled with paranormal and who throws hands up in the air for all the possibilities in between. And FATE!

I've already read this trilogy twice. It's that good. The characters are all complex and well developed, and the storyline is to die for. Cronin is not as I expected. For a vampire, he's got a good heart, shy streak, and blushes adorably. He's a romantic at heart with a heartbreak past, and has so much love to give. His soulmate, Alec, is a hardened NYPD detective with a photographic memory, and has a knack for having paranormal experiences on duty. The way these two complement each other is just... gorgeous. The storyline with the Egyptian vampires is fast paced and sound, and the romance is hot and lively. I can't wait to read it again.

I didn't know what to expect from a contemporary MM romance author who wrote a paranormal but I was delightfully surprised. You can't go wrong with N.R Walker's work no matter what genre. This book is N.R. Walker's signature style and flow and I absolutely love it. Who knew that a vampire would get mated to a human? Well, apparently it was foretold and the very stubborn and human Alec MacAiden is good with weird. So when a very old and handsome vampire named Cronin makes an appearance in Alec's life, his weird-stuff-o-meter goes through the roof but he can't deny his reaction to Cronin and of course, ends up giving in to him. Forget your history lessons kids, things are about to get strange! When rumors of vampire covens fleeing Egypt reaches Cronin and Alec they are thrown in the midst of a battle that seems so unlikely that it's hard to not believe it. The sexy rating on this book is low but the slow burn is intense and amazing and absolutely perfect for this story.

This M/M vampire novella is pleasant in a general kind of way. Writing is professional, characterization sensible and only a few minor inconsistencies mar an otherwise fluid plot with no cliffhanger, despite the book's being the first in a series of three. The author also tries to add originality to an otherwise well-trodden path by introducing a history-based mystery element. All is well, then? Yes and no. As a quick read, it has no real fault (though I detected a few grammar

mistakes). On closer inspection, the characters do not have their individual voice; humour is not always appropriate for the character mouthing the joke; many pages and situations could have been treated better, expanding them first and making them more poignant. I shall read the other two episodes but I find it hard not to think about a missed opportunity.

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