

## **The Eternal Kiss: 13 Vampire Tales of Blood and Desire**

*Trisha Telep (Editor), Rachel Caine, Cecil Castellucci, Cassandra Clare, Melissa de la Cruz, Karen Mahoney, Maria V. Snyder, Holly Black, more... Kelley Armstrong, Libba Bray, Sarah Rees Brennan, Nancy Holder, Debbie Viguié, Lilith Saintcrow, Dina James ...less*

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There's an allure to vampire tales that have seduced readers for generations. From Bram Stoker to Stephenie Meyer and beyond, vampire stories are here to stay. For those fresh-blooded fans of paranormal romance or for those whose hunt and hunger never dies, these stories have what readers want!

This collection of original tales comes from some of the hottest, most popular, and best-selling YA writers, including:

- Holly Black (The Spiderwick Chronicles, Tithe)
- Libba Bray (A Great and Terrible Beauty)
- Melissa De La Cruz (Blue Blood)
- Cassandra Clare (City of Bones)
- Rachel Caine (Morganville Vampires)
- Nancy Holder & Debbie Vigiúe (Wicked)
- Cecil Castellucci (Boy Proof, Queen of Cool)
- Kelley Armstrong (Women of Otherworld)
- Maria V. Snyder
- Sarah Rees Brennan
- Lili St. Crow
- Karen Mahoney
- Dina James

They will make everyone a sucker for eternal kisses.

## The Eternal Kiss: 13 Vampire Tales of Blood and Desire Details

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Trisha Telep (Editor) , Rachel Caine , Cecil Castellucci , Cassandra Clare , Melissa de la Cruz ,  
Author : Karen Mahoney , Maria V. Snyder , Holly Black , more... Kelley Armstrong , Libba Bray , Sarah Rees Brennan , Nancy Holder , Debbie Vigiúé , Lilith Saintcrow , Dina James ...less

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# From Reader Review **The Eternal Kiss: 13 Vampire Tales of Blood and Desire** for online ebook

## Carolyn F. says

Anthology - vampire stories - YA. I'll give my overall review here. Most of the stories were okay, some a little better than okay some worse than okay. I think this anthology is more geared toward a 15-16 ish reader and I found myself struggling mostly from boredom to finish it. I think my daughter would enjoy it but she's made a pledge to never read anything I've read first. So if I can pretend surprise, "Oh my gosh, this book sure looks interesting honey. I wonder what it's about?" I may get her to read it.

1. **Falling to Ash** by Karen Mahoney. Moth returns to her hometown for her mother's memorial and her master asks her to steal an urn at a vampire hunter's home. She gets caught and escapes. Then there's a scene where her father tells her to never come back that she's not welcome. I felt this story was incomplete. This felt like an outline of a book but was made into a short story. I would read this if it were a full length novel, which I feel the author should attempt.
2. **Shelter Island** by Melissa de la Cruz. Hannah lives on an island that full during the summer but during the winter is practically deserted, which she loves. She notices some strange things going on in the house and then Dylan appears before, a vampire boy, who's running from a vampire that eats his own. I don't know if this is a theme for me at least, but this story was so short which made it a little unsatisfying. But overall, the story was sweet.
3. **Sword Point** by Maria V. Snyder. Ava is accepted at a prestigious fencing school. They teach fencing and **how to kill vampiros!** Kind of a silly story.
4. **The Coldest Girl in Coldtown** by Holly Black. Matilda has been bitten by a vampire while at a party and if she can hold out for 88 days, she can sweat out the infection, but if she bites anyone she'll automatically die and turn into a vampire. She's on her 54th? day and a friend of hers runs into her and tells her that his sister and Matilda's boyfriend Julian have gone into the vampire area of town so that his sister can be turned and Julian has gone because of his girlfriend. Matilda turns herself so she can go find them and bad stuff happens. This was the most satisfying and complete of the short stories so far.
5. **Undead is Very Hot Right Now** by Sarah Rees Brennan. Now this story was the best so far. Funny and sad. Christian is a vampire in a boy band. While walking on the red carpet a girl yells for him as she's being squeezed by the crowd. He only been around for 19 years and was made when he was 18, so he's a little insecure. This was one of the funny things he said. "'You need water! I know this because humans . . . need to drinking water. For living.' He stopped himself from adding, 'this is just one of the many things that I know' and shaming himself further." I was smiling through the whole story. I've never read this author, but will look for her books.
6. **Kat** by Kelley Armstrong. Another good story. Kat is 16 years old and is on the run with Marguerite, who is a vampire. Kat is supernatural but she doesn't know how she's supernatural. Hunters come one night and chase them through town. When they catch Marguerite, Kat tries to exchange herself and is shot by one of the hunters. Now she finds out what type of supernatural she is.
7. **The Thirteenth Step** by Libba Bray. Lauren gets an asst job as a halfway house. One of the neighbors tells her about his cousin and his friend who ran out of their screaming and the cousin was dead, the friend was on

the run. This story was pretty gory and the ending was horrible, in a good for a horrible story way. I don't know if I could read more of her stuff if she has the same stuff happening. Disturbing.

8. All Hallows by Rachel Caine. Eve and the Glass House gang go to the EEK annual Halloween party, but Michael so excited by her outfit he goes vampire and needs to stop at the blood bank first. Well stuff happens to him and Eve, Shane and Claire see if they can help. One of the better of the short stories but that's probably because I know the characters.

9. Wet Teeth by Cecil Castellucci. Miles sees Penny at the park after he feeds and she reminds him of a girl he went to high school with. The next time they meet they start talking and then Miles starts to feel almost human. Sad ending.

10. Other Boys by Cassandra Clare. Jen, Gabbie and Brigitte are cousins going to the same high school. A new kid starts at the school and introduces himself as a vampire. But is he really a vampire? I guessed this one about halfway through.

11. Passing by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie. The world has turned upside down with vampires killing all willy-nilly. Jenn is about to graduate from vampire hunting school but is secretly in love with a vampire named Jack. Antonio her partner knows what's going on. I enjoyed this story.

12. Ambition by Lili St. Crow. The heroine goes to a Catholic school as a scholarship student and has a rich best friend named Gwyneth. Gwyneth sets her up for humiliation at a party and on the way home she meets Johnny, who seems to understand the way she feels so apart from all the "golden people". Even though the story left you wondering about whether she turned good or bad, it was a likable story.

13. All Wounds by Dina James. Becky is a high school student with a grandmother with Alzheimer. She find out when they have a late night visitor that her grandmother is a healer for the ethereals in their part of the world and should have been but hadn't been training Becky. With the help of a vampire master, her grandmother is herself and is able to see that she needs to take care of that. Very cute story.

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## **Izlinda says**

I picked up this book because I've read/heard of several of the authors, and short story anthologies are pretty cool.

"Falling to Ash" by Karen Mahoney - It wasn't as strong as a beginning to the anthology as I would have liked. I did like reading her "About Author" snippet at the end of the book. Yeah, I agree with wanting to be Buffy so you could kiss both Angel and Spike. :-P Though I wouldn't have minded being Tara, either. She's a sweet person and though she got screwed over majorly, she was one of the kinder characters.

"Shelter Island" by Melissa de la Cruz - I have de la Cruz's *Blue Blood* series on my to-read list. Apparently I can learn more about Dylan by reading it. Mmm, more of an incentive, if I remember! This is an interesting take on the vampire world, at least the little look we're allowed.

Sword Point by Maria V. Snyder - I've read 5 of Snyder's books and I really liked her *Study* series. So perhaps I'm biased in liking this story. :-P I like the tie between fencing and vampires. :) Ava's also a really cool name.

"The Coldest Girl in Coldtown" by Holly Black - I've read some of Holly Black's books. Black's story has an interesting premise about how one actually becomes a vampire. The ending was really quite creepy.

"Undead is Very Hot Right Now" by Sarah Rees Brennan - This story has a more sympathetic look at vampires. The idea of using a vampire as a gimmick for the band isn't that original, but I liked seeing Christian's thoughts about it.

"Kat" by Kelly Armstrong - I really like the pecking order of supernatural beings in this story. :D I might be interested in reading more stories set in this world.

"The Thirteenth Step" by Libba Bray - I haven't read any of Bray's books yet, though several of them are on my to-read list. It was pretty obvious what the Angelus House was all about, but Lauren's reaction may or may not be surprising to the reader.

"All Hallows" by Rachel Caine - For some reason, Eve's narration of her Catwoman costume and looking hot in it and such reminded me of Richelle Mead's initial writing of how Rose was thought as so hot because she had boobs. Hmmm. That said, I also found the vampire pecking order and the world in this story really fascinating. It leaves a bit on a cliffhanger so if she continues writing about this world in other anthologies, I'd be interested in picking those up.

"Wet Teeth" by Cecil Castellucci - Ahhh, one of the more heart-breaking stories in this anthology. :'-(

"Other Boys" by Cassandra Clare - This reminded me of Evernight by Claudia Gray. it was an okay story, though not one of the more well-liked. I have several of Cassandra Clare's book on my to-read list. I hope she's a stronger writer for full-length books than short stories.

"Passing" by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie - I've been wary of this particular combination since I thought their other collaboration - *Wicked* series and I've only read the first two books - were appallingly weak and terrifying to read. But this short story stood out to me. For all its "telling-ness" I liked the depth of the characters. I've also read some of Debbie Viguie's books for the *Once Upon a Time* series and while I don't think she's as good as Cameron Dokey, I did like her books.

"Ambition" by Lili St. Crow - One of the more realistic short stories I read about teenage life and interactions. I'm not exactly sure what the ending was suppose to accomplish - revenge? blowing off simmering resentment? - but it was clear what her choice.

"All Wounds" by Dina James - When I finished reading I was going "What?? This seems more like the beginning of a long story! It's also a weak ending for an anthology." Then I read the "About Authors" snippet in the back and found out that the "the story featured in this book is, quite literally, just the beginning." Well, good!

I wouldn't pour hate on this book, nor would I say it's a really really good anthology. Best borrowed for free, or read while in a bookstore.

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## **Kristi says**

Although I own quite a few anthologies, *The Eternal Kiss* was the first I actually read. It was difficult

initially, just being shown this short look into what could be a fantastic story and having it end all too soon. Thankfully by the third short story, I was addicted to these little samples of fang-tastic tales.

I loved the variety of writing styles. There were some authors I was familiar with and some ones I was introduced to. I always enjoy reading new authors and divulging in their literary stylings, so this was an extra treat. I'm surprised I've never thought to read an anthology sooner. I expected to have a one or two stories be really good, and the rest just be mediocre, but all 13 stories were really well balanced.

My favorites were:

Undead is Very Hot Right Now by Sarah Brennan – This was my favorite story in the anthology I have read Sarah Rees Brennan's book *The Demon's Lexicon* (recently released) and found that I really like her writing and her distinct brand humor, and it is really evident in this short story.

Basically this one is about a boy band. Doesn't that sound horrible in itself! But with this band, and every other boy band you have, the "hot" one, the "cool" one, the "nerdy" one. You know what I'm talking about. Well this band had a vampire, Christian, and he is the "gimmick. The story is about him trying to fit in to his new world.

The Thirteenth Step by Libba Bray – This story is more in the "horror" category. A young girl finds a job at a safe house for recovering addicts, reeling from her home experience and her own sisters admittance into rehab. Unfortunately this home has a very distinct thirteen step program.

Passing by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguié – I loved the premise of this one. It's a post apocalyptic world, where vampires are trying to take over. Teens head to Spain to learn how to become vampire hunters. I would love to read more about this one.

Overall a excellent anthology, especially for the legions of vampire fans. Although personally I'd say the theme is more horror than romance.

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## **Gabrielle says**

It was much better than I expected. I don't usually like short stories but there were a few in here that I really like. Unpredictable. Others, not so much. They were still kind of interesting, though.

(Three stars, because, though I did not enjoy all of the stories... I really liked the ones that I did.)

My favorites:

"The Coldest Girl in Coldtown" by Holly Black-- I REALLY want more of this. It was horrid and awesome. I really like how it wasn't fuzzy-bunny vampires. There should be more. Because I want it. Haha!

"Shelter Island" by Melissa de la Cruz-- Oh, man. Once I figured out who he was... Dude. That was sad.

("Undead is Very Hot Right Now" by Sarah Rees Brennan-- It was VERY cliché, but that boy was really cute. I like the author's wit and conversational dialogue. I was laughing out loud at some of the more awkward moments.)

"Wet Teeth" by Cecil Castellucci-- Very sad, but really good.

Yeah.

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## Tasha says

**There are 13 short stories in this book:**

**Falling to Ash by Karen Mahoney** - This is great and definitely made me want to read more of what I felt was a longer story

**Shelter Island by Melissa de la Cruz** - This story is pretty uneventful, much like her other writing the 'Blue Bloods' series, I would skip it

**Sword Point by Maria V. Snyder** - If you don't know anything about fencing, this story will get really boring REALLY fast

**The Coldest Girl in Coldtown by Holly Black** - This story was so awesome I had to go out and buy Holly Black's book **Tithe**, just to see what her longer works are all about

**Undead is Very Hot Right Now by Sarah Rees Brennan** - This is witty and original and makes me want to read some more of Sarah Rees Brennan's stuff

**Kat by Kelley Armstrong** - After reading this great story by Kelley Armstrong, I went out and bought her book **Bitten**, and as a result of reading that as well, Kelley is one of my new favorite authors

**The Thirteenth Step by Libba Bray** - After reading this, I really wanted to read some more by Libba Bray, but I'm not so much for the Victorian era that her current series is set in - Libba this means you need to write a vampire novel!

**All Hallows by Rachel Caine** - Fun with my favorite Morganville residents: Shane, Eve, Claire, and of course Michael. Read this and then read Rachel Caine's Morganville Vampires series for more fun!

**Wet Teeth by Cecil Castellucci** - Awesome interpretation of the human (less thought about) side of being a vampire. Need to find more stuff by this author!

**Other Boys by Cassandra Clare** - Ok, so I know she's had some controversy in the past, but the more of Cassandra Clare's stuff I read, the more I dislike her. This story is very obviously a ripoff of **Twilight** and **Jessica's Guide to Dating on the Dark Side**. Cassandra Clare hasn't been very original so far; I don't know why I expected this to be any different.

**Passing by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie** - This could be the beginning of a really great vampire novel - or the middle, for that matter. After reading this, I went out and bought Nancy Holder's novel **Pretty Little Devils**

**Ambition by Lili St. Crow** - Suspense! Intrigue! Awesome!

**All Wounds by Dina James** - I could see this being the beginning of a great series...Love it!

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## Tina says

I broke down each story ...

All Hollows by Rachel Caine - 3 stars. Eve (POV) and Michael. Good story, but I'm not all that interested in Eve and Michael's story. Now, if it were Shane and Claire, I'd probably have given it more stars. It was a quick glance into life after Bishop. Can't wait for Fade Out.

Other Boys by Cassandra Clare - 4 stars. Jen is highly intrigued by the new boy that introduces himself as a



vampire. She sneaks out of her home, where her strict parents don't allow dating, to be with him. I've read *Mortal Instruments*, I must say, I really enjoy Clare's writing.

*Kat* by Kelley Armstrong - 5 stars. If you like her *Darkest Powers* series (*The Summoning*, *The Awakening*, *The Reckoning*) you'll enjoy this short story. Kat comes from the same world and is a supernatural as well. Although, she hasn't figured out her power yet.

*Undead Is Very Hot Right Now* by Sarah Rees Brennan - 2 stars. I almost didn't finish it. Christian is in a band called *4 The One*. He is undead. He meets a groupie that is only into him because he is a vamp. Blah. It was boring. Nothing really happened that was interesting. I didn't even find the characters interesting.

*Sword Point* by Maria V. Snyder - 4 stars. Ava starts fencing classes at a new school. Not only do they teach fencing but they are vampire slayers/hunters. Very enjoyable! I would love to read more.

*Falling To Ash* by Karen Mahoney - 4 stars. This story follows Moth (Vampire) on a little journey where she unexpectedly meets a young hot vampire hunter.

*Shelter Island* by Melissa De La Cruz - 2 stars. Plot and characters were blah. This story ties into her *Blue Blood* series.

*The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* by Holly Black - 4 stars. Matilda is bitten and starts the change. Better than the *Tithe* series.

*The Thirteenth Step* by Libba Bray - 4 stars. Lauren starts a new job at a creepy rehab. It was good but it did take a little long to get to the creepy part.

*Wet Teeth* by Cecil Castellucci - 3 stars. Miles the vampire becomes fascinated with a human.

*Passing* by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie - 5 stars. It's the beginning of a team of 5 vampire hunters. I want more. I hope this is written into a full book.

*Ambition* by Lili St.Crow - 3 stars. The narrator (name not mentioned) becomes upset with her best friend. Leaves the party and meets a vampire. He offers to change her. The story line was sketchy. The author wanted to create mystery but instead created confusion.

*All Wounds* by Dina James - 4 stars. Becky finds a shocking family secret while taking care of her grandmother. If this is turned into a full length book, I will definitely read it.

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## **Rogue says**

Listen up girls, when a strange boy appears in your room and asks to suck your blood, the answer is not, 'yes,' it's pepper spray and baseball bats!

**PEPPER SPRAY & BASEBALL BATS!!!**

Keep these items near your bed at all times.

First, spray them in the eyes, then, hit 'em where it hurts ;) with the bat!

To make your own 'paranormal proof' pepper spray, ingredients are as follows (works for normal perps and anything 'out of the ordinary'):

cayenne (red pepper)

mace

garlic powder

liquid silver (not mercury, get at your local herbalists)

holy water

mix well, pour into small spray bottles, voila! :D

(patent pending)

P.S.

Do not try this at home. ;)

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## **Jennifer says**

The Eternal Kiss: 12 Vampire Tales of Blood and Desire

Edited by Trisha Telep

Age Range: Young Adult

ISBN-13: 9780762437177

Authors included: Holly Black (The Spiderwick Chronicles, Tithe)

- Libba Bray (A Great and Terrible Beauty)
- Melissa De La Cruz (Blue Blood)
- Cassandra Clare (City of Bones)
- Rachel Caine (Morganville Vampires)
- Nancy Holder & Debbie Viguie (Wicked)
- Cecil Castellucci (Boy Proof, Queen of Cool)
- Kelley Armstrong (Women of Otherworld)
- Maria V. Snyder
- Sarah Rees Brennan
- Lili St. Crow
- Karen Mahoney
- Dina James

My review:

I was skeptical with this book based upon its title and cover. I was worried that something that seemed very sexual (parted lips, tilted neck with the bite marks, no hint of a shirt) would not be appropriate for my students. How could something that looked very much like a romance book be marketed for young adults? After reading it, I don't know where the cover came from. I know that I am not supposed to judge something purely based upon the cover, but this led me to believe something totally different from the books was. The only thing that it managed to get right was that the book is clearly about vampires. In most cases, these stories had nothing to do with romance, even the young adult kind. This leaves me ambivalent about the

story. Some of the stories were really good, but it just didn't seem like they should be in a book with this title and cover. I don't think that is enough for me to say that I didn't enjoy the book, but it was like getting a candy that you expected to be strawberry and it turned out to be apple. It's not bad, but not necessarily good either.

Regardless, this was my favorite story:

My favorite story was the first one "Falling to Ash" by Karen Mahoney. It wasn't too long, but I felt like I actually had a good idea who the characters were. Moth has been called back from her "time off" by her master. We know that she was turned against her will, she is stubborn, a thief, and young. She is told that she needs to break in to a hunter's home and steal an urn. In the process she meets a cute boy that lets her into the building. Little does she know, this cute boy is the son of the famous hunter. How does she get out of this mess? Read and find out. This one was actually pretty good at defining the main characters and pulling off some tension.

This was my least favorite story: (SPOILER ALERT)

My least favorite story was "Ambition" by Lili St. Crow. Admittedly, I can't think of anything that I have read by Lili St. Crow, so it could just be her story, but I feel like I could tell you everything that happened in this story and not give anything away. The scholarship kid at a fancy school is starting to feel like her best friend is pulling away from her. They go to a party and people try to pull a dirty trick on her, so she leaves the party and goes to a club. At the club she meets a guy. This guy is hot and draws her attention. She sneaks out to meet up with him. He bites her and drains her of most of her blood. He then tells her that she has a choice. The author says that he tells her what the choice is, but doesn't share it with the audience. Then the girl goes to her best friend's house for a sleepover. Once everyone is asleep, she lets the boy into the house and goes to the car. That's pretty much the end of the story. Who knows what the choice is, or what happens to the people in the house, or if the boy even comes back to the car. I like stories with some ambiguity, but this is just ridiculous. It's fun to make up your own ending, but you need something to work with in order to do that. This story just doesn't give you enough to work with. You don't know much about the characters, there is nothing that may lead you to any conclusions about what the choice is, or what may happen if he does or does not come back to the car. It's rather ridiculous. I think this is a pure failure of a writing technique to draw an audience in. It makes me feel like she had a limited amount of time to throw something together and didn't have a clear idea of what she wanted to write.

Anyways, the other stories are in the middle. Some of them are better than others. There are some fantastic writer's in this collection, but in most cases this is not the best version of their work. Also, there are some author's that use characters from their novel series. I tend to enjoy this, but if you haven't read anything from them before then you may be lost. Also, most of the stories are more about growing and making choices than connecting with other characters. This should be an important part of the setup of the book, and I think that Telep fails the audience by not doing that. I hesitate to offer a ranking that is set in stone, but I would give it about 3 ½ stars.

It's average.

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**Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

This was a collection of young adult vampire stories with a definite bite. Quite a few of these stories were disturbing, and the resolutions were fitting with the old school vampire--a predator who kills, often just for survival, and sometimes for less justifiable motives. The fact that these stories involved teenagers makes the stories that much more disturbing, for teenage-hood is a harrowing enough experience already without the influence of the undead!

Although one might consider this paranormal romance, I don't. I would consider this more of a horror collection. There are elements of romance, but the focus doesn't veer far away from the sinister aspects of vampires. I think young readers who are looking for a darker type read might enjoy them.

I won't go into great details on the various stories in this review. Instead I will give my ratings and classify the stories based on the ratings. My caveat is that I rate books based on how much the ideas appealed to me, and the execution. It goes without saying that others might view the stories differently. Because the bulk of these stories are unsettling, I can't look for sympathetic characters and particularly happy endings, so I've taken that into consideration.

Four and 1/2 stars:

The Coldest Girl in Coldtown by Holly Black

Shutter Island by Melissa De La Cruz

Undead is Very Hot Right Now by Sarah Rees Brennan (very amusing)

Four stars:

Falling to Ash by Karen Mahoney

Kat by Kelley Armstrong

The Thirteenth Step by Libba Bray

All Hallows by Rachel Caine

Other Boys by Cassandra Clare

Passing by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie'

Ambition by Lili St. Crow

Three Stars

Wet Teeth by Cecil Castellucci

Sword Point by Maria V. Snyder

I've come to the conclusion that writing a short story is much more difficult than writing a full-length novel. It requires the ability to conceive, give birth to, raise, and to launch a mature creation in a very short period of time. Ideas have to be honed to the finest edge so they can penetrate the reader. I felt that some of these authors were more successful than others at having that power of a bringing their short story to life for this reader. All in all, there were no bad stories in this collection, because they all succeeded in giving me the author's vision of vampires in a young adult's world. For that, I respect the authors. But, I admit some stories impressed me a lot more than the others. Having said that, this is worthwhile anthology for most fans of vampire fiction, regardless of age.

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## **Tatiana says**

As always, only read Kelley Armstrong's short story *Kat*. *Kat* - a subject of the experiments performed by the

Edison Group - has been on a run for over 10 years. Now, when the group is closing in, will Kat and her vampire guardian be able to escape once again?

Kat is a great addition to the world of *Dark Powers*. I hope she will be featured in the future books, I'd love to know more about her. Kat makes another appearance in the upcoming anthology *Kisses from Hell* in a story titled *Hunting Kat*.

Kelley Armstrong also has *Kat* posted on her website as a free offering.

<http://www.darkestpowers.com/Kat.pdf>

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## **Lexie says**

For the record, I really don't like the back cover blurb. It wouldn't interest me at all if I wasn't already a fan of most of the authors herein. Stories are reviewed individually as well as an overall comment at the end.

"Falling to Ash" by Karen Mahoney

Moth is a (fairly) new vampire returning home for her mother's memorial service. Unfortunately her sire, Theo needs her to do a job for him that involves reclaiming the ashes of a dead vampire master from a deadly vampire killer. I really liked Moth and her ways of handling the various situations thrown at her. I want to know more about her, read more about her adventures. The only part I wasn't too happy about was the end, after her run-in with Vamp Slayer Jr, when it handles her family. It was rushed and we're not really given a lot of depth to understand why it was as sorrowful as I feel the author was going for.

"Shelter Island" by Melissa de la Cruz

A young girl meets a former resident of her house and the danger that has kept him from leaving. This was short, sweet and entertaining. Hannah is a level-headed girl, not prone to hysterics (thankfully) and the vampire boy she meets and befriends has angst issues, but they're understandable and not annoying. The story flowed easily and didn't seem like it was in a rush. The end came when the end came, but it was a satisfying ending.

"Sword Point" by Maria V. Snyder

Ava dreams of training under the Italian fencing master Bossemi at his illustrious school. She does not, however, dream of vampires ending that ambition before it even begins. This is only my second taste of MVS's writing outside of the Poison Study/Storm Glass world and I found this one to be as engrossing as her others. Ava is a likable character and Jarett is a fairly likable guy (dressed all in black, which is a sure marker for hero designation I sometimes think when reading her stories). You get a real sense of Ava from the story and fair sense of Jarett as well--who they are, their motivations and ambitions. The vampires (vampiros) were gruesome, creepy and totally deserving of their ending.

"The Coldest Girl in Coldtown" by Holly Black

Matilda used to be a normal girl, until she was bitten and made Cold. Now as she fights to keep her humanity by saying perpetually drunk, the friends she left behind may need her help. This was a different look at vampires and vampirism. I liked that you could, in theory, not turn into a vampire if you could hold out from drinking human blood for 88 days. The idea of Coldtown, where the vampires lived and where humans could go and party by bartering their blood for life, was also an interesting concept. While I was rooting for a different outcome to the story, I found the ending to be...poetic. It fit perfectly.

"Undead is Very Hot Right Now" by Sarah Rees Brennan

All Christian wanted to be a rock star--he got his wish, but is being the vampire gimmick of a boy band really what he wanted? Alternatively I think this should have been titled 'I'm not a brooding vampire looking for his soul kthaxbai' This is a snarky, amusing and slightly wistful tale of a guy who just happens to be a vampire that's being exploited by a grasping manager. I felt so bad for Christian, its not that no one understood him, it was more that they thought they understood him better then he understood himself. There are a bunch of really witty one-liners in here and I think that the pamphlet that Christian has memorized needs to be updated since it didn't help him handle an idiot lead singer with idol aspirations, nerdy asthmatic bandmate so very scared of him or a stoner drummer who just does not get anything, ever.

"Kat" by Kelley Armstrong

Kat and her 'Aunt' Marguerite have been on the run from the vampires hunters for two years, but are they after Marguerite the vampire or Kat the unknown supernatural? This loosely ties in with Armstrong's 'Otherworld' books and her young adult series 'The Darkest Powers' (also set in the Otherworld universe). For me this was a win because it fits nicely within The Darkest Powers books (which features the Edison Group's genetic testing on supernatural teens extensively) which I adore to pieces. I don't think I would have guessed Kat's supernatural truth though it does explain quite a bit.

"The Thirteenth Step" by Libba Bray

Lauren takes on an assistant's job at The Angelus House, a Drug Rehab center that has amazing results. But what exactly are those amazing results and how are they achieved? Okay Buffy fans, when you see Angelus it should say something to you right away (whether the author intended it that way or not). Anyhow, meta-analyzing aside, I wasn't sure what to think of this story at first. The vampires here aren't perfect, but they do help people so that's the important thing right? Lauren's choice isn't easy, but from a pragmatic standpoint I think it was the right one.

"All Hallows" by Rachel Caine

One Year after the horrific Dead Girl's Dance Morganville hosts another Halloween dance--but will this one turn out any better for The Glass House crew? The most interesting thing about this story was that it was told from Eve's POV, whereas the books are told from Claire's, and Eve has a distinctly different view of the world. More assured and confident in herself, Eve notices little things and remarks about other things that would otherwise not be mentioned in the series proper. The 'prophecy' that Miranda (the town's resident psycho-seer) says at the end, I'm not sure of the implications, but I'm definitely interested and hope to see how it plays out in the book series soon.

"Wet Teeth" by Cecil Castellucci

Miles has been a vampire for sixty years, but hasn't felt human for a single. When meets Penny he thinks that maybe things can change, and they do, just not how he expected. Sad, sad story. I had hope, because Miles isn't a bad sort, but sometimes happily ever after doesn't exist. I would have liked to know if this Penny was related to the Penny he knew, when he was a human. I fancied she was that Penny's grand daughter and that's why he felt so comfortable with her, but we're not told one way or another.

"Other Boys" by Cassandra Clare

Jennifer wasn't allowed to go out with boys, but when the new kid Colin--a self proclaimed vampire--draws her interest she suddenly finds the determination to be someone different. This was an all right story, though I probably wasn't as surprised as I should have been since a similar plot point is important to one of my favorite young adult vampire trilogies. I was however pleased with Jennifer reaction at the end.

"Passing" by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie

As a young vampire hunter's graduation begins, she reflects on vampires, comrades and the coming battle that could mean her death. This story surprised me in that much of what the narrator was saying, later turns out to be misleading and there are surprises that come at you rapid fire at the end. I've also always been a sucker for those romances that have one of the leads 'against my better judgment...' sort of feelings. I kind of want more of this and would have adored this beyond measure if I had read it as a novel instead of a short story. I'll cross my fingers and hope!

"Ambition" by Lili St. Crow

Told in first person narrative--the charity case at a rich all-girls' Catholic school, a nasty trick by her oldest friend starts her on a path towards a darker tomorrow. The story was a little confusing, because sometimes it would be in in past tense and sometimes it would be in present tense. I related with the narrator strongly and the ending is sort of a 'Lady or a Tiger?' situation leaving it up to the reader to decide if Johnny came back or not and what her reaction was. There was less of a 'vampire' presence in this story than any of the others and the narrator never clarifies if he is or isn't. "I don't know what Johnny is. There's not a word for it." (page 371, US trade paperback), but contextually that's what he seems to be.

"All Wounds" by Dina James

A young girl gets a late night visitor from a classmate in need and learns that some interesting things about herself and her the grandmother she's been taking care of. According to the author blurb this story is the start of a new young adult series the author is working on. GOOD. I really want to see what sort of hijinks Becky gets into as a healer-in-training and what sort of snarky banter her and Sydney engage in. That being said, the story made me tear up because I would give (and do) anything to have had more time with my grandmother when she was cognizant of her surroundings.

I don't think you can rightfully call these romance, or at least not most of them in the Harlequin sense. Certainly some of the stories deal with that sort of romance, but all of them look at vampirism from a romantic standpoint--the mystery, the darkness and power. The allure of the unknown right? Each author took a different view of what it means to receive a vampire's 'kiss' and depicted the consequences thereof.

I honestly enjoyed all of the stories, revisiting some of my favorite series (Morganville and Darkest Powers), reading new fiction from some of my favorite authors (Snyder, Bray, Black and Brennan) and being introduced to new authors (Mahoney, and James) made this anthology a great buy and a recommended read for the post-Twilight crowd.

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## **Arlene says**

### **The Eternal Kiss**

I chose to read a few stories from this anthology because it has a couple of my favorite authors, and to get an sort of entertainment from them, I'm definitely game. I immediately went to Clare and Caine's stories because they are my standout favorites in this group of writers. Overall, they were entertaining, but not quite to the caliber that I know these ladies are capable of. Fun, but I still wanted more.

### **Other Boys by Cassandra Clare**

*3 Stars*

This story definitely felt a bit different from what I'd expect from Clare. I love her Shadow Hunter series, so to read a story on vampires by her was intriguing. It did feel a bit abbreviated and light on some necessary details, but that's expected with a short story... obviously. Collin's fate was an unexpected twist, and I was

left curious about Jennifer's future. Overall, I felt Clare had a good premise going and if she was afforded a few more pages, *Other Boys* could be a fun and captivating read.

### **All Hallows by Rachel Caine**

#### *3.5 Stars*

All Hallows is a great story for all Morganville fans. It's told through Eve's POV, which is always a fresh perspective. In this story, Michael comes to Miranda's aid when she recruits the wrong crowd to help her become a vampire. When things don't go quite as planned, Eve, Claire and Shane come to Michael's aid to help with a messy situation, which is signature style Morganville. I think the thing that caught my attention was Miranda's prediction at the end of the story. We all know not to ignore this little twisted piece of freak because most often she's pretty spot on with her visions. I'm interested to see who will be the victim of her prediction... Excitement!!

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### **Victoria says**

I usually don't enjoy short stories. I find it difficult to relate to characters in such a short amount of time. This anthology was no exception.

\*sigh\*

#### **Individual ratings:**

- *Falling to Ash* by Karen Mahoney — 2 stars.
  - *Shelter Island* by Melissa de la Cruz — 1 star.
  - *Sword Point* by Maria V. Snyder — 3,5 stars
  - *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* by Holly Black — 3,5 stars.
  - *Undead is Very Hot Right Now* by Sarah Rees Brennan — 2,5 stars.
  - *Kat* by Kelley Armstrong — 2 stars.
  - *The Thirteenth Step* by Libba Bray — 3,5 stars.
  - *All Hallows* by Rachel Caine — 3 stars.
  - *Wet Teeth* by Cecil Castellucci — 2,5 stars.
  - *Other Boys* by Cassandra Clare — 3 stars.
  - *Passing* by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie — 2,5 stars.
  - *Ambition* by Lili St. Crow — 2,5 stars.
  - *All Wounds* by Dina James — 2 stars.
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### **Margot says**

#### **Rating: 3.5 stars**

I have several anthologies on my TR list but I rarely get to read them... Still, they're a great way to discover new authors I like!

That's what happened with Kelley Armstrong, whose first story I ever read -- *Hunting Kat* -- was published on *Kisses from Hell*. After reading -- and loving -- it, I got curious as to the rest (or rather, the beginning) of



the story, which brought me to read "Kat" (published on *Eternal Kiss*), and also the *Darkest Powers* trilogy, and other short stories related to it. I simply became a fan of Kelley's writing. ;) I'm hoping she publishes a series about Kat and Marguerite, it'd be very cool.

So, my favorite short stories from this anthology are "Kat", obviously, and also *Sword Point* by Maria V. Snyder, whose *Study* trilogy I plan on reading soon, as well.

"Undead is very hot right now" was another story that got my attention, it was very cute and well-written; Sarah Rees Brennan did a great job. Would love to read more into Christian's story someday.

And... I just learned that Karen Mahoney is gonna publish "Falling to Ash" as a complete book! Yay! That's another short I really, really liked, and I'm totally dying to know how Moth and Jace's story turns out. :)

### List of short stories featured

*Falling to Ash* by Karen Mahoney - 4.5 stars

*Shelter Island* by Melissa de la Cruz - 3 stars

*Sword Point* by Maria V. Snyder - 5 stars

*The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* by Holly Black - 3.5 stars

*Undead is Very Hot Right Now* by Sarah Rees Brennan - 4.25 stars

*Kat* by Kelley Armstrong - 5 stars

*The Thirteen Step* by Libba Bray - 2.5 stars

*All Hollows* by Rachel Caine - *didn't read it (view spoiler)*

*Wet Teeth* by Cecil Castellucci - 1.5 stars

*Other Boys* by Cassandra Clare - 2.5 stars

*Passing* by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguié - 4 stars

*Ambition* by Lili St. Crow - 2.5 stars

*All Wounds* by Dina James - 4 stars

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### Christina says

Probably more of a 2.5, but I'll give it a three because I'm nice like that. I reviewed each story as I read them. You might be able to pick up when I got fed up with vampires.

*Falling to Ash* by Karen Mahoney: Moth has returned home for her mother's memorial service. Her sire, Theo, decides to take advantage of the situation and send her on a little mission. Action packed and an easy page turner, but the drive behind her family's beliefs did not feel real at all. Added detail that probably could have been left out of such a short story (unless it fit into a series I don't know about).

*Shelter Island* by Melissa de la Cruz: Childish. A ghost story for 10year olds, if that. Hannah is awoken at 3am each night by the lights flicking on and off and a door banging. One night, she finds a boy in her room - a vampire - who claims he lives there. The revelation at the end isn't very exciting, either.

*Sword Point* by Maria V. Snyder: Ava has been invited to an exclusive training academy for fencing, karate and the like. She tries hard to fit in, but after a mishap at the bus stop with a karate trainer, she starts to notice

strange things about the Academy, like a room filled with wooden weapons. I liked this one, and the ending made me laugh (even if it was a bit quick to my liking). I would have liked to have read more.

*The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* by Holly Black: A definite favourite. Matilda has been bitten by a vampire, but unlike the norm, it takes 88 days for the infection to pass. If in those 88 days she drinks blood, she will officially become a vampire. Trying to hold out for those 88 days, Matilda attempts to stay drunk so she's not tempted to bite anyone, but a friend comes asking for help that ends her 88-day countdown: his sister and Matilda's boyfriend, Julian, are looking for entry into Coldtown so they, too, can become vampires. I liked the basis of Vampires, and the world Holly has created is definitely interesting (although the name, Coldtown, irritated me.) The final twist sent shivers down my spine. I'd definitely pick it up in novel-form.

*Undead is Very Hot Right Now* by Sarah Rees Brennan: Christian is part of a band, 4 The One, and hates his bandmates, his manager, and the fact that he's forced to play the 'stereotypical' vampire role. On the eve of their first concert, he meets a girl who he thinks will love him for him, rather than because he's a famous vampire. I think I would describe this one as a bit of a vampire parody. At first, I thought it was just stupid, and then realised that so much of it was mocking the essence of vampires. Faye, the band manager, is probably the best character; she's HILARIOUS. Eg, she sews Christian's cape to his sleeve so that when lifting his arm, he'll do 'that vampire thing'. Hilarious.

*Kat* by Kelley Armstrong: The main reason I bought this book. I absolutely adore Kelley Armstrong. This time round, Kelley's leading lady, Kat, is a teenage girl on the run with her vampire foster mum, Marguerite. What I enjoyed about this was how it tied in with her Supernatural world, in particular to the Darkest Powers series. Also proof that you don't need a cute boy involved to make a vampire story interesting.

*The Thirteenth Step* by Libba Bray: ARGH. This story was fast becoming a favourite, but half of it is missing! Pages 193 to 208 were repeated, and then all pages up to 225 aren't there. Terribly frustrating. Set in NYC, Lauren takes up a job as an assistant in Angelus House, a safe house for troubled teens and addicts. It has a bunch of awesome characters (including sexy Johannes), fast paced narrative and an intricate plot, considering the length. Definitely what a short story should be (well... excluding the missing pages).

*All Hallows* by Rachel Caine: It's Halloween. Time to dress up as Catwoman, go partying, and then rescue your vampire boyfriend from a bunch of jocks. Predictable. (I did love Shane though. He cracked me up.)

*Wet Teeth* by Cecil Castellucci: While hunting one night, Miles meets a girl who soon becomes an obsession for him, making him feel more alive than he's ever felt since becoming a vampire. This story: epic. I was gagging on the first page from his description of skin and veins stuck in his teeth, and yet the story still manages to feel beautiful. I LOVED the end.

*Other Boys* by Cassandra Clare: Jen picks up a sudden fascination with vampires when the new boy at school, Colin, claims to be one. Her strict parents won't allow her to date, so she takes the matter into her own hands... i.e. sneaking out with Colin at night. Also predictable.

*Passing* by Nancy Holder and Debbie Viguie: Vampire hunter academy. It's the day of the final exam, and only one student can graduate. To put it bluntly, I was bored. I don't know if this is because I'm getting bored of all these vampire stories, or if it was just *boring*. It felt unoriginal (Sorry, vampire academies are not original. Neither is falling in love with the enemy. Neither is the "good vampire". There were a lot of things I didn't like, clearly) and I ended up skipping pages.

*Ambition* by Lili St. Crow: This one... confused me. The narrator (was her name ever mentioned?) is an

outsider at her prestigious Catholic school, and apart from her best friend Gwyneth, she's never gotten along with anyone. After a practical joke at a party, the narrator goes to an all-age club and meets Johnny. Vampire Johnny. Now, that didn't confuse me. But when he asked Mystery Girl if she wanted to be turned, he gave her conditions - which we're not told - which made absolutely NO sense. I'm trying not to spoil here, but if anyone who reads this has a vague idea about the ending, I want to know your opinion on what happened!

*All Wounds* by Dina James: At 9pm, Becky receives a mysterious visitor banging on her front door, demanding to be let in. Not only is he carrying a wounded classmate in his arms, but Becky's Nana seems to know who he is, and *what*. First of all, Mary Sue all over the place. Second of all, I'm sick of being introduced to vampires. Haha. Can you tell I'm over this anthology?

*Overall...*

So many vampire stories in so little time. If it didn't start as a burnt novelty, it certainly ended that way.

Don't get me wrong. I enjoyed some of the stories, generally the stories where vampires already existed and the whole "OMG, VAMPIRES ARE REAL??" conversation didn't take place... yet again.

Considering I picked this up having only read Kelley Armstrong's books, I'd like to think some authors I've previously avoided have now been brought to my attention (Holly Black, Libba Bray). More importantly, I know which ones to definitely avoid.

I'm disappointed Richelle Mead wasn't asked to participate in this anthology, though. It would have made it all the better.

So, is it worth reading? Yes, if you're looking for some vamp stories to pass the time, or if you'd like to explore a variety of supernatural worlds.

If you're expecting anything of substantial depth, mindblowing adventure, or whirlwind romance... don't bother.

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