



WARRIOR: a collection of short stories

Antonica Jones (Editor) , Claudie Arseneault , Kayla Bashe , Natalie Cannon , Tyler Gates , Kelly Matsuura , Tash McAdam , Kirstie Olley , more... Helle Reiersen , Lewis Bright Rees , Abigail Rosenhart , B.R. Sanders , E.H. Timms ...less

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A werewolf fighting for her humanity.

A gladiator fighting for love.

A blind mage, a human sacrifice and a big, buff fairy, all fighting off demons to save the world.

Twelve writers. Twelve worlds. Twelve warriors.

WARRIOR is an anthology of twelve exciting science-fiction and fantasy short stories, bursting with unstoppable characters that happen to identify within the LGBTQIA spectrum.

WARRIOR: a collection of short stories Details

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Author : Antonica Jones (Editor) , Claudie Arseneault , Kayla Bashe , Natalie Cannon , Tyler Gates , Kelly Matsuura , Tash McAdam , Kirstie Olley , more... Helle Reiersen , Lewis Bright Rees , Abigail Rosenhart , B.R. Sanders , E.H. Timms ...less

Format : Paperback 230 pages

Genre : Lgbt, Short Stories, Fantasy, Anthologies, Glbt, Queer, Young Adult

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From Reader Review **WARRIOR: a collection of short stories for online ebook**

Mona says

You can't even imagine for how long I wanted to read this book.

I funded the Kickstarter campaign and without really realizing it, I put this book aside, like many others.

This is a SFF anthology featuring heroes who identify within the LGTQIAP+ spectrum and I'm pretty sure most of them are #ownvoices? But I'm really not sure for that...

Before talking about the stories, I really liked that they listed all the trigger warnings for each stories.

Unfortunately it isn't done enough even though it can really help some readers.

This book features twelve stories and I have to say that I really liked all of them! It was quite diverse, there's a story featuring an aro ace character, another one feature an intersex main character and most of the characters are poc.... We also have some disabled main characters with mostly physical disabilities.

Of course, I do have some favourite stories! Just like I said before, I really liked all of the stories but some of them stuck more with me than others, so here's a short list!

★ *Metal Mermaid* by Kelly Matsuura

★ *Glass Bones* by Kirstie Olley

★ *Nothing Good to Say* by E. H. Timms

★ *From Dust 'til Dawn* by Helle Reiersen

And my absolute favourite was *Sole Survivor* by Lewis Bright Rees!

Natalie Cannon says

As one of the authors, I'm biased towards this book from the start. However, this was also the first time I was able to read the other contributors' works.

And I am deeply honored.

From the beginning with Tash McAdam's ring fighter to Helle Reiersen's Daughter of the Night, every story knocked me right out my usual headspace into a new, starry universe of (blood-drenched) possibility. My heart ached and sang and tore. I reveled in each character's triumph. Each author brought their big guns to the page, wow-ing me at every plot twist and delighting me with their complex, diverse characters. Is it too late for me to learn knife-throwing? I want to learn knife-throwing after this book, since fairy portal closing and battle mage-fighting are a bit beyond me.

So in summary: I laughed, I cried, I want to learn a new skill, and I can't believe my little running werewolf snuck into this phantasmic anthology, among all these fantastic, brilliant, & splendid authors. Thank you for writing and keeping on writing when the going got tough. Thank you to Nica and Amelia, to all the Kickstarter backers, and to everyone who made this anthology possible. Keep fighting and keep writing.

Alexa says

average rating: 3.8 stars

This is a collection of stories with queer protagonists. In most stories about queer people, I am used to reading romances, so it was nice to read a collection with queer protagonists where many of the stories have no romance at all, and even in the others, it's usually not the focus.

Overall, there weren't any stories that I really hated, but there were several that just didn't really grab my attention. I kind of want to rate this 3 stars but I added up my ratings and the average was 3.8 so...

the seeing hands of captain zerach by kayla bashe: 4.5 stars. This one is about an older sapphic protagonist who is recently blind and has to learn to adjust to her disability.

things we'll never know by b.r. sanders: 5 stars. This is a story about aliens, but also about humanity. Poor/non-white people can't trust aliens because white people fucked them over, and rich/white people can't trust aliens because they fucked people over and think the aliens will do the same to them.

glass bones by kirstie olley: 4.5 stars. Fantasy girl and her disabled brother end up visiting our modern world. Also, she's in love with the Lake Maiden. I don't want to spoil the ending, but I'm glad she made the right choice.

unnecessary risks by abigail rosenhart: 5 stars. Honestly? Best story. Never saw that twist coming.

nothing good to say by e.h. timms: 4.5 stars. Aroace warrior saves kids. Neat.

these bodies are battlefields by tash mcadam: 3 stars

sole survivor by lewis bright rees: 3 stars

seida the fairy-troll by claudie arseneault: 3.5 stars

colossus of epheus by tyler gates: 2.5 stars

the metal mermaid by kelly matsuuru: 3.5 stars

howl by natalie cannon: 3 stars

from dust 'til dawn by helle reiersen: 3 stars

Hillary says

This anthology has something for everyone, from urban fantasy (yay, Natalie!) to historical fiction to high fantasy to science fiction. And unusually for an anthology, there wasn't a single story I didn't like. Everything was crisp, polished, and featured at least one LGBT+ character, though sexuality was never the focus of any of the stories. There were also two asexual characters, a genderfluid character (yay again, Natalie!), and a trans character - all from parts of the LGBT+ spectrum that don't typically get much representation. READ THIS BOOK!

Katie West says

This book was a Kickstarter project I backed and I just finished reading it. I loved it. As with any collection,

some stories stood out more than others (my favourite was BR Sanders' Things We'll Never Know) but there wasn't one I didn't like. Oh! Best part of this book? Every story features heroes who identify within the LGBTQIA spectrum. I think I underestimated how delightful that would be to read. It also came with trigger warnings for each individual story. It also reminded me that my favourite genre is by far YA sci-fi/fantasy. ?

Em says

Short stories are really not my thing, but I'm glad my Long Distance College Buddies Discuss Queer Books Club chose it. "Howl" and "Things We'll Never Know" were my favorites. "Howl" was lyrical and beautiful and "Things We'll Never Know" was a perfect science fiction commentary on reality without being obvious or boring about it. Some of the representation (especially of ace and ace spectrum characters) felt more like tokenization but all in all, solid.

Book Riot Read Harder 2017 Challenge: 21: Read a book published by a micropress.

(I'm having a hard time getting a concrete definition of "micropress" but per Ink and Locket Press's website they are "not-for-profit, and run mostly on volunteered hours, donations and caffeine" in addition to being small and independent, so I'm counting it.)

Rachel (Rustling Reads) says

First of all, I completely love the story-by-story trigger warnings listed in the front of the collection. These stories do deal with dark themes, and it creates a sense of trust in the collection as a whole right from the beginning, that it will never present you with anything more than you can handle. I'm going to do a brief-ish review of each story, because they're all great and I need to tell you why. I've included the LGBTQIA+ specifics of character identity where I know them.

These Bodies are Battlefields by Tash McAdam – queer romance, genderqueer/non-binary pit fighter and their admirer freeing each other from danger and abuse. This was such a gorgeous way to start this collection, and it's probably one of my favourite stories overall. There are so many beautiful lines in it that I actually had to pause and just let the whole thing sink in. It's about defending yourself and others, to not be ashamed of needing help, or having survived trauma. But I think on a deeper level it's about the difference between surviving and living. Alone, our protagonist is surviving, and with great strength. But together, defending one another, they have the space to actually live, and live joyfully. This is only the beginning, the moment they find one another, but I would absolutely read more about these two.

Sole Survivor by Lewis Bright Rees – m/m, though they've been separated by the zombie apocalypse. The 'zombies' are actually terrifying. I'm honestly still scared of walking around the house at night in case of Smilers. Until I worked out who everyone was, the flashbacks were a little confusing, but this story is in the best tradition of zombie apocalypses, with that yearning for safety, and for the people who mean safety to you.

The Seeing Hands of Captain Zerach by Kayla Bashe – blind lesbian mage captain copes with her recent

disability, and realises that, in the battle they're fighting, blindness might actually be an advantage. It's a beautiful story. Zerach has lost the love of her life and her sight, but she refuses to let others cast her aside. Her blindness will always be a difficulty, but the people around her will not be allowed to forget her skill, and her dedication to winning this fight. Most of the story is away from the battlefield, so there's space to really feel the depths of these characters.

Seida the Fairy-Troll by Claudie Arseneault – the big, buff fairy in the summary above. She likes girls, but the one she has a crush on asserts that she's asexual, and maybe aromantic. Seida was injured in a childhood mistake and is now ignored by most of the fairies because she has no wings. But when the portal to Hell begins to rip open, only Seida can save the Great Tree, and everyone who lives there. Seida already knows that she's great, which means that she's really good fun to read. But it's time that everyone else realised that she's great too.

Colossus of Ephesus by Tyler Gates – m/m gladiators. This one's probably one of the sadder ones, but it's also as literal as you can get in fighting for your love. Helios is just trying to do his best, to live as long as he can. But the gladiator's life was never going to be easy in that regard, and everything he loves and lives for is on the line.

The Metal Mermaid by Kelly Matsuura – lesbian cyborg soldier fights for her friends, for her betrayers, and for her skill and experience to be recognised. I think this was one of the worlds I enjoyed reading the most, and there seem to be some much bigger stories at play here. Reiko has been saved by so many metal parts that by now she's mostly machine. And that comes in handy on the battlefield, such as when a valuable enemy weapons drop appears to be unguarded on the other side of the river. A river which is deep, and cold, and full of flesh-eating alien monsters. I loved this one, especially when Reiko realises that even though everything doesn't always go her way, she maybe has more friends than she thought.

Howl by Natalie Cannon – werewolves, and not the cute kind. This kind of infection takes your humanity, no matter how hard you try to control it. But when Heather is bitten, there is one thing that might be strong enough to remind her who she really is. Heather has an ex-girlfriend, and her housemate (boyfriend?) uses male pronouns but seems genderqueer in some way. It's a desperate story of clinging to what really makes you human, and it has this very tangible tension about it which is completely great.

Things We'll Never Know by B R Sanders – black MCs, Aunt Cam is trans. Story of an alien invasion that went very differently to how you'd expect. It's probably one of the more accurate ideas of how aliens would react to us, and it's bedded in some very strong family relationships. It's funny, but it's also full of sadness and fear, and an unresolved ending – because there is definitely more to this than is on the page.

Glass Bones by Kirstie Olley – a completely wonderful mash-up of so much fairy tale tradition, and also magic rings to other-world portals, and at least two gay couples (f/f, m/m). Predictably, given the fairy tale content, this was one of my faves. Mizzy's brother is cursed with glass bones, and she's determined to find him a cure. But she might have to sacrifice one person she loves to save the other... Be still, my beating heart. This was so much fun to read.

Unnecessary Risks by Abigail Rosenhart – bisexual MC, an old warrior lady sets the story straight. She's dying, and she demands that this retired scribe copies down the truth of all the tales people tell about her. This is a great way to tell a long story in a short space of time – and it's unlikely that the legends of Mathilda, the Braided Menace, will die with her – especially given the way she imparts them. There's such emotion and passion in this story, it's incredible.

Nothing Good to Say by E H Timms – aroace, cursed warrior knows that the fort can't fend off the approaching raiders – especially since the guildmaster refuses to believe him about the seriousness of the threat. But Cuss is not in the habit of letting innocents die. Through some skilful narrative to-ing and fro-ing, we learn stories from his life. This man has never been interested in relationships, of any kind. But there's a child in every town who wouldn't be alive if it weren't for him. Honestly, this one broke my heart. It's especially precious to me because of the ace rep, of course, but the writing is so strong that I don't think anyone could be unaffected by it.

From Dust 'Til Dawn by Hellie Reiersen – a human sacrifice is led across the sands towards her death. At least, that's the plan. The Daughters have chosen her because she's trans, but she's going to prove them all wrong. There's a lot going on here, and it's going to take me a second read to work out exactly what happened at the end there, but I absolutely will read it again.

There is not a single weak link in this collection. As promised, twelve warriors, and each one is distinct, strong in different ways and fighting for different causes. Their orientations and identities are not at the forefront of many of the stories, but they matter. If you're struggling to feel like you belong in stories because of your orientation or gender identity, you should be able to find something for you here. I'm obviously biased to favour the aroace representation, but I connected with so many of these stories. It's a glorious showcasing of the sheer strength and talent of these writers, and their passion to tell stories which belong to everyone – but, more importantly, stories which represent those who find themselves excluded from mainstream narratives. Honestly, I'd give this six stars if I could.

This review was originally published at <https://rustlingreads.wordpress.com/2...>

Antonica says

(from the editor) We're so excited to share this book with the world!

WARRIOR brings together twelve exciting sci-fi and fantasy stories featuring unstoppable LGBTQIA protagonists. Here, you'll find gladiators, werewolves, legends, human sacrifices and mermaids (of a sort), fighting for love, honour, family, truth and life.

This anthology was successfully funded on Kickstarter in December 2016. Check the Ink & Locket Press website to find out when it's available for general preorder.

Louise says

Warrior is a great little anthology and it suits my tastes perfectly. Within the twelve stories included, it covers a wide variety of SFF sub-genres and tropes and features representation for a good number of LGBTQIA+ identities.

I'm not great at reviewing short story collections so I thought I'd break things down a little. In fantasy, identities are often implied without using terminology (so that e.g. it can be hard to tell if a character is bi- or

pansexual) but for my count, we cover gay, lesbian, bi/pansexual, trans, intersex and aroace protagonists. Pretty impressive.

There was no story that I disliked, and even the ones that aren't really my genre were interesting and well-written. My particular favourites were *These Bodies are Battlefields* by Tash McAdam, *Glass Bones* by Kirstie Olley and *The Metal Mermaid* by Kelly Matsuursa.

One of the things I really liked aside from the stories themselves was that there's a short trigger warning page after the contents. It flags things like war, implied sexual assault etc. but (and it bugs me so much when people complain about warnings for this reason) it doesn't give away anything about the stories

Mel says

Here's the KICKSTARTER for this cool project of LGBT SFF short stories...
