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What happens when "the happiest day of your life" turns into a nightmare? Forget the drunken best man or the bridesmaid dresses from the '80s . . . none of these wedding day disasters can compare to a cursed bride determined to make it down the aisle, or a vampire who is about to disrupt your wedding.

Weddings from Hell Details

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willaful says

Enjoyable paranormal romance short stories. I skipped the last story, a historical. Jeaniene Frost's story is only loosely connected to her series and can stand alone. I haven't read any of the other "Nicki Styx" books and it stood alone okay too.

Heather says

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I really thought I had read this anthology before, but I guess I just read the JF story. The rest were ok but not really memorable.

L-D says

"Happily Never After" by Jeaniene Frost: In this short, Elise is a vampire who lives in seclusion in NYC. She comes across Blake, a man who is possessed by a demon. She is able to stop him from killing and although he asks her to kill him so he stops hurting people, she decides to help him instead. Mencheres, her sire, Cat & Bones make appearances in this short. It was an interesting story and I liked Blake and Elise. 3.5 stars.

Robin Reynolds / October Woman says

TILL DEATH, by Maggie Shayne

This is my first time reading Maggie Shayne, though a quick count shows I have around 12 other books in my TBR by her, although half of those seem to be omnibuses with other authors.

When Kira was seven her mother died in a freak accident, and her father took his own life not long after. Now, eighteen years later, Kira receives a call from Scotland, advising her that a relative has died and she needs to come to Scotland for the reading of the will. There she meets her mother's family for the first time – several assorted, unmarried aunts – and learns of a curse placed on the family line – that MacLellan women are always killed at the hands of their husband. She also meets Ian, one of her family's solicitors, who she is instantly attracted to. A short novella but with so much packed into those 91 pages. I really enjoyed it and obviously need to read more of Ms. Shayne.

HAPPILY NEVER AFTER, by Jeaniene Frost

This story is the reason I bought the book. I love Ms. Frost's Night Huntress series, so I was looking forward

to this story set in that universe. It's been awhile since I finished the Cat and Bones books, but I think Chance and Isabella, the hero and heroine of HAPPILY NEVER AFTER, had made an appearance in one of the books. I vaguely remember their names.

Isa is engaged to the local mob boss, Robert Bertini. Or at least Robert thinks she is. Isa's brother, Frazier, has disappeared, after begging Isa to go along with the engagement for the time being. So while she can't stand Robert, she's pretending to be love struck. Meanwhile, Isa's grandmother, Greta, knows something's up, but doesn't know what. So she contacts her old friend, Bones, a vampire, and ask him for help finding Frazier. Bones passes the assignment on to another vampire, Chance. I liked Isa, and I liked Chance. He's no Bones, but then who is? I enjoyed the story, and for readers who've not yet been introduced to the Night Huntress series, it's a good peek at what kind of vampires inhabit that universe. But it didn't quite grab me the way the Cat and Bones books did.

GHOUL'S NIGHT OUT, by Terri Garey

This story just blew the others right out of my head. I'm very anal about reading series books in order, and I had looked up each story ahead of time, but somehow I missed the fact that this story was part of a series. Otherwise, I would not have read it until I found the rest of the Nicki Styx books and had read them in order up to where this one comes in (number 2.5 per Goodreads). But I am really glad I read it because I loved it. I loved Nicki. I loved the idea of her seeing spirits and reluctantly helping them with whatever they need help with before they can go into the light, ala Jennifer Love Hewett in "Ghost Whisperer", which I just happen to be streaming on Netflix.

In this story, Nicki's cousin Debbie has asked her to be a last minute bridesmaid in her wedding. Nicki doesn't want to, especially after seeing the hideous dress she must wear, but she knows her late mother would expect her to. While at a fitting for the dress, Michelle walks in and demands to know why Nicki is wearing her dress. Turns out Michelle was supposed to be the bridesmaid, but after a fight with Debbie she stormed off and was never heard or seen from again. Nobody realizes that she's dead, including herself.

I loved Nicki, and her interactions with Michelle. I loved the way Michelle's appearance changed depending on her mood or what she remembered. We also meet Nicki's boyfriend Joe, and while he didn't actually appear until halfway into the story, I loved him.

I started drifting away from paranormal romance because I got burned out on vampires, but ghosts still fascinate me, and I am very eager now to find the rest of the Nicki Styx books.

I did not read the fourth story in the book, THE WEDDING KNIGHT, by Kathryn Smith, because I know it's part of her Brotherhood of the Blood series, and I have the first three books already, so I plan to come back to this book and read THE WEDDING KNIGHT when I reach that point in the series. I know, I know, when these stories appear in these omnibuses like this they're supposed to work as standalones, but still.

Review first posted on my blog.

Holly says

Til Death by Maggie Shayne. My first book by Maggie Shayne and I really liked it. It was sexy, very interesting and very well written. I forgot I was reading a 'short story'. Normally I hate scary stories and

while this wasn't 'scary' it still gave me a few tingles and jingles up and down my spine. Loved it! 5 stars!

Happily Never After by Jeaniene Frost. I liked it. Maybe I was let down by it because of the three stories I read in the Weddings From Hell anthology, I thought J. Frost's was the weakest. Chance was a hot vampire and Isa wasn't bad. She wasn't great, but she wasn't bad and the mobster cliches were funny. 3.5 stars

Ghoul's Night Out by Terri Garey. This was my first story by Terri Garey although I've heard of her and put her books down on my wish list before. Now I need to hurry up and actually start reading her because Nicki Styx was a great character and her boyfriend Joe is really sexy. Plus the story was really good. Kind of like The Ghost Whisperer. 4.5 stars

I didn't read Kathryn Smith's story.

Tara says

Till Death by Maggie Shayne

3/7/10- Ok this is the 3rd Maggie Shayne story I've read. Her stories seem to deal with humans that are either psychics or witches. The H/H couple are pretty much strangers and then they have sex and no one even pauses to consider a condom. They aren't sexy but in this day & age, they are a reality unless you are having sex with a vampire or were wolf or something otherwise paranormal. Ok, that rant is over.

Kira MacLellan is a young girl when her she watches her mother, a woman who fled Scotland to marry, die. Her dying words seem to accuse her father of doing something to cause it. She also speaks of a family curse. Her father kills himself shortly thereafter, without explaining the curse. Years later she gets a call from a Scottish lawyer, Ian Stewart, saying her aunt has died and that she needs to come to Scotland for the reading of the will. She meets her spinster aunts, and Ian Stewart. (Ok, I went to college with a guy named Ian Stewart and while he was a lovely person, he was the romance hero of my dreams, so it was difficult to read this story and try to picture the hottie the described and then read his name- but that was my own problem.) Turns out that an ancestor has cursed all the woman to die by their husbands hands if he cheats. And now it becomes Kira & Ian's problem to deal either break the curse or continue it.

Ok, the problem with this story is the premise was really weak. Add to that there seemed to imply that there was something more to the curse, but it didn't really turn out to be anything. And the ending was very anticlimactic not to mention, lame. 2 stars.

Happily Never After by Jeaniene Frost

3/5/10- A Jeaniene Frost story is always welcomed. In this short story a former member of Bones' family calls to ask a favor and I believe he is trying to find Cat at the moment, so he sends in Chance. Chance is a vampire and was sired by Bones. Isabella is a restaurant owner in Philly. The local wanna be mob boss has decided that she will make the perfect Italian wife, so he kidnaps her brother so ensure her compliance. Enter Chance. He is there to help stop the wedding and find her brother. It's a cute story. The grandmother is feisty and the love scene is hot. 3 stars

Ghouls Night Out by Terri Garey

3/6/10- Here's the thing about Terri Garey. When all is said and done I like the story, I just always feel like her stories go on a little too long. And they always feel a little weird. I guess she's more UF than pnr, but they don't really feel uf either. It's like they are paranormal chick-lit mysteries. Is that a thing? ANYWAY, This is another story in the Nicki Styx universe. We see her hot doctor boyfriend and her bff Evan and even

Evan's boyfriend Butch. But this time the story centers on Nicki's cousin. She's getting married and her best friend, Michelle, drops out of the wedding at the last minute and Nicki is called to replace her. Unfortunately Michelle is actually dead and no one knows it yet. And since only Nicki Styx can see dead people... well, you guessed it she has to help Michelle walk into the light. I think there was an odd sort of story line questioning her cousin's decision to marry her fiance, Dale, that was left dangling. I'm not sure if it was meant to make Dale a suspect or to cast questionable aspersions on Michelle character but it ended up feeling like the an abandoned plot-line. 2.5 stars

The Wedding Knight by Kathryn Smith

I've never read anything by Kathryn Smith before. The actual premise for the story was a little underused. It seemed like it was too big of a premise for a short story so when it got truncated the conflict seemed silly. But other than that it was an okay story and for an 86 page story, there was a lot of steamy sex in it. It also helped that the characters had a previous relationship. Violet Wynston-Jones fell in love with Payen Carr, a templar vampire chosen to protect the blood grail, when she was 16. When she was 19 she gave her body and heart to him which he accepted and then he left, so save his heart and his vows. Now it's 1879 and she is 24 and about to get married. Payen is passing through a nearby town and hears of her engagement and sees who she marrying and knows he has to stop her for her own safety. But by stopping the wedding it is revealed that Violet is "unpure", now she is a ruined woman. Not to mention her fiance has now figured out what Payen is, besides the man that stole his fiance. It's up to Payen to save Violets reputation, keep his vows to the templar and save his own heart.

Like I said there was a lot going on in such a short story. It seems that it was a rush to get all the information necessary out there and then there was a lot left unused. I wonder if there is a full length book about these folks. I may have to check it out. I know, me who doesn't like historical type books. I think that's why I liked this story though. Even though it was set in 1879, it feels very contemporary which might make her unpopular for historical purists, but it suits me just fine! 3.5 stars

PS- I just checked, this is the prequel to a series, and I'm absolutely going to check out the series!

Marcy Jo says

Jeaniene's story was hands down the best, and that isn't just because of the cameo by Bones. (uh, how long do we have to wait for At Grave's End again? Crap. Too long.)

All the stories were entertaining, though, and I find myself wanting to hunt up some other works by TG.

Generally speaking, I prefer novels to short stories, since I really like to dig in deep with the characters, but these were well worth a read!

Mary (BookHounds) says

I swore I wouldn't read any more anthologies since I am usually disappointed with a couple of the stories in each one, but this one had strong, stand-alone novellas. I don't think anyone will be disappointed with anything here. I especially enjoyed Terri Garey's story about Nicki.

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

My favorites in this collection were the Maggie Shayne and Kathryn Smith stories. The Jeaniene Frost story wasn't bad, and the Terri Garey story was decent.

"Till Death" by Maggie Shayne

I didn't expect to like this story with the family curse due to a female witch ancestor embittered because her husband had cheated on her. She killed him and the woman he betrayed her with, cursed all her female ancestors to die by their husbands' hands if the husbands are unfaithful, because it was better to die than to know that their husbands had cheated on them. It just sounded...not to my taste. Well, it turned out to be a good story. I admit I really liked Ian (well he's a big, sexy Scot--so that's practically a given), and he was a sweetie. I liked Kira too. Although she was a bit skeptical at first, she showed real resourcefulness and bravery, confronting her ancestress to end the curse. I thought the accents were a little hokey. I'm thinking modern Scots don't talk like that. But, I guess that's a small thing. Four stars.

"Happily Never After" by Jeaniene Frost

This is my first story by Ms. Frost, and I'm not sure what I think about her. The humor was a bit on the cheesy and hokey side. Don't get me wrong, I like cheesy humor, but the tone of this story didn't always work for me. I thought Isabelle was a little hard for my tastes. She didn't trust, and didn't believe in much. I didn't really get to know her or come to like her. I hope that she learns to open up a little more in the future. I liked Chance, and I did get some good laughs. I mostly like Ms. Frost's concepts of vampires. I was offended at one comment about what modern women should have done regarding the lie that Isabelle told her unwanted fiance. It makes it seem as though a woman of a certain age who is chaste can't possibly be modern. It was a throwaway comment, but rather presumptuous. I guess I shouldn't take it personally, but I did. All in all, pretty decent. 3 stars.

"Ghouls Night Out" by Terri Garey

Overall, not a bad story. I liked the mystery and the unfolding of the dead bridesmaid haunting Nicki to solve her murder. I did not like the liberal throwing around of the offensive term 'redneck' and the low-brow offensive humor directed towards 'backwoods' people. Some of the jokes were funny, but some were mean spirited, making Nicki seem like a mean snob. Overall, she was likeable, but the judgmental attitude she had towards her country cousins made it hard to warm up to her at first. Her boyfriend, Joe, was scrumptious. It was an entertaining read, other than the offensive parts. Not enough to get me to read this series though. 3 stars.

"The Wedding Knight" by Kathryn Smith

This is part of the Brotherhood of the Blood series, about Payen, one of the knights who drinks from the Blood Grail chalice, becoming a vampire in the process. He seduced and left Violet five years later, but returns when he finds out she's marrying a member of The Silver Palm, a dastardly organization behind the betrayal and extermination of the Knights Templar, and worse. He refuses to let her marry such a dishonorable man, so he barges in on the engagement party, leading to Violet breaking the engagement. In truth, he never got over Violet, although he told himself he couldn't have her because she was human and he

was a vampire. Violet realizes that she never stopped loving Payen, and is determined to make him realize their future belongs together. Ms. Smith managed to get three love scenes in this very short story. I liked that Violet was a larger-sized woman, and Payen liked her just fine that way. It was a passionate, well-written story for all its shortness. If a reader doesn't like her love stories earthy and sensual, she probably won't like it. I liked it a lot. Four stars.

This story collection does indeed touch on weddings with a supernatural edge to their distaster quotient. Thankfully weddings do occur in two out of four (with a botched wedding scene in another), so it qualified for my challenge read! So to recap: I received a pleasant surprise with Ms. Shayne's story (although she has proven herself to be a good writer when I've read her). As for Frost, I will one day start the Night Huntress series, and I hope that the humorous tone is more to my liking in those. I'm not stricken with a burning desire to read Nicki Styx's series, since my tbr pile is already massively large and I don't tend to like the more chick-lit-oriented urban fantasy. Of course, I appreciated the Brotherhood of the Blood Offering and look forward to reading the rest in the series. So, I'd say two out of four isn't bad.

Rhianna says

Weddings From Hell is another paranormal anthology in the vein of Dates From Hell and Holidays Are Hell. Pick a theme and throw some popular paranormal romance or urban fantasy authors at it. And just in time for wedding season we've got this collection of tales sure to make your horrific bridesmaid dress woes and cold-feet fly right out the window.

[Till Death by Maggie Shayne:] is the first offering in the anthology. When a heartbroken witch of the McLellan clan lays a curse on the women of her family they are cursed to either die at the hands of their cheating husbands or never know love. When Aunt Iris passes away and Kira heads to Scotland for the will reading the last thing she expects is to encounter ghosts or start falling for handsome family friend Ian Stewart. Can she break the curse and find her happily-ever-after?

I've never actually read anything by Shayne, though I have several of her books waiting to be read. This story was short, cute and felt only slightly rushed by the limited time frame. But what really impressed me was her well written dialog, her Scottish brogue was near flawless and read so well! Can't wait to get caught up enough with other books so I can start reading hers!

[Happily Never After by Jeaniene Frost:] is the second tale, when grandma Greta's grandson and granddaughter get into trouble with a local mob-wannabe she calls in a favor from her vampire buddy Bones. Happy to serve, Bones sends in Chance to look after Isabella and hopefully find her missing brother Frazier. Unfortunately Frazier is likely in the hands of Robert Bertini, who has strong armed Isa into marrying him. But Chance isn't about to let the strong and independant woman marry the murderous lout, especially not since he himself is falling for her. Will he be able to save her brother and prevent her from this forced marriage?

Another author I've not read, but she's on my wishlist. This story was amusing with its intentional mobster cliches and the banter between Isa and Chance. If the writing here is any indication of Frost's writing for her series I doubt I'll be dissappointed when I get my hands on it.

[Ghouls Night Out by Terri Garey:] is the third story, introducing us to Nicki Styx (who has her own series-- 2nd book comes out later this month). When Nicki's cousin needs a bridesmaid who is she to deny the

family, even if it means dressing up in a pineapple yellow dress meant for the bride's best friend Michelle who just so happens to be dead! Of course, no one knows about Michelle's death yet so when she appears to Nicki, she can't help but feel compelled to help find out what happened. Will Nicki find out what happened to Michelle before it's time to kiss the bride?

This story ended up being my favorite in the anthology. I've never read Garey's first novel as it never hit my radar, but now I'm thinking I should hurry up and get it going! The redneck comments got a little judgemental at times but the stereotypes were nicely handled. Anyone who has some redneck relatives will likely find the entire wedding planning to be realistic and amusing, bachelorette party at a country bar complete with Shania Twain karaoke and round after round of beer anyone?

[The Wedding Knight by Kathryn Smith:] was the final story, rounding out the anthology with a historically set scene. When Payen Carr returns to London the last thing he anticipates is that he's arrived on the eve of Violet Wynston-Jones' wedding. When he realizes that her groom-to-be is a member of the Order of the Silver Palm--a group of former Templars seeking the Blood Grail and the destruction of the vampires who protect it--he can't let the wedding happen. But he has other reasons for wanting to stop the wedding as five years ago he and Violet shared one blissful night in which she proclaimed her love. If Payen stops the wedding will he be doing it to protect her from the Order or because of his own unspoken love for Violet?

Another author I haven't read, but have her series sitting on my shelves waiting--this short story turned out to be my least favorite. I'm not sure if it was because of the historical setting or because I felt like I didn't get enough back story. Maybe a little of both. The dialog was a little dull and very little descriptive scene setting took place to frame out the world in my mind. I believe this story ties directly into her series though so fans of it might enjoy the side trip.

Overall this was a really enjoyable anthology. Three authors I was interested in and hadn't read gave me a good taste for what they write and an author I hadn't even noticed yet smacked me between the eyes and made me take notice. From what I do know of the authors and their series Frost's ties into hers as does Garey's and Smith's. I can't say about Shayne's but I get the impression this is just its own story but well worth reading to feel out her style.

Julie (jjmachshev) says

Cool anthology with stories from Maggie Shayne, Jeaniene Frost, Terri Garey, and Kathryn Smith. Each tale provides a quick glimpse at characters from the authors' series about paranormal creatures.

"Till Death" from Maggie Shayne tells the story of a curse and the brave woman who's willing to place her life in the hands of a near-stranger. HOT!

"Happily Never After" by Jeaniene Frost is a hilarious and sexy romp pitting a wannabe mobster against a woman with a delicious vamp on her side!!

"Ghouls Night Out" by Terri Garey. You'll laugh as the heroine solves the mystery of a ghost who's all wet with the help of her hot boyfriend.

"The Wedding Knight" by Kathryn Smith revisits the story of Payen (a Templar vampire) and Violet, the woman who still loves him...even after he took her virginity and ran five years ago. He's here to stop her

from making a disastrous marriage, but they'll have to save each other in order to be happy together.

Nothing dark about this anthology. Most of the stories have more humor than suspense. I enjoyed all the stories.

Carolyn F. says

The Maggie Shayne story was good although a lot rushed. But that's probably because it's a short story. Kira confronted Ian about a curse within minutes of meeting him and they fell in love in a day.

The Jeaniene Frost story was good. I loved grandmother Greta and the romance between Chance and Isa was done well. There's a couple of scenes with Bones too. Greta and Bones used to have a thing a long time before.

The Terri Garey story was different. She's able to see dead people after having a near death experience herself. A few sexy talk between Nicki and Joe. A murder mystery that needs to be solved. This is the first time I've read her stuff and it was pretty good.

Kathryn Smith's another one of those super fast short stories. At least Violet and Payen had known each other before. Throw in a little Masonic-ish anti vampire group out to kill/kidnap Payen, and there was some added excitement.

3 of the stories are 3 stars, 1 is a 3.5 so I'll give the book a 3.5 overall, throwing off the average.

Unapologetic_Bookaholic says

I read part **Maggie Shayne's Till Death** [about a witch's curse:] and **Jeaniene Frost's Happily Never After**.

Again, I won't rate the entire book because I only read a couple of the stories. I liked the writing style of Maggie Shayne and I am considering reading a full novel to get a better idea of her world creation and characters. I did not care for the secondary characters and they played a big part in this novella.

Jeaniene Frost's story was more to my liking. Wasn't quite as captivating as Cat and Bones but was about a vampire and his target of affection. Isa is being forced to marry a mobster wanna-be. She is Italian and runs her own restaurant. Even she knows all the cliques that are running through her life. But she's doing it for her brother, she keeps reminding herself. When Chance comes into her restaurant one night and doesn't eat a bite she knows something is up. When he boldly stares her down with her mobster boyfriend staring *him* down, she thinks he's lost his mind.

This would be an enjoyable story for any Frost fan. I give it 3.75 of 4 stars. But I'll go ahead and round it to an even **4 stars**

Vanessa *the Pixie Princess* says

Review is for Happily Never After by Jeaniene Frost

Quirkyreader says

I am giving this collection of stories four stars. I wanted to give it five but the last story wasn't the best and was a bit of a mood spoiler. Aside from that, the other three stories were very well written and very entertaining.
