



Chosen by Blood

Virna DePaul

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Leader of an Otherborn clan, half-breed vampire Knox Devereaux would do anything to find a cure for the anti-vamp vaccine slowly starving his people into extinction. When the FBI contacts him about leading a team of hand-selected Others on a mission to reclaim the stolen antidote, Knox accepts. His new assignment places him in direct contact with Special Agent Felicia Locke, the beautiful human he's craved since their very first meeting.

Chosen by Blood Details

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From Reader Review Chosen by Blood for online ebook

Megan Riverina Romantics/Meggerfly says

4.5 Stars

I won this from Maya Banks

HOLY FREAKING GUACAMOLE! Chosen by Blood, the first book in Virna DePaul's Para-Ops series totally took me by surprise. I've been completely blown out of the water by this book!

Here's the 411. It's been five years since the US of A's Second Civil War came to an end. The president and all the Otherborn - beings that were born a different race from humans such as vamps and shifter's - leaders had signed the Humanity Treaty declaring peace. The Others were being integrated into society. Unfortunately, almost every human had taken the anti-vamp vaccine, changing their blood so that it was no longer nourishing to vampires. Now the vampires were starving. Though the Others were now citizens in the US, things were far from being all Kool and the Gang between the different races.

OK. So how cool is that? The world building in this book is intricate, exciting and unparalleled. I've never read anything like it before. It's truly amazing. Virna DePaul not only was able to portray the setting but also the political issues. When you can picture the scenes as clearly as you can in this book it enhances the reading experience tenfold.

I also really enjoyed the whole civil rights movement feel of the book. There's this small exchange that took place in the book that spoke volumes to me.

"Ten years ago we were hunting these fuckers down, and now we're supposed to fight next to them?"
"Not too long ago," Mahone reminded him, "I wouldn't have been able to sit at the front of the bus with you, Walker. Now you answer to me. Times change."

Those few words alone made me understand the situation in a way that a ton of words couldn't. Bigotry and prejudice are hot topics for me and the underlying message in this book, the one that encourages open-mindedness and acceptance, is one that I totally dig.

Another awesome thing about this book was the characters. Though this was Knox's and Felicia's book there was a wealth of secondary characters to get to know too. DePaul was able to give each their own personality and traits. It made me feel as if I were part of the team. It was wonderful to witness both the team dynamic as well as the 1 on 1 relationships between the characters. I for one really enjoyed Hunt and can't wait to learn more about him. The same goes for Wraith and O'Flare. There's obviously something going on between the two.

As far as the intimacy in this book goes, I was really surprised by the intensity of it. When I mean intense I mean INTENSE. It was actually quite steamy. Seriously, I have no idea how Felicia was able to keep her hands off Knox. Still, that made it all the more better when they finally came together. Then the heat between them became a raging inferno.

I have to say that Knox is definitely my type of man. I mean, there's a man who knows how to treat a woman. I simply loved how words of praise for Felicia just tumbled out of his mouth.

There were only a few things wrong with this book IMO. One thing that bothered me was that at the beginning of the book we were given a lot of info really fast. To me, it was a little overwhelming, however I caught on rather quickly. I think that might be part of Ms. DePaul's writing style since I noticed the same thing in another book of hers. The other thing that brought this book down from a perfect 5 STARS was that I feel that it needs some sort of glossary telling the different races and their characteristics.

This book is full of action, adventure, and raw passion. I strongly encourage any PNR fan to read it. I want to kick my own butt for not reading it sooner!

Suzanne (Under the Covers Book blog) says

I have such mixed feelings on this book. Some parts I thought were really good, others seemed a little confused and under developed and some bits just annoyed the bloody hell out of me.

Knox is one of the few healthy vampires around. During the civil war between humans and vampires the humans released a vaccine that renders human blood void inedible to vampires. But with Knox being a dhampire, half human half vampire, starvation doesn't effect him as quickly as his pure blood kin. Now the civil war is over and he is clan leader of his group of vampires and he will do anything to get an antidote for the anti-vamp vaccine which is slowly killing off his family, his race, even agree to head a new Para Ops team, a mixture of hand picked Others and humans. Their first mission, find the antidote.

Agent Felicia Locke has been in love with Knox since she first saw him and he has felt the same way, however, he was married to her best friend. However, her friend has died and they are now working together on the Para Ops team, but Knox, as clan leader, still has the duty to marry a vampire bride so help repopulate his race, a duty he can not put aside even for Felicia

This was a brand new experience for me, I liked the general story, the world being created and even most the characters, but what I didn't like? The romance. Knox and Felicia's romance just managed to annoy me, I completely understood why Felicia wouldn't be with Knox, he was going to marry someone else for the express purpose of knocking her up, all in a very honorable and selfless way of course, and then she would be his bit on the side. Clearly in the hundreds of years the Knox has been alive he hasn't gotten to know human women very well. Unfortunately this didn't endear me to him, and despite him obviously being crazy in love with Felicia and her with him, I just didn't feel any enthusiasm for their HEA.

However, I did like the other guys in the team, especially Wraith the wraith, I really can't wait to read more about her, she kick ass and invulnerable to death, yet the most vulnerable person on the team, I loved watching the sparks fly with her and O'Flare. This was another great aspect of the book, I loved seeing all the team together and fuse into a unit, I don't think they all entirely trust each other yet and I can't wait to see what happens next with all of them.

The world building was also interesting and one of the things I liked about this book. Others are basically all paranormal creatures, so weres, vampires, wraiths and mages, and they have recently "come out" in America, and this has caused a few civil wars. The civil wars mentioned was one of the things I thought weren't explained very well, was the civil war between humans and vamps or humans and all Others, or was it every race against every race? This wasn't fully explained, or if it was I didn't catch it.

But, one part that was explained very well, and in juicy detail? The sex. It was hot! Ms DePaul writes some

great erotic scenes, Knox may have annoyed me, but I reckon he could screw that right outta me, the dhampire has skills! What *did* bug me was when they got all hot and bothered at such silly times! Picture it. You are sat in the freezing cold, on hostile territory, you hear an enemy vehicle approaching, what do you do? Do you make out like teenagers, *or* do you keep your eyes on the road looking out for the people with big guns? Well if you are Knox and Felicia, clearly it is option one and you have a quick tonsil tennis session. *rolls eyes*

Despite my seemingly endless complaints about this book, I did enjoy the story and the characters, even if the romance wasn't as good as I hoped it will be. I will definitely be reading the next book to see what happens with my favourite Para Ops team!

ALPHAreader says

In an alternate history the US Second Civil War has all but wiped vampires out of existence, and in the aftermath of peace they are on the brink of extinction. A vaccine was invented that tainted human blood, ruining it as a food source for the vampire population. As a result, the number of fanged are dwindling.

Now the US vampire population live in a sanctuary called 'The Dome', and are led by Knox Devereaux – a dhampire human/vampire hybrid, and among the last few unaffected by the vaccine.

Knox was a soldier in the Second Civil War, but now he lives to lead his dying race . . . a heavy task to fall on his shoulders. As the vamp leader, Knox is expected to marry a pure vampire female and help to procreate and save the fading population. He already performed his duty when he married the vampire Noella, and had two beautiful children with her. But even though Knox married Noella, he has always been in love with her best friend – the human female, and FBI hostage negotiator, Felicia Locke.

Knox's leadership role is about to get even more complicated. The FBI have got wind of an antidote to the vaccine – something that could eliminate the contamination of human blood and restore the vampire's food supply, thereby saving an entire race of paranormal people.

And since Knox has the most to gain from this antidote, he is heading up the mission to find proof of its existence. Together with a walking-dead-woman simply called 'Wraith', a werewolf called Hunt, psychic human O'Flare and a mage named Lucy, Knox will put his life on the line to save his people . . . but when Felicia joins the task-force, Knox suddenly has more to lose, and gain.

'Chosen by Blood' is the first book in Virna DePaul's new paranormal series, 'Para-Ops'.

It's always nice to read fresh blood in the urban fantasy / paranormal genre. Old favourites will always be anticipated New Year releases, but the promise of a fresh new series to sink one's teeth into is equally exhilarating. So it was with great enthusiasm that I delved into DePaul's first book, 'Chosen by Blood' . . .

This novel is the establishment of the series focus Para-Ops team. In DePaul's alternate world, paranormal people are marginalized and ostracized in the wake of Civil War. Thanks to a vaccine, humans gained the upper hand in the war by eliminating themselves as a food source for vampires. But when a cure is rumoured to exist, all paranormal factions see it as an opportunity to right the imbalance between humans and paranormal's.

'Chosen by Blood' mostly concerns the Para-Ops leader and vampire head-honcho, Knox Devereaux. Not

only does Knox have the weight of his people's existence on his hands, but he is being confronted with his own personal wants and desires in the form of human FBI agent, Felicia Locke.

In theory, Felicia and Knox have a good romance – full of unrequited love and unimaginable yearning, stirred up with controversy over her being a human and Knox being part vampire. Knox has been pursuing Felicia since they first met, despite her uneasy attraction to him and his marriage to her best friend. Noella and Knox even proposed a mating-pair arrangement, whereby Felicia would be Knox's mistress. But Felicia wanted monogamy and fidelity, and she had no interest in being 'the other woman'. When the novel opens, Felicia is attending Knox and Noella's wedding anniversary when Knox succumbs to lust and proposes this 'ménage' arrangement to a disgusted and heartbroken Felicia. Skip ahead two years and Noella is dead, murdered the only way a vampire can be – her heart ripped out and burned. Felicia has managed to avoid Knox, who has been in France for some time arranging his new marriage (which will strengthen ties with the European vampires). But Knox is still adamant that Felicia be his mistress – and he hopes that when they are reacquainted, Felicia will be willing to shake off the shackles of close-minded human fidelity.

Right away, DePaul is on the back-foot with regards to Knox and Felicia. First off, she references their first meeting where, apparently, sparks were flying and lust was running high. But readers are given little to no back-story about Knox and Felicia's first meeting. We don't even really know how Felicia came to be best friends with the vampire Noella (strange, since their friendship probably kicked-off in the wake of vampire discrimination?). But most detrimental of all is that readers never experience Knox and Felicia's first meeting, either in flashback or detailed remembering, it's always just stated as a fact that they have a heart-tugging attraction to one another . . . Urgh. True love, soul mates and love at first sight all rolled into one. If you're like me, then this romantic premise really bugs you because it gives the author a scapegoat – 'soul mates' can replace actual attraction, and 'love at first sight' is cited instead of actual scenes of sexy repartee and genuine affection. Such is the case with 'Chosen by Blood'. Knox need only be in the same room and Felicia creams her pants. And even when Felicia is heart-broken and insulted by Knox's offer of mistress-status, Felicia still wants him and can't deny her attraction to him. It's telling, not showing; DePaul is telling readers that Felicia and Knox want each other, without showing us much evidence to back it up.

For some people, Knox's offer of blatant infidelity will be quite off-putting to the overall romance of the novel (especially when vampires in most paranormal romances 'mate for life'). But DePaul actually works this unorthodox offering into the story . . . Felicia is frustrated by Knox's presumptuous and hollow offer of an extramarital affair. But it's the norm for vampires to marry pure-bloods, but take other lovers – while Knox believes that Felicia should ignore her stuffy human preconceptions about fidelity and monogamy – both of them are ruled by their cultures and beliefs, but are desperate to change the other's thinking.

I thought that Knox and Felicia's tug-of-war romance, with the hurdle of misconceptions about fidelity and marriage, was interesting and tension-filled. But their actual 'sparkage' and heat just wasn't there . . . as evidenced by their first sex scene. This was clunky and unsatisfying. Considering the fact that Felicia had been ignoring her lustful pull towards Knox for years, you would think that their first coupling would be explosive and soul-affirming – instead it read awkward and unfulfilling.

Knox and Felicia were a pretty awful first HEA couple for the new Para-Ops series. But there is hope for two secondary characters introduced in 'Chosen by Blood'. The living-dead-girl, Wraith, and human psychic Caleb O'Flare. I loved these two – they are both combative and hurtful towards one another, but only to hide their true (awkward) attraction. These two stole the romantic spotlight, completely. I'm thrilled that the next book, 'Chosen by Fate' is about their romance . . . and whereas DePaul just told us that Felicia and Knox were attracted to one another (as opposed to showing us), I can definitely attest to O'Flare and Wraith's sizzling chemistry.

The romance in 'Chosen by Blood' felt completely flat to me, but I did like DePaul's world building. The story of an alternate history and Second Civil War is ingenious and full of possibility. The vaccine/antidote storyline of this book is a good introduction to this universe, in which vampires are dwindling and 'Others' are discriminated against. But there's plenty of leeway for deep exploration . . . in the wake of war one group is always the down-trodden, the loser forced to succumb to the whims of the victor. That's humans and 'Others' in DePaul's world. I'm willing to forgive a lot of the romantic fizzle, purely because I loved this Civil War storyline so much;

The door opened and Knox Devereaux stepped inside. He was, as always, impeccably dressed. Tall and grim-faced, his dark pants, expensive black duster jacket, and polished boots made him look like a GQ outlaw.

Yes, indeed, Mahone thought. The times had changed.

The right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness no longer applied just to humans.

Wraiths had a right to vote. A court had just ruled that a mage's right to practice magic was akin to one's right to worship. And vamps, both full vampires and dharmires alike, couldn't be denied health coverage based on 'malnourishment' being a pre-existing condition.

The Others were demanding their due and making their presence known.

I will also say that the ending of this book didn't entirely work for me. The dénouement drags, and a lot of previously-unmentioned villains pop out of the woodwork to complicate the finale But like I said, I'm willing to forgive a lot of DePaul because I loved the back-story universe she created. I'm also really excited to read Wraith and O'Flare's romance – which is sure to wash out the bad taste Felicia and Knox left behind.

2.5/5

Stephanie G says

Half-breed vampire Knox Devereaux's life belongs to his clan, that is dying slowly from an anti-vampire vaccine that was given to all human after the war. Knox has to step up to lead the clan and is expected to marry a vampire to have children and populate their community. The only problem is his heart belongs to a human female his clan would never accept.

When Knox is asked to lead a team of others to retrieve the antidote for the vaccine of course he says yes. This could be a win, win for him. This would give him the opportunity to save his people and claim the human who had hunted his heart since the moment he set eyes on her.

Felicia Locke is a strong willed level headed FBI hostage negotiator, but the moment Knox walks in a room all reasoning goes out the door. She must find a way to work with him without allowing her heart to get in the way.

Felicia knows Knox is honor bound to marry a vampire, but she will not be the woman on the side; even if it is an arranged joining for the purpose of children. Felicia is unable to share Knox it would eventually kill her inside.

The team will have to learn to work together and learn who they can trust and who will eventually betray them, some lesson they will not learn till it is too late.

I loved Knox he's sexy honorable and strong. He wants Felicia so bad it hurts him but he's too worried about upholding the respect he's gained with his people to throw caution to the wind and take her and only her.

Felicia wants Knox with a heat that is equal to his but she is too smart to want to be second best. Even when he promises to be hers and hers alone only to stray for the purpose of making children with other vampires. She is too strong enough to say no that's not enough for me! I think she is strong willed and likable

This is a great debut novel. Once you meet Knox and Felicia you are drawn into their passion for each other, you can't help but yearn to know what will happen next. The team of others that is formed consist of, a wraith whom as lost her memories of herself before she died, a human who has visions and a bit of a cocky mouth, a were who is carrying a load of baggage inside, And a hard on for pushing Knox' buttons, lastly a mage who has a super crush on the human who is too busy lusting after the wraith to notice her.

There are lots of likable characters In chosen By Blood this book will keep you on your toes. I thought they could have had a little more action since this is what they were brought together for but it was still good the way it was. I can't wait to see what will happen in the next installment and I wonder who will be in it, there are several good ones to pick from.

****Athena****

Jen says

What I liked about this book was a complete departure from how I normally feel. Normally I like the romance and the world building is just a bonnus. I kind of knew from the prologue that I would not like the setup of the H/h relationship. And as the book went on that part just did not get any better for me.

The premise is that humans have been given a vaccine that spoils their blood for vampires. Because of that vampires are starving having to survive on animal blood. Knox is a dhampire, half human, half vampire so he does not need as much pure blood as a normal vampire. He is not as weak as all other vampires. Knox is also the head of all the vampires and has to do his duty by marrying another pure blood vampire so they can reproduce. Unfortunately the woman he marries has a human best friend that just so happens to be his mate. Bad for both of them.

The US government forms a group of Others and humans to do some covert operations. Both Knox and Felicia are on the team. Knox's wife had died leaving them free to hook up...but oh wait Knox still plans on marrying another vampire and wants to keep Felicia on the side. He set up the arrangement with the other vampire by telling her that his heart belongs to someone else so their marriage would be for children only.

Now I don't know about you, but I think I would have a real hard time being with someone that was boinking another woman, even if only for children. Not happening. That part of the story never worked for me. I wanted Knox to go up in a ball of flames each time he talked about how wonderful it would be for him and Felicia to "love" each other freely. Yeah, whatever dude.

I did like the world that DePaul has created. The concept of the others and the things that were going on are really what kept me interested in the story. I think I will read the next one if only to find out what happens with the teams that have been created.

Catherine says

3.5 Stars

The prologue of this book made me blink a few times and wonder if I was comfortable with the romance setup. *[Don't worry, the following isn't really a spoiler. It's all explained in the prologue.]* When Knox and Felicia first met, they both knew that they were soulmates (literally). The only problem was that Felicia's best friend, Noelle, was married to Knox at the time. They both tried to resist it. Felicia even stayed away for years at a time and visited rarely. When she did visit, she avoided Knox like the plague. She didn't want to hurt her friend by letting her see the pull between them.

Noelle and Knox are both vampires. Knox finally gave up waiting for his soulmate after 300 years or so and married Noelle. He loved her, but he wasn't *in* love with her. She was fully aware of this and okay. She didn't believe in soulmates the way he did. In this book, vampires don't value marriage the same way humans do. They marry, and don't believe in divorce, but they often have Mate-Pairs so they can have more opportunities to breed. Vampires are all about breeding to preserve the continuation of their race, especially now that they're all slowly withering away.

I was kind of uncomfortable because the intensity between Knox and Felicia was great—even though it was only the prologue—but there was someone they both cared about standing in between them. Knox asked Felicia to be with him after he had been married to Noelle for 9 years. Noelle knew about their connection and wanted them to have relief. Noelle had already strayed a couple times, but that wasn't considered a bad thing. Vampires just don't cast marriage and cheating the same way humans do. Felicia turns him down even though she doesn't want to. She *does* care about cheating and she can't do that to her friend.

Because of that prologue I knew going into it that this would probably not be a typical romance. And I was right. Although I was deeply uncomfortable with the friend/wife being a stepping stone to their happiness, I loved the struggle between the characters. Knox has finally grown tired of stepping back because of Felicia's morals. He has to do what's best for his race, so he can't belong to her solely, but he's determined to bring her around to his side of things. For her part, Felicia knows that she can never accept the life that Knox wants them to have. She doesn't understand how he can truly love her when she's not enough for him.

I loved the intensity between them in the beginning. They were both stretched tight from denying their attraction to each other and were in danger of snapping.

Another emotion--pure, undiluted rage--filled him at the thought of her with another. It made everything else, every other emotion he'd ever felt, seem innocuous. Made him want to rip off his clothes--the luxurious symbols of civility that he normally loved--and make her see him as he truly was--primal, lethal, and fucking ready to prove to her that she was his, once and for all.

I wanted to be angry at Knox for pushing Felicia to be with him just to make himself happy. He knew she wouldn't be happy if she gave in, but he convinced himself that they could work it out. He was stuck in a position of power because of the decline in his race and he felt responsible for doing all that he could to ensure their continued survival. He was unwilling to give up his responsibilities for her, but she was unable to give in, no matter how much she wanted him. She wanted more for herself than to have to share a man when he was needed to breed.

Even though, I wanted to be angry at Knox, as I said, I couldn't. He was in a crappy situation and I could understand how desperate he was to get her to agree to be with him in some way. But I also loved that Felicia didn't give in. She wanted to, and at times she wavered, but she always stuck to her morals and refused to give in. At least in the beginning she did...

That's really where the relationship shone the brightest. Unfortunately, once they got together, they seemed to change and lose all of the intensity I prized. Felicia lost her backbone and became a weak, self-pitying creature. The relationship devolved into a more typical, irritating romance and I lost interest in them. It was a shame to go from such a different, compelling romance to such an overdone, dramatic one.

Luckily, once the romance went down the tubes I still had the Para-Op team to keep me entertained. I think the author put together a great cast of characters there. They managed to feel fleshed out and compelling without taking away too much from the lead characters. I loved that each team member was so different and that they didn't easily get along together. Out of them all, Wraith was the one that hooked my attention the most. I'd love to learn more about her. She was so closed off and abrasive, but I saw a peek of sentiment under there now and again.

The way the romance read in the second half is what slowly lowered my grade. I wish I could have been more satisfied with their relationship, because everything else in the book just seemed to pop for me. I did have a slight problem with a character from both of their pasts popping back in at the most convenient moment possible to talk them through their issues, though. That really made me roll my eyes.

Although I only gave this one 3 ½ hearts, I still really enjoyed how fresh and different it felt. I loved the Para-Op team characters and can't wait to learn more about them. I already have my eye on book 2 and it's not even out yet. :)

Favorite Quote:

He wanted to get so deep inside her that he would touch her soul and make her realize that, despite everything, their difficult circumstances, her mistrust, his inability to give her all she wanted, he loved her. Good, bad, it didn't matter. She was his.

Review originally posted on Fiction Vixen.

Lady Heather says

All I can say is WOW!!

This was such an amazing surprise.

I loved the author's writing, storyline, and characters.

The story takes place in a world where Vampires, Weres, Wraiths, Psychics, and Mages are known among the human race.

There is a lot of prejudice, and a vaccine has been developed against the Vampires, so that Vampires can't feed from humans anymore. As a result the Vampire race is starving to death.

The US Government has developed an antidote to counter the vaccine and make human blood pure.

..Unfortunately, the antidote has been stolen and the lead scientist working on the 'cure' has been murdered.

A team is formed by the director of the F.B.I. (The Para-Ops Team) who's mission is to find the antidote and bring it back to the US Government.

The main characters in this story are Knox who is half vampire - half human, and Felicia an F.B.I agent, and also Knox's wife's best friend.

Without giving too much away, let me just say that the story gets intense rather quickly, and keeps the reader captivated right to the end.

I couldn't put this book down and thoroughly enjoyed reading it!

I look forward to reading more from Ms. DePaul.

Tina Folsom says

DePaul sets up an intriguing new world with creatures we think we know at first; then she puts her twists in and makes it all fresh. I loved that. Knox and Felicia are a hot pair, their relationship is sizzling. The supporting cast is diverse and makes me want to read the next one. Can't wait till the second book is available, because I'm sure it'll capture my imagination as much as this one. Great job!

Kale says

Chosen By Blood (A Para-Ops Novel) is set in a world where the paranormal are tentatively accepted by human society after a civil war between the two factions. But the cost was great to the vampires, their numbers dwindling from starvation due to a vaccine developed by humans that have contaminated the blood supply, during the unrest. Enter Knox a half human half vampire hybrid unaffected by the tainted blood and leader of his dying race. Knox will stop at nothing to save his people, putting duty above all else. Even his heart. Felicia is a negotiator for the FBI, and Knox's only weakness. She has been denying his advances for years because of his marriage to her best friend, and her own morals.

But Felicia is about to lose the luxury of running away from the strong attraction she has for Knox. Because they are about to join an elite team of paranormals, and their first mission is to retrieve the antidote to the vaccine that is destroying the vampire's food supply.

This book needed a better editor. There were quite a few typos, and grammar errors. Mostly it needed someone to find a way to fix the confusing beginning. The whole book was set up poorly. Actually I think the story would have been better without the already established, overly complicated lead relationship. The book opens up two years prior to the story's main timeline and thrusts the readers into the middle of Knox's, his wife's, and Felicia's weird relationship. I found this disorienting because the threesome has a long history better suited for a book of it's own, and while I get that DePaul is trying to set up the love interest we aren't getting much of anything about the actual book. It comes off messy and forced. It would have been better to scrap the whole thing and change the relationship structure or at least not make it so rigid.

Another problem with the story is how unlikeable Knox is. It seems like DePaul took her vampire straight out of a carpathian novel by Feehan, but the writing was way more crass. Throughout the book he was mostly concerned with only what he wanted completely disregarding Felicia's wishes. There was no building of a romantic relationship. No getting to know one another. No foundation for their professed feelings. It was nothing but lust in the guise of love.

Most of all I am surprised that Chosen by Blood was so graphic. I'm no prude but most writer's try to find interesting ways to describe sexual content. Not DePaul, she was not creative at all in her descriptions. She was so glaringly blunt and to the point with her writing, that it just didn't fit well, like a puzzle piece jabbed into the wrong slot. And there was a lot of naughty scenes. It seemed like there was something steamy going down in every chapter. This book could be re-shelved in the erotica section instead of paranormal romance. Normally I like this kind of thing but I just don't think it was done very well.

I think the Para-Ops concept is a great and an original idea, but I think the book didn't focus on that idea enough. The supporting characters were awesome and under utilized. DePaul had an interesting take on the undead, mages, and half borns. Plus her world building is lacking. She spent way too much time creating a vampire society that came off aloof and pretentious. Along with an overly complicated one dimensional relationship and then used sex to cover up her short comings.

Chosen by Blood could have been a killer book with the potential for an equally amazing series. But DePaul is stalled by the tired and stale romantic standards of barbaric bloodsucker stereotypes. Choosing to highlight her stories weaknesses instead of developing it's strengths and originality. I think she could benefit by focusing on the missions, moving her minor characters into equally major roles, and putting as much effort into her post-apocalyptic world building as her sexual content.

SheLove2Read says

I didn't get very far into this before I decided not to finish it. First of all, I'm never going to be okay with a story where a man is "ok" with cheating on his wife, even if she's ok with it and/or she's also cheating. Maybe that's prudish of me, but it's not something I'm interested in reading. I also didn't like the author's voice. I can't quite say why, other than I just didn't. Won't be reading anything more by this author.

Danielle says

Chosen by Blood is the first book in the Para-ops series. This new world that Virna DePaul has created is very similar to the real world with a paranormal twist that will take you on a exciting roller coaster ride. Put on your seat belts because I couldn't get enough of this dark, different and hot read!

The story takes place 5 years after the war has ended. Humans and otherborn- humanlike are having a hard time finding peace. The FBI has been working on finding an antidote for the vampire population that just happens to be killing them off. Will they be able to find it in time or will the death toll continue to rise?

Knox Deveraux is not only the leader for his clan, but is now in charge of heading the para-ops to find the antidote and bring it back to the United States. Felicia Locke is a FBI agent who just so happens to be the only human working on this paranormal team.

Knox and Felicia have had a history for years. They also have been in love for years but do to other issues regarding Knox's clan they have never acted on any feelings. Hell, Felicia has tried to avoid him time and time again. Avoiding him isn't very easy to do especially now the tension will rise when they are set up on the same time. Will they finally give into there every desire?

Now I have tried to break away a bit from paranormal romance of late only because a few books I recently read have been lacking for me but Virna DePaul brought back all the fun with a whole new world that I had no problem getting lost in. This book has me more than intrigued but ready to follow the series to the end. But I hope that won't be anytime soon. To be completely honest putting this book down is a serious problem for me. This fast paced debut did not only keep my attention but has me dying for more.

DePaul brings an awesome plot that captures you from the beginning. The characters aren't only interesting, but the way she brings them to life is phenomenal. They are witty, strong, and so well written. Everything flows so wonderfully together. Even the secondary characters will peak your interest. The romance was well written. The sex scenes were super hot! Knox and Felicia both had that "I don't give a shit" attitude, but even when they were together they had their soft spots and DePaul brought that out perfectly.

I want to thank Virna DePaul for bringing me back to the paranormal romance world. Now I am super excited to get my hands on the second book in the series, *Chosen by Fate*, which is set to be released on October 4, 2011. This wait will not be an easy one, but I am sure it will be very well worth it in the end. Welcome to my auto buy list Virna DePaul.

Jennifer Estep says

Chosen by Blood by Virna DePaul is the first book in her Para-Ops paranormal romance series.

FBI special agent Felicia Locke has been not-so-secretly attracted to half-breed vampire Knox Deveraux for years, but Felicia has fought the attraction since Knox was married to her best friend, Noella, before her death. But now, Knox is single and has been asked to head up a special Para-Ops team that is charged with tracking down a potential cure that may cleanse human blood and keep the vampire race from starving. The human Felicia is among those asked to join the team, along with Otherborn creatures like a wraith, a mage, and more. None of the team members really trust each other, but they're going to have to if they want to survive -- because there are people out there who don't want them to succeed and will do whatever it takes to stop them ...

I thought the premise of the book was really cool, and I enjoyed the beginning as the team members were assembled and started working together and getting to know each other. It kind of reminded me of a paranormal *Magnificent Seven* or an *Ocean's Eleven* (or six in this case). I just enjoy those kind of storylines. I also liked Felicia and the fact that she stuck to her guns and didn't get involved with Knox while Noella was alive.

I also liked the secondary characters, especially the tortured but wise-cracking Wraith and Mahone, the FBI boss man who's in charge of trying to keep all the team members in line and not at each other's throats. The world building was also interesting, especially in regards to Wraith and how no one seems to know why she and others like her have come back from the dead.

But I have to say that I didn't like Knox at all. In the beginning of the book, he wants Felicia, even though he's married to her friend. After Noella dies, Knox still wants Felicia, even though he plans to marry another vampire as part of a political alliance. Knox wants Felicia, but it doesn't seem like he wants to sacrifice anything to have her either. He came off as kind of selfish.

There's a lot of action in the book, which I enjoyed. However, I thought there were just too many

unanswered questions at the end about everything from whether or not the cure would work to which characters were on what side. It got a little jumbled and confusing.

Overall, though, if you like paranormals with plenty of action and suspense, you might want to give this one a chance.

Michelle says

Another new to me series that has me hooked!

I liked Felicia, I was really happy with the choices she made and the strength of her character. It took me awhile to warm up to Knox, though I think that was the idea. A lot of the team members have me really curious about their secrets.

This book had lots of action, plot twists, romance and some hot loving! Can't wait to see what's in store with the next installment :)

Ashley says

5 STARS!!!

My Review:

The Plot:

When the secret was unveiled that the creatures of nightmares and legends did in fact exist, humans immediately enacted every force in their arsenal to protect themselves from the new unknown. Now, five years after the Second Civil War has ended, a thin precarious coat of civility exists between humans and Otherborn. In fact, war may once again be upon the horizon as the world watches the vampire population starve into extinction after a man-made vaccine inoculated human blood from a vamp's thirst. In a final bid to uphold the tenuous peace, the FBI has created a specialized task force called Para-Ops. Their mission: regain a stolen antidote that may be the key to counteracting the effects of the vaccine that is polluting the vamp's sole food source.

Human FBI Special Agent, Felicia Locke, has warred endlessly with her consuming desire and its resulting guilt from the moment she laid eyes on her best friend's husband and fell helplessly in love. Now, having tragically lost her beautiful friend to senseless murder, Felicia's mind is still dead set against any romantic chance for her and the luscious half-breed vampire clan leader, Knox Devereaux. Truth be told, there's many reasons why the two can't enter into a relationship and each one is more significant than the last. Most importantly, Felicia will not disabuse the memory of her friend by consummating the guilty love that she's felt for her husband. Two, Felicia's human and knowing Knox's deep desire to prove to his clan that he's nothing like his traitorous human father, he most certainly will marry another vampire as the vamp council demands. In vamp culture, few marry for love. Like a throw back to Victorian principles, marriages are arranged for the benefit of the clan and no one is more dedicated to duty than Knox and Felicia will be damned before she becomes his mistress. She wants marriage and a family and she'll settle for nothing less.

But when Knox steps up his passionate pursuit, Felicia's hold on her principles are quickly slipping.

Knox has hungered desperately for Felicia from the very moment he laid eyes on her and he ceased to ever make a secret of his love, even with regards to his own wife. Having a higher set of morals than most of her human kind, Felicia has been steadfast in her denial of him and their love but that's going to end once and for all. Knox is done waiting and he's been offered the perfect opportunity to claim Felicia as well as save his clan from starvation. After being approached by the FBI to head a new Para-Ops team, Knox wastes little time debating his decision. His clan is dying and he'll do whatever is necessary to save them even if it means working with the very same people that developed the despicable vaccine that doomed vampires to begin with. In addition to his agreement to lead, Knox wants Felicia and the FBI will deliver on that demand but not in the way Knox anticipated. Instead of the FBI re-assigning her to the Dome, his clan's home where Knox can be certain of her safety, Felicia is assigned to Para-Ops.

Knowing that Knox is bound to marry again given his duty to his people and their need to re-populate, Felicia is done wasting more time without Knox when he'll soon be lost to her forever. Not buying Knox's attempt to install her as security detail at the already tightly secured Dome, Felicia asks to be assigned to Para-Ops. Her hostage negotiating skills are bound to be of use when a group of hostile and distrusting Otherborn operatives are thrust together and are asked to accomplish a team goal. But when she and Knox finally give in to their burning need, Felicia realizes that Knox has never truly known or trusted who she is. While it's true that he can't deny his soul's call to her own, it doesn't stop him from discriminating or distrusting Felicia's human DNA despite the fact that he himself is half human. The taint of his traitorous father delves deeper within Knox than either him or Felicia realized and if he doesn't take control of his wayward emotions, he won't just lose Felicia, he'll lose her forever.

The Heroine:

Loyal, brave, and steadfast, anyone would be lucky to call Felicia Locke friend. In addition, her quick thinking, fighting skills, and stellar verbal sparring make her perfect for the FBI and Para-Ops. Unlike most humans, Felicia was raised, has befriended, and fights for the Otherborn creatures. Given the chance to not only help Otherborn kind, but more to the point, to help her lost vampire friend by eradicating the scourge her own race has heaped onto vamps to assuage their fear is paramount. But even beyond that, Felicia is aching for Knox. When the one and only opportunity presents itself, that being Para-Ops, Felicia can't let it pass. Knox will uphold his duty and soon marry a vampire as his race demands, but right now, in this moment he's unattached. While there are still several barriers that may never be breached where their love is concerned, the immediate one holding Felicia back is the fear that she'll never get enough of Knox. That scratching the itch won't lessen its burn but forever inflame it.

The Hero:

A born leader through to his core, half-breed vampire Knox Devereaux will always go above and beyond his duty to his clan. But there is resentment that festers within his heart. Born half vampire and half human, Knox has had to work harder than a pure blooded vampire to gain the respect he deserves. To make his plight even worse, his human father is a convicted traitor having given humans the powerful secrets necessary to subdue, fight, and kill vampires. However, there are bittersweet benefits to his tainted DNA. Knox has not felt the horrific effects that the human vaccine has wrought upon his pure blooded brethren. Leading not by popularity but by his sheer physical strength amongst a starving population, Knox's de facto power generates friction within the vamp council. But all the angst he faces pales with the opportunity to find the antidote and not only save his clan, but grant him the opportunity to claim Felicia.

Beyond just being a man, Knox's vampire culture doesn't understand the whole failing notion of having one's cake and eating it too. He will marry a vampire as his clan, and more importantly, as his race demands. Knox also loves Felicia and he wants her by his side for the entirety of her human life. From his perspective, he doesn't understand why Felicia can't handle the necessary evil of him mating with his vampire wife purely for the sake of re-population. Beyond that, his future wife would mean nothing and would in fact, know and understand the situation that she'll be wife in name only but his heart and his love would belong to Felicia. What prevents Knox from becoming a caveman however is that in all honesty, he wants to provide Felicia with her dream of marriage and a family. The question is, will Knox uphold his resentful duty or give in to the all consuming love he and Felicia share?

My Final Thoughts:

CHOSEN BY BLOOD is a rare find. Its a book that captured my attention from the moment I glimpsed its cover and it was a feeling of possible greatness soon strengthened by the promising summary. And I knew, the moment I dove into the first chapter that all my instincts were about to become proof of one hell of a thrilling romance.

Boasting one of the best opening chapters I've ever read, CHOSEN BY BLOOD opens with one of my favorite plot devices where the hero and heroine have a previous history. Even better is when that history involves love from afar so you can imagine my glee when the first pages immediately unveiled two yearning souls desperate to be together but uncontrollable forces have kept them apart. From the very start, the reader is skillfully enmeshed within the combustible chemistry of Knox Devereaux and Felicia Locke as well as the agony of circumstances that have thus far succeeded in keeping each other just out of reach. No sooner does this happen that you yourself become desperate for more.

In addition to the romance between Knox and Felicia, CHOSEN BY BLOOD hosts an eclectic group of secondary characters that hold the valuable promise of fantastic series installments to come. What do you get when you toss together a werebeast with a chip on his shoulder, a mage with a distinctly feline secret, a human psychic that defies the word beautiful, a wraith (ghost) that can't complete a single sentence without dropping the f-bomb, and a love feuding human and half-breed vampire? One hell of a storm tossed thrill ride! There's never a dull moment to be had when one or all of these unlikely team members are within the same vicinity. Outright hatred and acute distrust erupts almost immediately between some or all members but for better or for worse, this is Para-Ops. I've come to several conclusions regarding the writing strengths of authors. In my opinion, a mark of a good author is when each character can stand alone and be readily identifiable. But a mark of a great author is when one character can utter a single sentence and the reader will know without any additional information who that character is. The latter is Virna DePaul.

CHOSEN BY BLOOD is the very definition of high octane action with plotting that never lets up until the very end. Be prepared to hold tight while the book bucks and twists its way through ultimate fighting showdowns, shocking government cover ups, and a multitude of dirty little secrets. Finally, the *Pièce de résistance*: the passionate inferno that is the romance between Knox and Felicia. Never once, no matter how intense the scenes or how twisted the plot, the romance and all its conflicting and passionate emotions never takes a backseat but instead seeps heatedly throughout.

A paranormal "A-Team" with the added bonus of lush romance, CHOSEN BY BLOOD is one read this year that you don't want to miss. Enjoy!

Netanella says

First paragraph: *VAMP DOME*

PORTLAND, OREGON

One downside to being a vampire's best friend was knowing she could read your mind.

Not that Noella ever would, at least not without good reason, but still . . . Something about the way Noella looked at her tonight put Felicia on edge. There was a certain knowledge in her eyes that hinted at questions to come. Questions that Felicia had to avoid at all costs.

"Chosen By Blood" is the first in a well-crafted urban fantasy series set in world where humans and Others live in an uneasy peace after a civil war between races - vampires, weres, mages, wraiths, humans, and I'm sure an assortment of other flavors. DePaul does an excellent job in world-building, and I was immediately sucked into her world where humans have 'poisoned' their own blood to make it unpalatable to humans, effectively starving a race. There are plots and plots within plots and subterfuges, but DePaul goes a good job in keeping all the threads tightly woven together.

At first I was a little overwhelmed by the amount of characters that were quickly introduced in the book, but that feeling was quickly laid to rest as each character was fleshed out and came to life. The six members of the Para-Ops are introduced here, as is the team's origin, and one can quickly deduce that some of these members will feature in the next two books of the series, for which I am very grateful. Because although I enjoyed this story of Felicia and Knox, I am very much looking forward to O'Flare and Wraith in the next book. Recommended for the genre.
