



Love in Vein: Twenty Original Tales of Vampiric Erotica

Poppy Z. Brite (Editor) , Elizabeth Engstrom (Contributor) , Nancy Holder (Contributor) , Ian McDowell (Contributor) , David B. Silva (Contributor) , Jessica Amanda Salmonson (Contributor) , Christa Faust (Contributor) , Charles de Lint (Contributor) , more... Douglas Clegg (Contributor) , Kathe Koja , Barry N. Malzberg , Steve Rasnic Tem , Melaine Tem , Norman Partridge , W.H. Pugmire , Brian Hodge , Mike Baker , A.R. Morlan , Danielle Willis , Robert Devereaux , Thomas F. Monteleone , Wayne Allen Sallee , Gene Wolfe ...less

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A sexy new repackaging of the extremely popular anthology of vampire erotica, edited by acclaimed author Poppy Z. Brite.

The classic horror tale is about fear. But in the last few years a new literature of the macabre has arisen, one that goes deeper than horror, beyond fear, to explore our darkest, most intimate hungers. The ones even lovers are forbidden to share.

Acclaimed dark fantasy author Poppy Z. Brite has brought together this genre's most powerful and seductive authors in an original collection of vampiric erotica, a shameless celebration of unspeakable intimacies. It is not for everyone.

But neither is the night.

Love in Vein: Twenty Original Tales of Vampiric Erotica Details

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From Reader Review Love in Vein: Twenty Original Tales of Vampiric Erotica for online ebook

Pat Cummings says

The overall tenor of the erotic tales in Poppy Z. Brite's collection is strongly reminiscent of Harlan Ellison's ground-breaking *Dangerous Visions* anthologies: edgy, uncomfortable to read, but full of images that are hard to forget.

Brite has collected twenty stories that skirt the perimeter of good taste—and despite the market among adolescents for vampirica, this is **not** a book for the teenager. Themes range from ghoulish feasting to lesbian revenge, and include references to Wiccan and pagan corn-god blood sacrifices.

One tale pursues the sad end of Lucy Westenra's blighted love, lighting the shadowy corners of Bram Stoker's story. Another explores the death of Mozart and Van Gogh as the result of haunting by *lamia*. We have stories of Japanese vampires, of shape-shifters who live on spirit more than blood, of the lost and the arrogant and the brutal and the alien.

Vampire faces are lovely or haunting or weirdly strange, but always attractive. Of all twenty stories, not one speaks of a repellent blood-drinker. The vampire draws us all, victims seeking to provide sustenance. We may regret that attraction and seek also to destroy that which enslaves us, as does Peter in Mike Baker's *Love Me Forever*. We may embrace it without reserve, even unto death, as does Satoshi in Nancy Holder's *Cafe Endless: Spring Rain* or the cowboy Quincey Morris in Norman Partridge's *Do Not Hasten to Bid Me Adieu*. We may even adopt part or all of the vampire's nature, like Marshall in David B. Silva's *Empty Vessels* and Alex in Christa Faust's *Cherry*.

However you relate to vampire stories, though, you will find something in this book that goes beyond simply disturbing, that becomes irrationally upsetting. For me it was *Geraldine* by Ian McDowell. Perhaps it was the extension of early-term abortion to the spiritual and memory side of the equation; as if the loss of a barely-commenced pregnancy equates to the rejection of both the father and the act of conception.

Perhaps for you, there will be a different story here that crosses the line. Something in the vampire still attracts, despite the smell of the grave that clings to the cape. And something, despite that attraction, repels each of us eventually. You'll find both in this anthology.

It's not for the squeamish.

Tabitha says

Its a little naughty folks.

Jessica says

I remember thinking, where's the erotica?

M.M. Strawberry Reviews says

I'd never read Poppy Z Brite, and this book was recommended to me. Generally, I like anthologies, but this book is a collection of hit-and-miss. Some of the stories are interesting, but many of them do not even have vampires in them, or are just so poorly written that they are hard to read (such as the last story in this collection, which is nonsensical and disjointed) Some of the stories are about psychic vampires - feeding off emotion, or sound, or whatever, but this was a plodding book to get through. I can't really recommend this as a good read - if you're curious about what is in here, I recommend borrowing it from the library or a friend first because I bought this new, and really wish I had my money back. Oh, well.

Hannah Givens says

A few stories were standouts -- "Cafe Endless: Spring Rain" by Nancy Holder, "Cherry" by Christa Faust, "In This Soul of a Woman" by Charles de Lint, "The Alchemy of the Throat" by Brian Hodge, and "A Slow Red Whisper of Sand" by Robert Devereaux.

However, even including those stories, it's waaaaaaaaay too gory and gross to be erotic. The definitions of "vampire" and "sex" were both too vague to mean much of anything. If it had been called "Twenty original tales of vampiric sex-tinged disgusting violence" then it would've been more accurate.

Juushika says

An anthology of twenty tales of vampire erotica. Or, at least, it's meant to be. Brite's arrangement is strong, but the quality of the selections leaves much to be desired. There are a cluster of decent stories from Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Christa Faust, Douglas Clegg, and Brian Hodge, and Gene Wolfe's "Queen of the Night," an oblique dreamscape of ghouls and fairy queens, was my favorite. But there's just as many mediocre stories, and three that I couldn't even bring myself to finish. Brite's introduces the vampire as taboo breaker, as "the mutant ... considered beautiful even as it is feared," but here dark sexuality often means child abuse, rape, and sex work, peppered with unappealing brute pornography--more grimdark than taboo breaking, distinctly tiresome and never erotic. The vampires fair better, but only barely: they're varied, but most stories are slave to their concepts, summaries of the vampiric figure with not much in the way of independent plot or characters. Give this a miss. I adore the intent, but the execution is a disappointment.

Jennifer says

I found this book at the library book sale and grabbed it because it had "Poppy Z. Brite" splashed across it and I've been wanted to read her stuff.

But then it said, "Vampire Erotica" and I put it back. I thought about it a bit and said to myself, "Well, it's only \$1. What do I have to lose?" I bought this one and "Love in Vein II."

I was pleasantly surprised. Though most of the stories have sex in them, most of them are not erotica in the classic sense. By that I mean, sex isn't the point of the stories. They pretty much all have plots that work independently of the sex.

Not all of these are great stories. Not all of them are good stories. But almost all of them are entertaining, and the really bad ones also tend to be really short.

Nick says

My favorite stories in this collection of “vampire erotica” include Gene Wolfe’s “Queen of the Night,” a retelling of the Celtic myth of changelings from a boy’s POV who has been abducted by the dark fairies and lived with them for 9 years; on his return to the “real” world he is initiated into sexuality by the dark fairie queen in excruciatingly painful vampiric fashion. Wolfe tells the story with his usual reverence for character and the general paranoid feeling of the protagonist that he will always be an “outsider”. I also liked Brian Hodge’s horrific tale of a present day castrato (that story in itself a great horror) seduced by a sympathetic yet decadent vampire-like creature, “The Alchemy of the Throat.”

Among the other stories I enjoyed Kathe Koje’s and Barry N. Malzberg’s vignette of a vampire in a garden, “In the Greenhouse.” Poppy Z. Brite, the editor of this intriguing collection is greatly influenced by the French decadent poets, and hence Baudelaire’s concept of the prose-poem, and the Koje/Malzberg piece is a great example. (Brite writes of her views on French decadence in her wonderful volume of essays, *Guilty but Insane*.) In fact, many of the selections in Brite’s collection reflect this prosaic poesie, and generally that is very nice to see.

The longer pieces which attempt this prosaic/poetic decadence I don’t find to work as well, however – and chief among these is the volume’s final entry, “A Slow Red Whisper of Sand” by Robert Devereux. I don’t so much mind the pure pornography of this piece, indeed there are graphic instances in many of the stories, but coupling that sort of decadence with a lengthy plotlessness in which images meander around each other in confusion and general chaos bewildered me as a reader trying to piece together a narrative. This sort of puzzlework is something I usually enjoy, but here it just fell flat – which is not good for pornography.

?I?E???? says

Warning Massive fucking swearing up ahead!

I don't write many reviews but I just had to explain why I rated this 1 star. The second story in this mindfuck of an anthology is about a girl named Chris who was repeatedly sexually abused by her fucktard father. She grows up and finally moves out, but because of the abuse, she has problems connecting to anyone. She dumps her boyfriend because he fucked her while she was sleeping without a condom. She knows she's bi but doesn't want to be a lesbian even though she prefers women. This is where the story gets bat shit, balls to the wall, crazy. She meets a girl at a bookstore and they go out on a date. They end up messing around, just kissing and they fall asleep. Chris wakes up to the girl going down on her but then she starts feeling a lot of pain and then an explosion of pleasure. It turns out that Chris was pregnant from her dumbshit ex-boyfriend, and this girl, while going down on her, sucked the fucking fetus out of her and ate it, slurping sounds and

all!! She's like a vampire hybrid that needs live fetuses to survive, so she glamours people into having sex with each other and as soon as there is conception she aborts the fetus the same way she did Chris's. Well Chris is spooked at first but then gets over it, she tells her she loves her and wants to be the only one to "feed" her, which means getting pregnant all the time by random men. I swear my uterus was fucking cramping from reading this!!

There's also a psychic element to what this girl does. She can erase any bad memories and people associated at the time of conception. So of course, Chris wants to forget ever being abused by her father, so what do they do? They go to his house and she fucks him, her own fucking father!!! She "luckily" gets pregnant the first time out so she doesn't have to do it again and her girlfriend removes her memories of his abuse along with the fetus.

This was the most fucked up story I have ever read. What kind of disturbed weirdo thinks of writing something like that!!! How in the fuck is this supposed to be erotica as the title of this book states??? It's too bad because I really liked the first story, but now I'm just too disgusted to go on.

Alex says

I love Poppy Z. Brute but was disappointed to learn she only edited this book and had written no short stories among the bunch. A lot of the stories were good but most forgettable. I would still read the second anthology book though.

DeAnna Knippling says

A reread.

If you're looking for a balance between the erotic and the horrific, well, it's overbalanced toward the horrific, and most of the stories seem to miss some crucial element of appeal--the beginnings waste pages clearing their throats; the paragraphs meander aimlessly; the endings go off the rails or stop before the resolution, let alone the kiss-off.

The book came out in 1994, though: twenty years have passed, and the Sexy Vampire craze isn't running full steam. I have the benefit of hindsight now, and can say that there were a couple of good stories, but a lot of them I skimmed or even skipped to the end.

Ones I particularly liked:

"The Final Fete of Abba Adi," by Jessica Amanda Salmonson
"Queen of the Night," by Gene Wolfe
"The Marriage," by Steve Rasnic Tem and Melanie Tem
"The Alchemy of the Throat," by Brian Hodge

Lipsy says

I don't know what it is but I just can't get along with short stories. I have trouble writing them, and I have trouble reading them. I always want more, I always want it go somewhere it doesn't have time to go, and most of the time I finish them thinking...'what was the point?'

That said, I did enjoy some of these 'tales of vampire erotica', but many I started and then skipped. I was surprised to see a story from Nancy Holder in here, who I recognised as one of the writers on Buffy (same person, right?)... a far cry from that, that's for sure.

Overall I understand why Brite put these very different stories together but I wanted it to be more 'Brite-ish' and less 'The Hunger' if that makes any sense at all.

Ungelic_is_us says

My feelings about this book are deeply, deeply mixed. I think it's an excellent vampire-themed sexual horror collection, but I don't think the majority of the stories are remotely erotic. Just because something has sexual content, doesn't mean it's sexy. I have a hard time imagining anyone finding the majority of these stories very erotic. I mean, what is erotic about a ten year-old boy watching his prostitute mother have sex with a john through a crack in the door, and then seeing him suck her emotional capacity away and turn her into a catatonic? I suppose there must be someone who finds that idea sexy, but I don't know that I'd want to be writing for them.

Don't get me wrong--I think that story was one of the most powerful in the collection. But I can't see it as smut. These stories deal with rape, coercion, incest, child molestation, sadism and violence. These are not themes I like to get into during my, ahem, private time. A couple of the stories were genuinely triggery. But nearly all of them were excellently written and quite effective horror stories.

I think the "erotica" tag may just have to do with the publishing industries' tendency to relegate anything with sex to the romance/erotica corner. It feels like such a misnomer to me. Then again, what do I know? I mean, Rule 34 exists for a reason.

DoctorM says

As erotica, not so good. Too much self-conscious splatterpunk posing, too little actual sex or exploration of vampire sex that goes beyond the tired and overdone. It's only "Cafe Endless: Spring Rain", Nancy Holden's small gem of a story about desire and pain and longing in Japan that saves the collection at all.

Dharia Scarab says

Don't buy it, definitely not worth the money. Out of 20 stories, maybe 3 were ok. The rest were pretty bad.

This collection was more horror than erotica and only half the stories were about traditional vampires. Far less than should have been in a collection of "vampire erotica".

Since I don't normally write reviews unless I have something specific to say, here's the break down of how I rate my books...

1 star... This book was bad, so bad I may have given up and skipped to the end. I will avoid this author like the plague in the future.

2 stars... This book was not very good, and I won't be reading any more from the author.

3 stars... This book was ok, but I won't go out of my way to read more. But if I find another book by the author for under a dollar I'd pick it up.

4 stars... I really enjoyed this book and will definitely be on the look out to pick up more from the series/author.

5 stars... I loved this book! It had earned a permanent home in my collection and I'll be picking up the rest of the series and other books from the author ASAP.
