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Tamara Thorne

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DARK SECRET

Perched on a fog-shrouded hillside high above an isolated California coastal town, the once-opulent inn was neglected for decades. Now restored to its former glory and filled with well-heeled guests, The Candle Bay Hotel and Spa owes its remarkable renaissance to its new owners, the Darlings. Yet the seemingly all-American hosts hide a chilling, age-old family secret...

INNOCENT ARRIVAL

Lured to the picturesque spot, assistant concierge Amanda Pearce is mesmerized by her surroundings—and by her seductive new boss, Stephen Darling. But the odd behavior of her employers during the day and suspicious bloodsplatters in the hotel fill her with an overwhelming sense that something sinister is going on.

BLOOD WAR

Little does Amanda know that not only are the Darlings vampires, but that a murderous vampire vendetta is about to begin. The Dantes, a vampire clan nearly exterminated by the Darlings a century ago, have come back to seek vengeance and steal a potent elixir—a potion as precious to vampires as blood itself. As the lethal feud unfolds and her feelings for Stephen deepen, Amanda faces the greatest decision of her life—to die or join the forever undead.

Candle Bay Details

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Author : Tamara Thorne

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From Reader Review Candle Bay for online ebook

Steph Moyer says

This book is about vampires. True born vampires and human vampires.

Julian, a true blood and maybe a bad guy, has this potion/elixir that heals humans, lets true blood vampires walk in the sunlight and kind of turns human vampires crazy. So, he trades some of it to the Darlings, a family of human vampires, so he can stay at their hotel. Because there's some treasure under their hotel that he needs. The Darlings all start going crazy, except for Ivor because he's paranoid. Yay for paranoia, apparently. Also, the hotel has a new concierge, Amanda. Julian thinks she is his lost love reincarnated, but she has the hots for Stephan Darling and thinks Julian is creepy.

I liked this book, up until the end. It didn't give me much closure. I know what happened to two characters after a big fight with a big baddie. What happened to everyone else? There were deaths, how were those handled?

Good book other than that.

Jessica (a GREAT read) says

So many many years ago, I read two of Tamara Thorne's books, Haunted and Moonfall, they were incredible! They were creepy scary and just down right frightening in some sense. So I decided I wanted to give her vampire novel a try, Candle Bay. I was expecting the same sort of creepy scary story that scared teh beejesus out of me, but that's not exactly what I got unfortunately.

That's not to say Candle Bay was a bad read, it was quite good. Sort of like one of my usual Urban Fantasy reads, except a bit different. Amanda, our heroine, isn't the fighter chick kicking ass, she's normal. Blissfully normal. She decides to be an assistant concierge at the Candle Bay Hotel and Resort, as she was always fascinated by the hotel growing up. And naturally, she's given the late shift.

But what we know and Amanda doesn't know is that the hotel is run by vampires. The Darlings, a family, run the hotel. And even vampire families have their troubles.

There was a lot of vampire history to be understood in this story. One fact being the difference between human vampires and trueborns. Pretty simple, human vampires are humans that get turned into vampires-- basically the vampire we all have come to know and love in some instances--and then the trueborns are ones that were never human. That they were just born vampires. You might wonder, so are they babies forever? The whole never aging process shitick. Well, that gets explained, rather simply too. It's different for all vampires and the aging just stops at a certain point. Usually in the height of life, mid-20s to early-mid thirties or so.

Julian, a trueborn vampire, is living it up in the hotel. It's clear early on, that he is no friend to the Darlings. He's looking for the famed Treasure that is said to be hidden in the tunnels below the hotel. And trying to find the entrance to said tunnels has been anything but easy. He's a tricky character to understand, he has a natural born hate for all human vampires, yet he gives the Darlings this special concoction that heals vampire bites. But it does a bit more than that too, not that he tells them that. The concoction soon becomes a drug to the Darlings, one that cannot get enough of. It plays on their base vampire instincts, and that of course is to

drink blood. Which leads to some nasty results.

For a nearly 500 page read, this book was surprisingly fun to read and quite fast paced too. I just had a busy few days, otherwise I likely would've finished it in 2 days instead of 3. Two of the Darlings, Ivy and Lucy are teenagers, they were turned into vampires during their teenage years--sucky age to be stuck at forever--and they are quite the pair. They have definitely taken a liking to their vampiress. They are rather...eccentric, perhaps? I struggle with the word. Nothing fazes these girls. They like sex, no matter who the other person is. They like blood. They like power. They are just pretty freaking creepy if you ask me.

What becomes sort of a funny chapters long event is when the twins accidentally kill one of their hotel guests. They hide the body in a laundry cart, intent on getting rid of the body, yet the cart keeps getting moved...like all over the hotel! Then another guy is trying to show it to the Darlings thinking that it's from their enemy vampire clan the Dantes, but when he tries to show it the Boss, it's gone! Then Amanda, our heroine stumbles upon it and thinks it's a prank, but she isn't too sure about it. It was quite funny, something that kind of reminds me of something you would see in an Abbot and Costello movie!

Anyway, as I am getting off track here, but again, the book was 28 pages short of 500, there's a lot to discuss! Amanda has caught the eye of two of our resident vampires. Stephen and Julian. But with Julian, there's something more to the attraction and that is Amanda reminds him of someone he once knew from very long ago in his early vampire years of life. But Amanda is a bit more drawn towards Stephen.

Oh and did I mention Amanda loves to read paranormal books?! Of course it isn't said like that, just that she enjoys all things ghost, werewolf, ghoul, whatever, and of course vampire! Be they movies or books! And she doesn't always share this fact else she has to endure endless teasing--hello my life! Yes, Amanda and I could have been the best of friends back in the day!

There's quite a bit of mystery surrounding the Treasure. That's what the story tends to focus on. Julian wants to find it, the Dantes want to find it. It's a pretty hot commodity! And we do get tales from Julian regarding his past and what eventually leads to what the Treasure is! It was all very exciting!

The ending...now here's where things get a tad upsetting. There's confirmation on the Treasure and that tale of the story ends nicely. But then there's the whole fate of Amanda that is up in the air. And for all the characters really. What will they do now? What's going to happen to them next? It's all unclear. For every single one of them. I usually don't like that kind of ending with my standalones. There's too many unknowns. I could be fine with not knowing what the secondary cast will do, but I am more curious about Amanda and her options. Although it's alluded to what her choices were, I just don't like knowing for sure, you know? Alluding is one thing, but knowing is another entirely.

And another thing that I didn't mention but feel like doing here is that there were quite a few deaths! These vampires are not always the kind hearted ones we see usually. They kill. Sometimes with intent and sometimes accidentally as well. Just a little something to throw out there!

Overall, it was a decent read. I enjoyed it all for the most part. The pacing was good, at times it was a mite slow, as it was told in third person from many characters' points of view. Which always lets you know what's happening and with whom. I was hoping for a little more terror, if not horror. The other two novels I read did scare me quite a bit while reading during those summer nights! Yeah, not recommending do that again, but I loved the thrill of the terror I got! Here, I didn't get that really. But it was still a decent read. Sort of another book that sets the course for Urban Fantasy reads...minus the kickbutt heroine and the ultra dreamy vampire man. He's dreamy, but he and the rest of them are still killers.

So would I recommend this one? Totally! If it sounds like one you might like to read, definitely give it a try! I was actually debating if I wanted to put this one in my Halloween giveaway next month, but I am not sure yet. What do you guys think? If you've lasted this long with my review--kudos to you and a virtual, imaginary cookie--would you consider reading this one if it was given to you?

verall Rating 4/5 stars

Christine Bowles says

Well, I think the fact that it took me nearly 2 months to read this one should be an indication of how much I liked it. And if it wasn't, I was sur eto give it only 2 stars. I enjoyed most of the book, was ever sure I would finish it rather quickly, but by the midway point I found the story slacking off. I wasn't thrilled with it to say the least. I wish it had been better.

Maybe some time in the future I will try ot give another one Of Thorne's books a go, but at this time I am not wholly impressed with her style or witing. Maybe in the future, though.

Jonathan says

Candle Bay is the third book I've read by Tamara Thorne. I almost feel suspect leaving another 5 star review, because I rated her books Haunted and Moonfall 5 stars. But, I have to rate Candle Bay 5 stars as well. I guess her style of writing is just my one of my favorites. Again she blends horror with subtle humor which is rare. Hell she could probably redesign my phone book at this point and it would be 5 stars. I'm sure it would have my neighbors all classified as "Freaks, Do-Gooders, Pompous Asses, Sex Maniacs, and Those That Must Be Avoided (at all costs). Anyway I'm off topic, Candle Bay is a vampire novel. I don't really like vampire novels, so I didn't think it would have the zing of the last two. And I will admit, it took me longer to get into than her other novels, but once I met the "twins" it was page after page of glee, interspersed with general creepiness. There are two classes of vampires in her world, Trueborns and human conversions. And there seems to be a class war among them, although Trueborns are extremely rare, maybe there is only one or two left. Julian Valentyn, a trueborn, shows up at the Candle Bay hotel after making a deal with the human vampires that own it. In return for protection, he gives them an elixir which, when rubbed on bite wounds, heals them. Makes it easier for them to snack you know, better logistics. But he isn't telling them what his real plans are, or who he really is. The elixir has some side effects too, and that vampire family, given more time, would soon need a vampire Jerry Springer to help them sort out their issues that the elixir is the true cause of. So the twins... the twins were my favorite. Ivy and Lucy. They were out of control to begin with, and the craziness just gets crazier when the start on the elixir. It was great fun, Coast Eddie the Candle Bay DJ was great, and I could just hear his silky voice warning people about what lurks in the fog. Well, I'm rambling now, but this is a great book, it will make you laugh, cringe, and in a few places open your eyes wide in shock. I highly recommend it.

Nenia ? Queen of Literary Trash, Protector of Out-of-Print Gems, Khaleesi of Bodice Rippers, Mother of Smut, the Unrepentant, Breaker of Convention ? Campbell says

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This book is a *tease* - it is all bark and no **bite**, and when I'm reading a book about vampires, I want alllllll the bite, baby.

I love books about vampires, particularly vampire novels published before TWILIGHT. For better or for worse, TWILIGHT was a game-changer for the vampire subgenre, removing them as figures of horror and placing them firmly within the camp of other romance heroes. I've read some excellent vampire romances, but part of me - the dark part of my soul that comes alive at night - yearns for those sinister figures of yore, who were less interested in kissing and pining on about their eternal loneliness and more about the BITING. YAS.

CANDLE BAY was published in 2001 and even though it has romantic elements, it's definitely more horror than romance, and anyone picking it up expecting romance is going to be disappointed. The premise is pretty unique. Amanda Pearce is a newly hired concierge at a clubby hotel and spa near San Francisco. She's always been attracted to Gothic horror and things like vampires, so the misty, reclusive resort really appeals to her romantic sensibilities - and so does her tall, dark, and handsome employer, Stephen Darling.

The Candle Bay Hotel and Spa is managed by the Darlings, who are all very good looking - and all vampires. There's Orion, who fancies himself the next Godfather; Natasha, the femme Dom who likes to work hard and play hard; Stephen, the brooding romantic; and the evil twin daughters, Lucy and Ivy, who swing both ways and are completely psychotic and out of control. Living with them is another vampire named Julian Valentyn. Unlike the Darlings, Julian was BORN a vampire and not MADE - something that puts him a cut above the others, and which he doesn't fail to lord over them.

In addition to a "Will they/won't they?" between Amanda and Stephen, there's also a bit of a love triangle between Amanda and Julian, because Julian feels a connection to her due to events in his past. Those events make up the bulk of the plot driving this story forward because there's something hidden in the tunneling basements beneath the Hotel, and that something is *alive*.

CANDLE BAY is not a short read and it went on for way too long. There are many pointless asides that bog down the narrative and all of the sex scenes are disgusting. I don't mean disgusting because of gore (although that too); I mean disgusting because of how they are written. I'm hoping to post this review on Amazon, so I

must refrain from posting salacious content, but please check out some of my Goodreads status updates for a "greatest hits" recap of some of the choice sex scenes in this book.

I also feel like there wasn't a lot of payoff. I was expecting hotter scenes between Amanda and Julian and Amanda and Stephen. The only people having sex in this book for the most part were secondary characters, which brings me to my next issue with this book: EVERYBODY GETS A POV. This is exactly why I didn't like Paula Hawkins's new book, INTO THE WATER - if there are too many people running around, it's harder to become invested in any specific person and they all start to blur together after a while. To her credit, Thorne gives all of her characters distinctive personalities (which Hawkins did not), but this makes the blurb seem misleading, because you think that it's going to be all about Amanda and Stephen getting it on, when in fact it is not.

Also, this is the SECOND vampire "romance" I've read with an Atlantis connection, and yes, it is just as ridiculous as what FOREVER AND THE NIGHT tried to do. At least this book didn't involve angels. Seriously, if you ever want a laugh, check out my review of FOREVER AND THE NIGHT.

I feel like I should give this book a low rating but can't quite bring myself to. I was vastly entertained by CANDLE BAY and couldn't put the book down. Even the terrible sex scenes were incredibly entertaining. This is basically the Bertrice Small of vampire novels - it's disturbing and badly-written, but the story is such a compelling train wreck of a mess that you can't bring yourself to look away.

Thanks to Heather and Karly for joining me in this BR!

P.S. The Chelsea Quinn Yarbro reference in this book was A+

3.5 stars

Nancy says

book would have gotten 3 stars if ending wasnt so weak

Karlyflower *The Vampire Ninja, Luminescent Monster & Wendigo Nerd Goddess of

Canada (according to The Hulk)* says

Late to the party as always..... half drunk and blurry eyed....

Buddy-reading, of a sort, with the Queens of Trash and Awkwardness.

SFReader says

http://www.sfreader.com/read_review.a...

Heather *Awkward Queen and Unicorn Twin* says

The book synopsis says that it's "Twilight for adults." I don't entirely agree with that. One, this was way weirder and bloodier, hence the adult part. (Also, there were some frightening things happened with penises.) Two, *Twilight* was nearly all romance, and this was... not.

Although every single character in the book gets a POV, Amanda was the main character. Yet she is eclipsed by more exciting and fucked up POVs, such as Lucy and Ivy. The psycho vampire twins just bicker and play pranks and fuck things up even when they're trying to help. They had so many POVs I was soooooo tired of them, even though I thought they were somewhat interesting at first.

I was really looking forward to Amanda's romance with Stephen, and later, the sort-of love triangle with Julian. Both vampires sneak into her room at night to bite her and accidentally scare her, and even though she's asleep she's kind of into it. But that's about as far as that goes, except for a couple of kisses with Stephen. In fact, Natasha's romance with Douglas (I thought his name was David, but I went and checked the book and that's actually the name she gave to his massive penis) was more involved. I was actually rooting for Natasha and Douglas, whereas Amanda/Stephen/Julian offered me nothing but frustration.

There was an odd little character named Aardvark who had nothing to do with anything, and gave cute little aardvarks a bad name, but I noticed this line from one of his POVs: *preying on liberals wherever he found them*. Another vampire book I read also had a strange vendetta against liberals, in that they were the only acceptable prey, along with people who watch porn. I am baffled. What does the vampire world have against liberals and porn?!?!?

This book was both fast-paced and a slow read—like quicksand, as my buddy-reading partner Nenia put it. I really wanted it to step back from the plot and focus on the characters. I thought the setting was nicely done, however, and there were some fun quotes.

As imperfect as humans were, they made excellent fertilizer.

Ah, Julian. Your psychotic tendencies were so promising in the beginning. But I still rooted for you even

though you turned out to be kind of soft and a bad schemer.

"Why do you hate us?" Natasha's voice was strong.

"You will address me as 'Father.'"

"Why? Your own son won't do it."

Burn!!!!

And last, my personal favorite:

The Father emerged from the darkness and stepped into a toilet bowl.

And on that note, thanks for the BR, Nens! (And Karly, who is late getting started! PSA: Don't start it.)

Chip says

More like 3.5. Not my favorite but not a bad vampire story.

Peggy says

Got this saved for you too. This hotel is full of those pesky, sexy vampire`s & one wittle human...lol...*smack`s blood smeared lip`s* lmao

Laura Ruetz says

While I didn't love this book, I didn't hate it. It had some good elements, especially the mythology of vampires, which was the best plot element. The writing was decent and the story was good but it seemed too riddled with cliches and the characters all seemed flat and one dimensional. I would have loved to have had the characters be more complex, it would have made the story more engaging. overall, a decent read for those who like vampire fiction, but it needed a little more.

Karen Jones says

I'm not into the current vampire craze, but I enjoyed this horror story about vampire/human hybrids running a hotel in Candle Bay, CA. There's the typical Thorne sex and humor involved. Almost as good as Haunted.

Todd Nelitz says

I have never been interested in vampires. Then I read this gem by Tamara Thorne. I read it in about three sittings. A wonderful take on an old genre. The characters were delicious and the story addicting. Looking forward to the sequel that is currently in the works. Bring on more of the Darlings!

Elke says

Another book I desperately wanted to read since it first came out, but managed to do so only 10 years later for several dumb reasons:

1. delayed purchase until it was out-of-print - aargh
2. couldn't find an affordable used copy - grmph
3. let it sit on my shelf for fear it might not meet my expectations

Talk about missed opportunities...almost...

But back to the subject:

My expectations for Candle Bay have always been high in the sky, due to its summary which got me hooked immediately, mostly positive reviews all over the web and my appreciation of other books by its author. As you may already guess from the rating, the book indeed met my expectations! *wipes brow*

I simply loved the creepy atmosphere created by the ever-present fog surrounding the Candle Bay hotel, as well as the weird radio DJ's paranoid warnings of things that may lurk in the dark.

The characters are well drawn, each with its own little quirks and secrets, and keeping the vampires very human despite their vampiric nature. Like Uncle Ori, who deems himself the godfather of the Darling family but is not taken too seriously by his relatives, who humour him anyway. Or the mischievous twins, spoiled brats who just want to have fun and never think of the bloody consequences. Just your usual everyday family madness...

The story itself was well developed and I liked the open end, leaving enough room for a sequel, which unfortunately was never released, but fortunately is not required either. I enjoyed and smiled at the references to other books, movies and persons as well as the measured wit in deadly serious situations (pun intended). As the cover suggests, the novel also contains some romance, but fortunately it is only a further ingredient and not the main course.

I guess the book Highly recommended, and not only to vampire aficionados.
