



# Between a Vamp and a Hard Place

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## **Between a Vamp and a Hard Place** Jessica Sims

Lindsey Hughes loves antiques and couldn't be happier to make a living in the estate sale business. But when her assistant accidentally buys an entire estate without her approval, Lindsey is forced to clean up the mess herself.

Lindsey travels to the newly purchased, age-old house in Venice, Italy, and soon discovers more than she (never) bargained for. While digging through the hoarder's trove that fills every floor, she finds a secret staircase behind a wall that leads to a strange coffin...with an even stranger inhabitant.

Vampire Rand FitzWulf has been in his coffin for 600 years. But now that he's awake, he's ravenous, and there's a delicious-smelling woman with a rare blood type in his basement. Luckily, Lindsey has more to offer than blood: she agrees to travel throughout Europe with Rand to help him get revenge on the one who turned him. But as the unlikely pair grows closer, will the vampire be overtaken by his thirst for blood—or his thirst for love?

## **Between a Vamp and a Hard Place Details**

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Author : Jessica Sims

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# From Reader Review *Between a Vamp and a Hard Place* for online ebook

## Marlene says

Originally published at Reading Reality

First of all, as the author states in a Goodreads post about this book, even though a lot of the promotional material for this book said that it was #5 in the author's very popular *Midnight Liaisons* series, it isn't. It's not even in the same universe as the *Midnight Liaisons* series.

And color this reader disappointed. I was expecting another story about the *Midnight Liaisons* paranormal matchmaking agency. I love that series, as reflected in my review of the fourth book, *Must Love Fangs*. Let me put it this way, I love this series enough that I mostly buy them instead of getting free ARCs. Unfortunately for the purpose of a trail of evidence, when I spend my own money I don't always write a review.

The *Midnight Liaisons* series is purely snarktastic fun with a paranormal romance twist. For a good time start with *Beauty Dates the Beast*, and keep reading until you can't stop laughing out loud at the dialog. Then keep reading so your buzz continues.

*Between a Vamp and a Hard Place* is a beast of an entirely different color, type and species. It's a lot closer to Kerrelyn Sparks' *Love at Stake*, Katie MacAlister's *Dark Ones* or Lynsay Sands' *Argeneau* series. Those are series where rich vampires in the 21st century meet modern women and get their attitudes dragged into modern times as they fall for each other in spite of all sorts of barriers both real and imaginary. The story is told mostly for humor, with a slice of HEA, or should that be bite, added for spicy good times.

In *Between a Vamp and a Hard Place*, would-be antiques dealers Lindsey and Gemma have one month to clear out an abandoned apartment in Venice in the hopes that they will find something worth the \$10,000 that Gemma paid for the privilege. They do find antiques. They also find a vampire who has been dormant for six centuries with a stake through his heart. A lot of traditional vampire lore gets skewered in the service of fiction, but that part works pretty well.

Rand FitzWulf has a lot to learn about the 21st century and the women in it. But before he can, or if he can, settle down to life with his new blood vassal Lindsey, he has to find the vampire who ordered his staking all those centuries ago, and do unto him before Rand gets done onto again.

In this fish out of water story, Rand ends up charmed by Lindsey, and Lindsey falls in love with Rand. How much of the start of their relationship is due to Rand's powers is an open question to the reader. And how much Rand's love for Lindsey has its roots in her extra tasty Hh blood group (which does surprisingly exist) is an equally questionable conundrum.

But as Rand and Lindsey chase his nemesis across Europe using his vampire "spidey-senses", the slightly lost vampire and the in way over her head modern woman become partners, friends and eventually lovers.

Lindsey always believes that her time with Rand is temporary, but when they come face to face, and fang to fang, with the original Dracula, no one expects to get out alive as Lindsey, Rand and Gemma trip over themselves trying to save each other.

It's so crazy it just might work. But at what cost?

Escape Rating B-: Some of my rating is due to my disappointment. I just didn't get the book or the experience I was expecting.

On the other hand, the scenes of Lindsey choking down garlic to make her blood poisonous to Rand's enemies were absolutely priceless. It sounds awful, but the descriptions are awfully funny.

The way this story is set up is an interesting way of dealing with the vast power differential between a vampire and a human, especially a relatively young one. Lindsey starts out feeling a bit sorry for Rand, and Rand is forced to admit he needs Lindsey as his guide to the 21st century, and for that he needs her willing and not under his thrall. He can force her into doing whatever he wants, but when he does that he loses access to her knowledge of how the world works. And he needs that knowledge badly. Understanding a language, which he does by magic, is not the same as understanding the meaning behind it.

So there's a strong feeling of Stockholm Syndrome in Rand's love for Lindsey. And an equally strong feeling of responsibility in Lindsey's love for Rand. He needs her and she needs to take care of him. It works for them, and it works as part of a very high-stakes road trip to Hell. But I just wasn't totally sold on the romance. I could see them bonding, but I couldn't see them staying bonded. Of course, things change.

Between a Vamp and a Hard Place had lots of interesting bits, and Lindsey's and Rand's banter is often hilarious. But this story just didn't put the bite on my happy place the way that the Midnight Liaisons books do.

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### **Chris C - A Midlife Wife says**

Oh to have the imagination some authors have. This lighthearted read was a delight in every way. From the first page this author had me all in.

What was different about this book, you ask? I loved the story and strong characters to start. It is not easy to take a page from history, add some literary license, and then develop a story around it. This book is a blending of two different times; a match up between yesterday and today. I loved the way the author crafted her Vamp. He is a warrior who is loving and caring too. A wonderful balance for the unafraid and tough Lindsey who decides to fight for her man. The connection between the two was fun and endearing. You almost wish you could find a guy like Rand to have as your own.

This quirky book tells a story that blends a bit of humor with a bit of seriousness. Good against bad. Powerful against evil. I loved how the author looked at the world today in the eyes of a 600+ year old man. Funny and insightful! You cannot help but laugh at many of his experiences.

This book has all of the qualities we look for in a pleasurable read. Jessica Sims strongly combined an intelligent story with wonderful characters, some mystery and suspense, humor, and delight throughout this book. I loved every bit of this fun book.

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## **Brenda Ayala says**

Look at that cover. Just look at it. You know exactly what kind of book you're going to get with a cover like that.

This is officially my first read from Comic Con 2016! One of the many I got from the publishers as I was circling the publisher booths like a shark zeroing in on prey. This one was skinny and easy to hold in one hand, which was especially useful when I had giant bags full of other books.

I went into this knowing exactly what I was getting. What was surprising was that I actually enjoyed it! The story was a good one, enough that I had a pleasant time reading. I'd classify it as a beach read since it's light and quick. Rand's desire for revenge is actually one of the main drives of the novel, not just the blossoming romance between he and Lindsey.

Lindsey was a great protagonist too. She was feisty and sexual and consistent the whole way through. So many times authors will give us a main character who is supposed to be sarcastic and headstrong but then she's a giant wimp. Lindsey was not one of those. I had a grand old time rooting for her and Rand because they were worth rooting for, surprisingly.

Sex scenes were on point too. Not too ridiculous and not too many of them. I would have liked a little more about Lindsey introducing Rand to more modern sexual positions, but alas that thirst will go unquenched.

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## **Valerie says**

What a fun vamp book. This one had me laughing out loud as Rand, the just woke-up six hundred year old vampire, tries to adjust to the modern world. And then it had me cheering for these two to get together. Finally, it had me hunting for a solution to their problem and finding none. What a great triple wow!

Loved the pace of this one. The pages turned quickly and I was always surprised when I looked up to find I read as much as I had. Finding a gorgeous vampire and trying to figure out what to do with him while hanging out in a sold estate trying to get your antique business in out of the red made a great story. And while I saw some things coming early on, the dynamics of their problems escalated to a point that I saw no solution. And that just doesn't happen very often. As it turns out, I was quite satisfied with the ending. Had me happy and even giggling a bit. Great story.

The characters are fun, funny and dynamic. Rand is perfect. With the alpha male and Renaissance man vibe he has going on he had me seriously laughing out loud. Doorknobs confused him, cellphones had him jumping and riding on the train was miraculous to him. I enjoyed watching him explore the modern world while he got to know Lindsey. He was drawn to her blood but he really did get to know her. And when a guy like him falls, it's pure pleasure to watch. Then there was Lindsey, she's pretty sure she shouldn't be falling for a vampire but she can't help it. Guys aren't on her agenda and she's been alone for a while but she learns the depth of Rand and she just can't resist. They really are adorable together.

I can leave out Lindsey's bestie, Gemma. She swears with the best of them, makes some questionable decisions and is the best comic relief. I loved her. Oh, and she slept with a vamp. Yep. It happened. Hehe.

The heat is high and the connection between these two off the charts. They both try to resist each other and it only adds to the sexual tension. I was glad they didn't just jump into it. They spent time together and got to know each other. They tried to do what was best for each other. It made the yummy times between them more for me.

A great story, wonderful characters and high heat had me enjoying this one well into the night. If you enjoy paranormal vampire stories, this one is a great fast read that will leave you satisfied.

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### **Cheryl says**

If you are over vampires you just might get back into them with this book. I know I will be finding more books like this...romantic comedy with a paranormal twist. Rand is your typical tall, dark, sexy vampire but the way he looks to interact and communicate in the 21st century is funny. Especially the language barrier between him and Lindsey. There is laughs to be had. The way that Rand kept calling Lindsey a "wench". Then there is Lindsey's best friend, Gemma. She also brings comedic relief. I had a very enjoyable time reading this book. Because of all of the laughs and the characters I was able to get lost in this book and was speeding along reading this book.

The storyline was a good one. Very believable and plenty of action and romance. I could feel the deep connection involving Rand and Lindsey. They may have come from different centuries but they show that time does not matter when it comes to love. I will be checking out more books by this author.

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### **Darcy says**

Eh...I found myself bored while reading this one. I almost dnf'ed it a few times, now that I made it through the whole book I wish that I would have. I thought the whole set up with Lindsey finding Rand was unbelievable, things didn't get much better with his actions and how things went down with the battle with the "Dragon". Rand's reaction after in the hospital made me roll my eyes, how could he forget how to speak English. When this one ended, I was glad to be done with it.

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### **RJ says**

"I know exactly who staked me. It was a blond whore with large tits and bountiful thighs. My last memory is of her riding my cock."

"I thought it was just a blonde with big thighs. Now it's more than one? Exactly how many wenches were you bedding at once?"

"Last night? Four."

Annnnnnd, I'm out. Thanks for the visuals.

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## **P.A. Lupton says**

This book hit the spot perfectly for me. I was in the mood for a good vampire book, and this was exactly what I was craving. Rather than changing up the vampire lore, this author chose to make her vampire subject to all of the weaknesses from famous books like Dracula. We had the coffins, garlic, holy water, crosses, stakes through the heart, and everything else. Authors have been trying to one-up each other by writing the most unique version of vampires (yes, I'm including the sparkly ones) that it was nice to have someone go back to the classics.

Normally, I'm not a fan of how this book ended, but this author pulled it off well and gave a very satisfying epilogue that made it work for me.

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## **Jill Myles says**

No ratings, because, yanno, authorbeast.

I am mostly commenting to say:

- 1) The blurb says the hero is a billionaire. He is not. I'm not sure how that landed there. I took it out several times and it still made its way onto the cover. C'est la vie.
- 2) The book says it is #5 in the Midnight Liaisons series. It is not! This book completely stands alone and is not even in the same 'universe'. The vampires in that series are not the vampires in this series.

The more you know and all that. :)

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## **Ramblings From A Chaotic Mind says**

Are you in the mood for a fluffy paranormal romance with some humor and suspenseful elements woven in effortlessly? Between A Vamp and A Hard Place gives readers all that and more in true Jessica Sims fashion. Her writing flows seamlessly throughout each book, setting the scene and drawing the reader in with ease. She paints a picture that I can place myself in and soon I'm lost within the pages. Never too dark, her books are exactly what I gravitate toward in between books that leaving my craving the light.

In need of some good luck, estate buyer Lindsay, finds herself and her business partner in a foreign country going through some rich hoarders apartment looking for sellable items to get their fledgling business some traction. Finding a hidden basement isn't surprising but finding a coffin with a vampire inside certainly is. Pulling out the stake brings him roaring back to life but Rand has been asleep far longer than he imagined. Hundreds of years have passed and now he needs help finding the person who imprisoned him within the coffin and the reluctant Lindsay will have to do. Leading the old fashioned vampire through Europe looking for his maker isn't what Lindsey should be doing but the hot vamp certainly has a way with convincing her

to go against her instincts.

Even though this wasn't a hard hitting paranormal there wasn't a dull moment as Rand and Lindsay traipsed around Europe searching for his band of brothers and their maker. On the way they learned to effectively communicate and overcome Rand's overbearing, out-dated ways. Being such an old vampire, and having been asleep for so long, Rand had to catch up in regards to conversation and treatment of females. Lindsay, though exasperated at times, made sure to put him in his place each time he stepped out of bounds.

As weird as this may sound, I loved how Sims made the story line more believable than other paranormal romances. I can't really go into details since that may give away some things but Rand's ability to do a lot of things was tied to the fact that his maker had already learned them, therefore making Rand (and his brothers) able to do them as well since it filtered down. When situations changed so did Rand's ability to do them which was an awesome and brilliant addition to a genre where little surprises me these days.

Between A Vamp and A Hard Place is a light paranormal romance with hints of heat and suspense that readers across the genre will enjoy as much as I did!

I give Between A Vamp and A Hard Place by Jessica Sims 4 stars!

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## **Lillie says**

This book was one word: frothy.

Entertaining (although not for me) but light on substance.

Or reason.

Reading this book was a chore. Not cause it was badly written (the pacing was really my only problem with the writing style tbh) but because I kept coming to inconsistencies, things that didn't make sense (realistically or in context of the story), or things/events that were simply silly.

One thing I like in books is *immersion*. The ability a writer has to take something unimaginable and make it imaginable, to take something that would never happen in real life and make it come alive.... And yet I kept constantly coming to things that just brought me right out of the story.

So in the end, even though I liked the premise, the story just wasn't doing it for me.

I had this pretty big rant ready (I've retyped this three times now) but I've come to the realization that this book shouldn't (and hopefully wasn't meant to) be taken seriously. So I won't review it seriously. Not the way I'd like to anyway.

The characters don't act realistically (ignoring their two-dimensional characters to start with) and often come off childish or over the top, too easily ready to accept the impossible events taking place. There was little to no research or effort put into the book (don't get me started on how many times I went NOPE when someone would say something about the hero's past in the middle ages that was very not true). And the plot moved so quickly and in such outlandish ways that I can do nothing BUT not take it seriously.



If I do I'll have an aneurysm.

So despite liking the premise, I have to say this book was a bust for me. It might be entertaining for someone looking for a quick read that doesn't require a lot of thought involved but since i've never been the "no questions asked" type of girl, I'll pass.

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### **Ezinwanyi says**

This audiobook was cheeky and light hearted and amusing. It is the kind of book you want to read when you don't want anything complex and deep. It was superficial on world building and character development but high on amusement value.

Lindsey Hughes and her best friend Gemma ran a barely in the black antiques business. As they were trying to figure out ways to infuse some cash into their business, Gemma attempted to purchase some valuable items at an estate sale. It turned out that Gemma purchased the entire estate in Venice, along with all the items it contained.

Lindsey and Gemma travelled to Venice, Italy to get an inventory of their items in hopes of finding a treasure in the midst of the items. Something of interest was a hidden staircase behind a false wall, and it was holding a really nice coffin. Instead of finding rare gems, Lindsey discovered a man asleep in the coffin.

Rand FitzWulf had been in the coffin for over 600 years before he was found by Lindsey. Now that he is awake, he is eager to find out what happened to him all those centuries ago. Thus began the friendship and adventures of Rand and Lindsey.

I chuckled a lot. I mean, it used most of the same vampire clichés: garlic, holy water, dirt from hallowed ground but I still had fun with the characters. Lindsey was likable heroine as was her friend Gemma. Rand made me laugh as he still had his old ways of life such as referred to women as wenches. The characters worked well together and it appeared didn't take themselves too seriously.

If you are looking for a story that was sweet, simple and comical, then this one is for you.

*Special Thanks to Tantor Audio for the audobook given in exchange for an honest review.*

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### **Jennifer says**

My life has been crazy these last few weeks. If I were to list everything that has happened, it would sound like complete fiction. Needless to say, I am in need of intense escape. I've had my eye out for a strong PNR - heavy on vampires - as this is my comfort genre. That sounds ridiculous but this is the genre/subject that gave me my spark for leisure reading so when I find a good vampire romance, it feels a bit nostalgic and reminds me how fun and full of escape reading can be.

With all that said, Between a Vamp and a Hard Place didn't do it for me but it almost did. Unfortunately, it felt one-dimensional and a little too cutsie for my personal taste, but I finished the book so I must have liked

it overall. I'm still on the lookout for a PNR to hide out in for a few days so if you have some recommendations then PLEASE let me know!

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## **Marianne says**

For ancient vampire with mind reading capabilities the dragon certainly was a fool.

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## **Tanja ~ T's Book ~ KT Book Reviews says**

Between a Vamp and a Hard Place is my first time reading Jessica Sims. In all honesty, I didn't know that this was the fifth book in an existing series. Having said that, not having read the previous books did not hinder my reading experience at all.

Two roommates (and business partners) are in Venice to hopefully reap the rewards of an estate sale. Finding great antiques and selling them online is a job for Lindsey Hughes as well as a calling. It's when she stumbles upon a 600 year old vampire that things take a turn for the unexpected and otherworldly.

So... the down and dirty. I had a hard time believing reactions and acceptance while reading. It was a bit too much of insta-everything. Time to accept things and move on does happen, it just comes off somewhat immature and unrealistic at times. Having said that, I was totally invested 'til the end. I wanted to know what would happen and by whom. I needed closure to the mystery as well. I totally got it and I'm glad I kept reading until the end.

I dunno guys... I didn't LOVE it, but it wasn't a bad read either. I know authors hate a wishy-washy review and I hate that mine is; but what can I say other than my honest thoughts? I am sure Midnight Liaisons has a fan base and that they will love it.

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