



Daughters of Artemis

S.L. Armstrong (Editor / Contributor) , Della R. Buckland , Marie Carlson , K. Piet , Shashauna P. Thomas , Erik Moore

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Werewolf lore has long been dominated by tales of the strong alpha male, but what of the strong alpha females? The Storm Moon Press anthology "Daughters of Artemis" explores this mostly neglected aspect of the werewolf mythos, with an erotic twist.

Bounty hunter Toni McGowan has faced supernatural beasts that would send most running, but her latest assignment may be the toughest yet--playing babysitter to a New Ager wannabe. Jade Nicols, though, has a few secrets of her own, the darkest of which may just get them both killed.

Luna Rivers isn't the most graceful of people at the best of times, and being stalked by shadowy figures and prowling wolves hardly qualifies. But after being rescued by the beautiful and sensual Syrene, Luna learns that there is more to herself than she'd ever suspected. She's a werewolf, too, and in a whole new world of danger.

Andrea---Andy to most---is a pack leader in the forests of Washington state. Poaching in a nearby pack's territory throws suspicion on Andy's leadership. In order to find the truth, Andy and her mate Fiona find themselves forced into an uneasy alliance with Rafael, the other pack's alpha.

Susan Runningwind is forty-five, but already strong enough to have earned a seat among her pack's elders. Jesse Westfield is a documentary filmmaker investigating the so-called "Werewolves of South Dakota." But when Jesse begins to get too close to the truth, Susan must make a choice between her pack's welfare, and the growing attraction she feels to the younger woman.

Sasha is the first female in the kingdom of the shapeshifting House of Wood to be granted leadership of her own pack. The transition is hardly smooth, however, and Sasha winds up at odds with Aneira, her mate. Failure to maintain control of her pack would mean demotion and shame, but doing what she knows she must could drive Aneira away forever.

When werewolf Katya captures blind weretiger Yun alone in the wilderness, she sees only an opportunity to finally end the raging conflict between their two peoples. Yun remains loyal to the tigers, though, and as time passes, Katya finds herself less and less inclined to force the information from her. But when the fight comes to them, both will see their loyalties tested in the crucible of battle.

Daughters of Artemis Details

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From Reader Review Daughters of Artemis for online ebook

Dide says

In whole this book doesn't provide optimal satisfaction as a lesbian novel and less as a wolflore. However, three stories did serve well with my expectations such as The Fire of Her Eyes by K. Piet, Luna's Mate by Shashauna P. Thomas and To Pierce the Sky by Erik Moore. Looking forward to reading other stories by them

Alex says

Overall

It's been a long time since I've read lesbian romance, and even when I did, I was very particular about it, favoring romances to erotic tales. Please keep this in mind when considering this review.

Anthologies are always hard to judge, since the writing varies, both based on strength and personal preferences. This anthology was a mix of mediocre and good, with just about every other story being well written. For fans of the genre, this will be an enjoyable dip into several different worlds with varying takes on werewolves and steamy scenes between our heroines. It's worth a shot if these two things push all your buttons, but the stories aren't strong enough on their own to tempt an outsider.

The Fullness That Love Began by Marie Carlson

A story that focuses more on sex than plot, there are several major issues that arise during the story. However, all the Big Deals aren't dealt with by the end, and although it "leaves you hanging," I didn't feel frustrated. It feels like it's the beginning of something bigger, but I wasn't involved with the characters enough to be worried. A bit too sex heavy for my liking, especially as the first in the anthology, but people may feel differently about it.

The Fire of Her Eyes by K. Piet

Starting and ending with action, this story has a nice lull in the center where everything becomes peaceful and domestic, letting the reader see how the characters react in urgent, political, and romantic settings. The difference and variety quickly develop the characters and the bond between the two leading females. Everything flowed nicely and the story was well constructed.

While she is arguably the more secondary of the two characters, since she's not the narrator, Yun stole the show for me. With her quiet strength, awesome ability, and talents, in addition to her blindness, she is very likable. Plus, the sensuality described between the two characters in bed gives the sex scenes a greater purpose than the tawdry. A nice, compact glimpse into this wolf pack.

Luna's Mate by Shashauna P. Thomas

My first impression of this story was that it was going to be humorous because the writing style seemed to focus on the silly: Luna's bad luck and clumsiness. However, it quickly turned darker as Luna is attacked by wolves and her luck just seems to get worse from there. The plot line had great potential as the awkward misfit finds her place in the world after two harrowing encounters.

However, I was never able to really enjoy this story because the writing kept me from sinking into the

characters and really being absorbed in their problems and emotions. The writing wasn't bad, but it wasn't smooth enough to let me forget that I was reading. I felt like I was being told more what was happening than being shown it, although things were written in an active voice. Part of the problem could stem from the feeling that this was a larger story clipped into a short, thus it left the author trying to prune facts to be able to fit into it, making some of the writing come across choppy.

To Pierce the Sky by Erik Moore

I'll be honest, I had a little snicker at the title, because sometimes I have the maturity of a twelve-year-old. However, this is a good story, with nice pacing, and interesting if not unimaginative characters. The conflict and resolution are believable and realistic (which I think we can agree are different things when talking about a world with werewolves). Susan also had a character development point that I thought worked well for her history and her character and helped make her more interesting.

The story takes place in a Lakota tribe (of werewolves, of course), and mixes tradition with modern conveniences, as well as doing an excellent job of weaving white and Lakota culture/myths. And since it did make me laugh at first, there was a good reference of the myth in the title. Overall enjoyable.

Protect the Moon by Della R. Buckland

This short action fantasy felt a little too cliche for my tastes, as the (special) big, tough werewolf is sent to protect the (special) new-age witch. Much of the story seemed to happen without much explanation as though it was just a taste of the world, although it didn't really entice me to want more. It read like it was pulled from a table top RPG, from the specificity of clothing and weapons and the set up of the politics to the amount of detail given to the characters' appearances.

The writing was stiff, probably due to the consistently short sentence structure, although I recognize I'm hypersensitive about this. In addition, Jade presented as an innocent woman who is being sucked into a world that's bigger than she thought. Several of her actions in the beginning of the novel take an almost wicked angle once the reader has knowledge of the facts at the end. I didn't like her, didn't trust, and wasn't sure our lead female should trust her either.

Sacrifices by SL Armstrong

The werewolves in this story weren't really werewolves, although wolves were the theme of the group of elves. The culture and society in which this story takes place seems deeply involved, although the reader is only given a glimpse. Although I'd liked to have learned more, I appreciate that the story wasn't burdened with information and the reader is left to make some leaps and fill in some blanks. However, that being said, some clarification on what exactly the characters in the story *were* would have been helpful. Things were a little too vague at times.

Still, this was an enjoyable story where the main character has to appease her King, her mate, and her pack while also finding her own happiness. While the plot didn't blow me away, the writing was strong and it was a good finish to the anthology. It's also interesting to note that the first and last stories in the group both involve het sex and child bearing.

Received this book for review.

Be sure to check out my other reviews on my blog.

Nomad says

Alright, this book was a major disappointment. Normally I enjoy short story collections, but I prefer them to all be written by the same author, anthologies are a collection of short stories written by different authors and as such tend to be very uneven. This one was more uneven than most... and because of that it was very disappointing.

The first story was abysmal, just awful. It read like a series of ideas that the writer had fly into her head, that she then committed to paper. It opens in the middle of a sex scene and the ending isn't really an ending, because NOTHING get resolved.

The second story was pretty good. A slice of life in a woman's week in learning that the things that go bump in the night are real. There were loose ends left dangling, but unlike the first story, it left you wanting more, not feeling irritated.

The third story was also pretty good, exotic setting and mingling of both species and races. It's nice when writers move beyond the werewolf for story ideas. A unique take on being disabled was used in this story and all in all the whole thing worked for me. I wasn't expecting it to, but it did.

The fourth story COULD have been great. It COULD have been awesome... and when it came to character development within a short story framework it was. But it was so overloaded with Native American racial stereotypes that it ruined it for me. The writer wrote the Lakota Nation tribes without doing much research into them. And for anyone who has, it blatantly shows. Also, he writes a modern day tribe hunting with spears and cooking raw and fresh kills over open fires and members of the tribe living in teepees.

WTF???

I'm sorry, but the Lakota are not stuck in 1890, and portraying them that way is grossly offensive. Writers out there... do better. Passive, sterotypical racism may not be entirely intentional, but it is still inexcusable in the internet age of easy research.

The fifth story was even more abysmal than the first. It read like a high school creative writing assingment with supernatural creatures and lesbianism. The dialgoge was stilted and completely lacking in contractions. Nobody talks that way and it brought me out of the story over and over again. The setting was a town about 90 minutes from where I live, so it was sort of fun to recognize the places she was talking about, but that was the only pleasure to be had. The plot was bad and the dialogue was worse... and the sex was ACTUALLY laughable.

The sixth and final story was good, but not great. It wasn't bad, but it wasn't something I would reread either. It's a fantasy story that has werewolves and elves... or elves that turn into werewolves... I'm not really sure. The story had fabulous potential, but too much was going on to have it work well as a short story. This was at LEAST a novella jammed into a very short story and the whole thing suffered for it.

I would very much like to read it given a novella or novel length treatment, but as a short story it fell far too short. Many fantasy stories do as the genre requires so much world building to be comprehensible.

All in all VERY uneven and VERY disappointing. Could have been a great way to introduce F/F werewolf PNR to a wider audience... but it falls so far from achieving that mark.

Snott says

This is an anthology of stories about female alpha werewolves. All of the stories contain female wolves having sex with other females, one or two stories also contain sex with males. As with most anthologies I enjoyed a few of the stories more than others but overall they pretty good.

Sally says

On the one hand, it's a shame werewolves haven't had quite the same level of literary exposure as vampires, because they have so much more potential. The act of transformation, the duality of spirit, and the tense dichotomy between domesticated human and wild animal make them so exciting to explore. Unlike vampires, there's never an end to the seduction or to the transformation, which means there's far less risk of the story growing stale.

On the other hand, that lack of exposure is also a relief, in that werewolves haven't been de-clawed to the same extent that vampires had been de-fanged.

Daughters of Artemis is a really fascinating collection, with its own duality of spirit and tense dichotomy between horror and eroticism. Given the pack mentality of werewolves, and the traditional focus on the alpha male leader, it's really exciting to read a collection of stories about female werewolves who are both leaders and lesbians. Additionally, it's wonderfully rewarding to find authors who remain true to the wild mythology, while finding creative ways to make the stories contemporary.

The Fullness That Love Began by Marie Carlson

This was a fun story about suburban werewolves (complete with jobs at Microsoft), hunting rights, pack alliances, the war of the sexes, and the emotional conflict between love and procreation. Visually, the focus here is definitely on the human side of things, but the politics are all werewolf, and the sex is just wild enough to cross (and re-cross that line).

The Fire of Her Eyes by K. Piet

A much more traditional a tale about werewolves in the wild, with a danger triangle between werewolves, weretigers, and human hunters, this was definitely my favourite story in the collection. The romance between Katya, leader of the wolves, and Yun, blind tiger outcast, is simply gorgeous, and their lovemaking is both wild and sensuousness.

Luna's Mate by Shashauna P. Thomas

After two tales that proudly thrust us into the midst of the pack, with alpha females well-established and in charge, this is a nice step back to the story of a 'normal' girl on the run from wolves. Luna is just a great character, and we really get to see her transform emotionally through her meeting with feral destiny, and her seduction by the sexy Syrene is delightful to behold. The tone of the writing didn't quite match that of the story, but I loved how it first set, and the upset, all expectations.

To Pierce the Sky by Erik Moore

Combining themes of the first two stories, this one was an interesting look at a contemporary werewolf tribe,

established within a Native American culture. I liked how the cultural clash between Native and Caucasian was contrasted with that of the werewolf and the human, and I thoroughly enjoyed having the tables turned, with the virgin werewolf being seduced by the white woman who has come to interview her.

Protect the Moon by Della R. Buckland

Although a decent story on its own, this fantasy tale suffers from comparison to the stories around it. Whereas the others walk that fine line between mythology and reality, allowing us to imagine the story could be happening just behind that line of trees, this is clearly a tale of another time and place. That in itself isn't an issue for me (I love epic fantasy), but it feels artificial here. Full of action, but without the sensuality or the drama of the others, it just came across as kind of flat.

Sacrifices by S.L. Armstrong

Another story firmly rooted in the realm of fantasy, this is a large part of why the previous story suffers in comparison. The characters here are easy to love, the writing flows beautifully, and it's probably the sexiest story in the collection. Like the first story, the themes of duty and obligation are key here, with Sasha having to balance her King, her pack, and her mate. The werewolves are definitely not traditional, but it's kind of fitting that the collection end on a creative twist.

Overall, a very strong collection, and one that I think has broad appeal – no pun intended.
