



Eternal

Cynthia Leitich Smith

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With diabolical wit, the author of TANATALIZE revisits a deliciously dark world where vampires vie with angels -- and girls just want to have fangs.

At last, Miranda is the life of the party: all she had to do was die. Elevated and adopted by none other than the reigning King of the Mantle of Dracul, Miranda goes from high-school theater wannabe to glamorous royal fiend overnight. Meanwhile, her reckless and adoring guardian angel, Zachary, demoted to human guise as the princess's personal assistant, has his work cut out for him trying to save his girl's soul and plan the Master's fast-approaching Death Day gala. In alternating points of view, Miranda and Zachary navigate a cut-throat eternal aristocracy as they play out a dangerous and darkly hilarious love story for the ages.

Eternal Details

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Author : Cynthia Leitich Smith

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From Reader Review Eternal for online ebook

Parthena says

The writing style definitely seemed geared more towards young adults than adults, but this was one of the most sad yet inspiring romance stories I've ever read, in mostly a good way.

The story opens as young Miranda, unpopular and awkward, tries to live life a little more dangerously in order to impress her more popular and edgy friend. They creep into a graveyard at night to meet some guys they have just met, and, unfortunately, this is her entry way into the life of the undead as she is attacked and kidnapped.

Zachary, her invisible guardian angel, has been watching over her since she was born, and over time his love has grown into romantic love as she approached adulthood. The author really does a good job of conveying his sense of protectiveness and tenderness towards Miranda, and his sorrow when he fails to prevent her death.

When the characters meet later on in the book, it is apparent that Miranda has changed, and almost all of her humanity has eroded over the years..but not all of it.

This love story is infused with sacrifice, redemption and plays a large part in the battle between good and evil. Very well done; it's not often I come across a book aimed at teenagers that is so emotionally impactful. I don't normally compare authors, but this love story affected me way more than Stephanie Meyer's "Twilight" ever did. The characters have much more dimension.

Shannon (Giraffe Days) says

Set in the same present day, alternate reality world as Smith's first book, *Tantalize* (which I haven't read), a world of shape-shifting vampires living on the fringe, of were-animals of all kinds, and some very sexy angels, *Eternal* is a sweet story with some pretty gruesome touches.

Miranda has always been the shy, quiet one, following along in her best friend Lucy's shadow, eyeing cute boy Geoff from afar, aspiring to theatre but lacking the confidence to get up on stage. Her parents are divorced and she's an only child growing up in Dallas. Perhaps the only quirky thing in her life is that she thinks her bean bag is possessed - it's always in a different shape when she wakes up in the morning.

It is possessed: by her Guardian Angel, Zachary, who's watched over her since she was born. But one night he sees a dark cloud of Death wreathing her face and knows her life is going to be cut unnaturally short. Admitting that he's in love with her, he does the ultimate boo-boo: revealing himself in order to save her life.

Only he hasn't saved it. Miranda has instead been taken off by the king of all vampires, the Dracul, and converted to vampire and his heir. The vampires are hierarchical in the extreme, arrogant, blood-thirsty, possessive. Her new life is spent tip-toeing around her moody new "Father", who is slowly going insane, and forgetting about her human life. What she needs, like all aristocratic vampires, is a good Personal Assistant. So she puts out an ad for a PA and nets incredibly hot Zachary, who's on a new mission from God.

After a slow set-up the book doesn't really pick up until Miranda and Zachary are reunited, and even then not a great deal happens. While I was reading it I enjoyed it, but afterwards I felt disappointed and unsatisfied. It could be the ending, or the very chaste love between the two leads, or the slight goody-goody flavour to the whole story, but my opinion keeps dropping the more time goes by.

What I did like were the two leads, who both had enough character and snap between them to entertain, plus Zachary's sense of humour, which was a delight. The urban fantasy world it's set in is only moderately sketched out, which is a shame because it's quite intriguing. It has that level of blood-thirsty nastiness as the more adult series, like Sookie Stackhouse and the Women of the Otherworld, but it's left as a superficial surface world.

Eternal has enough originality and humour to make for a decent read, but uses too many cliched elements to really stand out. I hate to say but there are the obvious and notable *Twilight*-isms, which seem unavoidable these days no matter the author's intentions. Smith won't be able to escape them here. Speaking of which, I did find that while the love between Miranda and Zachary was clearly spelt out, it wasn't really *shown* - so I didn't really buy it.

Perhaps it's a failing of the YA genre (I hope not), but it seems that the books are getting very brief, and not delving into the worlds and characters deeply enough to satisfy. Smith would do very well at writing adult paranormal romance (as long as the characters throw off their celibacy), because the writing's a similar loose style, easy to read, very much focused on the overall plot. Still, it's a light, fun read with a deeper message that I choose to ignore because, let's face it, it's a well-worn message.

Holly says

I didn't have very high expectations for **Eternal** because I didn't particularly enjoy **Tantalize**. So I was pleasantly surprised when it became an interesting read.

Zachary is Miranda's guardian angel...and he's in love with her. When Miranda becomes a vampire, Zachary is blamed and must correct things. With the help of a friend or two, he sets out. I don't want to say much more for fear of spilling something.

I really liked the guardian angel aspect of the story. I love angels and Zachary was so pure, yet human it was completely real. Miranda's "father", the Dracula, brings back the vampire that kills mercilessly. It's completely refreshing in that respect, even if some of the implied details are enough to make someone feel cautious.

Apparently the only reason this is a companion to *Tantalize* is because there's going to be a third book, *Blessed*, that combines the characters from both books. So really, if you haven't read *Tantalize* yet, you'll be just fine to read this first.

Gunne says

Girl has guardian angel who loves her.

Girl is turned into a vampire against her will.

Her guardian angel breaks the rules to try and save her.
Her guardian angel is stripped of his wings and radiance.
Hence the story of a fallen angel who loves a vampire princess.

I love the concept of this. I really do. It's like a middle finger to Stephenie Meyer: "You think it's cool to have a vampire fall in love with a human? Let me show you the kind of extremities you can *really* indulge in, you half-wit pseudo-storyteller!"

Unfortunately, Smith doesn't really have a flair for words. Her characters, though wonderful in their... species, are a little flat. There's no distinguishing traits for any one person, much like how Meyer writes her books. I'm kicking myself and feeling frustrated because here you have a potentially awesome romance transcending species, yet the characters themselves don't leap off the page, making you really love them. And yeah, I love to feel passionate about fictional characters. If I could I would consider asking J.K. Rowling or Jonathan Stroud or Neal Shusterman to re-write the dialogue and re-tell the entire story, keeping only the main frame of the plot (the synopsis I wrote in my first paragraph).

Such a waste.

Jeanine says

After reading "Tantalize" I didn't know what to expect from "Eternal". I didn't expect for vampires and guardian angels to be thrown in a novel together, that's for sure. I really enjoyed this story and loved how Zachary's and Miranda's relationship unfolded.

I would have given this book a five-star rating if it weren't for the lack of emotion during certain times in the book where emotions should have been so high that the reader's heart's ache for both Miranda and Zachary.

Overall, I loved how Ms. Smith takes us back to what Vampires should be and have always been before Twilight: frightening and hungry :)

Mary says

Meh.
Just meh.
Boring, cute story with forgettable characters.
I own(ed) a copy of this, or else I wouldn't have bothered finishing it.

Cindy says

I'm giving this 3 stars--some of its content makes me reluctant to recommend it to some of my teen customers, but its overall appeal (vampires! a love that cannot be!) and the manner in which Smith turns some HoRo conventions on their head make it a worthy read.

At first glance, this seems like standard teen HoRo--unappreciated/unpopular heroine is recognized for the wonder that she is by much older, all-powerful, all-knowing supernatural who protects her from the Big Bad

Vampire lurking in the shadows. Cue the hearts, the flowers, and the happily ever after. Here's where Smith turns everything on its head, though--that protective supernatural, Zachary, is not a vegetarian vampire with a heart of gold (although he does sparkle). He's a guardian angel. And he's not all-powerful or all knowing. In fact, when it comes to his heart and his impulses, he's all too human and through an extreme error in judgment he causes the girl he loves from afar, Miranda, the girl he's sworn to watch over, to fall into the hands of the Big Bad. And before you know it, Miranda's joined the ranks of the blood-sucking undead and is working her way up to being the new Big Bad on the scene. What's a guy to do when a mandate from Heaven says he's got to take out the girl he loves?

Most of the story is told from Zachary's perspective (How novel, teen HoRo from the male point of view!) and he's not your typical leading man. Or an especially likeable one. When an angel falls, he falls hard, and Zachary's hit bottom, spending his days in drunken debauches and tattoo parlors. As a result, we learn little of Miranda's early days as a vampire. For much of the story, in fact, I found Miranda to be a very unsympathetic and unlikeable character--before vamping she was shy and unable to stand up for herself in most aspects of her life (although she'd learned to manipulate her mother fairly well). Post-vamping she's fairly heartless, cruel, cold, and well, bloodthirsty. But that last goes with the territory, I suppose. I very much enjoyed her transformation when Zachary re-enters her life--at last, Miranda grows a spine! And while she may have developed concern for the human cattle in her "care," she's ultimately still a monster. Being a vampire has allowed her to take manipulation and scheming to new heights. And while she may be "doing the right thing"--it's not necessarily for what we, the readers, the non-fanged, would consider the right reasons. Miranda's still one of the villains of the tale. I found that very refreshing.

ETERNAL fits very nicely into the world of weres and vampires Smith created in her earlier book, *TANTALIZE*. There's no character overlap, they just share the basic mythological framework that allows for the existence of weres (definitely) and vampires (possibly) that should allow for more stories in this universe.

The book's not without its faults, however. The subplot with the friend (Lisa? I've already forgotten her name.) who devotes a web page and ongoing search for the missing Miranda should've been developed further or dropped completely. Its inclusion felt forced, especially Miranda's anonymous posts to the blog at the end. The inclusion of the captured weres also seemed rather unnecessary, unless it was to cement their existence in this universe.

I was also disappointed by a trend I'm seeing in teen horror and fantasy lit lately--extremely adult elements of a violent and sexual nature are creeping in, making me a bit squeamish about recommending them to teens as a whole. (Yes, Holly Black & Melissa Marr, I'm talking about you, too.) There's references, some oblique, some...not so much... to BDSM, fetishism, and various other sexual practices. Not to mention fairly explicit scenes of death and dismemberment. This one's not for the faint of heart--there's no fade to black when it comes to the murder of humans, vamps, or weres in this book.

The other trend *ETERNAL* subscribes to, unfortunately, is the "I'm older, smarter, more supernatural, and better than you" and therefore must protect you, tell you what to do, and stalk you from afar. Or right here, in the shower, or from the beanbag beside your bed. (Ugghh. That's just downright creepy.) I'm becoming increasingly annoyed by this--Edward is, of course, the king of stalkers, but Zachary gives him a run for his money. I miss the days when the female protagonists of teen novels actually took care of themselves, rather than having men do it for them. Thankfully, Smith dilutes this quite a bit--by the end of the novel, Miranda is most definitely thinking and acting for herself, and doing a right fine (if gruesome) job of it, too.

Will fans of Stephenie Meyer enjoy this latest entry in the swelling ranks of teen HoRo? Some of them will, undoubtedly. Some of them, however, will be extremely put off.

If you're not squeamish, can handle the idea of an angel with most decidedly un-angelic thoughts, and are willing to try things from the "I'm a vampire and you're food" point of view, this one's for you.

Trin says

Cynthia Leitich Smith read all that hoopla about angels being the new vampires and wings supplanting fangs as the primacy source of teen wangst, and she was like, "Whatever, bitches, I GOT BOTH." She's also got a sense of humor, which really, really helps a lot. *Eternal* features a guardian angel named Zachary, the highlight of whose life existence is "shower time" with his charge Miranda naked under the spray—at least until, whoopsidaisy, he lets Miranda get turned into a vamp. Pervy angels, legitimately murderous vampires: this book is just dark and twisted enough for me to enjoy it. Not love it—the ending gets mawkish and preachy in a way I could really do without—but I was amused. That's really all I'm asking for with these things, anyway.

...Okay, all right, truthfully, *it's not*. I really do want an epic supernatural love story, one that's funny and dark and sexy and badass and that lacks the ooky gender stereotypes that are so prevalent in most teen fiction (though not this book, mostly, thank whatever). I want one of these silly books with their designed-by-Hot-Topic covers to make me feel like a good episode of *Buffy* could back in the day, like the world is something beautiful and tragic and still, somehow, worth fighting for—especially in a sleek leather jacket and kicky boots. *That's* what I want, what I'm asking for every time I pick one of these things up.

But I have learned to take amusement.

Jessica (Goldenfurpro) says

This and other reviews can be found on The Psychotic Nerd

MY THOUGHTS

Technically, this book is a companion to another book, *Tantalize*, but there is hardly anything connecting the two books. To be honest, I wasn't that big of a fan of *Tantalize*, but I already had a copy of this book, so I decided to read it anyway.

This book has two points of view: Miranda and Zachary. Zachary is a guardian angel and Miranda is his charge. When Miranda ends up being turned into a vampire princess, Zachary loses his wings and becomes a fallen angel. While Miranda is discovering what it's like to be a vampire, Zachary is trying to find a way to save her soul.

I had issues with Zachary from the beginning. I know that he is her guardian angel, but it was annoying that he would call her "my girl", when she didn't know he existed. He was also in love with her. The romance isn't even in the book for a majority of the time. Then they kiss once, near the end, and suddenly they are soulmates. This was very unbelievable.

I was, honestly, okay with the story in the beginning, but it went downhill when the "romance" was

introduced. Though, the book is very slow-going. I didn't feel like anything was really happening until the end. The characters are also flat and the dialogue is awkward.

IN CONCLUSION

I wasn't a big fan of this book. Yeah, it wasn't my kind of book to begin with, but the characters, romance, and overall writing didn't help.

The next book is supposed to combine *Tantalize* and this one, but I do not feel inclined to continue the series.

Tamora Pierce says

This is the quirkiest tale I've read in a long time! Guardian Angel Zachary loses his wings and his status when he interferes with his charge's good death and Miranda becomes the vampire king's newly adopted daughter. Now Zachary must pull himself out of his drunken tailspin and see if he can salvage what's left of the coolest young vampire's soul before it's too late for either of them--if it can be done. After all, in Miranda's new life she's rich, popular, adored by her new father, dressed to the nines, and immortal. What's worth losing all that for?

Just having to know how the characters were going to get around the rules of the royal household, and the deadly vengeance of Miranda's new dad, towed me from page to page. I just had to see how it came out!

Bark says

I have not read book one in this series and listened to this as an unabridged audio borrowed from the library (love my library!).

Miranda is an ordinary enough shy teen struggling with belonging, cliques and all of that high school stuff that means nothing once you graduate. She humiliates herself by trying out for the school theater group and plans to spend yet another Valentine's Day watching movies with her best friend because neither have a boyfriend. But their plans change and she ends up in a cemetery where she is accosted by a vampire who makes her one too . . . Yikes. She also has a guardian angel named Zackary who loses his wings when he exposes himself while trying to change the path of Miranda's life (or death).

Fast forward a year or so and Miranda is now a vampire. This whole thing was bothersome in the fact that so many events and feelings were just skipped and it seemed like lazy writing to me. She's a vampire but we don't get to experience how she adjusts with the angst of it all. We're just told that she's finished up with her soul sickness time or some such nonsense and she's now a gorgeous bloodthirsty beast of a princess. She calls her maker "Daddy" and seems to love him dearly simply because he lavishes her with \$1000.00 t-shirts and custom made gowns and of course plenty of fresh bodies to torture and slaughter. Shallow much? Her complete character turn-around didn't work for me because her year of "soul-sickness" was glossed over. I needed some genuine, gut-wrenching sorrow to buy this but didn't get it. In fact, she didn't seem to miss her previous life at all.

Meanwhile, Zackary sans wings is given a new assignment involving Miranda though he doesn't know it. Somehow they fall in love but I never bought it because neither character was developed well and their love

story thus was not believable. The ending did work for me. Sadly, this could have been a deep, emotional five star read but fell flat due to the shallow character building and the lack of any real chemistry and bond between the characters.

Kristy says

2.5 stars (generous)

Okay, so it wasn't to terribly horrible. It is a completely different story and set of characters from 'Tantalize'. When I first started reading and it seemed to be going in the route of guardian angels, I was on board. But, as the story develops it's really more about vampires, which is okay I guess, but something was not working for me in this one at all.

Book info: Miranda is a typical shy-girl teenager who just happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. She goes to a graveyard (STUPID) on halloween night with her best friend and ends up 'dying', but not really. Her guardian angel steps in to save her life, only for her to be taken away by the "father". When Miranda awakes, she has lost most of her humanity and her new father drills into her to be a crude, self-serving vampire with no regard to human life. Enter Guardian angel. He's in trouble for saving her and is cast down on a mission from above. He thinks his job is to destroy the father. But really it is to get Miranda to see her humanity again.... Blah, Blah Blah.

To me the character Miranda is hard to like, it feels like we know nothing about her.... I also feel like I am reading a book written by a robot. It's like she is writing what she thinks we'll like. Whew, she was off by a landslide!

Sidenote: Why does the back of this say "Fans of Twilight will like this"??? Sorry, I am a T fan, but this is not even remotely as well written or thought out as Twilight. (I know to a lot of you that is not saying much.) Other thing it points out is that "Smith is the Rice of this generation" They really didn't just compare this *cough* garbage *cough* to "Interview with a vampire did they?!?!?!?!"

I can't think of anyone I would recommend this to. Don't read it unless you are seriously bored and into crap books.

Adrienne says

I've given this 4 stars because I really don't know what to make of this and 3 stars seems very mean for something that I actually quite enjoyed so I guess really it's a 3 1/2 but again that seems wrong! Ok all this sounds a little contradictory but the story was good, the vampire world was unusual as the vamps were mean, nasty, blood thirsty types, and the angel thing was good even though there's a lot of that going on now, there were subtle elements of other darker things which I quite liked too. I like the protags Miranda and Zachary. So why am I wavering? Well somehow, somewhere there wasn't enough for me, something just some teeny weeny element was missing, I don't know whether it was the lack of actual lust between the H/h or the depth of the story which could have had more..... but I really wanted more from this. However what was there was good, the writing was right up my street with first person POV from both H/h, with lots of tongue in cheek

humour and great one liners, there were also the darker elements I mentioned earlier which makes me wonder what kind of adult books CLS could potentially pen. So all in all I'm left in a quandry with this one. Will I read the next one? yes because I'm curious now as to how H/h will be re-united.

Misty Baker says

6 or 7 months ago I ran across this book and instantly felt the need to read it, unfortunately (as would be my luck) there was no Kindle version. So there I was... watching it taunt me from my wish list until finally I decided to put my big girl panties on and actually purchase the physical book. This final shove into adulthood however, did not come without reservation, after 7 months of updated comments and crap reviews, I was a little bit doubtful of how good it was actually going to be.

Of course... I had to judge for myself, and I'm glad I did.

See, there is this newly formed phenomenon called the “Meyer’s Effect” it rears its ugly little head anytime a YA novel is released and spouts the now daunting words “Vampire” and “Romance.” Regardless of the premise or plot intentions of the book, people are automatically inclined to compare and contrast it to the “Twilight” series.

Please people, for the love of all that is holy, you have to stop doing this.

“Eternal” was fantastic in an entirely NEW way. The story follows 2 lead characters, Miranda, who due to no fault of her own ends up a vampire, and Zachary, her guardian angel, whom...coincidentally is the reason she is now guzzling blood instead of Sprite.

Zachary, overwhelmed by guilt and self pity turns to a life of drinking and partying, that is... until his boss, Archangel Michael, sends him on a mission.

Save Miranda...and save yourself.

The story is a wonderful journey of determination and the ability to maintain free will, regardless of your current circumstances.

The writing was a tad choppy in places (mostly the beginning) but once the plot was in full swing, I hardly even noticed. I will make it very clear though that I thought the ending was brilliant and fitting, I don't see how softening it would have done the characters any justice. (Trust me when I say this was a matter of much debate in the previously mentioned reviews.)

There were personalized coffins complete with Nascar emblems, 1 serving of maid tongue, a vampire debutant ball, holy water dunking tanks for those who misspeak, the nosiest father on the planet, and one hell of a killer battle scene.

If you like vampires...and you like sarcastic pissy fallen angels...buy the book you will enjoy it. But if you are looking for a smattering of romance and heartfelt speeches, better luck next time, cause this is not for you.

Happy reading my fellow Eternals and remember: cherubs aren't angels, they are just fat little short dudes

with curly hair.

fleurette says

One of the worse books I've ever read. No plot, no character development, no background. It looks like few notes made by author to write a book. Boring and annoying.
