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A Stroke Of Midnight (Meredith Gentry, Book 4)



Synopsis

I am Meredith Gentry, P.I., solving cases in Los Angeles, far from the peril and deception of my real home—because I am also Princess Meredith, heir to the darkest throne faerie has to offer. The Unseelie Court infuses me with its power. But at what price does such magic come? How much of my human side will I have to give up, and how much of the sinister side of faerie will I have to embrace? To sit on a throne that has ruled through bloodshed and violence for centuries, I might have to become that which I dread the most. Enemies watch my every move. My cousin Cel strives to have me killed even now from his prison cell. But not all the assassination attempts are his. Some Unseelie nobles have waited centuries for my aunt Andais, Queen of Air and Darkness, to become weak enough that she might be toppled from her throne. Enemies unforeseen move against us—enemies who would murder the least among us. The threat will drive us to allow human police into faerie for the first time in our history. I need my allies now more than ever, especially since fate will lead me into the arm of Mistral, Master of Storms, the queen's new captain of her guard. Our passion will reawaken powers long forgotten among the warriors of the sidhe. Pain and pleasure await me—and danger, as well, for some at that court seek only death. I will find new joys with the butterfly-winged demi-fey. My guards and I will show all of faerie that violence and sex are as popular among the sidhe as they are among the lesser fey of our court. The Darkness will weep, and Frost will comfort him. The gentlest of my guards will find new strength and break my heart. Passions undreamed of await us—and my enemies gather, for the future of both courts of faerie begins to unravel.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Solving a double homicide, avoiding assassins and coping with growing, sometimes uncontrollable, power keep faerie private detective Princess Meredith NicEssus (aka Meredith Gentry) busy in the fourth and strongest entry in Hamilton's adult fairy tale series (after 2004's *Seduced by Moonlight*). When someone murders a fey and a reporter during a press conference inside the Unseelie's headquarters, Merry calls in the cops to assist (and inadvertently involves the FBI as well). But once on magical turf, human police face challenges and dangers of which the princess was unaware. Meanwhile, Merry lives up to the five fertility deities in her lineage and lustily fulfills her royal duty of mating with sidhe males and making sex beyond mere human comprehension. As Merry matures, the meaning of all the sex and magic comes into more effective focus, as does Hamilton's underlying mythos of the restoration of the faerie race's true power. The absence of complicated politics results in a more palatable plot than in previous volumes. By the end, the Unseelie court seems to be tiring of Merry's super-sadistic Aunt Andais, the Queen of Air and Darkness (as are, most likely, many readers). The queen's son and Merry's rival for the throne, Prince Cel, looms as an even greater, more corrupt menace to her future. Faeries, fornication and forensics fuse for yet another darkly fantastic frolic for Hamilton fans. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Praise for Laurell K. Hamilton's *A Kiss of Shadows* "I've never read a writer with a more fertile imagination." "DIANA GABALDON's *Sizzling . . .* Memorable characters and wicked wit make it all delicious, ribald fun." "Publishers Weekly's *Caress of Twilight* "Sensual, without a doubt . . . This book moves like a whirlwind." "St. Louis Post-Dispatch" "[A] sexy, tension-charged dark fantasy mystery." "Locus" *Seduced by Moonlight* "This [faerie] society is one of the most detailed, imaginative, and lovingly drawn in all fantastic fiction, and the Meredith Gentry series has become something special." "San Jose Mercury News" "Hamilton's books [are] must-reads." "The Denver Post" --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm a big fan of these books which overall, aren't very highly rated. I think it's because the series is so many things besides erotica and make no mistake about it, no matter what they're marketed as,

these are erotic books. You've got romantic erotica + mystery + suspense + paranormal + urban fantasy, it's a lot to take in. Merry Gentry aka Princess Meredith and her posse of bizarre lovers have a PR nightmare on their hands after the murder of a human reporter takes place inside the unseelie faerie mound. This fourth book in the series has a much less developed plot than the others so I can't give it a full five stars. It was rushed in places but I still really enjoyed it. Hamilton's writing transports me to whatever weird whacked out world she wants to put me in. It's all about the writing for me and however odd she gets, this woman can write.

Hamilton has done it again. She has taken a series that started off promising and lost it in the sexuality. I'd normally write a more wordy and intelligent review but this time I just don't care to try and say all that flowery stuff. The first book of Hamilton's I read was *A Kiss of Shadows*. I had accidentally bought it with a handful of the early Anita Blake books so I figured I'd just read it first. I enjoy good erotica and I love a contemporary fantasy just fine so I enjoyed it and the following two installments. Having recently read *Danse Macabre* and decided not to continue with Anita, I was hoping Merry would still bring something to the table for me. And indeed in some ways she does. I enjoy the characters in this series very much... but I'm starting to see where Anita's harem of men has become confusing with it's MANY members (pun not intended) suddenly Merry's harem is starting to feel much the same. I still love Hamilton's ability to create a great "fantasy" world and give it depth. What is starting to concern me is that while Anita has no plot and is all sex, Merry's sex is the plot. In some ways that is okay because she has written the world to work with it... but it sure would be nice to have something other than porn style group sex to read. There's no real passion in it anymore. It all feels forced and perhaps it is just my romanticized ideal but I enjoy an erotic scene much more when the characters are lead up to it with some fiery tension. On a side note. I am sick and tired of people calling Hamilton's writing erotica. It is NOT erotica. It gives erotica a bad name. It isn't even romance material IMHO. It's not even particularly sexy. As an erotica reader for several years I happened to stumble upon a book a while back about how to write erotic scenes that are good. One of the key elements is not to sound clinical, like a doctor describing how the medical details, or sound like you're giving a sports commentary on a porn film. Which is EXACTLY what I feel like I have read in the last two Hamilton books I've tried. I'm done with Anita but I'm going to give Merry another try because at least her sex scenes are the plot. LOL

Princess Meredith, the private detective and not-so-private Princess of Faerie, is back in this 4th installment in the Merry Gentry series. The race for the throne is underway, and Merry gets busy

fulfilling her royal duties of trying to get present by one or more of her royal guards (all of the previously celtic dieties in centures and millenia past, when the primal forces of magic were much stronger in the world) ... and in the process, the Goddess (and the presence of magic along with her) begins to show more signs of returning, and restoring vitality to the faerie realm ... a vitality that has withered over the millennia under the cruel sadism of the Queen of Air and Darkness. Prince Cel is still in prison, but his followers (and other elements opposed to having a half-breed like Meredith take the throne) have not been idle ... there has been foul murder done within the halls of the sidhe, and further murders are attempted - and neither Princess Merry nor her Elite Guards (even as they begin to reclaim some of their old strength from ages long past) are safe. The author tells her tale with her usual mix of steamy magically-enhanced sex, mythological fantasy, court intrigue, and forensics. It's a highly enjoyable romp. My only memorable nit is the authoress' tendency to write, at times, in extremely short and fragmentary chapters ... such as breaking up a single continuous scene into 5 chapters, of only 3-5 pages each. There's no apparent rhyme or reason to her chapter divisions, and her plot advancement is slow. Reading this as I am hot on the heels of George R. R. Martin's excessively long-winded and overly complex "A Song of Ice and Fire", encountering back-to-back chapters of only 3-5 pages each, and all of them a seemingly unbroken continuation of the parahraps immediately before ... it caused an involuntary nervous twitch, and I had to repress the urge to laugh hysterically.

This book was really interesting. Some of the descriptions were a bit too long for my taste, however. The sexuality was ramped up in this book, I think, compared to the previous ones. I won't bore you with a plot summary as I know other reviewers are fond of doing that. I do appreciate that this book has chapter demarcations. Chapter demarcations make it so much easier to know how close you are to the end of a chapter or to be able to find a stopping place when you need to do so. If you liked the previous books in the series, I say you should give this one a shot. Have at it because I don't think you'll be disappointed, unless you have a limited tolerance for sex and violence, but if that were true, you might not have gotten past the first or second book in the series. I can't wait to read the next one.

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