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Once Upon A Curse: 17 Dark Faerie Tales



Synopsis

#1 Bestseller in Fantasy Anthologies and Dark Fantasy! Seventeen magical stories from NY Times and USA Today bestsellers and award-winning authors that will entice you to the darker side of faerie tales. More Grimm than Disney, in this collection you'll find twists on Snow White, Hansel & Gretel, Rumpelstiltskin, The Snow Queen, Cinderella, The Pied Piper, Alice in Wonderland, and Red Riding Hood, plus new tales paying homage to the old traditions. Shadows cannot exist without light, however, and you'll find enough happily-ever-afters to lift your spirits in this anthology full of adventure, dark powers, and ultimately the enduring power of true love.

YARROW, STURDY AND BRIGHT by Devon Monk - Sweet music cannot hide a wicked heart...

FAE HORSE by Anthea Sharp - Faerie bargains can grant any desire, but be careful what you wish for.

THE QUEEN OF FROST AND DARKNESS by Christine Pope - Her heart is the only thing colder than a Russian winter....

BONES by Yasmine Galenorn - Sometimes, your most cherished dream can turn out to be a nightmare.

MAGIC AFTER MIDNIGHT by C. Gockel - The Wicked Stepmother is about to meet her match...

DANCE WITH THE DEVIL by Donna Augustine - When the devil makes a deal with a dancer, he gets more than he bargained for.

NO GIFT OF WORDS by Annie Bellet - Never steal from a witch...

THE GRIM BROTHER by Audrey Faye - Not all walks in the wood end well...

BEAST INSIDE BEAUTY by Danielle Monsch - Happily Ever After ain't guaranteed when Once Upon a Time is here.

FAESCORNED by Jenna Elizabeth Johnson - The Morrigan, Celtic goddess of war and strife, must relive a painful memory that reminds her of what she can never have.

DRAWN TO THE BRINK by Tara Maya - Sajiana's job is to hunt down monsters brought alive from paintings. She never expected to meet one so handsome... or to need his help.

THE VARIANCE COURT by Alexia Purdy - Anna, a struggling college student, discovers a mysterious ring that turns her quiet life chaotic when the ring's magic doesn't do what it's told.

THE MORRIGAN by Phaedra Weldon - A young man discovers he has leprechaun blood - and is wanted by dark faerie forces.

ALICE by Julia Crane - A twisted tale of Alice and Wonderland. Facing madness and an ominous prophecy, Alice chooses to follow her heart despite knowing her world is about to change forever.

STILL RED by Sabrina Locke - When the Hunters come, can there be any escape?

THE FINAL STRAW by Jennifer Blackstream - To banish a gold-spinning demon, first you must guess his name...

THE UNICORN HUNTER by Alethea Kontis - Only Snow White knows what really happened in the forest...

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Customer Reviews

The Final Straw by Jennifer BlackstreamMaddox and Milly try to find a way to be together in this Rumplestiltskin tale with a demonic twist. I've read a few of her fairy tale series and admit, for a novella, I liked this one best. I was satisfied with the the turn of events and conclusion in this story than I was with the first two fairy tale books. Beauty in the Beast by Danielle Monsch Detective Kenna Morgan has a killer to catch..and she has to survive the publicity rounds for the pin up calendar she's in-it's for a good cause but she could do without seeing Callen Beist again. Even though the first book in her Grimm Nights series left me hanging for an actual ending, Monsch's style of writing is unique-she never goes the direction I think she will. The story captured my interest with the cast of characters and the allusions to Kenna's past..I just wish it was longer to see what happens between Kenna and Callen! Yarrow, Sturdy and Bright Devon Monk Yarrow sets out to find the Tailor's son, her lost love, when he fails to return after a year. To save him, she has to defeat the Pied Piper before time runs out. Devon Monk was a recommended author to me and I will be checking out her other work-in a short span she had me entranced with this remake of The Pied Piper. The attention to detail was memorable.

A favorite story in this great anthology, Fae Horse by Anthea Sharp, is a wonderful read. It left me wanting more of the story, before and after! It's a beautiful story that is too short. I can't recommend it enough to everyone, to anyone, who remembers the fairy tales from their youth.

I was looking forward to reading this, and for the first few stories I was pretty happy with my purchase. However, it soon became clear that not all stories were of the same quality level, and, worse, a number of them are either teasers or opening chapters to longer works (some not yet published), meaning that these "stories" have no end, and really no discernible plot. For example, "Beauty Inside Beast" (which is 10 chapters but I think under 30 pages.. the first chapter is one sentence long) sets up a few interesting characters and some mysterious murders and teases.. .what? I'm not sure, because it ended with no resolution to anything, really not even a START on the murders, but it did have an ad for the author's other work. "The Morrigan" is probably the longest story, but I stopped reading after a few chapters. It's like the author didn't re-read it to check for inconsistencies.. After getting beaten senseless, the main character wakes up, dazed, and looks at the ceiling. He thinks it looks like the ceiling of his uncle's trailer.. hey, it IS the ceiling of his uncle's trailer! And there's his uncle, yep. Then a minute later he notes that he hasn't seen his uncle since he was about 10 years old (but apparently has perfect recall of what the ceiling looks like). Then he remembers a mug his uncle has and what he likes to drink. Then he notes that he "barely remembers" his uncle. And so on. Lots of "I must be going insane.. this magic stuff can't be real!" type of thing, which always drives me nuts if it goes on for more than about 5 seconds of the person's life. And if you're told that a group of men in black hoodies are beating people who fit your description with iron pipes at night, and ten minutes later you get attacked at night by a group of men in black hoodies wielding iron pipes, you should probably figure out PRETTY QUICKLY what's going to happen next. Anyway, like I said, a mixed bag. Some good short stories, and a lot of what might as well be free Kindle previews of other work.

This is a review on only Alexia Purdy's story, The Variance Court. I will try to remember to update the review when I have finished the other stories. I absolutely loved The Variance Court! Alexia Purdy switches, seamlessly, from "real world" to "fantasy world" and the characters are complex, having rich backstories that I would love to hear more about very soon. I hope we are treated to a series in this rich fantasy world!

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