



## Nightlife

*Rob Thurman*

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*There are monsters among us. There always have been and there always will be. I've known that since I can remember, just like I've always known I was one ... Well, half of one, anyway.*

Welcome to New York City - a troll under the Brooklyn Bridge, a boggle in Central Park, and a beautiful vampire in a penthouse on the Upper East Side. Most humans are oblivious to the preternatural nightlife around them, but Cal Leandros is only half human.

His father's dark lineage is the stuff of nightmares – and his entire otherworldly elf race are after Cal. His half brother, Niko, gave up college to keep them on the run for four years, but now the Grendel monsters are back. And Cal is about to learn why they want him. He is the key to unleashing their hell on earth. The fate of the human world will be decided in the fight of Cal's life...

## Nightlife Details

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Author : Rob Thurman

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## From Reader Review Nightlife for online ebook

### **Erin ? \*Proud Book Hoarder\* says**

3.5

**“What’re you still doing up? You know all good little ninjas should be in bed, visions of homicidal sugarplums dancing in their heads.”**

Urban Fantasies told through a male point of view aren't that common. There are a few out there but they're in the minority. This one's a brother team with Cal, being the younger brother, and Niko, the older, stronger, and more disciplined one. They both grew up with a horrible mother and no father, and Niko, in college, did what he could to protect and guard Cal. When the monsters came for Cal one night, however, they had to run off together and keep running, trying to avoid the monsters that want to bring Cal back into the fold. Apparently he's only half-human, and they're not even sure what the monsters want him for. With a plot like this, the reader in me begged to read it.

The beginning of this one fascinated me - with the creepy window tapping, the bizarre situations and the alarming sense of doom and mystery, I was hooked. It was a disturbing moment that I probably won't get out of my head for a long time to come. It started tapering off a bit for me after this, and I felt the author lost his footing slightly. For some reason I started losing interest in the plot as it progressed, which is typically the opposite for me.

I enjoyed reading through Cal's sarcastic perspective, being sympathetic toward his inner turmoils about being a monster. Niko as the brother is a major character, and while he's "likeable," he does have a flaw -- he's TOO perfect. Robin was the funniest of the group and when he was around the enjoyability of the book shot up immediately. The troll as a character and villain - how creepy. He was huge and truly disgusting, what an awful creation! The monsters after Cal are unique in how they're created and what they set out to accomplish. I really do dig the world Thurman wove here.

There's a lot of action in this story, from martial arts fighting (Niko seems a blend of God knows how many fighting styles), weaponry (swords, guns, the whole enchilada), and a whole host of about everything else. The mystery is what really fascinated me (finding out what happened to Cal those two years with the monsters as he discovers it himself), and it is what kept me reading the most with anticipation.

No anticlimactic ending here...still, the middle had cool parts but sagged as if the author wasn't sure where to go with it sometimes and a bit of the structuring fell apart. The protagonist and finding out the secrets was the best part, I think. It's worth a read even with some of the lagging (especially that beginning, wow!) and I'm curious how the rest of the series will fare.

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

I loved this book. It was very different and kept my interest in a way that a great urban fantasy should. I really fell in love with Cal and his brother Niko. I love books that show a positive view of siblings since I love my sister and get along so well with her. If you enjoy the relationship between Sam and Dean on Supernatural, you'd probably like this book for that reason. Some of the elements of their relationship bring

to mind the Winchester brothers. Niko is a man that I could marry. His love for his brother was so intense and so all-consuming the way a sibling should love. I love his dedication to being the best warrior that he can so that he can protect Cal when his "other relatives" try to take him back. When he cut his hair off in grief, I just about lost it.

I enjoyed the new twist on elves, and I found the action sequences so vivid they jumped off the page at me. There were some genuinely scary moments that sent a chill down my spine (I love a good scare). I liked the noir-esque narrative, peppered with wry humor and in a voice that really sounded like a young man (I was surprised the author is a woman) who has seen more bad than good in the world. In fact, I think Cal is a great character and a real trooper considering what he has gone through and the heritage he has to face.

I love that Cal's sweet on a young woman who is biracial and can see the future (you know me and my love for interracial romance). Fans of shows like Buffy and Angel would like this book because it has the feel of these shows, but delves deeper than an hour long show can. I liked the very interesting secondary cast of characters and beasties (as a lifelong fan of folklore, I am always happy to see some of the beasties in fiction books). I loved that I actually had to look up a few like the boggle who lived in the pond in Central Park. Fans of Harry Dresden from the Jim Butcher novels and John Taylor from Simon R. Green's Nightside novels will probably like this book and consider it a book that might show what Harry and John might have been like as a young man. In the end, I just can't say enough good things about this book. I will buy every book Rob Thurman writes and particularly the Cal Leandros series. If you are an old fan of urban fantasy, a new fan, or wanting to branch out to this wonderful genre, please read this book.

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### **Tammy says**

I really liked this one! This is the first book I've read in the genre with a male main character so it was a nice change of pace.

Cal is half-grendal (elf/auphe). He was abducted by the grendals when he was younger and managed to escape. Since then he and his brother Niko have been on the run, always trying to stay one step ahead of the grendels. But Cal is tired of running and wants to find out more about his connection to the grendals.

I love Cal's sarcasm, I think that anyone who's half something evil is entitled to being a little sassy. I love Niko, he's probably my favorite. I'm kind of wondering if Niko will eventually become some type of supernatural. I really liked that this book had vampires, werewolves, elves, trolls, boggles, pucks-so much variety! Super excited for Moonshine :-D

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### **Shera (Book Whispers) says**

Genre: Urban Fantasy

Thoughts:

It has been such a long time that I've read a book and at the end want to obsessively stroke the cover. This was one of those books, it pretty much had me going all Gollum after the last page turned. Considering this

was a reread for me, even better.

One of the main things that I love about *Nightlife* is the running dialogue. If you've ever watched an episode of *Gilmore Girls* (not that the two have anything in common story wise) you can appreciate witty conversation. *Nightlife* is full of it. You can be shivering in terror at one of the scenes in the book completely repulsed by the actions of the evil villains, but you can't stop yourself from smiling. Thurman has dark, witty-gritty humor down to a science. Even if this book only had half the genius of plot and world building, the dialogue would have been enough to carry it.

Luckily, it has all the plot and world building you never knew you could ask for. Cal and Niko, our two awesome brothers have a lot of baggage to bring into this story. Niko has a taste for all things shiny, pointy, and deadly—if it can kill Niko knows about it and can use it. He's smart as all get out, and is quite appealing to the ladies. Cal is lazy and sarcastic, which makes for one heck of a narrator. Most of a dark and witty humor is from Cal, but the banter between the two brothers is great.

The world Thurman has created is beyond believable, everything adds up for better or worse. Going into this you want to forget everything you think you know about the magical creatures of legend. You think elves are beautiful people with long flowing hair? You got the hair right, but don't forget about the evil red eyes and a body straight from the images of hell. They may have stolen children, but they sure as heck wouldn't replace them with anything but the bones from a night's good meal. There are so many dark and scary creatures in here that it's a real treat. By the end of this book you won't be able to look at spaghetti quite the same way. Plus, forget about looking for Bloody-Mary in the mirror, keep a look out for a banshee in the mirror.

Never have I had the pleasure of thoroughly enjoying characters in a book as I did in *Nightlife*. Cal and Niko's relationship is pure genius. I know a lot of reviews say how they love the sibling relationship, but this time I mean it. The two have a bond that time, or monsters, can't shake. In really cheesy words, it down right beautiful. Niko refuses to let Cal believe he is a monster, even if he is half human and half monster. By the end of this book, Cal gets a front row seat of what a monster truly is as his own body is taken over. They came into this book with a lot of baggage, and by the end they may have dropped a few, but they gained more.

Other side characters were just as enjoyable. Puck, or Robin—the things with the furry legs—was one enjoyable/annoying son of a gun. I wasn't sure whether to chuck him out a 30 story building or high five the perverted guy. You can't let Robin's laid back sleazy ways fool you, his pretty much immortal existence is taking its toll. Hopefully with the next books we will get to see his dirty laundry. I can only imagine how much with a guy who new everyone from history, and probably slept with everyone from history. The freckled-face redhead was a great oracle, seeing how such powers could effect a teenager was refreshing. Instead of a crazy wacked out hormone crazed girl, we've got someone who knows the weight of the world. She's not going to drop it until she breaks. A no nonsense Healer, and his cousin/dog really had me begging for more info on the two. Even the villain in this book is . . . there's just no words you have to read it to experience this monster.

One of the things I truly appreciate is the flash backs. In most books you deal with them to get the 4-11 on what's going on. Thurman makes you want to know what happens to these characters. With other books the flashbacks are boring and tedious. Not here, there just as wild a ride as the rest of the book and only add to the story. Thurman doesn't just rely on flashbacks to give us more on the story or what's happened in the characters life. Events unfold smoothly giving out the information in little bits and pieces so it never feels out of place.

#### Bottom Line:

I read this book back when it was first debuting, 2006, when the Urban Fantasy boom was really starting up. Back then I thought this was the best UF I had ever read. Even after all this time and all of the other UF I've read (and it's a lot) it still holds true. In fact, this is probably the most solid debut novel I have ever read. In the end I'm not going to have enough words, or the right ones, to say just how much I love this book. Everyone I have ever recommended this book to has given it 5/5, and that is pretty amazing considering everyones individual tastes. Lots of reviews claim that this book, or other, has great grit, humor, and original story. This one is a guarantee. Put your big girl/boy pants on and get ready to get messy.

#### Sexual Content:

No sex scenes, just some dirty talk every now and then.

5/5- Fabulous, a beautiful obsession!

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#### **Cathryn says**

DNF. I just can't anymore with this book. I got through 11% and I was just so bored. Maybe it picks up but if you can't draw me in by now then I can't be bothered to continue. Too many books, too little time.

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#### **Gergana says**

Stopped at 40%

Read from February 18 to 20, 2015

#### **What I liked:**

- The overly-protective bad-ass elder brother
- The protagonist being a half-dark- "elf", hunted by the evil side of his family.
- The dark atmosphere, the urban setting and the creatures living in popular New York landmarks.
- The relationship between the two brothers

#### **Why I stopped reading:**

- Story wasn't progressing fast enough for me
- Cal, the main hero, is too cynical and sarcastic, which I don't mind, but mix it with immaturity and lame comments and I had my eyes rolling every few minutes.
- Many random characters popping out of nowhere to deliver important info dump.

If you like Urban Fantasy, this one is not that bad. Just not my cup of tea.

Similar books that I would recommend:

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## Amanda says

I have come to the conclusion that I should not buy urban fantasy books that were first published as mass market paperbacks. I can only assume it's the publishing world's version of "straight to DVD" or a SyFy original movie.

*Nightlife* isn't terrible, but it isn't great. It's been-there-done-that territory for me and just wasn't worth my time. The plot is somewhat original: The Auphe (apparently another name for elves) need a human/Auphe child to help them open a gate to the past. The problem? Auphe aren't the Keebler elves: they're hideous, monstrous creatures who only live for violence and destruction. Not exactly what a woman wants to cozy up to for a night of passion. So the Auphe find a drunken gypsy whore who will do anything for money. Apparently they had to wait centuries for a woman depraved enough to sleep with anything that could provide adequate coin as payment for the experience; on which I call "bullshit" as this is the stuff of pure fiction. Hugh Hefner manages to find such a woman every fifteen minutes. Anyway, 9 months after this crime against nature occurs, little Caliban, named for the offspring of witch and demon in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, is born. Cal and his half-brother, Niko, escape their terrible childhood together and spend the rest of their lives on the run from the Auphe.

What's not particularly original about the novel is the execution. The characters are stereotypes to the urban fantasy genre. Niko is some sort of concrete jungle ninja; he walks around packing enough steel that he's at serious risk of shish kebabbing himself every time he sits down. He must also be as stealthy as a drawer full of silverware. Despite being so deadly, he's gorgeous and has blonde tresses that would be the envy of Lady Lovely Locks and the Pixietails (how's that for an obscure 1980's toy reference?) Cal, the supernatural part of the duo, is like Harry Dresden's younger brother. He's snarky and sarcastic in a not particularly clever manner. And this is problematic for me because I'm sick of this ultra-hip, pop-culture spouting, always quick with a quip in the heat of battle, "I'm such a smart ass, but I just can't help it" persona of the protagonists in these types of novels. It gets grating after a while, which is why I finally gave up on the *Dresden Files* and it's a big part of the reason as to why I'll be giving up on the Cal Leandros series. This smug glibness seems to be a literary sleight-of-hand for distracting the reader from a lack of character development, which is fun at first but gets tiresome after the second or third novel of this type.

Another reason *Nightlife* didn't particularly hold my attention is because it begins with the resolution for what should be the novel's climax and, sure, the opening certainly gets your attention, but by the time you make it to what should be the most suspense filled part of the novel you realize, "Oh, hey, this has looped back around to the beginning. Damn! I already know what's going to happen." It's as anticlimactic as the Anthony Weiner scandal (c'mon, we all knew that was his junk). This foreknowledge certainly makes the last 1/4 of the novel tiresome.

Again, I can't say the novel isn't worth reading; in fact, it might be okay for those new to the genre. I've read so much of this stuff that I know I've become jaded and from now on, if it wasn't first issued in hardback, I'm going to take a pass on this genre.

Cross posted at This Insignificant Cinder

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## Dara says

It's an interesting world, with lots of possibilities, but I definitely got a 'first novel' vibe. A bit clunky in places (esp. in the middle, when there's a kind of POV shift of sorts), and the narrator was ~~annoying~~ an asshole at times (though he is 19, so that could be on purpose). The brotherly interaction has a touch of Sam n' Dean, so SPN fans might dig it.

There was just a little too *much*, if you know what I mean. Does the older brother have to have long luxurious locks AND be awesome with swords AND be totally super intelligent and well read AND be wicked handsome AND have the hots for a cute vampire chick? And Cal, the 19-year-old narrator, talks like he's a world weary hard boiled gumshoe.

Still, I did like it enough to pick up the sequel at the library.

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### **Mike (the Paladin) says**

These are pretty good. A cut above some of the Urban fantasy out there. It does have one of my pet peeves however...a vampire romantic interest, ugh. I'm so sick of "friendly", "tragic", "misunderstood", and "romantic" vampires. As I've observed elsewhere...what if after you've fallen asleep from a wonderful and long session of lovemaking, she feels like she needs a snack?

Think about it.

The story here while not completely original (I mean what story is?) this is a pretty original take on it. Cal (view spoiler)

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Still, pretty good read. Enjoy.

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### **Mel says**

A good start to a new UF series. This one is about two brothers, Cal and Niko, who have lived a life on the run, trying to escape the ghost... or better: monsters from their past. But the monsters have caught up with them.

My biggest problem was that I didn't understand why the Big Bad was/were so bad. We were *told* the Grendels were horrible but we hardly *witnessed*, why.

The Grendels and Darkling felt a little cardboard. Or like a James Bond antagonist who is bad, but you don't really know why. Because what would killing off everybody in the world really bring him? He'd just be bored after a month...

So I'm hoping more for the next book's villain(s).

The book wasn't an 'on the edge of your seat' - kind of thing but very engaging nonetheless. And the dynamic between the brothers was heart warming.

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A good read.

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### **Anita says**

I think I've found my next favorite series. I LOVED the sarcastic humor, the well-imagined fantasy creatures, the relationships among characters, and the plot. (I didn't see the plot twists coming.) If you're a fan of Harry Dresden, you might like this series - it satisfied the same literary craving as the Dresden files from my perspective.

Basic storyline: Cal is half demon/Auphe/Grendel - whatever you want to call it. His mom got paid to give birth to him. (His mom was a drunk and a whore.) Cal's older half-brother Nik has always looked after him, so when the Grendels come after Cal, Nik takes him out on the run to hide him. Four years later, the Grendels catch up with Cal and Nik in NYC. That's where it gets REALLY interesting. Cal and Nik meet some other supernatural creatures - some good, some evil. There's a great big plot twist in the middle of the book that I loved, so I can't really report anything that comes after without giving it away. Loved it, and the ending was very satisfying.

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### **Felicia says**

I'm listing this book because I believe that guys who want less vagina in their Urban Fantasy would enjoy this. I wasn't sucked in, but it was pretty good. I do think that others might be and that's why I'm listing it!

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If you like Jim Butcher then read the blurb and decide!

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### **Becky says**

3.5 stars

Quick and dirty review: Pretty good... It dragged a bit in the middle, and was a bit too repetitive with the whole "woe is me; I'm a monster" thing... but it was dark and different from other urban fantasy that I've read, and I liked it for that.

One thing that I really enjoyed was the humor, and I loved the interaction between Cal and Niko, and Niko and Robin as well. Niko is a bit too straightlaced and too perfect at everything, but he makes for a great straight man to play off of.

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I wouldn't be opposed to continuing the series to see where it goes, and for a debut, it was far from the worst I've ever seen.

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## Devann says

*I'd seen Grendels before, more times than I could count, but never like this. Never so close I could see the naked greed in the eyes, the poreless texture of the skin, hear the utterly alien whisper.*

**Jesus Christ, my mom had fucked that?**

This was the first paragraph of this book that I read as I was randomly flipping through it at the bookstore and I pretty much immediately knew I had to buy it. About eight years and no less than 10 rereads later [I know it says 'reading for the 2nd time' on here but that's a damn dirty lie] and this is still one of my favorite series [eclipsed possibly now in terms of actual content by the October Daye series by Seanan McGuire, but in terms of sheer number of rereads this series is still miles ahead]. This was also the first urban fantasy series I ever read and now UF is my go-to genre so this will always have a special place in my heart for that reason as well.

Most people I know who are into this series [myself included] found out about it through the Supernatural fandom, and while there are a lot of similarities I personally would not consider this series a 'rip-off' although I'm sure some people would disagree. Honestly Cal and Niko have a way better relationship than Sam and Dean, who I feel spend at least 80% of their time randomly lying to each other about everything. I personally like this a lot better than Supernatural at this point but it's all personal preference. ~~Although at least this series has an actual queer main character instead of just queerbaiting people for a decade.~~ I mean uh ...not that I'm bitter or anything. This series and SPN do unfortunately share the habit of throwing out their female characters randomly but I'll discuss that more in-depth when I get to the later books.

Anyway the absolute number 1 selling for this series to me is Cal's POV. To this day Cal's is still my favorite POV that I've ever read and also literally the reason that I don't understand people who complain about 1st person books [yes, this book is in first person, run away if you hate that]. He's snarky and sarcastic but I feel like it's definitely more natural than a lot of other series where the snark feels more forced. Cal is the standard to which I hold all other snarky emo asshole protagonists. Actually the only reason I rated this book four stars instead of five is because there's a POV shift for a large part of the latter half of the book and it always throws me off because I'm just so used to it being 100% Cal at this point. Also because at this point I know how great the next three books are and I need to be able to give them a higher rating. We'll call this one a 4.5 but rounded down.

I also like what Rob has done with the world-building in this series. The Auphe are unlike any other creature I've seen in any urban fantasy series and she also puts a few unique twists on the other creatures as well. We get a bit of insight into Robin and the pucks in this book, which I think is a really interesting take on the whole pan/puck mythology. Darkling is really cool as well and again, I haven't ever read anything with a creature with quite the same background/powers so I like that she gives us something new to work with. There are a lot of series are just a huge mixing pot of many different mythological creatures, but this series will always be one of my favorites. We haven't seen a lot of Cal's powers yet but they are just AWESOME in the later books, and if I'm ever asked what kind of urban fantasy creature I would want to be my answer is always half-auphe like Cal [I know he's very emo about the whole thing but I feel I'm much more emotionally balanced than him lol].

I could literally go on about this series all day - my kindle copy of this book has HUNDREDS of highlights and I once tried to start a series reread on Dreamwidth although that fell apart due to the fandom having like five people - but I have to cut this review off at some point so I guess this is as good a place as any.

Oh, a quick P.S. - Cal and Niko are Romani but at the point in time when this series was started people were still mostly using the word 'gypsy' to refer to people of Romani descent so if that is something that constitutes a definite pass for you then probably skip this series. It's only a few times in this book but gets pretty prevalent in the next few before dropping off again in the later books [I think around the time that it became widely known/accepted that it was actually a racial slur and that the correct term was Romani]. I'm giving the author the benefit of the doubt that she didn't know at the time, especially since she heavily eases off of the word later, but I know some people won't want to deal with it at all and wouldn't want to be blindsighted by it so I thought I would mention it.

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### **Kana says**

In a nutshell, I would say this book is not worth reading....or any of the authors work.

Issues:

The author used more metaphors than clear sentences, making the scenes extremely difficult to follow. Which lead to a general lack of interest, and I found my mind wandering, even in the most intense scenes. I didn't even realize I wasn't processing all of it. I had an overall sense of boredom.

There was a redundancy throughout the book that got on my nerves. 'Yes, he's the spawn of a monster, I get it, can we move on?' I also do not care for authors who tell you what a character is like with the reasoning 'just because'. I would have appreciated a bit more proof that the older brother was 'smart' besides everyone simply saying he was. He gave no proof of that other than a few 50 cent words here and there.

There were one or two parts in the book that kept me interested thanks to the dry humor or the characters criticizing themselves, but that quickly faded. And I found myself losing interest and continuing to read felt almost painful.

I was trying so hard to finish the book, hoping it would get better. But honestly, the last straw was finding the distasteful behavior of the author towards her fans, too much.

Berating ones fans, on multiple occasions that they aren't buying enough of your product and actually scolding them, is uncalled for. And extremely petty. After that I found no reason to give the book any further chance, and put it down. I had been planning to read to the end and attempt the second book if it picked up, but that was just too much. I see no point in giving the author anymore of my time and money if that is how she appreciates her readers.

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### **Carole (Carole's Random Life in Books) says**

3 Stars

When a group of friends on Goodreads decided to read this book, I thought it sounded like a great idea and joined in. This book was an okay read for me. It had some really strong moments that I loved. It also had some moments that I thought were more than a little boring. The beginning of the book was absolutely fantastic and I just knew that I was going to love this series. Unfortunately, the book as a whole did not live up to those opening scenes. I have been really torn about how to rate and review this book since the story ended up feeling so hot and cold in the end.

I really liked the unique take on the Auphe or demon-like elves. The fact that the main character, Cal, is half

human and half Auphe really pulled me into the story. Cal's older brother, Nikko, is fiercely protective of Cal and will do whatever it takes to keep him safe. This interesting world and the strong relationship between the brothers really set the stage for an exciting novel. Throw in a little sarcastic humor, similar to what is found in the Harry Dresden series and it should have been almost perfect.

Unfortunately, the book had quite a few problems. The excitement of the opening chapters quickly waned and didn't return until the book was almost over. I thought that much of the book was actually boring at times and tedious at others. This book may have fallen victim to the first book syndrome found in many Urban Fiction series where the world building overpowers the story and the book suffers as a whole. I also think the humor that started out great at the beginning felt overdone by the conclusion of the novel.

I am considering continuing this series but I am not rushing out to buy the second book anytime soon. There were enough good moments and the world is interesting enough that I wouldn't mind seeing where this series could go. I do think that many Urban Fiction fans will enjoy this book.

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### **Summer says**

In 'Nightlife' the main character is Caliban (Cal) Leandros and his half brother Niko. They share the same human mother, however Caliban has a Grendel for a father. Grendel is what the brothers call the monsters. And Caliban's father's specific breed of monster is elf. These elves are not pretty and serene in the Lord of the Rings kind of way. They're scary, violent, and have been watching Cal all his life. Several years ago the Grendels finally made a move and kidnapped Caliban and killed their mother. Caliban managed to escape from their world and returned but aged significantly older with no memories of what happened between his kidnapping and escape. They've lived on their own since, dodging any Grendel they see and moving from place to place. Cal has always felt guilty about it because he feels like Niko is sacrificing his life to protect his. Niko is incredibly smart and has honed his body into a slick fighting machine. They're currently living in New York city and have been for a while now. Yet Niko spots a Grendel in the park one day and kills him. Neither brother knows if this is a one-time occurrence or a shadow of things to come. Should they run? Should they stay? Perhaps there are some things that these two brothers can't run away from after all.

I definitely agree with reviewers that this book would appeal to fans of the Supernatural tv series. I'd highly recommend it to fans of the show but also to general urban fantasy fans as well. There's enough differences between the show and these books not to feel like it's the same thing though. There were a few issues to me with the writing style but overall it had me glued to the pages. There's lots of action and the plot moved at a good pace, but the relationship between the two brothers is priceless. It completely made this book for me. Niko is just a larger than life character and bounced off of Caliban they make a great pair. I think I'm in love.

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### **Kelly H. (Maybedog) says**

Wow. I was looking for a new urban fantasy series to supplement my Dresden Files addiction and I sure found it. They aren't the same by any means but this series gives me everything I want: intensity, drama, biting humor, creativity, believable characters, villains to hate, heroes to love and worry about, unusual creatures and foes, powerful yet vulnerable protagonists, etc. etc. Add in two brothers who live to protect each other and I've also got a series to help me while I wait for the next season of Supernatural to come out on DVD. (In a few places this book read like an episode with Dean in full anger mode trying to protect Sam.)

There aren't enough women or people of color for my taste (I want a female fighter!) but this is just the first book. I don't know how the next will compare though because this plot is the culmination of something that has been going on for the heroes' entire lives but I'm more than willing to find out.

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## **XX Sarah XX (former Nefarious Breeder of Murderous Crustaceans) says**

**DNF at 39%.** Because there's only so much boredom I can take.

**Oh, I know exactly** what you're thinking here: "Oh, look! A new addition to Sarah's DNF graveyard!  
**Surprise, surprise!**"

**Well I am sorry** to disappoint you but this is not yet another case of "Sarah has less patience than a rabid rabbit in heat." No it's not. Of all the **delightfully dysfunctional Freaks** that buddy read this book with me, at least three DNFed is as well. Ha! Didn't expect that, did you now? Point made. **Moving on and stuff.**

**So what is this book about you ask?** No bloody idea. I swear I did get to the 39% mark. Cross my heart, hope to die excruciatingly and all that crap. The thing is, nothing happened in said 39%. And when I say nothing I mean **NOTHING**. Wait, that's not really fair. And we all know I'm all about being fair right? Right. Anyway, as I was saying, a few things **did actually happen** in those memorably glorious 39%:

### **① "I think there's a bug in my Coke."**

**Wow.** Talk about creating angst-filled moments here. Dreadfully stressful stuff, if you ask me. I might never recover. Let me tell you, my Little Barnacles, Stephen King has **absolutely nothing** on Rob Thurman here.

### **② Having car problems. Trying to fix the car. Buying a new car.**

**Double wow.** I don't think I can stand it. This book is turning me into a nervous wreck. Will they be able to solve their car problems? \*shudders\* Will they be able to fix the car? \*shakes in fear\* Will they get a good deal for the new car? \*breaks down and cries\* **This is just too much!!!**

### **③ The MCs meet a vampire.**

**Triple wow.** And such an awesome vampire they meet, too. This is simply amazing. To think **Shelly** some of my dear fangbanger friends dare criticize my uber cool Chicagoland Vampires because they drink bagged blood. **She They obviously haven't read this book.** The very fine specimen of the vampiric clique we have here is beyond such mundane activities. Bagged blood? Oh please, don't be ridiculous, it's totally passé, we take **iron supplements** now. *And the concept of decaffeinated vampires suddenly takes on a whole new meaning.*

**So yeah,** lots of fascinating stuff happening here. I just couldn't put the book down. It's **\*that\*** good. Add to that an **amazingly** supposedly **witty mc** (view spoiler) who is sometimes 17, sometimes 19 (don't ask) and acts like a 13-year-old, and you're in for a **pretty wild ride**.

**Do I need to tell you** Rob Thurman has officially made it into my very exclusive "Has Found The Cure For Insomnia" Club? Ha. Didn't think so. Clever, clever Little Barnacles. **Read this at your own risk and stuff and sleep.**

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### **Carol. says**

Thurman's Leandros series tends to be very dark, both in world view and in the voice of the sardonic, damaged narrator, Cal. It's one way the book distinguishes itself from it's UF brethren, but also inhibits me from issuing a ringing endorsement. I can only take so much of the sarcastic, callous, lazy narrator before my inner drill sergeant is tempted to provide a swift kick in the narrative.

One of the most interesting things about the series is that the relationship between the brothers is a focal point for their characters and for plot development, and that seems a little more unique in a genre known for independent and wise-cracking detectives. Nightlife introduces us to Cal and Niko's attempts to avoid a particular group of monsters, the Auphe, as they take refuge among the human herd in New York City. New York, of course, is full of monsters, termed 'Grendels' by the brothers, providing numerous sources of information and conflict.

Thurman's writing is a good example of the better urban fantasy novel. World-building is well done. She frequently weaves in major literary references, particularly Shakespeare, but is usually kind enough to reference it for the education-impaired reader. Character development seems strong, and it's an interesting choice to have the caustic Cal be the narrative voice instead of his more educated and thoughtful ninja-brother. They have a seriously co-dependent relationship. I enjoyed the introduction of Robin, who provided touches of lecherous humor, but also a streak of believable loneliness. The monsters were multi-dimensional as well. The bridge troll was particularly horrifying, but save some horror for the fiendish Auphe. (view spoiler) it wasn't a character I enjoyed reading. The first time through, I tended to skim it just to get the major plot points. During the second, I focused more on the quality of the writing, and I have to say it was very impressive, but just not to my taste. The resolution was believable, if somewhat predictable, and introduced two characters that will continue to appear in later books. I enjoyed the NYC setting which is decently realized but doesn't overtake the story.

A three and a half star ride.

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Cross posted at <http://clsiewert.wordpress.com/2013/0...>