



# Nightshades

*Melissa F. Olson*

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## **Nightshades** Melissa F. Olson

Alex McKenna is the new Special Agent in Charge of the Chicago office of the Bureau of Paranormal Investigations—the division tasked with investigating crimes involving shades.

Or vampires, as they're more widely known.

Children have been going missing, and agents are routinely being slaughtered. It's up to McKenna, and some unlikely allies, to get to the bottom of the problem, and find the kids before it's too late.

*Nightshades* is a new gritty urban fantasy from Melissa F. Olson.

## **Nightshades Details**

Date : Published July 19th 2016 by Tor.com

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Author : Melissa F. Olson

Format : Kindle Edition 208 pages

Genre : Horror, Fantasy, Urban Fantasy

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# From Reader Review Nightshades for online ebook

Jessica ❀ ➡ Silverbow ➡ ❀ Rabid Reads-no-more says

**Reviewed by: Rabid Reads**

It's no secret that I don't like Dead Things: ghosts, zombies, ghouls . . . *vampires* . . .

Vampires are an exception more frequently than other Dead Things, but they're rarely something I deliberately look for when picking out a book.

BUT.

Occasionally an author manages to strike a balance that is pleasing to mine eyes.

Someone manages to capture to undeadliness, the bloodthirsty ruthlessness, while setting apart an individual or small group of individuals who have tenaciously clung to their former humanity, shunning the brutality of their more old school counterparts.

\*tips hat\*

Meet Lindy, or Sieglind to *not*-her-friends, who despite vampires coming out of the proverbial closet, still lives and works among the humans.

Secretly, of course.

Until the one vamp the government has managed to capture gives her up, anyway.

But rather than slaughtering the puny human who attempts to corner her, then hitting the road, she agrees to help him.

Lindy has a broader vision of the future than some of her vampire brethren. She dreams of a world where her kind can coexist with the humans. And in order for that dream to become reality, a powerful vampire hell-bent on teaching humans their place in the food chain must be stopped.

This is the story of how, with the help of humans, she begins to do just that. And lemme tell you, the obstacles encountered along the way kept me flying through the pages of my favorite Tor.com short story to date. FYI.

It's not a new spin on vampires, but what Olson does with the well-known creature *is* highly entertaining. In a world where the existence of the supernatural is undeniably revealed, there are a million ways humanity can respond to that knowledge, and NIGHTSHADES is hopefully the first of many installments in Olson's version of that brave new world. Highly recommended.

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## Eon ?Windrunner? says

3.5 Stars

A pretty entertaining paranormal urban fantasy story. Not my favourite genre, but this was fast, thrilling, well written and worth the time. As a novella it seems to be setup as a primer for either a series or a full length novel, (read cliffhanger) but not sure if that is the case as I cannot find any further info. Either way, I'd read more of this.

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## Ami says

3.5 stars

**Need to say this first: Cliffhanger is EVIL!! How could you, author??**

I am familiar with Melissa F. Olson's other urban fantasy series (and I like them very much), so I don't really think twice of trying this new one of hers. The opening was quite a punch -- scary and gritty. Then the story rolled.

I liked Olson's portrayal of vampires ... or *shades*. I liked the characters introduced as well. Alex McKenna, the new SAC of Bureau of Paranormal Investigations Chicago, who has a chip on his shoulder, trying to prove himself being his own man, without the family name behind him.

Then there's Lindy, a millenia-old vampire who tries to cut ties from other shades, and blends with humans. They team up to catch Hector, (view spoiler) who has captured teenagers to (view spoiler).

The idea is intriguing ... but then, you know, cliffhanger (ARGH!). This is definitely more like a set-up, I think, to future books. I am going to follow it, just because I need to know what will happen (view spoiler)

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## Mara says

Unfortunately weak, as all her writing. She's got ideas, but the execution is often lacking. I feel something is missing, but if you ask me, I can't really pinpoint why.

The male lead sounds like an overexcited teen boy, not an FBI Special Agent. The plot didn't sound solid to me, neither world building, come to think of it.

It's a short, easy read, but nothing more than that.

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## Erica says

*Nightshades* is one of my 2018 favorites; you'd think I'd have written a review long ago (I read this in early March). I have a harder time writing reviews for books I've really enjoyed. I'm afraid my review simply

won't do it justice. But, since it is a favorite, I also feel that I *should* write a review for it. So here goes.

Nighshades, or shades, is the word used to describe vampires in **Melissa F. Olson** 's urban fantasy world. I like to think that this is because 'vampire' simply feels too movie-esque, dated, (which I personally think should be the case in an urban setting).

Similar to the vampires I love - and completely different from the vampires I loathed (I'm sorry, but to me a vampire should be a fearsome creature, not a brooding eternal youth who for some [definitely odd] reason decides to repeat high school over and over and over again) - shades consider humans as a food source. There has been a tentative peace between the two: the majority of humans fear shades, and with good reason. Shades are able, through just the slightest touch of saliva to the skin, via a seemingly innocent touch, make a human's mind suggestible. They, the shades, also possess supernatural strength, speed and healing abilities, making them a frightening enemy indeed.

*Nightshades* begins with a promotion, for Alex McKenna, an agent at the Bureau of Paranormal Investigations, a subdivision to the FBI, to head a special team who're assigned a case which clearly involves shades. Recently, several bodies of teens, drained of blood, have been discovered in a suburb to Chicago. The team discovers a shade who has ostensibly adapted completely to the human lifestyle, Lindy, whose help they, more or less voluntarily, they employ to help solve the case. It would seem that Lindy has a closer relation to the murders than initially thought.

*Nightshades* is an urban, gritty, fantasy, emphasis on the gritty. It's dark and eventful, just the way I like a book to be. I'm not usually a fan of Urban Fantasy (I read to escape reality), so me choosing this as a favorite of 2018 is really saying something.

My one big problem with this book was that it was too short - which is echoed by many other reviewers - but this is probably also one of the strengths of the book: it gives the reader a longing for more, which they are given in the sequel *Switchback*, an equally strong, if not stronger, story than *Nightshades*. As a matter of fact, I found both so well written and interesting that I've already pre-ordered the third and final book, *Outbreak* which has a publication date set for June.

I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a **good** vampire story, in which the vampires are indeed scary. Even if you're not an urban fantasy fan, give this book a chance, it's worth it.

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## Marta Cox says

Oo I'm always on the look out for a different type of paranormal story and I just might have found one here. Now please don't shout or groan but yes it's about vampires or shades as they are referred to here. Obviously they have lived amongst humans for quite some time but in this story it's a recent revelation with just one in captivity but as our story begins it's clear that things are escalating but why?

Allow me to introduce Lindy, a shade with a shady past (sorry I couldn't resist!) and she's about to pull this story together. The FBI might have formed a unit to understand the shades but recently it's absolute bedlam with missing teenagers and dead agents. Alex is the agent in charge in Chicago but he realises he needs a team that will literally think outside the box and that's right when he gets his own particular brainwave! Who would understand the shades kidnapping and slaughtering better than one of their own? Yes you guessed it Lindy but her past might just be part of the present problem!

Ok from the first page I felt as if I was watching this on a screen. I'm not sure whether or not the author has written scripts but the timing was everything here. It's as if these characters are performing in the theatre of

my mind and it made for a riveting although admittedly short read. Do I want more ? That's a huge yes please and there are still questions unanswered but one thing I know for certain I'm going to check out this authors back catalogue and sincerely hope she turns this book into a series  
I was gifted a copy from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review

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### **Kira says**

The nightshades a.k.a. vampires weren't like the average vamp in two ways. One is the way they were made. Their saliva was the potent ingredient not blood. It had to be placed directly into the heart. That would have been some sick shit before needles were invented. It definitely would have prevented accidentally turning someone. The other way they were different is their looks. They weren't described as exceptionally beautiful. Their beauty wasn't what made them special.

It was a good start to the series. I can't pinpoint why but I didn't get sucked into the story. The focus was on the vampires and the murders. I would have liked to have gotten to know the characters better. Alex was okay but now that I think about it I don't know much about him personally. Lindy was cool and wasn't living the standard vampire lifestyle. It was odd when she easily acquiesced to Alex's demands. Their goals were in alignment, but I expected her to put up a better fight for her freedom and independence. It was good enough that I'll read the next one when it comes out.

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### **Kate Campbell says**

\* I received this title for free from NetGalley in return for honest feed back\*

When I first started into Nightshades, I instantly thought how great of a TV show this would be. Federal Agents hunting dark vampires? I'll be there on my sofa, at 9pm Thursday evening waiting for Nightshades Chicago to come on. It would be great!

The action in the book starts right away. Special Agent Ruiz and his partner are in a rural area of Illinois, looking for shades (vampires). The shades had been kidnapping teenagers in the area and they were closing in. Nothing good comes of their pursuit in Heavenly, Illinois. Special Agent Alex McKenna, comes into the picture. He is interested in shades and he thinks he can track them down. His second in command Chase Eddy would be right there beside him through the whole operation (I'm telling you - TV SHOW). We also have Lindy, a language expert who will assist McKenna at all costs to bring down the shades.

Nightshades move very fast, with everything starting on Friday morning and ending Monday night. The timeline was only a drawback because I wanted more! I think this book could easily have been a solid 400 + pages and I would have sucked up every word! I really hope that Melissa Olson makes Nightshades a series of some kind. I became invested in the characters and McKenna's mission to find the shades kidnapping the teenagers. There is a whole awesome and dark shade world! I would love to read more about Agent McKenna and his team going in and taking shades.

If "another vampire" book is making you sceptical, just put that side for a moment and pick up Nightshades. No one glitters here, there is no teenager blinding love. There is action, blood, and death. It was a quick read and I really enjoyed it! If you are going to the beach or by the pool, this would be a great book to pick up!

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## **Biana says**

TOO SHORT! TOO SHORT! I need more!

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## **Angie says**

Fyi it's unclear from the blurb but this book is more of an introductory novella to a new series. It has a cliffhanger ending.

Nevertheless, it was still good. I like the way Olson does paranormal. I usually like my vampire books on the smutty side but Olson is fantastic with character development and weaving interesting mysteries to solve that I don't really care about the lack of sex.

I didn't think there were many more ways to make a vampire story original but this story certainly is. If you haven't read anything from Olson do yourself a favor and check out her work. I'm looking forward to more. Well done!

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## **Sophia says**

The Shades are out of the dark and shadowy closet and now humans are realizing they aren't quite the top of the food chain. In fact, they are the prey...

I took one look at the blurb and who was narrating and I was all-fired ready to give Melissa Olson and her paranormal thriller a go.

Nightshades is the introductory story in a new series. It does the job of introducing the background, setting, and the players. As I learned more about the Nightshades world and this version of vampires I was intrigued. The case of the disappearing teens and the death of one due to a shade attack, the formation of a new Preternatural Crimes Unit team, and the thrill of story moved along swiftly and steadily to a breathtaking climax.

The story took a while to get going, but that didn't matter. It actually was a quick listen and had some great action suspense scenes with a great group of characters. Alex McKenna is one of the leads with the enigmatic Lindy as the other. He's human and an FBI agent and he tracks her, a shade, down to help him solve the kidnapping and murders. It's earlier days for them, but they had great rapport, light banter, and a slow-burn attraction that has me excited to keep going with the series.

The big climax happened to finish off the main conflict of this book, but it also introduced what will be the series conflict. Ha! I knew Lindy was more than she seemed. The enemy is a worthy opponent for Alex and Lindy and the rest of the team. I can't wait to see what comes next.

Luke Daniels was his usual amazing self doing the narration. Whether it was light-hearted banter or an intense dangerous moment, female or male, sinister or innocent, he nailed it all. I really do need to listen to more off his backlist.

So, in summary, this venture into a new to me series was a resounding success. I definitely want more Nightshades action. Urban Fantasy lovers who like a good stirring vampire tale and an engaging FBI team should give this one a go.

My thanks to Brilliance Audio for the opportunity to listen to this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **All Things Urban Fantasy says**

**\*\*Reviews courtesy of All Things Urban Fantasy\*\***

Melissa F. Olson has become one of my insta-buy authors. I haven't read anything of hers I haven't liked, and NIGHTSHADES is no exception to that. NIGHTSHADES is a gritty police procedural in an awesome urban fantasy world.

NIGHTSHADES introduces a great cast of characters in what will hopefully turn into Olson's next series. NIGHTSHADES is a shorter novel, so it mainly focuses on three people in the newly minted Bureau of Paranormal Investigations. Despite the length of the novel I still felt like I got to know those three characters, and they were well developed.

Vampire are overdone. There are too many urban fantasy/paranormal romance books out there revolving around vampires at this point, so if you're going to use them you have to make them different. I'm not guaranteeing that someone else hasn't done vampires this way before, but I felt that NIGHTSHADES put a couple of different twists on vampires that made the story more enjoyable.

My only complaint about NIGHTSHADES is the same problem I have with lots of TV shows these days. Why in the world do you go into a situation with vampires, who can take a huge beating before going down in addition to being faster and stronger than you, with only government issue 9mms? These guys work for the FBI they have access to tactical shotguns that can shoot solid metal slugs many times the size of a 9mm bullet. But it's a common mistake made by people who aren't familiar with guns.

If you're looking for a fun, quick read pick up NIGHTSHADES. If you enjoy watching police procedural TV shows and would like to see that mixed with your favorite genre, urban fantasy, pick up NIGHTSHADES. If you just have \$3 lying around pick up NIGHTSHADES, you won't regret it. I hope that Melissa F. Olson gets the go ahead from TOR to continue this series, because I'm eager to see what happens next.

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## **Shelley says**

**\*Source\* Publisher**

**\*Genre\* Urban Fantasy**

**\*Rating\* 3.5-4**

**\*My Thoughts\***

Melissa F. Olson (author of the Boundary Magic and Scarlett Bernard series) and Tor.com, have put together a short story called Nightshades that has plenty of intrigue and action that focuses on what would happen if



the Mortal world discovered that the paranormal world actually existed and has been there the entire time. In this case, Olson has created shades, or if you like, vampires who are unafraid of pushing their weight around.

\*Full Review Posting @ Gizmos Review 07/28/2016 - Link to Follow

Pub Date: Jul 19 2016 Macmillan-Tor/Forge

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## **Lila says**

2,5 stars

My rating suggests I didn't like this book, but it's more to reflect how indifferent it left me. It's run-of-the-mill, paint it by numbers story about vampires. Very generic and absolutely nothing jumped at me as unique. Villain literally has this line:

"I am a king. And the stuff of nightmares."

I admit I had some hopes, since Tor.com published some amazing novellas and especially since author wrote an article about *Shadow Police* series by Paul Cornell and I hoped that inspiration will shine through her work.

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## **Paul says**

in a rare moment of reflection i noticed i have read/am reading a fair number pf vampire novels as of late. so paul, my imaginary or potential review readers ask, what seperates this from the pack. ah im glad you asked(or that i asked for you). for one thing these vampires are unique, they spit in the face of established mythology

yet in a respectful manner. olson seemed to pay respect to the mythos while seeking literary means to bring a fresh perspective to it. and she didnt resort to sparkly vamps to do it. another way they are different is olson strips the emo angst but leaves the inherent sensuality.

ok so a tweaked spin on vampires, what else did the author do to earn 4 stars you ask.(awww who am i kidding we both know even though you didnt ask that im going to try to tell you anyhow).

olson developed a.FBI task.force.to deal with the outed vamp problem headed by Alex and even though there is sexual tension between our hero and the "good" vamp and romantic overtones it doesnt seem forced or contrived.

basically this is an urban fantasy action thriller novel. but dont take my word for it, read it.

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