



Fierce Reads: Kisses and Curses

Lauren Burniac (Editor) , Ann Aguirre , Lish McBride , Marissa Meyer , Caragh M. O'Brien , Marie Rutkoski , Gennifer Albin , Anna Banks , more... Leigh Bardugo , Jessica Brody , Katie Finn , Nikki Kelly , Emmy Laybourne , Jennifer Mathieu , Lindsay Smith ...less

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A fabulous collection of short stories from your favorite Fierce Reads authors, perfect for fans and new readers!

Beloved of readers and booksellers, our Fierce Reads program has garnered tons of enthusiastic fans since its inauguration in 2012. Now, the authors you know and love are coming together in one book! With standalone short stories from a handpicked set of FR authors, this fabulous collection will include a mix of original content and popular favorites, and will often feature characters or worlds from existing Fierce Reads books. Extended, personal introductions from each author will make this a must-buy for fans as well as a fantastic portal for engaging new readers with the program. With a wide range of genres and subject matter, there will be something here for everyone!

Marissa Meyer • Glitches
Marie Rutkoski • Bridge of Snow
Jennifer Mathieu • Dynamite Junior
Anna Banks & Emmy Laybourne • Monster Crush
Courtney Alameda • Fixer
Jessica Brody • Unstolen
Ann Aguirre • Secret Heart
Lish McBride • Death & Waffles
Lindsay Smith • Krisis
Katie Finn • Deleted Scenes
Caragh M. O'Brien • Tortured
Nikki Kelly • Blue Moon
Gennifer Albin • The Cypress Project
Leigh Bardugo • The Too-Clever Fox

Fierce Reads: Kisses and Curses Details

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From Reader Review Fierce Reads: Kisses and Curses for online ebook

Sharon Mariampillai says

This was short novella. I did think it was interesting to understand the scene from Fade's perspective. However, I think it was also a bit pointless because it did not give any other insights to what happened during that part.

Kate says

The description on Goodreads says that this collection is "perfect for fans and new readers." I disagree. This is not a collection for new readers, but for those already fans of one or more of the authors. Most of the stories in the collection are set in the existing worlds created by the authors, and many read like prologues. (There is even one "story" that is actually a few deleted scenes from a book by the author.) Beyond that, expect major spoilers.

I think that if you are already a fan of one of the authors listed, and you would like to read an additional snippet, you may very well enjoy the collection, but I didn't, as I'm generally not one for deleted scenes or extras.

Darcy says

This review is based only on the story by Ann Aguirre.

I liked this little secret glimpse we had of Fade's feelings for Deuce. But I think the best part of this was the introduction by the author. I loved her tale of how she started writing as a kid, how hard it was for her as an adult and how she finally sold her first story.

Carol says

I really hated that this book, that is filled with "short stories," even exists. It's not short stories - it's practically outtakes and add-ons to books that the contributors already written, so you need to have some prior knowledge or something. As far as I know, some of the "short stories" in there have already been published separately from this compilation of stuff, so I question why those stories are even there in the first place.

Nicole says

Kisses and Curses does not have a fixed theme and instead is filled with novellas from the contributing

authors' series.

I liked that each author talks about their journey to writing books, why they do it and give a short intro into the short story featured.

As per my usual, I will comment and rate each each story individually.

Glitches by Marissa Meyer

(#0.5 Lunar Chronicles)

5/5 stars

Anyone who has read this series would love to read a short story set in this world. I like how I got an insight into how Cinder felt being introduced to her new family. Andddd her first impression on Kai. Epic. Seeing how warm Peony was to her stole my heart and understanding why Adri and Cinder have a strained relationship allowed me to sympathize. It was heartbreaking to have Garan taken away though. But this story sets things up for future books. I really enjoyed it.

Bridge of Snow by Marie Ruthoski

(#0.5 The Winners Curse)

4/5 stars

This occurs before the Winners Curse novel but it did not really matter to me. I liked the idea of a mother telling her smart beyond his years son a compelling story which lead to a life lesson. As always the author's writing impresses.

Dynamite Junior by Jennifer Mathieu

3.5/5 stars

I knew the main character here was represented in the book The Truth About Alice but I was actually more fascinated with Alice than Carmen despite this novella being focused on her. I felt sad for her family but did not really connect with her. This could have been any old typical high school story.

Monster Crush by Anna Banks and Emmy Laybourne

3/5 stars

This story is special. It is not a novella from a book published by either author but instead was written through a twitter back and forth by them. It seemed very impromptu and not in a good way. I found it cute but rather unrealistic.

Fixer by Courtney Alameda

3.5/5 stars

Apparently this is from book called Shutter. I notice alot of the stories in this anthology are from the perspective of the main character's love interest aka the guy of the story. This one was pretty good considering I have not read the book, it gave me a quick look into the world without making me confused. It also packed tons of emotions into just a few pages which I could feel my heart softening to.

Unstolen by Jessica Brody

3/5 stars

The premise actually fascinated me but this novella only served to give me a brief view into the main character's love interest, Zen and a pivotal scene where he takes her memories from those who have stolen them. It gave me a hint that Seraphina was not normal. Just an okay read for me.

Secret heart by Ann Aguire

4/5 stars

This one occurs in book 1 of the Razorland series. It is nice to see things from Fade's pov. I love that he fell for Deuce so early on and this novella shows the reader how he deals with it.

Death and Waffles by Lisa McBride

3.5/5 stars

A rather good intro into the full length novel. Even though the main character, Matt seemed boring, I was fascinated with Ashley and her job as Harbinger.

Krisis by Lindsay Smith

4/5 stars

Whoa, this was exciting and the premise good. I am interested to read Sekret because who can say no to story set in Russia during the Cuban Missile Crisis and teenagers with psychic powers who can turn the tide of the war? I Hope Larissa and Ivan get a happy ever after though.

Deleted scenes from Broken Hearts, Fences and Other Things to Mend by Katie Finn

3/5 stars

Now because this is not a novella and more a collection of scenes taken out from the main novel, it seems to lose the appeal because it is very disjointed. But then I still found myself enjoying the scenes, especially the pizza one even though the plot is rather cliché.

Tortured by Caragh M O'Brien

3.5/5 stars

I have always been fascinated with dystopian so reading the author's introduction immediately perked me up. Despite the novella being short and not revealing much I was still fascinated to find out more. About what had happened to the world, how people coped and who Gaia was. She seemed important.

Blue Moon by Nikki Kelly

2.5/5 stars

I could not get into this at all. It was very confusing. At first when the author introduced the world I was fascinated but then I read the novella and my interest turned to confusion. By the end of it, I did not want to know more.

The Cypress Project by Gennifer Albin

4/5 stars

I guess this is a bit of a prequel to the Crewel Series. I was intrigued by Lucy, Joshua, the romance, the sci-fi aspect of it. The WWII setting was nice as well. Funny because I have seen Crewel around but never gave it

a chance but perhaps I should.

The Too Clever Fox by Leigh Bardugo
3.5/5 stars

This is folk tale set in the world of the Grisha Trilogy. It does not relate to any of the characters but it was nice. In a kind of bed time story kinda way if you like them a little dark. It felt like there was a moral to the story though.

I love some of the short stories as I already read the full novels like Cinder, Winner's Curse and Enclave. Especially Glitches because I adore the Lunar Chronicles. One thing I notice is that a lot of the stories are novellas from full length books and mostly from the guy's pov, guy is almost always main character's love interest so reader gets tons of talk on how he adores girl, would do anything for her, how strong and brave she is multiple times. It gets a bit annoying to say the least.

Some of stories I could not get into because I did not read the books so I could not understand the characters(Death and Waffles, Unstolen and Dynamite Junior) but some made me want to read the books(Krisis, Fixer, The Cypress Project, Tortured). Overall a satisfying collection of YA novellas that have a variety of genres to please everyone.

Cori Reed says

Unfortunately although there are a few stories in the collection I quite enjoyed (the stories by Marissa Meyer, Marie Rutkoski, Leigh Bardugo and Nikki Kelly all kept my attention), the rest left me feeling a bit "meh." Also, the story by Anna Banks and Emmy Laybourne was literally a Tweeted back and forth between then and it's a SASQUATCH ROMANCE. Um, no thanks! It was real bad.

So...seek out the stories by the authors I mentioned maybe, but the rest I give a hard pass.

Katherine says

I am super split on this entire collection. So first of all, I'll just review each of these short stories individually:

Individual Reviews:

'Glitches' by Marissa Meyer – 5 stars – I really like the Lunar Chronicles series and I liked this prequel. It made me love the series and Cinder even more than normal. It was the perfect length and the writing was great.

'Bridge of Snow' by Marie Rutkoski – 5 stars – I was shocked to like this. I didn't like The Winner's Curse at all, and this is a prequel to that told from Arin's mother POV. It's also part folk tale. This was so cute, and it kind of makes me want to retry this series.

'Dynamite Junior' by Jennifer Mathieu – 4 stars – The Truth About Alice is one of my favorite books of last year. This is another POV from the book and it made me feel all the feels from the real book. It was a great intro if you haven't read it, but it adds another layer if you have.

'Monster Crush' by Anna Banks and Emmy Laybourne – 1 star – This is a SASQUATCH ROMANCE. I'd

say that I'm an open-minded reader but maybe not. This was also written in tweet format, so nothing about this worked. It was super insta-love and the relationship was ridiculous.

'Fixer' by Courtney Alameda – DNF – Maybe it's because I haven't read Shutter but I didn't get it.

'Unstolen' by Jessica Brody – 5 stars – This was short, but sweet. I loved the writing and I will definitely be checking out her books.

'Sweet Heart' by Ann Aguirre – 2 stars – I feel like this was unnecessary. I've read the first book of the Enclave trilogy and won't be continuing, but it just felt like a love poem to Deuce. Like it was about holding her hand for six pages.

'Death and Waffles' by Lish McBride – 3 stars – I liked the concept of this, but I wanted more out of it. Like, there was some full book potential here. But Lish McBride sounds really cool.

'Krisis' by Lindsay Smith – 4 stars – I just read Skandal, so I was familiar with the characters and this world. I loved the tie in to the Cuban Missile Crisis and getting another psychic's perspective.

'Deleted Scenes' by Katie Finn – 3 stars – I haven't read this revenge series, so I had no idea what was happening. They were cute, but out of context. And I was disappointed that this wasn't original.

'Tortured' by Carah M. O'Brian – Didn't read – This whole story was a spoiler for her series!

'Blue Moon' by Nikki Kelly – 4 stars – I liked this. It was a cute story without being overdone and I'll be looking at some more of her work. Plus, I liked the mysterious style of writing.

'The Cypress Project' by Gennifer Albin – DNF – Yeah, another case of I didn't read the series so what is happening.

'The Too Clever Fox' by Leigh Bardugo – 3 stars – This was okay. I didn't understand some of it, which is often a problem for me with folk tales. I just don't think I'm the type of reader for them.

The main reason I was disappointed overall with this was the lack of original content. Most of it was already published in some way or a deleted scene. Also, it was all from their series (only two original ones). I hadn't read most of them. There were two or three new authors I will check out because of this, and some series I love more because of their features, but some that I'll probably never read now. I wish that they had written something new in a different world so I could have more fun with it. I always felt like I was missing something.

Overall, I would suggest reading this if you've read the majority of these series or authors. Maybe just keep a copy around for when you do? Anyway, it was a quick read, but I was wanting more.

Taina says

3.5. I was expecting it to be so many short stories. I didn't really enjoy of some of them just started off in the middle of some of the other books that the author had written. For me, they got better as they moved along. The last one was my favorite.

Charyz Wayne says

Honestly, I haven't even read Enclave yet. I only have the copy of Secret Heart and was curious to read this and have a glimpse of Razorland Trilogy. I have read Fade's thoughts, for Deuce, specifically. And damn those unspoken words made me melt. My heart was continuously fluttering. If given a chance, I would very much likely to read the trilogy. If only I had a copy, I literally would. Fade's a sweet and gentle guy. Deuce's a fierce and independent girl. I needed more of them to subside these fluttering feelings.

Completely Melanie says

This is 14 short stories from 15 different authors. Most of the short stories were insights into a certain aspect of another book or series most of which I hadn't read. The first story was called Glitched and it was a Cinder story by Marissa Meyer. Because I had read that book, I really enjoyed this story. There were a couple of stand alone stories in here that I also enjoyed. All in all, I think I would have enjoyed it more if I had read all the books attached to these stories. Because of that, I do plan on keeping this book and probably rereading it in the future after I have had a chance to read the books that go with it.

Quirkyreader says

This was a very fast and fun read. It will greatly appeal to those who like light horror and sci-fi. Also, it is very clean. So it is safe for a tweenager to read it.

The last story impressed me the most. It is called "The Too Clever Fox" and it is by Leigh Bardugo. I have always been fascinated by trickster stories when the trickster is a fox.

Read this one aloud with family and friends and enjoy some well crafted stories.

Desiree says

NOTE: When I average out the ratings for all of the stories I actually completed, it comes to a 3.16, so I almost gave this book three stars. However, that would've been completely ignoring the 5 stories I didn't read because they didn't stand on their own outside their series. I feel like that should reflect on this anthology.

Short story collections should not require the reader to read a bunch of other books just to understand what is going on, unless they are written by the same person and specifically marketed as stories taking place in one world i.e. Stars Above, by Marissa Meyer, which is a collection of short stories taking place in the Lunar Chronicles Universe.

I purchased this anthology because there was something about the cover that was intriguing to me. I also liked the title. I assumed that this would be a collection of romance stories, mostly in the fantasy genre. I was also excited when I saw some of the names contributing to this anthology: Marissa Meyer, Leigh Bardugo, Ann Agguire, etc.

Unfortunately, I was very disappointed by this collection. First of all, almost none of the stories are original at all. They're all connected to the author's previous works. This works in a couple of cases (I liked Leigh's story about the too-clever fox, which I'm assuming made its way into Language of Thorns) and the stories by Jennifer Mathieu and Lish McBride worked as stand-alone stories, even though they were loosely connected to other series that I hadn't yet read.

It honestly ends up feeling like a money grab by the publishing company, as most if not all of these stories already existed before the anthology was compiled.

I'm going to give a rating for each story, beginning with my favorite of the bunch and working my way down to my least favorite.

First of all, there were 5 stories that I skipped over. I haven't read the series that these stories came from, and many of them took place in the middle of the series and followed important characters in the series. A couple of the series were familiar to me, but I'd never had the desire to read them, so why would I want to read a short story that jumps into the middle of the series?

Anyway...

1. Fixer by Courtney Alameda - I haven't heard of this series before. Apparently this author leans toward the horror genre, which is not something I tend to reach for, so I doubt this will ever be something I will come back around to.
2. Unstolen by Jessica Brody - Now, this one actually sounds intriguing to me. A girl is on a plane when it crashes and she is the only one who survives. Apparently it ends up being a mystery/suspense type series, so I'm interested in maybe checking out the series, but this snippet takes place during the other books and I want a little more foundation before jumping in.
3. Deleted Scenes by Katie Finn - I don't know if the series this comes from is for me. It seems like it's geared toward very young teens, which I am most definitely not. Also, as the title suggests, this story is literally a deleted scene from a book that I haven't read. I don't know how well it will hold up on it's own, and I don't feel the need to read it for that reason. Perhaps if I go back and check the series out. We'll see.
4. Tortured by Caragh O'Brien - I actually own the Birthmarked trilogy, which this story is connected to, but I haven't been able to get through it. I tried listening to it on audiobook once but it couldn't hold my interest. I am going to try one more time and make a decision about it once and for all. If I do read it and enjoy it, I'll come back and read this story. If not, I won't.
5. The Cypress Project by Gennifer Albin - This takes place in the world of the Crewel trilogy. It appears to be a prequel to that series that shows the point where our world diverged and went toward the world in that series. I know that this is a prequel, but I haven't heard great things about the foundational series, so I don't think I will be reading this.

Okay, now on to the stories I actually read. Again, from my fave to least fave:

5/5 The Too-Clever Fox by Leigh Bardugo - I love her writing and I love this story. I haven't read Language of Thorns yet, but I would assume that this story makes it in there and I kind of want to buy Language of Thorns just so I can read it with illustrations. This had the perfect blend of whimsy and moral that you get from traditional fairy tales.

4/5 Glitches by Marissa Meyer - This is a prequel to Cinder, the first book in the Lunar Chronicles. I really enjoy this series and this little glimpse into Cinder's first weeks with the Lihn's was great. I feel like even someone who hasn't read the Lunar Chronicles would enjoy this. It stands on its own, which cannot be said of all of these stories.

4/5 Death and Waffles by Lish McBride - I haven't read the books that this story comes from, but this story stands on its own as well. I never felt like I'd just been dropped into the middle of a story with no context. Even though you don't know exactly what is going on at first, it becomes clear very quickly and there is some backstory given. I liked the whimsical, yet serious nature of the story, and I thought the author did a

wonderful job balancing something that could be on the macabre side. I want to read more by this author.

3.75/5 Dynamite Junior by Jennifer Mathieu - I haven't read the book this story is inspired by. It does take place in the middle of the novel *The Truth About Alice*. I've heard of this book before but I was wary of picking it up because of what I perceived as slut-shaming. However, after I read the author's note, I realized that her book is absolutely not promoting that kind of behavior at all and now I kind of want to pick it up. The one thing I will say is that the writing seems a bit on the simplistic side. But I would read a book about Carmen and her struggles. I would read it right now.

3.75/5 Bridge of Snow by Marie Rutkowski - I have read the Winner's Curse trilogy and wasn't really a fan. And I have to say, I feel like maybe I might want to give the series one more shot. This was actually pretty good. I liked the folklore that is woven into this. It was similar to the Leigh Bardugo story in that way even though it wasn't a straight-up fairy tale. And the last couple of paragraphs actually hurt my heart. It was the only time throughout this anthology that I got emotional at all.

3.5/5 Krisis by Lindsay Smith - I have seen the book *Sekret* here and there but never picked it up. This short story takes place a year before the book and follows different characters, which I appreciated. I actually thought this was pretty interesting. I haven't read many books taking place during the cold war, and even though this particular series contains paranormal elements, I'm still interested in checking it out after reading this short story.

2.5/5 Blue Moon by Nikki Kelly - I honestly don't remember what happened in this story and I just read it a couple hours ago. It just did not stick with me at all.

2/5 Secret Heart by Ann Aguire - I've read Aguire's *Razorland* trilogy. Twice. I know there is a fourth book, but I was not interested in the slightest by the synopsis. This short story isn't even a story. It's retelling a scene from the perspective of Fade, the male protagonist. It's boring and it's unnecessary.

0/5 Monster Crush by Anna Banks and Emmy Laybourne - WTF. The most shocking thing about this awful story isn't the fact that it was actually published by a legit publishing company. It isn't even the fact that it is a sasquatch romance (Yes, you read that correctly. No, I'm not kidding. Yes, I wish I was.). To me, the most shocking part of this utter drivel of a story is that it took TWO authors to spew it out. I'm just floored that anyone thought this was a good idea. First of all, Sasquatch. Romance. Now, I would've been fine if they wanted to do some sort of Beauty and the Beast thing with a Bigfoot as the Beast. That could actually make sense, especially if they were going to set the story in the Pacific Northwest. I could get that. But this was a take on Sasquatches that was just a big mess. Um...spoilers ahead...

In this dumpster fire, sasquatches supposedly used to be human, and they turn other humans by kissing them on the mouth. Just the mouth. Apparently they can kiss them anywhere else on their bodies and everything is hunky-dory, but one peck on the lips immediately turns the other person into a sasquatch--but only during the day. At night they get to be in their human form--but only for a little while. Over time they lose 'human hours' until they are fully sasquatch.

It's so freaking stupid. I just...can't.

Aside from that, there is also the fact that this is insta-love at it's most cringey. There is a reference to Disney Princesses and how she understands how she could fall in love in one night. At one point, they even reference the term 'insta-love' saying how much they hate it but oh well!

The final nail in the coffin for me is the structure. It is literally just the two authors, texting lines of the story back and forth to each other. I don't know if this is legitimately how they wrote this story, but the gimmick didn't work at all. It made the entire thing seem very lazy to me. Actually, that is the perfect word for this. Lazy. And like I stated previously, I was astounded that this was a selection for publication in ANY book, newspaper, magazine, ezine...whatever. It's bad. I do not feel any urge to pick up anything from either of these authors.

Honestly, this anthology annoys me more and more as I think about it. It isn't marketed as 'short stories set in the world of your favorite series!' If it was, I probably wouldn't have purchased it in the first place, but I definitely would've paid more attention to the authors included to see whether or not I'd read a majority of their books.

Anyway, rant over. I don't recommend this anthology unless you've read a majority of the books by these authors.

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

They were okay

Stephanie Roxane says

I originally was going to do a mini review on each story, but honestly feels like a waste.

Most of these stories were not good. I DNFd a few of them.

Most of these stories were sort of companion stories to books I've never read and this made them really super confusing and irritating. Nowhere on the book does it say that every story is a deleted scene from another work.

I liked Glitches, the Cypress Project, and Death and Waffles and the Leigh Bardugo story which I've previously read in Language of Thorns.

Maria says

This was different.

Being a new reader to all of the authors, I figured this would be a nice way to familiarize myself with their work as I've only read one Bardugo (Wonder Woman) and and currently reading one Meyer (Renegades) but this book of short novellas is really intended for readers who are already engrossed with the authors books as 8/10 of these novellas involved within those very worlds and characters and me not knowing them, was left out and feeling "meh".

With that said though, the writing was good and on others better. I was interested to look into new authors(to me anyway) and the novellas are to blame for that.

I really enjoyed reading "Monster Crush"(harkens to oddball convos with my bestie), "Secret Heart", "Death & Waffles", "The Cypress Project", and "The Too-Clever Fox"
