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Hunter Kiss

Marjorie M. Liu

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"In this eSpecial, New York Times bestselling author Marjorie M. Liu provides a companion novella to The Iron Hunt and Darkness Calls, the first two books in her gripping new urban fantasy series. Meet Maxine Kiss, the Earth's last protector."

This novella, a prequel to The Iron Hunt, was originally published as part of the Wild Thing anthology.

Hunter Kiss Details

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From Reader Review Hunter Kiss for online ebook

Lori {Romancing the Dark Side} says

A great prequel that introduces you to the dark and sinister world of Maxine Kiss, demon hunter. Glad I read this one before starting the series. It gives you a good back story that is insightful when reading *The Iron Hunt*.

Kati says

I really loved the first book in the "Hunter Kiss" series even though I found it a bit confusing, reading it without knowing about this novella. But this story? Too preachy, too much would-be religious talk about the essence of good and evil, too much info dumped on the reader, too long, too whiny... And the sex was so, so unnecessary. It actually turned me off. When I got to the part where they started climbing each other like a tree after knowing each other for an hour or two, I almost dropped it completely. I'm glad I read the book first. If I started the series with this short story, I might have avoided it altogether.

Donna says

As someone who really enjoyed *The Iron Hunt* despite that nagging feeling of missing backstory, I was very happy to see this novella made available separately from the paranormal romance anthology it was first published in.

Dorothea says

I read two of the Hunter Kiss novels before realizing that this novella (which was first published with some other authors' novellas before the Hunter Kiss novels) existed. So I was a bit confused as to why the novels, which have a strong romantic element although they're closer to urban fantasy than paranormal romance, only allude in passing to the story of Maxine Kiss meeting her partner, Grant Cooperon.

The reason seems to be that Liu already published that story, in this novella. So if you want to know the details, you should read this -- but otherwise, I really don't recommend it as an introduction to the series. The basic ideas are here, but Liu hadn't fully worked out the feel of the Hunter Kiss world -- Zee doesn't feel quite right, and Blood Mama is all wrong. (Also, the sex scenes are really awkward.)

Start with the first full-length novel, *The Iron Hunt*, instead. If you really want a more standard romance story between Maxine and Grant, the third book, *A Wild Light*, takes care of that -- as long as you don't hate (view spoiler).

Shannon (Savhage Temprest) says

"Hunter Kiss" by Marjorie M. Liu was a pretty interesting story about a demon hunter who meets a man that changes everything she has ever known. It is full of action, romance, in the non-traditional sense, and intrigue from beginning to end. I liked the character of Maxine Kiss and the tragedy of her life and those before her. I also liked the little demons that live on her body as tattoos during the day and come alive at night. The love interest, Grant, was pretty interesting as well. I think the only thing I didn't like about this story was the vagueness about it and how Maxine and Grant met and "got together" is a little strange for me as well. I had previously read a short-story that is based in the Hunter Kiss series in the anthology Inked, and I liked it along with world Ms. Liu has created. I'll definitely be reading the other books in this series starting with The Iron Hunt.

Nona says

Maxine Kiss...smartest read you can find

Hunter Kiss....Maxine is a demon Hunter like none you've read before. Marjorie M. Liu is an author god who writes with a scary understanding of what makes us tick and some of the smartest dialogue available. 5 books and 2 novellas comprise the scope of Maxine's world, and they are not enough. This story enhances the first 2 books, and takes us deeper into the personal side of Maxine & Grant. MML paints with vivid words and wondrous concepts, building a world and lives that are touchable. There are many previous novels under her belt, and all that experience coalesces into a series that will blow you away.

Angela (Angel's Guilty Pleasures) says

~ 3 Stars~

Hunter Kiss is the Prequel to the *Hunter Kiss* series by Marjorie M. Liu. I recommend reading this before you start The Iron Hunt book 1. **Hunter Kiss** is full of action, romance, in the non-traditional sense, and intrigue from beginning to end.

The prequel is written POV and explains about Maxine, her background story, as well as her meeting Grant. She is someone who has no home, no roots and avoids men like the plague. She sure did fall into bed with Grant very quickly and I did not feel that much chemistry between them. Not to sure about this relationship. Will see how the books work this one out.

Maxine also has tattoos that come to life when the sun sets and these tattoos are no ordinary tattoos. The author explains the myriad species of spirits and demons who have invade this world. Humans who are possessed and that Maxine can see them.

*The story was interesting. The writing style though made the book feel more formal and old fashioned. It's not in the past nor was it decades ago. This style made the story move more slowly and hard for me to connect to the characters. I plan to read **Iron Hunt** and see what happens next, though I'm not in a big hurry to check it out.*

Anoolka says

Perhaps closer to 3.5 than 4 this was nonetheless a pleasant read. I started reading the first book in this series and then realized there was this prequel. Things make much more sense with this little novella as an introduction to the series. On one hand I found Maxine and Grant's relationship to be moving awfully fast, on the other hand Grant is a refreshingly different male character for a paranormal/urban fantasy series. He's not physically perfect, he's somewhat naive and far more positive (ex-priest!) than the heroine, it's a bit different than the usual macho alpha type.

I'll definitely give the next/the first book in the series another go.

Keikii Eats Books says

85 points/100 (4.5 stars/5).

While getting ready to leave town, Maxine comes across Grant Cooperon, whom demons are circling around in order to kill. Maxine, driven by an instant connection to him, knows she has to save him.

This is a relatively quick novella set before the first book in the series. It can be read either before or after the first book. It tells a full story on how Maxine and Grant meet. It wasn't exactly interesting or groundbreaking, but it was entertaining. I enjoyed this novella. It doesn't actually add much to the series, so it isn't exactly necessary to read, but it isn't completely nonessential because you do get stuff out of reading it. It introduces all the characters you need to know as well as basic worldbuilding and setting up to the series.

Decent start to the series, but don't expect too much out of the story.

Robin says

This is good. It's the prequel to the first book in this series, unfortunately I read the first book quite some time ago and while I remember some of it, the gist, not a great deal more. So it feels out of context but my fault. Still a good story.

Literary Ames {Against GR Censorship} says

I began reading Iron Hunt and was having a confusing time of it when someone mentioned that there was a prequel (thank you, Kendra) so I put Iron Hunt down and read this. It explained how Maxine met Grant and described some of her background, all very helpful but for someone who constantly moves around and avoids men like the plague, Maxine sure did fall into bed with Grant very quickly, they're not even well-matched or have much chemistry. Grant gravitated towards Maxine like a moth to flame and Maxine appears to be settling with Grant because she doesn't want to run any more, she wants a home and Grant can provide one.

The story was interesting, however the writing made it hard for me to connect with the characters despite it being written in the first person. I'm a big fan of first person narrative but the language was so formal and old fashioned with a lot of "I cannot" and "I did not" instead of "I can't" and "I didn't". This wasn't set in the past nor was it written decades ago, it made the story move more slowly and Maxine seem very detached and unemotional which left me feeling bored, bewildered and very thankful that this was only novella and not a full-length book.

The action at the end had me wondering if this storyline was going to be continued because the resolution was too quick and easy. One minute Grant was going to die and become enslaved and the next they are both out of danger and dismissed with a warning.

I will read Iron Hunt and it's sequel as they were impulse buys at a closing down sale but if I hadn't have done that I wouldn't bother reading them after suffering through this very dry ebook.

Jacqueline says

This really should be read before beginning her series, as it clarifies and sets up a lot. Overall, it's a very good novella - action packed and romantic.

Skye says

I loved the prose in this. It was jumpy and a little all over the place. Quite sharp and to the point. And not really the kind of prose I would have expected from a novella in a paranormal romance collection. It wasn't really that heavy on the romance either, that was just kind of slotted in. Which I appreciated immensely. After all, what I like about this series (the novella that I have already read anyway) is the darkness of it and the intensity.

This is the start of the Hunter Kiss, a little romantic introduction that (I'm assuming) sets you up for the rest of the series. And it is one that worked really very well for me. I found it thoroughly enjoyable, if anything, a little too enjoyable in that it makes me want to not finish any of the other books on my "currently reading" pile and just jump straight into The Iron Hunt. It is taking a lot of self-control to not do this. And to you know... continue doing the work that I'm actually supposed to be doing (that I get paid to do).

This isn't the fast-paced novella that I was expecting. Although there are demons and external impacts on Grant and Maxine, most of the story is about them getting to know each other. Specifically, it is about Maxine being introduced to her reader in all of her weird and abnormal glory. And what an introduction it is... now to hide The Iron Hunt somewhere safe so I can be a little more productive in my life...

GCB-LovesGoodBooks says

I really liked this novella and read it before reading the first in the series as a number of reviewers had said to read this first. It was refreshing and sort of a new genre for me - speculative religious paranormal romance and you what, I think I like it.

But one thing, they really did not need to have sex so quickly. This was the only discordant part of the novella for me. Too soon.

Faye says

First read: 2010 (in Wild Thing anthology)

Re-read: October 2015

I am about to re-read the Hunter Kiss series in preparation for the latest book; 'Labyrinth of Stars.' Unfortunately I read the prequel story in an anthology many years ago and no longer own that particular book. Hunter Kiss is essential reading for anyone who wants to read the series. I remember when I picked up the first book (The Iron Hunt) and started reading, I had to put it back down and go and check online that I hadn't picked up a later book in the series by accident. A lot happens in this novella that is continued in The Iron Hunt.

Hunter Kiss introduces us to Maxine Kiss, a young woman who has some unusual abilities and gifts. The most unique part of her is her tattoos which cover every inch of her skin. These tattoos are actually five little demons who can peel off her body at night and become separate creatures with their own personalities. During the day when they cover Maxine's body they make her impervious to harm like having bullet-proof skin. They are her protectors and are long living if not immortal. They have protected each generation of women in Maxine's family, until that woman has a daughter and then that protection transfers over to the child. The reason Maxine needs this protection is that she can see what she calls 'zombies' - demons who have invaded a human host and slowly take them over, using that body to cause the pain and suffering of others which they feed from. Maxine is a hunter and can kill these zombies.

In Hunter Kiss, Maxine meets Grant Cooperon, a former priest, flute player and owner of a homeless shelter. He is being hunted by these demons and Maxine must find out why.

I really enjoyed the world that Liu has created here. I have read other UF series set in Seattle and Liu manages to make her world atmospheric, dark and different. I also love that Maxine's romantic interest isn't an 'alpha male.' Grant is gentler, honest about his feelings and seems like a nice person. He also has a physical injury and must walk with a cane. At the same time he is not a pushover and is able to be an equal partner to Maxine.

I liked the mythology around the demons, Blood Mama and the prison veils. The only factor that stopped this story getting the full five-stars is that I felt Maxine fell for Grant too quickly and easily. This is a person who had been on her own ever since her mother died and on the move her entire life but within hours of meeting Grant (view spoiler)

Rating: 4.5/5 stars. I am looking forward to my re-read of The Iron Hunt.
