



Eternal Hearts

Jennifer Turner

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Toni Tutoro just wants to go home. Banned from Chicago's vampiric society after cutting a swath of violence through the city, she must now successfully complete an investigation for the Lord of Chicago to regain the right to live in her hometown again. To ensure Toni's safety during her probationary period, Drake Black, a feared assassin, is secretly contracted to protect her. Even with direct orders to keep his relationship professional, and his own personal vow to never get involved with a female vampire again, Drake finds himself drawn to Toni in ways he can't explain. But unbeknownst to him...he's tied to one of the people who drove Toni to her night of destruction. Drake's legendary heritage holds the key to Toni's survival and success, but will she be able to forgive his connection to the brutal night that robbed her of those she loved most? Will Drake be able to forget the betrayals in his past and risk taking one more chance? But most of all - can they find a way to reach each other in the darkness?

Eternal Hearts Details

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From Reader Review Eternal Hearts for online ebook

Katrina says

My review is based on Eternal Hearts, not having read book one in this series. It wasn't until I was half way through I found out it had a previous book, but saying that I don't feel I missed out on anything. But I will be reading book two..

Toni Tutoro broke the most important rule amongst her kind, ** The veil** - The secret to keep their existence from humans. Being a newly turned vampire with little control, Toni wanted payback to avenge the death and kill the people who slaughtered her family in cold blood and in doing so, she killed innocent humans and exposed her kind. For this she was banished by Lord Christian Locke and banned from Chicago never to return.

3 years later she returns.

Toni has now returned to Chicago, thanks to close friends and a lot of money. Here she meets Drake Blake. Drake is a supernatural force not to be reckoned with - he is hired to protect Toni and finds that her personality etches its way into his hard core. Her unique mannerisms, ways and funny antics, and kind and loving heart, if more of a human than he could have imagined.

Toni has Drake intrigued and he begins to feel things he never thought he would again in his life.

Destined to kill he can also protect, not many see this side of him. Drake works for the Crypt – an ancient organized who deals with the people needing termination and also people who need to be protected.

Drake feels he needs this job; it keeps his monster inside and his need to kill is strong so this keeps his inner beast at bay. Drake is two parts of a whole and hates himself, but he finds that Toni keeps his bad beast at bay and surfaces the beast within that loves and wants to be loved.

Toni receives a task from Lord Locke to regain her stay and home back into Chicago. She must complete it without Drake and prove who is behind the new pack of werewolves been let into the city zoo and find out why they are here. We are taken on a whirlwind of events – Will Drake and Toni's love be safe, will Drake's enemies kill her and will the Crypt let their love flourish or die before the flames have burned? Will Toni learn to love again after all she has endured and will she survive one more at the hands of Stryker?

My thoughts!!

Well Drake is a supernatural God!!! I loved his character, he had abilities as a Hybrid – You must read to find out the scoop on him. * As I haven't read book one I found his abilities - * fascinating - grins ** Very intriguing, and definitely had my interest piqued. He was a torn and tortured soul who came across as a hard arse and untouchable, but upon meeting Toni he let himself live a little and loved a little. We were able to see two sides to this hot arse, scary but, hunky man. ** swoon ** ((I enjoy a hotty in my reads))

The connection between Toni and Blake was quick, but I enjoyed the electricity and sparks that were present. Being a romantic at heart, I love romance and love, it was sensual, hot, and definitely smoldering!!! I think they had a great connection and both learned to love each other despite the torn souls they both were. Both imperfect but worked together like yin and yang.

Toni was fiery, which I enjoyed she took no shit from anyone, (my kind of girl) she was a true warrior but very loving and loyal to the ones she cared about. Kind of like a split personality, one minutes a kitten the

next a lion. I liked that she wasn't afraid to show her emotions, no matter which state she was in. Her humor has me giggling at times, and this also lightened the mood.

All supporting characters I enjoyed, I look forward to the next installment – Oktobers story ?

I felt that all the characters blended through well and where all relevant in the storyline. Some of the characters traits rather freaky and dark, but hey this is paranormal and any fantasy or evil is told. I liked that Jennifer expressed not only the good sides but all the evil that dwells within her characters.

Storyline – plot was enjoyable and kept my interest from the very beginning. I have not read the first book but after reading this one, I definitely will be. Storyline flowed smoothly, chapters running from one to the next, and I must say the climax had me hanging off that roof spurring Toni on.

Overall an enjoyable read, filled with twists, and turns, betrayal and murder, love and lust and sexy love scenes that will knock your socks off. Humor and dark moments, but also a story that will keep your interest piqued and heightened throughout.

Majanka says

Toni Tutoro's reason to take revenge on the vampires who allegedly killed her entire family was totally understandable, and although even some of the ancient vampires feel for her, that didn't keep her from being banned from her home town, Chicago, when breaking the Veil by killing vampires in public. Now, three years later, Toni is back in town, her presence requested by the very people who banned her in the first place. Unfortunately, the Vampire Lord of the city, Christian, has a very peculiar reason for wanting Toni in town: there's some sort of werewolf plague going on, and he wants Toni to find out what the four-legged creatures are doing in vampire territory. Failing is out of the question. Meanwhile, we meet up with a familiar person from Eternal Seduction, Drake Black, a man torn and scarred by his long lost love for a vampire woman. While he was unable to let his dead heart beat for centuries, so to speak, with Toni around it does come pretty close. The two of them share an instant attraction, mainly because in Drake Toni finds the protector she seeks, and in Toni Drake finds the honest, reliable woman who would never manipulate him or hurt him intentionally. He can trust her, and it's that trust he's been craving for centuries now. It's a match made in heaven...or somewhere a lot darker. As Toni goes on werewolf hunt, she is forced to face enemies from her past, the most prominent one being the woman who was at least partly responsible for Toni's exile three years prior. As emotions run high, Toni and Drake must keep their cool...

Toni is a very...annoying character. Initially, I liked her. I felt for the tragic heroine who lost her family during an extremely violent crime, who was forced to flee her hometown for something as silly as taking revenge, and who is now finally able to return, only to learn that her return is only on the condition that she gets information involving the local werewolf population. However, my initial bond with Toni soon disappeared into thin air as she went from one emotion to the other about as easily as another person takes a breathe. I mean, I don't change my clothes as much as Toni changes emotion and partly personality as well, and I like changing my clothes two or three times a day. That's just to give you an example of how much moodswings you have to get through in order to get to the essential plot. Toni just seems all over the place. I like her backstory, her basic personality, her ultimate goals, but I don't like her extended personality, including the silly moodswings. I felt like slapping her and telling her to stick to one mood already. Even if it was just for a day, or even an hour. It's exhausting to read about a heroine who's either insanely happy,

insanely sad, insanely scared or insanely angry, or everything inbetween. I like how the author tried to give her heroine a deep and meaningful personality with a lot of different layers, but whereas Jennifer Turner definitely succeeded in this in *Eternal Seduction*, I think she went a bit over the top in *Eternal Hearts*. Toni is definitely never going to be on my friend-list. Even for a traumatized fledgling vampire, she's just a bit too moodswingy to make me appreciate her.

Drake Black is probably the opposite of Toni. Charming, powerful, but also cool and distant. At least that's how he is towards everyone else, but oh no, not towards Toni. He instantly warms up towards her, and is all too eager to give her the place in his heart which long ago belonged to a traitorous vampire woman who supposedly scarred him for life. Well, great way to get over that...go for Mrs. Moodswing Extraordinaire. I know I'm being a bit sarcastic, but I couldn't help but feel that Toni and Drake's relationship was a bit rushed and a bit...unusual, if not implausible. Honesty alone isn't going to cut in I'm afraid, not even for Toni, who is the epitome of honesty. This is the classic story of ancient vampire falling for highschool teenager on a bad hormone trip again, except that Toni isn't even a highschool teenager, which makes this all the more annoying. I wanted Toni, but with a grown-up and adult personality, and perhaps then she would've been a nice match for Drake. Now I'm not so sure, and I actually feel kind of bad for the guy, who is thrown into a relationship with the equivalent of a hormonal high school teenage girl.

I liked the storyline, the plot twists and most of the supportive characters. One comment though is that, for a story as plot-driven as *Eternal Hearts*, the number of supportive characters was just too large. Some simply dropped by to say how much they missed Toni. Yes, and you're important for the plot how? Your purpose in this life is what exactly? I mean, I'm all for supportive characters, but they ought to have a meaning. And you can say all you want about them getting larger roles in further novels, but if you cannot explain the reason of existence for one third of your supportive characters in this exact novel, then you simply have too many of them. I couldn't even keep them apart! And I don't like the name 8-Ball. Especially not for a vampire. I can't help it.

Moving on, I have to say that another thing that bothered me about *Eternal Hearts* is how cliché it is. *Eternal Seduction* was practically a revelation – oh my god, someone can actually write paranormal romance without sounding totally cliché? And, did you notice the original and awesome vampire hierarchy, politics and history? And like, how it's totally not predictable? Well, that sort of goes kaboom in the sequel. The story is still not predictable, mind you, but I missed Jennifer Turner's impressive world-building skills, her interesting and original characters, and her unique and innovating take on vampire romance. *Eternal Hearts* is like a step back. A major step back. We're thrown back into the realm of cliché, been-here-before stories of weak girl with annoying personality falls for insanely powerful, handsome and protective vampire with a dark side. Sounds familiar?

Well, now I'm officially done complaining. Because beside the fact that I'm not going to join a Toni-fanclub soon, and I'm not exactly cheering with self-made flags and fitting tshirts for Toni and Drake's relationship, I still enjoyed this novel thoroughly. *Eternal Hearts* may not have pleased me as much as *Eternal Seduction* did, but it's still an outstanding book in the genre of adult vampire romance, it has some kick-ass characters that'll definitely keep me reading (read: Odin...mmmhmm) and I would definitely like to learn more about the paranormal world Jennifer Turner created for her *Darkness Within* novels. I can't wait for book three in the series, *Eternal Embrace*, and I hope I get the opportunity to read it, even if I wasn't as praising in this review as I was in my review for *Eternal Seduction*. Jennifer has a wonderful narrator's voice, and she always comes up with a breathtaking, action-packed plot. I'm still impressed and eager to read more. Recommended to all paranormal romance fans.

Katie says

Prior to reading EH I refreshed with a re-read of Eternal Seduction. This re-read only emphasized my love for the first book, but I'm at a bit of a loss as to how to review Eternal Hearts. I read Eternal Seduction, the first book in the Darkness Within series the first time in 2008, and I really liked it so I have literally been waiting years for this book.

To be fair my tastes normally lean towards character driven books. EH is definitely plot driven which was probably why I felt most of the scenes played out in EH were being told to me not SHOWN to me. And in effect many times while still in the first half of the book I became bored and set the book down. More than once or twice I found myself having to read a page twice and then saying "what???", or "huh???". I thought I'd missed something, come to realize I read it right the first time. The vague descriptions which I took as plot holes in the first half of the book often left me confused and distracted. So many characters are brought in, some with more than one name to reference them, it was difficult to keep track of who said what, who is capable of what, and who is who.

If EH would have continued the way it did for the first half I wouldn't have been able to finish it. It did however take a turn in the second half that semi-redeemed it for me. The plot holes for the most part began to fill and we started to learn what the hell was going on.

The problem I had in the beginning was the reader was being told what was happening as if they already knew "the big picture" but we weren't given any indication what that was, so it was frustrating to follow. The second half as things unfolded where I said "what" earlier I was able to say "ahaa". This was a very creative tactic by Ms. Turner, I just wish she would have been able to articulate it a bit differently as to not make it so confusing.

I was also helped out a lot because I visited the author's website. On there is a description of what the types of immortals there are and what they can do. This also created a huge turning point for me because the types of vamps and immortals are not explained in detail in the book and once I understood what they were I was able to connect the dots better.

Overall I was a bit disappointed in EH, not to the point that I won't read the next Darkness Within novel, I definitely will. Provided of course I don't have to wait another 3 years for it.

Nicole says

Review originally posted here:

<http://thebookpushers.com/2011/08/19/...>

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Publish Date: Out Now!

How I got this book: eARC from author

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Review – Eternal Hearts by Jennifer Turner

by MinnChica on AUGUST 19, 2011 in B REVIEWS, B- REVIEW, PARANORMAL ROMANCE

Publisher: Dark Dreams

Publish Date: Out Now!

How I got this book: eARC from author

Toni Tutoro just wants to go home. Banned from Chicago's vampiric society after cutting a swath of violence through the city, she must now successfully complete an investigation for the Lord of Chicago to regain the right to live in her hometown again.

To ensure Toni's safety during her probationary period, Drake Black, a feared assassin, is secretly contracted to protect her. Even with direct orders to keep his relationship professional, and his own personal vow to never get involved with a female vampire again, Drake finds himself drawn to Toni in ways he can't explain. But unbeknownst to him...he's tied to one of the people who drove Toni to her night of destruction.

Drake's legendary heritage holds the key to Toni's survival and success, but will she be able to forgive his connection to the brutal night that robbed her of those she loved most? Will Drake be able to forget the betrayals in his past and risk taking one more chance? But most of all – can they find a way to reach each other in the darkness?

Blurb from Goodreads

After reading the first Darkness Within book, I was anxious for the second, and so excited when Turner asked if I was willing to review Drake's book. I have to say though, the tone of this book felt very different to me than the first. It didn't feel nearly as dark as the first book was. Drake is an assassin, and after coming off an extended string of contracts, he gets a protection order for a female vampire who needs someone to watch her back as she petitions to come back to live in Chicago. Too bad Drake can't stand female vampires, and wants nothing to do with this assignment. But when he meets Toni and realizes that she is nothing like the female vamps he knows, he is unexpectedly drawn to her.

Toni's lived the last three years on the road, and in constant hell. Her family was slaughtered, she didn't get her revenge, and was forced to leave the only home she ever knew. When Drake follows her around the city and offers her protection, she can't help but to start falling for him. When she realizes that he has been holding back secrets from her, and is then put immediately on the investigation of werewolves in the city, she might not get the chance to work out her feelings before the world turns on end.

One of the big things I enjoy about this series is that the games the ancient vampires play with their "pawns" is so twisted and dark and convoluted and wrong on so many levels. At the same time it's awesome to try and read and figure out what all is going on. Who is on who's side. What the desired outcome it, etc. etc. The ending little snippet with the two ancients and how they initiate their games like movements on a chess board was so intriguing and a little screwed up. But I love it!

I loved Drake from the first book, and kept on loving him through the second. He was mysterious and sexy and an alpha male to the core. I love that he went from hating all female vampires, to falling head over heels for Tony. Watching him peel back the layers for her, reveal new aspects of himself was great. I do feel though that there was so much more to Drake that we didn't get. He is still somewhat of an enigma to me.

Toni was great as well. I liked her childish and carefree ways. It was so different from all the other characters that she really stood out in the world. She was a bad ass when needed to be, and yet sweet and caring and so young at times as well. I worried about her throughout the book though. at times she came across as so different. Sometimes she would be so strong and so fierce, and other times she was so sensitive and sheltered and insecure. There didn't seem to be a ton of consistency to her character.

The romance between Drake and Toni was well done. I liked the conflict they went through together, as well as the struggles they had individually. I did feel that they came to love one another a little too quickly, especially for Drake. It was hard for me to imagine this stone cold killer who kept everything bottled so tightly would go from hating female vampire to falling for one in just two short days. It was a little rushed and sudden for me.

Like the first book, I was happy to see a great cast of secondary characters. Odin was back, although we didn't get to see nearly enough of him. Turner has a wide selection of characters, and I almost felt that there are too many people to keep track of. I want to know more about everyone, but after a while started getting confused about who was who from the first story to the second and so on.

All in all this is a great sophomore novel from Turner. The story is dark and twisted and fabulous with all its secrets and plots turns. I hope that she continues to write in this world, because the world building is exceptionally done.

I give Eternal Hearts a B-

Feminista says

Rating: 2 out of 5.

I don't know what happened here. But I was confused throughout the book. I didn't know what was going on half the time...

Even though I had read the first book AND really liked it...

Some parts were a bit weird. Characters would say something or do something, and expect me to understand their ulterior motives...

Lori {Romancing the Dark Side} says

Romancing the Dark Side Review:

An intensely passionate and beautiful love story!

Toni Tutoro is a fledging vampire warrior who has been banned from her city of Chicago, after exacting revenge after her family is brutally murdered. After three years of wandering, Toni is given a chance to redeem herself and come back home by Christian, Lord of Chicago, but only if she can complete the task he's given her. In walks Drake Black, a merciless assassin who always follows orders, gets the job done and never gets involved with his mark. His latest order is to serve as a protector, not assassin, for the young Toni

Tutoro.

Drake has had his heart broken by a female vampire before and vows to keep his distance from Toni and be rid of her as soon as possible. When her meeting with the Lord of Chicago is postponed, Drake is forced to spend some quality time with his ward that can only mean trouble. The feisty female vampire sparks his interest with her gutsy attitude one minute and caring demeanor the next. Drake has never met anyone who doesn't fear him and sees him as a man and not a monster. To his surprise, the more time he spends with Toni, the more he ponders the possibility of opening his heart to another again.

Just when I thought this series couldn't get better, Jennifer Turner gives us Eternal Hearts! Toni and Drake's story is simply alluring. Both characters are just looking to be accepted and loved for who they are and when they meet...sparks fly! Each carries their troubled past, but somehow manage to truly see each other for their self and not what they've been labeled as by others. I love how Toni wears her heart on her sleeve and makes no apologies for it, she has held on to some her mortality in her young immortal life. It's surprising that she's experienced so much pain yet still manages to trust and love so freely. Her rapid mood changes didn't affect me in the slightest, I found her character to be genuine and noble. If you've already read Eternal Seduction, you'll surely notice the huge difference in this heroine's personality from the first.

When you are first introduced to Drake, he is portrayed as this deadly assassin who lives to kill and has little or no emotions. As the story unfolds, you see he has his reasons for being a loner but when he meets Toni he is ever the gentleman and shows a side that is quite tender for an assassin. I found myself falling for his charm in no time! Drake is a dark, sexy, tortured alpha hero that learns true love is sometimes worth the fight.

This story is a bit more plot driven than the first in the series but has the same degree of engaging characters and unique story line. There's plenty of action in and outside of the bedroom, and the addition of an evil female villain works perfectly in creating suspense. Old friends as new characters are also introduced and give you an inside look into our main characters' personalities and pasts. This ultimately is a paranormal romance with intense drama that draws you in from the start. Eternal Hearts is an alluring love story with betrayals, mystery and suspense that will tug on your heart strings and make Jennifer Turner a new favorite!

{ebook courtesy of author/Bewitching Book Tours for review.}

Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

This is book 2, Book 1 is

I had the pleasure of working with the author on this book as a Beta Reader. Besides it being an interesting experience, it was great to read such a good story in its early stages. I read the final product as well, and the story turned out to be better than I could have imagined.

While not necessary, I still recommend reading the first book Eternal Seduction before reading this one. I cannot wait for book 3!

Donna (BLHmistress) says

As many of you know I love series books, I am what you call a series addict. I sometimes rather have series

than stand alone's for simple reason if I connect with the characters I really want to keep reading on. The downside with series is sometimes the books following isn't as good as the first one that draws you in. That being said this book did have that and more.

One thing I love is Jennifer's world-building and her characters, her female character's especially they are darker and again the sarcasm is woven throughout the book and that is a big plus for me.

Toni, a young fledging has come home after being exiled and she would do anything to be able to stay here though young, she has a lot of spunk which I loved.

Drake, who is an assassin has been ordered instead of a kill is ordered to protect her. I love Drake in fact I think he is my favorite Hero so far in this series well maybe until we get to Odin, which I wish there was more of in this book. Just love that guy.

The Twists and Turns were all through out this book, just when I thought I might have figured it out she pulled another ooooooh no way moment and it wasn't til the end I really had that kind of moment.

Would I recommend? Yes I have in fact already have I just can't not stop telling my friends they must read this series. I can't wait for Oktober's book though he has me a bit confused so not sure how I am going to feel about him yet. Read the book and then you will see what I am talking about.

Ramblings From A Chaotic Mind says

Toni has been banned from her home. After nearly outing her vampire race in a fit of rage, she was cast out. Several years later she is ready to make amends to the city she nearly destroyed. Toni comes back expecting the worst, but her underground friends are still around and ready to help her out anyway they can. Family, no matter if it's blood related or not, stick together.

Drake is a cold blooded assassin who doesn't have time to fall in love. His job won't allow it. When he takes a protection job instead of a killing job he never expected the beauty with whom he is entrusted with. Toni isn't like other vampires. She is warm and caring and doesn't seem to have ulterior motives. Finding out who is behind the death of her family and helping her make amends in the city she loves is all that seems to matter to her. Unlocking Drake long silent heart though is the real prize.

After reading Eternal Seduction I was eager to get to Eternal Hearts. I fell in love with Drake from his short appearance in the first book and was thrilled to find out he was the main character in the second. However, this was nearly a DNF for me. The only thing that really kept me reading was Drake. I didn't really get his attraction to Toni and thought in many ways she was still a child. Even with being a vampire for several years, she still acted very immature in parts. My brain says there is nothing wrong with a girl that has been a vamp for several years sleeping with a older vamp...but she still looks like a teenager. It was just odd for me. I don't know why it was odd for me and I can't explain it. It just was.

I enjoyed Drake's intense emotions in keeping her safe even though he got very attached fast. His internal tug of war with himself on falling in love because his heart had been broken before pulled me in. Toni's ability to break down his walls and see him for who he truly was also worked. A man. Not what he was capable of doing while working his job as a assassin.

The villain in the story fell flat for me. She wasn't nearly scary enough and I thought there could have been more action associated with her part in the storyline. For someone that was born into the techy family in the vampire race, she sure wasn't the brightest in her crayon box. Perhaps she was just cocky and THOUGHT she was. I felt that more interaction with the werewolves and their hand in all the trickery would have ramped up the villain aspect a bit. I think overall I just wanted more action and less intervampire politics, which the story had in spades.

None of the secondary characters really stood out to me with the exception of Odin who we actually met in the first book as Kerestyan's twin brother. If anyone gets a 3rd book I really hope it's him. He needs some lovin. He's a bad boy too, which really rocks my boat. Cocky to a fault and downright mean when he wants to push your buttons. A man I could seriously fall for.

Overall I did keep reading and I warmed up to Toni a bit by the end. Drake, though, I fell hard for. His passion and quirks kept me going and enjoying the read. Parts of Eternal Hearts didn't work for me...but some of those were outweighed in the end. Since Eternal Seduction was as awesome as it was, I will continue to read Jennifer Turner's work.

Kara-karina says

(minor spoilers ahead)

Before I start venting, please bear in mind that I rarely find paranormal romance as satisfying as urban fantasy, so I am biased. Plenty of people will love this book. So read it and judge for yourself.

First of all, I love this cover much more than the first. It has more connection to the plot than the first book. It is an interesting book, but the world-building and humor I admired in the first installment are virtually non-existent. This is a straightforward paranormal romance.

Drake, a mysterious male character from the book #1 becomes a typical "oh, how can I live my life without this woman" man when he gets an order of protection on Toni Tutoro, Fledgling vampire who was exiled from Chicago.

Toni is supposed to be a strong female character but we know all this from the words of secondary characters. She is just not allowed to show her strength in this book. Yes, she is super nice to everyone, keeps saying sorry, cries and gives hugs, but most of the time she goes with the flow.

There was a moment in the book when Toni was left on her own to lead an investigation into an illegal appearance of werewolves in Chicago. It would really have shown her potential. But no. Magically her long lost brother appears out of nowhere and practically takes charge.

Why? There are many paranormal romances where the female protagonist is strong, and I absolutely love them. Take Alexandra from *If Angels Burn* by Lynn Viehl or Elena from *Angel's Blood* by Nalini Singh, - their strength and resistance to the male character are spicing everything up. But again this is just my personal preference :)

One secondary character who I found creepily intriguing was Oktober - a vampire who could manipulate emotions of everyone around him and who could literally eat people. He was the essential bad ass. However, I've got a suspicion that the next book with him as the main character will turn him into everything that noble and good and woefully misunderstood.

One of the reasons why I admire the author is that Jennifer Turner doesn't shy away from showing us true evil. Toni goes through this huge tragedy of what happened to her family. We see her enemy Natasha Stryker being as vile as you can get, and it feels real, not one dimensional. You want the evil punished, the villains stopped.

Like I said, Jennifer Turner has got serious potential and I really liked the books; they kept me hooked, however the issues I had with them prevented me from awarding the books with higher marks.

Tracy says

~* 3.5 Stars *~

Beware the Boredom of Gods and Monsters

The only thing exiled fledgling Toni Tutoro wanted was to be allowed back into Chicago, the city where she'd been born and raised. Almost four years ago the brutal slaying of her human family set the new Warrior on a path of revenge and destruction that ended the life of six humans and almost broke the Veil, what vampires call the cloak of secrecy surrounding them that keeps their existence hidden from humans. The Lord of Chicago, Christian Locke, has ultimate authority on whether she stays or goes, and she's willing to do anything, give anything, live by any rule, just to be able to come home.

Contract killer Drake Black is a seething mass of aggression who doesn't trust vampires, especially female vampires, so when his boss specifically gives him a protection contract on a fledgling fanger back in town, Drake is more than a little put out. But he doesn't exactly have veto authority on the jobs he's given. Reluctant and bitter, Drake takes the contract to keep Toni safe until Lord Locke decides her fate, but it takes exactly fifteen minutes with the sultry Toni to realize that she's not like any other vampire he's ever met. Maybe because she's so young, maybe because her life has been so difficult, Toni is still so very human in so many ways, and it is that humanity that calls out to a dark, lonely place in Drake and offers him comfort.

What he assumed would be an odious task has turned into a pleasure for him. What she assumed would be a pride-pinching trial for her...well...is still a pride-pinching trial, but with yummy Drake Black beside her to make the time pass a little easier. Neither realize the scope and depth of the Machiavellian games of the Ancients; neither notice the political warfare being waged behind closed doors, pushing Toni closer and closer to a dangerous killer even as it pulls her and Drake apart. The cold truth is, Toni may have finally come back to Chicago...just to die there.

I was blown away by *Eternal Seduction*, the first book in the *Darkness Within* series, when I read it in May of last year, and I reread it just this past March as my anticipation grew for the release date of *Eternal Hearts*. Parts of the book lived up to my expectations and hopes, but unfortunately, they were small parts. There's a legitimate danger of falling into the oft-mentioned sophomore slump when a new series is cranking up, and I think that is what happened here. I still say with confidence that Turner has the writing chops to be a wildly successful author with a fresh, exciting voice who writes easily readable narratives and unique characters in an original world, but there were some problems in this book that I didn't see in its predecessor.

There was an almost absolute dearth of exposition, so very little of the world was explained, terminology went undefined, and characters were light on previously established development. I read the first book in the series, reviewed it, and read it again in less than a year and yet I still felt lost when I stumbled across the unique terminology, history, and mythos of the world and creatures that Turner created. I wouldn't recommend a reader start the series with this book, but even if you've read the first one, you may want to refresh your memory before starting this one.

The main characters weren't as well defined and unique as Kerestyan and Logan, and neither Drake nor Toni were quite as appealing. Logan's emotional detachment and damage coupled with an odd sort of fatalistic strength and flawed valor were hugely attractive and really set her apart in the first book, and I loved the role reversal of Kerestyan being the love-struck and fully invested one in the relationship. Drake and Toni weren't equally complex or original and Toni in particular had the emotional equilibrium of a sugar-hyped thirteen year old with ADD. Secondary and ancillary characters didn't fair as well, either, and with the sole exception of Odin, who was just as wonderfully humorous as he was in the first book (and just as underused), none really had any presence that made them stick out in my mind. Well...there was Oktober...but that was not in a good way.

The plot also gave me some problems. It was all over the place in this book and had a few threadbare spots that teetered dangerously close to being actual plot holes. I appreciate an author who layers plot threads and weaves them together into a full, three dimensional story that has life and depth, but in this case I felt like there were a few too many threads and none of them seemed to be woven together in as cohesive and tight a whole as we saw in the first book. It threw off the pacing and timing of the book in several places and some sections just seemed awkward and misplaced. Plus there a ton of secrets and veiled motivations that involved almost every primary, secondary, and ancillary character in the book. Each of those had to have their own big reveal moment, so by the end they had lost the power to surprise or have significant impact. When looked at in total all those threads and surprises and secrets ended up seeming like a muddled mess of cross-purposes and conflicting agendas.

Despite those issues, there were some truly fun moments in this book, and I did really like Drake. I wish his dichotomy had been played up a little more from the beginning, but I enjoyed him very much, and I liked him and Toni together. Their romance was a bit fast to develop for my taste, but it was thorough and filled with genuine emotion that improved both characters, and had a sexuality that appealed. The whole romance plot arc was the strongest part of the book for me. I thought the inevitable conflict between them was realistic and true to the characters, the resolution pleasantly portrayed, and the culmination of their journey through the book completely satisfying.

Oddly enough, though, it was the epilogue that showed off Turner's brilliance and originality. In the epilogue we see what had been mentioned and alluded to in the first book and in several places in the second. It was my favorite part of the whole book because it framed and explained with perfect clarity the overall concept of the series even as the horror dawned. There is something chilling and deeply disturbing about the scope of the game when you start to really ponder it, absorbing with brutal understanding the inherent pettiness of it all - and how little concern for the...pieces there is in it. Beware the boredom of gods and monsters. That way lies horror and death.

I sincerely hope is that there is a much shorter wait until the third book in the series comes out. This one may not have appealed to me personally as much as the first, but there were parts I liked and enjoyed, and the world and the concept for the series arc is still very unique, fresh, and interesting, and several characters are definitely worth their own moments of long reader attention as leads in their own books. I look forward to whatever is coming next.

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Reviewed for One Good Book Deserves Another.

Stephanie G says

The most important rule among the vampires is not to break the Veil that keeps humans from knowing about

their existence. Even though Toni Tutoro had every right to want revenge against one of the people who was responsible for her family's murder, she jeopardized the Veil by killing humans publicly and was banned from Chicago. Now three years later, she is back and is given one chance to redeem herself and be allowed to come home. Christian, the Lord of Chicago, wants her to find out why there are werewolves in his city and what they're after. Failure is not an option. Toni is able to get back into the city with help from powerful friends who are willing to risk Christian's anger to help her and after getting to know Toni, I can understand why. She's fiercely loyal to those she loves and doesn't play into vampire politics. She's part of the strong warrior line of vampires yet she has no problem crying in front of others when her emotions get the best of her. She's a fantastic mix of fighter, lover and survivor that I really enjoyed. This mix is what also draws Drake to her.

Drake Black still carries the scars from a female vampire he dared to love years before. After being betrayed by her, Drake swore he'd never give his heart to another, especially a vampire. When given the assignment to protect Toni, he tells himself he'll keep his distance. But it doesn't take long for him to fall for Toni's unique personality. Drake is a deadly combination of supernatural creatures and his job as an assassin helps keep his beast at bay. His job does take an emotional toll on him and at times makes him feel like a monster. Though he does have a darker side that will always be part of him, Toni is able to look past his heritage and job to see the man he really is. I loved Drake's character from the start because he doesn't play into the games others do. He just wants to do his job and go home to have some pizza and beer. Simple sounding but enough to make me wish I was relaxing right next to him.

Toni's investigation into the werewolves leads her back to the woman who's partly responsible for her exile three years earlier. Instead of running to Christian and putting all the blame on her, Toni does the right thing and conducts an investigation and looks for actual proof. Toni does receive some help along the way from some good friends and I understand why they were put into the story but it felt like there were too many characters. Some would just say how they missed Toni and others would stop in to say a few words to Drake and then disappear from the book. I felt it was supporting character overkill and it took page time away that could have been spent on getting to know Drake and Toni more.

While I do think that *Eternal Seduction* was better, *Eternal hearts* is still a really good read. Toni and Drake are wonderful characters and I wish more time would have been dedicated to getting to know more about them and watching them interact with each other. The investigation wasn't so much a 'who done it' because you already know that from the beginning, it was about Toni redeeming herself while maturing as a vampire. There's a grittiness to the story and characters that I just couldn't get enough of. Jennifer Turner is great at writing remarkable, unapologetic characters that makes a story you may have heard before into someone all her own. The next book with feature Oktober as the hero (I'm not sure if hero and Oktober is allowed to be used in the same sentence) and I look forward to finding out if he is truly as evil as he appears to be.

-Stephanie

Laurie says

This book had great pacing, flowed very-well, and was quite entertaining. The characters intrigued me. The main characters and the secondary characters were all well-differentiated with unique quirks, flaws and mannerisms. I was impressed by this attention to the characters differing personalities because there were so many of them.

This is the 2nd book in this series and unfortunately, I have not had the opportunity to read the first book, *Eternal Seduction* (A Darkness Within series, book 1); however, that really did not hinder my enjoyment of this book in the least. Enough of the back story was filled in during the telling of this tale so that I was able

to relate to specific motivations without problems. For me, this story stands alone just fine though I do admit that if I get the chance and the time I would like to read the first book.

This book has substance and there were plenty of twists that I did not anticipate. The characters were far from stagnant, as the story progresses the reader is able to discover additional insight into their behaviors – some good, some terrible. Most of the characters fall into that disconcerting gray area, neither totally good nor totally evil. I liked the way in which events and conversations masterfully revealed these otherwise hidden traits and feelings. There was good mystery throughout, and a dark feeling of trepidation permeated the pages, and yet a basic optimism of spirit was also tangibly in evidence as the characters made their decisions and, in general, accepted the consequences that resulted. Most assuredly, I am eager to read additional entries by this author.

Reviewed by Laurie-J

Sparklybearsyα°,.,.,•~» says

Eternal Hearts by **Jennifer Turner** is the second book in her *Darkness Within series*. Book One **Eternal Seduction** i fell in complete love with, such a different premise to the vampire world and characters that were not your typical hero/heroine. Very outside of the box and i loved it. So i was super excited for book two to finally be here.

Eternal Hearts does not disappoint. Here we meet Toni and Drake, an assassin and a fledgling in need of protection. I was intrigued with Drake from ES and although i would have liked him to be a bit more badass assassin like, he was a lovely character, page after page he was funny, charming heart warming, a man's man and just the man for broken Toni who had a past full of horror angst and pain.

While i did feel bad for Toni, her constant mood changing made me a little dizzy and a lot more irritated, i wanted to yell "pick a mood and stick with it for at least 6 pages!" She reminded me of a stropky teenager at times, or a toddler hyped up on sugar, I wasn't invested in her as i was in Logan from ES but i liked her. My Odin made an appearance again, if you read my review for the previous book you know i loved the God of War, i really hope he gets a book!

The plot moves along nicely, I was more interested in the character building though, there's a few characters for the future im hoping, some of the world politics lost me, nonetheless Eternal Hearts delivers a great tale, I love the characters Ms Turner has given us so far, everyone should read this series, the writing is brilliance, dragging you into a world of good and bad and the most unusual heroes and heroines that you can't help be charmed by.

Im already anxious for book three.

Favourite Quotes:

Unfortunately for her, he'd left his heart in a different shirt and his give-a-shit was broken

And a funny quote from my Odin, God Of War. Lurrve him!

Odin snorted behind Drake, so loud, he was sure the people in the next state heard it. "Undead slut of the night. That's awesome. I'm so gonna use that the next time I see his mom." Jake let out a sigh as a look of complete resignation washed over his face. "Are we gonna start with the mom jokes again? Because, seriously, like I told you the last time, my mom's dead. She's been dead for over three hundred years. You need to get some new material."

The last thing she needed to be doing was ogling some hot guy who had...the most depressing set of blue eyes she'd ever seen.

Eternal Hearts - *a sheer ride of awesome*

Damaris (GoodChoiceReading) says

Eternal Hearts is Jennifer Turner second novel in her Darkness Within series. I waited a very long time to read it, but it was so worth the wait. I just found out today that Turner plans to have more than TEN books to this series. I am actually pretty excited about this. She writes really well and has created a world that is very believable.

In her first book, Eternal Seduction, the story took place in New York City and in Eternal Hearts, Turner switches it up and it takes place in Chicago. She gives you a little bit of past characters and introduces some new characters.

Eternal Hearts tells the story of Drake and Toni. Drake is a well known assassin and Toni is a newly turned Vampire who sort of got herself kicked out of Chicago. Now she returns to try and make her way back in and finds herself in even more drama. But this time she has Drake by her side and the both them are falling slowly in love with each other.

In the beginning of the story I will admit that Drake to me was a bit cold and seemed very miserable. I was thinking to myself, "Oh Great, he's one of those who beats himself up," but that didn't last very long lol. When he meets Toni for the first time, and begins to spend more time with her you see a whole different side to Drake. The side he doesn't show to anyone else comes out. Toni was also a very super funny character. I laughed at almost everything that came out of her mouth. Since everything was so new to her, it wasn't hard to impress her and put her in a state of shock. She was also very easy to like and relate too.

This is a great series and I cannot wait to read the next in the series. And to think, I discovered Jennifer Turner's Darkness Within Series by just browsing Amazon's recommendations. Saw the cover, saw the star ratings and downloaded for my Kindle. Was immediately hooked ever since.

Eternal Hearts is full of romance, love, betrayal, and lots of twist. You will love it! A great Read!

4 out of 5 Stars!
