



Blood and Salt

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Romeo and Juliet meets *Children of the Corn* in this one-of-a-kind romantic horror.

“When you fall in love, you will carve out your heart and throw it into the deepest ocean. You will be all in—blood and salt.”

These are the last words Ash Larkin hears before her mother returns to the spiritual commune she escaped long ago. But when Ash follows her to Quivira, Kansas, something sinister and ancient waits among the rustling cornstalks of this village lost to time.

Ash is plagued by memories of her ancestor, Katia, which harken back to the town’s history of unrequited love and murder, alchemy and immortality. Charming traditions soon give way to a string of gruesome deaths, and Ash feels drawn to Dane, a forbidden boy with secrets of his own.

As the community prepares for a ceremony five hundred years in the making, Ash must fight not only to save her mother, but herself—and discover the truth about Quivira before it’s too late. Before she’s all in—blood and salt.

Blood and Salt Details

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From Reader Review Blood and Salt for online ebook

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

*“What’s a wreathing ceremony?” I asked as my brother lagged behind with the bags.
“It’s very special.” Beth led us along the lakeshore. “It only happens once every seventeen years. A week before the ritual, the chosen daughter from the Larkin bloodline picks a boy from the Mendoza bloodline to walk the corn with on the summer solstice. Your bloodlines have been specifically bred for each other. For this occasion. It’s so romantic.*

If by "Children of the Corn meets Romeo and Juliet" you mean **lots and lots of actual corn and a love triangle without being the least bit frightful**, then sure, this book is just like Children of the Corn meets Romeo and Juliet!!!

Ashlyn and her twin brother **Rhys** are just normal teenagers livin' in the big city, except for the fact that Ash sometimes sees a dead girl, and their mom...well.

*“Did Mom seem weird to you?”
Rhys shook his head and laughed. “I don’t even know how to answer that.”
I scanned the crowd. “Weirder than usual.”
“Other than the fact she believes she’s part of an invisible cult where our five-hundred-year-old ancestor is performing corn rituals and Coronado from my eighth-grade history class is terrorizing the world in an attempt to keep his immortality . . . not really.”*

...Yeah. All's well and good until Mommie Dearest starts spouting weird shit and then lo and behold, disappears. Ash has a vision of a weird ass woman who appears out of nowhere and tells them that their mom has disappeared to Kansas and into all the corn, so all they have to do is go to Kansas and find her.

So these two teenaged siblings **go off to Kansas to find their mom based on Ash's vision**. Sure, why not. Why the fuck not?

In Kansas, they encounter corn. Lots of lots of corn.

*I pulled over into a makeshift lot full of old rusted-out cars.
Beyond that stretched nothing but corn. Miles and miles of corn.*

And I really hope you like corn, because there's oh-so-much of it. This book is less...

And more...

So the siblings get to a crazy ass cult commune, and as it turned out, **Ash is different. Special. The CHOSEN ONE. SUCH A THING HAS NEVER OCCURRED BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF YOUNG ADULT FICTION!!!!!!!**

“I’ve seen conduits do incredible things when they’re in their ancestors’ memories—terrible things, too. And you’re the first conduit born into the Larkin bloodline. Who knows what you’re

capable of."

And like every good cult, nobody gets to choose their own life partner, so Ash gets paired off with this handsome gorgeous Thor-looking golden bronzed piece of man-muscle. Except that his golden beauty doesn't do anything for her, for you see, Ash is attracted to the one boy she can't have instead *sigh* That love triangle is meant to be the *Romeo and Juliet* thing, I presume. So naturally, because her mother is still missing, Ash has to do **everything she can to focus on her mom's disappearance.**

I couldn't take my eyes off Dane. Sweat and dirt never looked so good.

Really, her beloved mom is gone. Her mom, who has sacrificed so much for Ash and Rhys. She who escaped the commune before both were born. Looking for her mom is of the utmost importance.

His smile was so warm, so perfect, that for a tiny moment, I forgot all my problems. I wondered if anyone else obsessed over that tiny dimple on his right cheek.

Really. This is SRS BSNS!!!!!!!!!!

Something bubbled up inside of me—stronger than courage; the feeling was almost predatory. I wanted him. I couldn't stop staring at his mouth. I would've said anything, done anything, been whatever he wanted me to be at that moment just to feel his lips against mine.

Yessir.

For a book that started with the vision of a dead girl, this book wasn't the least bit scary. There was corn, corn, more corn, cult people who aren't scary so much as they are ass-backward old-fashioned farm hicks. There was a shit ton of romance, and I guess there it did the job, because **for some people, there's nothing scarier in a book than a love triangle.**

Aimee ♥ | Aimee, Always says

*Warning: Prepare yourselves for swearing.

There are books that I want to cherish, but end up wanting to throw against a brick wall--*Blood and Salt* is one of those books. Despite this, I'm actually not sure if I want to recommend it to everyone, or tell you to let it burn in the pits of your TBRs.

This book started off *brilliantly*. Check out the first line, and I dare you to tell me you aren't intrigued:

The dead girl hung upside down over our kitchen table.

Chills-inducing, right? Sadly, after the first couple of chapters, everything just goes downhill... and stays down. Let me elaborate.

The intensity of the horror aspect died down a notch ten notches after the initial chapters. The gorgeous setting had so much potential to be used for the promised creepastic plot, but ended up turning into a large display... of corn. A shit ton of corn.

I mean, sure, the actual plot was pretty well-thought of and is actually kind of epic, but execution was flat. This book ended up turning into your typical YA paranormal romance, with **the heroine entering an unknown world, with scenes where she gets to dress up and be pretty--surrounded by corn!--and eventually finds out that she's the Chosen One.**

So basically, the horror aspect of this book was a fail--there's still the romance to look forward to, right? You, my friend, are unfortunately *wrong*.

The romances in this book were weird and unrealistic as heck. To be honest, I was kind of expecting the insta-love, but it still hit me hard in the head. Bonus points because there are *two* romances in this book. Hooray. But we'll only talk about the main one because it was the most annoying one.

See, Ash is normally *repulsed* by men--and I mean that literally. But when she meet's the *gorgeous* Dane, she instantly wants to be closer to him, and all that cheesy shit. And even when he's such a douchebag to her, she's still insanely *attracted* to him.

The characters themselves were inconsistent as fuck, especially the *men*, particularly Dane and Rhys, Ash's brother. Like come on, guys, GET A GRIP ON YOURSELVES. **One minute, they're cracking jokes and trying to be sweet, and then in the next, they're being total jackasses to the women.**

I'll admit, the book *was* easy to read. **The writing style was fairly simple and easy to get into, although it did get really repetitive at some points.** ~~If I read the word "Oh," one more time I would've exploded.~~

The ending was the book's saving grace, though. It wasn't mind-blowingly epic or anything, but it was much more composed and emotional than the first 90% of the book. Yes, I did cry a bit towards the end. Yes, it's because of the romance.

Overall, like I said earlier, I'm not sure if I want y'all to read this book or to ditch it, so I'm just going to leave y'all with a warning: If you want to read this book, go into it with lowered expectations.

Deadly Darlings | The Social Potato | The Book Geek | Twitter | Instagram

Kim Liggett says

They're calling BLOOD AND SALT romantic horror, but I prefer Hormance. Can we please make that a thing? ;)

shady boots | #WatchPOSE says

" . . . achingly beautiful boy she can't have . . . "

Hello, red flag.

Gökçe says

3,5

Amerikan yerlilerinin hayatı oldum olası hep ilgimi çekmiştir. Özellikle mistik ve gizemli yönleri. Kan ve Tuz'a bu nedenle de büyük bir hevesle başladım. Ayınlerin, ürkütücü toplulukları, gizemli ormanları içinde kaybolacağım düşüncesiyle. Bunların büyük bir kısmını gerçekleştirdi kitap.

Ana karakter, Ash gibi ne olduğundan, nelerle karşılaşacağını zandan habersiz çöküyorsunuz yola. Heyecan, gerilim, gizem ve aşk da size eşlik ediyor. Ayrıca kitap çok akıcı, yazarın dili kesinlikle bozmuyor. Bir sonraki sayfayı hevesle çevirmenize neden olan bir olay örgüsüne de sahip.

Kan ve Tuz'da hoşuma gitmeyen şey, olayların içine pat diye düşmem oldu. Sanki öncesinde bir elli sayfa daha varmış ve bunu okumamışım gibi hissettim. Karakterin biraz daha geçmişi inilmesi gerekiyordu. Gerçi ilerledikçe size neler olduğu ile ilgili bazı bilgi kırntıları veriyor yazar. Ve de kitabın mistik ve gerilim dolu bölümlerinin, romantizmden biraz daha aşır basması isterdim ki son bölümde bu olunca mükemmel bir sonuçla karşılaşmışım.

Devam kitabını merakla bekliyorum. Son bölümdeki heyecanı umarım ikinci kitapta da görebiliriz.

Wendy Darling says

2.5 stars Cynically, I usually don't pay any attention to blurbs, but with so much praise from horror/suspense writers I like (five out of the six quoted on the ARC jacket), I thought this was a sure thing. But alas, this romantic horror novel didn't wow me as either a love story or as a creepy read.

There are a lot of characters and many details to the mythology here, and yet almost none of it is truly intriguing. The MC has close to no interior dialogue to speak of, and we're constantly told someone is gorgeous or someone is scared without being shown that for ourselves. (view spoiler) It's impossible to feel dread and fear and tension with this style of writing, and while some of *what* happens is kind of fun (the first line in the book, for example, is *The dead girl hung upside down over our kitchen table*), the way these things is described doesn't push your senses enough to incite a visceral reaction. And that's saying something for a book in which it's heavily implied that (view spoiler).

The last fifty pages were much more engaging, however, when I finally felt a connection between Ashlyn and Dane, and when the plot picks up the pace with some good surprises. I do think other readers will enjoy this more than I did, particularly the teens for which this was written. Both horror and romance are categories in which your tastes and background affect your reactions to a book in a very personal way.

An advance copy was provided by the publisher for this review.

But but but! I have to add that because I wasn't all that engrossed in the mystery, the repeated references to the non-scary corn (walking in it, touching it, etc) made me giggle after awhile. Corn, man. It's just corn.

Jenn says

Gorgeous, gorgeous, terrifying, hilarious, GORGEOUS writing and a killer (literally) plot. I totally fell in love with these characters, which was unfortunate in some cases. Also: I will never see Kansas the same way again.

Bonnie says

Blood and Salt was easily my most anticipated YA horror of the year. Alas, I'm slowly losing faith that I'll ever find something that is worthwhile. This isn't to say that there isn't enjoyment to be found, I'm just clearly not the targeted reader. Considering horror is one of my favorite genres you would think there wouldn't be a difference but the way the YA versions always seem to be written just doesn't do it for me. I was leery about this one from the get go, because honestly? Romeo and Juliet meets Children of the Corn?

There's something I find thoroughly compelling about cults. How did they begin? How were people allured into this following? I read another cult-ish YA novel earlier this year that did a superb job at illustrating it all and at the same time leaving you completely unsettled; reading about cults should leave you feeling like that. Alas, the cult in Blood and Salt lacked the unsettling feeling, but rather had so many plot holes in the logistics of it all that I was more or less just confused.

Ashlyn and her twin brother Rhys have been raised by their mother who grew up in a cult in the middle of the corn fields in Kansas. The cult centers around the belief that their ancestor, Katia, has been waiting for centuries to be reunited with her lover who was murdered. The only thing she is waiting for are appropriate "vessels" for her and her lovers' souls to be able to use to finally be together. The rest of the followers believe that once this happens, Katia will share her immortality with them. When Ashlyn and Rhys find their mother has disappeared one day, they think that she was meant to be Katia's vessel, and they set off to the corn fields of Kansas to save her. Immortality, a hint of alchemy, and cannibalistic corn (or cornnibalism as Dani so eloquently put it) could have been a most excellent story but I felt that too many aspects of this story were left tragically unexplained.

From the very start, this book requires quite a bit of suspension of disbelief. Ash and Rhys have both grown up in the modern day, but Ash is always seeing this random dead girl that hangs from a rope by her ankles and who coincidentally seems to look exactly like her. There's little to no explanation for this, but her mother knows and occasionally gives her a new tattoo that is meant to protect her. When Ashlyn receives the voicemail from her mother saying that she's gone to "walk the corn" one final time, the twins set out to Kansas immediately, driving the twenty hours straight to get there. Ash's immediate acceptance of this cult and their belief systems was a bit far fetched and upon their arrival begins having visions of Katia that only succeed in confusing the story even more. There's also her immediate attraction (by his scent, no less) to an individual that she's immediately told she can't be with, that he's of mixed bloodlines and that sort of thing just isn't allowed. So naturally she's obsessed with him. Because apparently he smells that good.

Of course he's gorgeous too.

'...he was the kind of beautiful that made me think I might still be hallucinating.'

Followed shortly by:

'I'd never felt such a strong physical attraction to anyone.

Even if it was just for a fleeting moment, he seemed to make all my problems disappear. I wanted to bottle that feeling and carry it around in my pocket. The thought of kidnapping him crossed my mind.'

I really should have called it a day.

<http://media.giphy.com/media/10ABvIA9...>

It only continued.

'He coaxed the bottle away from me and took a deep swig. [...] I snatched it back and took another drink, not because I wanted more, but because his lips had just touched the bottle.'

'Firelight was kind to just about everyone, but what it did to Dane's face was... criminal.'

'For a moment, I wondered if I'd imagined our kiss last night, but he glanced down at my lips like he owned them.'

While all this is going on, she's practically forgotten all about her prior concerns for her mother, the memory flashes continue to complicate everything, and she continues to fall deeply in love within the span of about 3 days. The out of nowhere plot development for her brothers side of the story didn't help anything either. Given the fact that this is the first in a series, I would have hoped for a bit more character development and definitely more relationship development, but the lack of both left this one a most befuddling read for me. The ending lacked real resolution, just ending with the intent to bring readers back for the next installment but unfortunately the first installment didn't hook me enough to be invested in seeking out the sequel.

I received this book free from First to Read Program in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Carole (Carole's Random Life in Books) says

This review has also been posted at Carole's Random Life.

I had really high hopes for this book. Romantic horror just sounds completely fantastic. I like a good romance novel every once in a while but mix that up with some horror and I just knew that I would fall in love with this book. The description even mentions *Children of the Corn*...so it has to be scary right?!?! I haven't actually seen *Children of the Corn* but I know it has to be scary because my parents wouldn't let me watch it back when I was a kid (I am still a little upset about this). I was prepared to be frightened.

I was rather disappointed by the time I finished this book. This book wasn't the least bit scary for me. I also found it to be just another entry into the overcrowded genre of Young Adult Paranormal Romance. I was really looking forward to something completely unique but found that this wasn't really all that different at all. There paranormal elements weren't your average sparkly vampire or teenage werewolf but the visions that the main characters has didn't seem very original either.

The opening scene really grabbed me. How could it not? Dead girls and dripping blood always seems to grab my attention...and I was hoping for a lot of blood in this one. I was ready for things to get really scary after that first scene but that was about as scary as it got. The book really kind of lost me when it became more of a romance than anything else. It wasn't even a very good romance. There was a serious case of insta-love without a lot of chemistry between the characters in this one. I was really hoping for more blood to be perfectly honest.

I quickly figured out that the comparisons to *Children of the Corn* were actually referencing the corn...not the horror. There is a lot of corn in this book. Magical corn. Most of the book happens in the middle of acres and acres of corn. I expected scary...and I got corn. Oh well.

I didn't actually hate this book. I liked it well enough for what it was but it did not live up to my expectations. I did find myself wondering how things would work out and felt compelled to finish the story. There were some interesting elements in the book but this was a book that never was hard for me to put down. There big twist was a bit of a surprise and the last section of the book was rather exciting. Unfortunately, things didn't wrap up quite as nicely as I had hoped they would and I really think that readers will need to read the second book to get the full story.

I am not going to recommend this book to others. I do think that other readers may enjoy this one a lot more than I did. I am not sure at this point if I will pick up the second book in the duology or not. I kind of want to know how everything works out but this book was so forgettable I probably won't care by the time it is released.

I received an advance reader edition of this book from Penguin First to Read for the purpose of providing an honest review.

Initial Thoughts

I don't even know what I think about this book right now. I need to take some time before I even try to put my thoughts together for a review.

Kassidy says

3.5

Asl? Da?l? says

Bir çeviri daha bitti! Ve bay?ld?m! Yazar hemen ikinci kitab? üstüme ats?n istiyorum; heyecan, korku, gerilim, gizem, a?k... ne ararsam vard? Blood and Salt'ta! Çok severek çevirdim; umar?m çok severek okursunuz:)

Blythe says

Romeo and Juliet meets Children of the Corn...?

Kathryn says

What. the. Fuck. I repeat: WHAT. THE. FUCK. BLOOD AND SALT'S a **special kinda crazy. And not the good kind.**

"I'd never been to a cult bonfire before...."

But before I delve into the utter lunacy, **here are the basics:** A teenaged Ash Larkin is haunted by a girl who looks identical to her. **Ash's mother claims that Ash is psychically linked to a powerful, immortal ancestor.** When Ash's mother goes missing, **Ash and her twin brother Rhys, flee to the Kansas cult their mother escaped from decades earlier.** At the commune, Ash's visions intensify. **Ash must decipher the meaning behind her visions if she has any hope at finding her mother.....or saving her own life.**

So cults and psychic visions are pretty standard horror fare, where BLOOD AND SALT goes off the chain is structuring a story around the dead, yet immortal Francisco Vasquez de Coronado. Yes, that Coronado. The 16th century spanish conquistador. Can I just say who formulates a horror novel around long-dead explorers?? **What kinda crack are you smoking, Kim Liggett?** And then there's the crazy pants love triangle between Coronado-Katia (Ash's ancestor)-Coronado's soldier. Again, WHO THINKS OF THIS?? **I'm a fan of strange and unusual. I myself am strange and unusual. This isn't strange. It's not quirky or weird. It's just like a really bad acid trip. Like you're Alice and the Red Queen is trying to off your head.**

"Even here, surrounded by unknown danger at every turn, I couldn't stop thinking about his skin against mine."

And not only is the BLOOD AND SALT fucked, it's just so **damn trope-y. Ash is in instalove with a guy she's legit met for 5 minutes. That's so fucking insulting to women** I just can't. It takes more than being broodingly attractive to spark affection. To infer that women falls for the first guy that crosses their paths is degrading. And the romance strikes a weird balance with the scary. **It's almost as if Kim Liggett couldn't decide if she were writing Children of the Corn or The Notebook.**

As for the remainder of the plot: Ash is entirely too naive. **Drinking the Kool-Aid? Nope. Ash is ready to shotgun that shit.** Ash is so credulous, I fully believe she'd send a Nigerian prince \$5000 via email.

Summary: Skip it.

Lee Kelly says

Wildly addictive and compelling, BLOOD AND SALT envelops you in a world like no other -- I have truly never read another book like it. There's romance, mystery and horror all wrapped up into a seductive tale of unrequited love and immortality. I could not stop reading or thinking about this story, and can't wait to get my hands on the sequel.

Irmak says

Kitab? okumaya ba?lad???m andan sayfa 150 civarlar?na gelene kadar kendimi Ash gibi sersem sebelek hissettim. Olaylar birden ba?l?yor ve kendinizi ana karakterimizin bile anlamad??? bir esrarengizli?in i?inde buluyorsunuz. Okuyorsunuz. Okudukça kafan?zda sorular ço?al?yor. NE OLUYO YEA! Diye feryat ederken buluyorsunuz kendinizi. Ve sonunda her ?ey yerine oturmaya ba?lad?kça bay?l?yorsunuz. Yani en az?ndan bende bu ?ekilde i?ledi :)

Ba?larda gerçekten kendimi olaylar?n pat diye i?inde bulmu? gibi hissettim. Devaml? ne oldu ne olacak derken esrar perdesi büyüdü. Ve gerçekten çok ilginç ?eyler oldu. K?z?lderili kabilesini okumak bana inan?lmaz keyif verdi. Bu tarz ?eyleri okumay? çok seviyorum. Ve kurguyu gerçekten çok sevdim. Benim i?in tek s?k?nt? olaylar?n pat diye i?ine dalm?? olmakt?. Birde Ash :) K?z? bazen bo?azlamak istedim. Yersiz çocukluk yapt??? anlar oldu. Ve bir karakter bu kadar salak olabilir miydi acaba. Her ?ey gözünün önündeyken hiç bir ?eyi görmedi! Cinnetlik!

Ayr?ca kitap inan?lmaz ak?c?yd?. @dagli_asli her zamanki gibi yapm?? yapaca??n? diyorum. Bask? ise muazzam. Yabanc?'n?n bask?daki orijinalli?ine bay?l?yorum.
