



Bloodborn

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Ulrika, recently turned as a vampire, attempts to adjust to her new way of life. But when a fellow vampire is killed in Nuln, Ulrika and her mentor, Gabriella, are sent to investigate. Soon they find themselves facing danger from all sides as they attempt to solve a mystery that threatens the very existence of the Lahmian bloodline. How can they hope to destroy something with the power to kill a vampire?

Bloodborn Details

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Author : Nathan Long

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From Reader Review Bloodborn for online ebook

Michael Alexander Henke says

This is the first book of a trilogy that spins off from the Gotrek & Felix series of novels. Those novels are not required reading as I haven't yet read them and my enjoyment wasn't diminished at all.

Bloodborn is the tale of Ulrika Magdova, a newly turned vampire settling into here undead existence. Her guide in this Gabriella, who is teaching her the ways of the Lahmian sisterhood and how she can survive in a world full of zealots and hunters with no other objective but to cleanse them.

Ulrika settles into her new place fairly quickly, just in time to learn that someone has been exposing and murdering other members of her sisterhood.

Ulrika is a fun character even though the "good" vampire is a bit tired at this point. At least in the Warhammer universe it isn't always happy endings for everyone. The book is violent and not everyone makes it out.

The ending was a tad on the convenient side for me. The vampires are confronted by a group of Witch Hunters and manage to talk their way out of the predicament. It seems to me if you suspect someone of being a vampire you splash them with your holy water. Then you either have a dead vampire or a wet person, not that big of a gamble.

J.G. Cully says

Bloodborn is actually the book that encouraged me to write my first novel, particularly as the main character is a vampire. I thought the concept was a good one. Nathan Long has a lot of experience in this area, and the writing is very well done. You instantly connect with Ulrika and are keen to follow her through her often unwilling adventures.

The story, half mystery half adventure, is very interesting and holds you from beginning to end. However, my two criticisms would be that sometimes the narrative feels a bit strung out in parts, not quite flowing as it should. Secondly, whilst the stories epic climax is exciting it's final ending is very disappointing and the follow on story did not correct this disappointment.

But, if you like Vampire's and are into the Warhammer Fantasy background, this is a good story.

Willow says

**** 1/2

This book was SO much better than I thought it would be. I'm actually quite impressed. Maybe I've read too many crap vampire novels. And let's face it, fantasy can get pretty tedious with all its excessive descriptions and clichéd characters. *Bloodborn* avoided all those pitfalls though, and, was well written, pulling me right into the vivid Warhammer world.

I've never read any Warhammer books. (Hell, I've never even played the game). But that didn't matter. You don't need to be familiar with Warhammer to read this. The world is rich and lush, and so well established that it feels like a tangible place. Different authors have been adding to it for years, so it has a complexity that I don't think one author could have achieved. I've always been the kind of person who felt like you have

to start with the 1st book to appreciate a series, but with Warhammer you don't have to do that. It's just a place. So while the characters may refer to people or places from other books, it doesn't happen often, and it's not excessive. More importantly, it doesn't feel like an info dump. So even though Ulrika is a character that was first introduced in the *Gotrek & Felix* series, you don't have to read those books to get into this. It just adds color to an already colorful world.

As for the vampires, they're wonderfully gritty. Most of them are female -- the sisterhood of Lahmian. Ulrika is newly born, changed against will, so she's not completely comfortable in her new life. Nor is she comfortable with her undead powers yet. Her teacher is Gabriella, her mistress.

While, Ulrika admires, respects, and loves Gabriella, I don't think she much cares for the sisterhood. She's too independent and has a love of humanity, which goes against her new life. It's funny, Anne Rice has always made her vampire men a bit androgynous and slashy, and I think Long does the same thing here, only it's women characters he's playing with, making them fem-slashy, especially Ulrika. Ulrika is described as being boyish looking, dressing in men's clothes and sporting a short haircut, yet she's feminine too. I thought she was a cool character. I could easily imagine her and Gabrielle becoming lovers. Gabrielle even calls her 'beloved'. They both have different strengths that complement each other. Unfortunately, Ulrika is attracted to human men too, which is something she learns is a big mistake. There is certain tragedy about becoming a vampire, and I like how Long touches on that. What I really liked though, is that Long's vampires are true monsters. He never lets you forget that either. They can rip a human into shreds and they actually do that too, but that didn't stop me from sympathizing with them.

As for the story, it's an exciting thriller (maybe a little pulpy, but I like that.) I had a hard time setting this book down during the last half. Long doesn't seem to have a problem killing characters off, so I really didn't know who was going to make it. Not to mention, he writes excellent action scenes. There was one scene I actually found myself holding my breath. LOL

So all in all, I enjoyed *Bloodborn* a lot. I recommend it if you like fantasy books. I will definitely be reading book 2.

Vincent says

Ulrika is a vampire, like many vampires, bought into this condition against her will. Negotiating her new life against the horror of being one of the undead she also faces conspiracies in the city on Nuln.

Ulrika first appeared in the *Gotrek and Felix* books by William King. She was a Kislevite noble and warrior of the Ice Kingdom. Turned by the lichemaster Adolphus Krieger she was given into custody of a Lahmian vampire to train her in the ways of the undead and keeper from succumbing to the baser instincts.

This is not just a vampire fantasy, it is also a detective novel that combines the best of high fantasy with mystery - battle and who done it with a little blood between friends.

Paul says

Spinning off of the *Slayer Series Vampire Slayer*. Ulrika Magdova former love interest of Felix and newborn vampire, is under the instruction and care of Countess Gabriella and having a hard time controlling her urge

to feed. Gabriella is a vampire of the Lahmian kind, she is instructed by her Queen to help her sisters in Nuln. Gabriella takes Ulrika with her to Nuln, where they find of the six sisters, two have been slain. Their corpses left in public with claws and fangs extended to expose them as vampires, this creates panic in the people, and attracts the attention of the Witch Hunters. Ulrika does a bit of spying for her mistress, and agrees to work with one of the witch hunter who doesn't recognize Ulrika is a vampire herself.

Tim says

Well, it's that spooky season where I try to do only horror reads for a bit... but I'm in the mood for a fantasy novel. Wherever shall I turn? Answer: Warhammer.

Better answer: Warhammer with vampires.

The Warhammer series is in many ways your standard "based on an RPG" style fantasy world, much like Dragonlance or the Forgotten Realms books. What separates it from the more classic D&D series is the more grimdark nature of the world and the elements of borderline cosmic horror that comes across with it (seriously, if you want a disturbing read, go to their wiki and read up on some of the Chaos gods of Warhammer). The series is probably better known for the 40K line which is essentially military sci-fi with fantasy tropes, but the original old world still stands with some entertaining reads.

This is one of those books that I read at the exact right time. I recognize that it is not a great read; it has some laughable lines and some of the character interactions had me snickering. (view spoiler) With all its problems though, this is an extremely fun read, which is all I ask from such books. The action was good, the main character was fairly likeable (and while she did a self examination of the moral quandaries of becoming a vampire and feeding on humans, she fortunately did not become a brooding depressed character who tries to make themselves a constant bummer). The side characters were a bit on the mixed side, but the main witchhunter was a well-developed character who played nicely with the expected tropes of such a character (playing them mostly straight but never being lawful stupid about it). The pacing is excellent and the plot is actually... fairly clever, though it does fall into one or two eye rolling moments. All around this was just a blast, and easy to forgive its flaws as it is just an entertaining read.

I was informed that I really should have read the Gotrek and Felix series before reading this one as it's something of a spin-off. It is true that how Ulrika turned into a vampire is covered very quickly in the first few pages, and just explained in a paragraph or two instead of a detailed scene (most likely as a recap for those who already read it but may have forgotten some details), that said I found it works fairly well as a standalone as it does at least recap anything important and isn't full of constant references to prior works. While I suppose it does spoil the fact that in at least one book it isn't going to go so well for Ulrika, that seems like even seeing the omnibus book's title (Ulrika the Vampire) would pretty much be a giveaway. So... *shrugs* on with the review!

It is always a challenge for me to say if I would recommended these RPG style fantasy novels to other readers, as those who like them pretty much already know of them. They are rarely every great (though there are some exceptions in the Dragonlance series that do achieve greatness in my opinion) but they are almost always consistently entertaining. A solid 3.5/5 rounding down as I don't quite feel its appropriate to give it a 4.

Stefan says

I had very low expectations of this book. The only reason I picked it up out of the bargain bin in the bookstore was because i saw the "warhammer" logo on it, and for €5,99 I decided that it was worth the risk.

With a title like "Ulrika the vampire" and the cover picture the way it is, I was expecting a "New moon" or maybe even a "Charmed" feel to the book. I was pleasantly suprised.

I found the main character very sympathetic even though she had to make some tough decisions troughout the story, and the ending was original enough to keep my reading at a eager pace untill the very last sentence.

All in all a very easy read and very much worth giving a try.

Abhinav says

Shadowhawk reviews the first Ulrika the Vampire novel, a spin-off series inspired by and featuring a character from the popular and on-going Gotrek & Felix series.

“An intense, action-packed novel that delves into the life of a recently-turned vampire struggling to find her place in the world.” ~ The Founding Fields

My previous run-in with Nathan’s work was the excellent Blackhearts Omnibus, featuring the adventures of Reiner Hetzau, a former Empire pistolier, and his companions as they are sent on one dangerous mission after another to atone for their crimes. The omnibus was a great read for me, considering it was my first ever Warhammer Fantasy novel and therefore served as an excellent introduction to the setting at large, given the wide variety of situations and enemies that Reiner and his friends go up against.

The next was Orcslayer, part of the on-going Gotrek & Felix series and while not as good as the Blackhearts Omnibus, it was still a good enough read, particularly with its various twists and turns that keep you on your toes.

And that is why I picked up the Ulrika novels in a heartbeat at Games Day this year. I really wanted to get back into the Warhammer world and knowing that Nathan’s work has always entertained me, Bloodborn and its sequel Bloodforged were one of my first buys. The Warhammer setting is different to most other fantasy settings precisely because it is so much darker than these other settings and is very unique in almost everything. It is also one of the richest settings I have ever read about and as sort of a rough counterpart to the grim-dark of Warhammer 40,000 it is one I have always enjoyed reading about in the past.

Bloodborn is the first novel I read after a near two month hiatus and I was immediately hooked onto it. I finished it in roughly two sittings and it is one of those very, very few novels I have ever read that I finished so fast. In fact, the only novel I finished faster than this would be Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, which I finished in a record 5 hours.

Nathan’s writing just flows so well from page to page that it is hard to resist putting this novel down at all. Having read the Gotrek & Felix novels featuring her ages ago, her history was something I didn’t remember at all unfortunately, but that was not a problem at all. Past events from the original series are referred to throughout the novel, particularly since Ulrika still has rather deep feelings for Felix, and so it was hardly much of an effort to keep track of all these events.

One of my first reactions to the novel as I was reading through was that how simple Nathan's writing is. There is no unnecessary, flowery language. The action scenes, of which there are quite a few, are all short and well-packed and each is unique. Ulrika, even though she is somewhat angsty and quick to temper at times, doesn't mince words. Which suits her character fine as she is a Boyarina of Kislev and was a soldier in her father's army before she was turned. The dialogue from the other characters, a few of whom have quite "wordy personalities", is also short and to the point.

Simplicity is always a big plus for me. I have read some overly wordy works in the past and while my experience with them overall has been rather hit and miss, it has been more of the latter and less the former. So I enjoy novels which tend not to be grandiose and verbose. Because they are easy to get lost into for all the wrong reasons.

In terms of his characterization, I think Nathan is right on the money here. Being a new Vampire, especially one who was tricked and seduced into it, Ulrika's motivations and her actions are all believable. Which is all well and good since Ulrika the Vampire now moves in a very different society and is part of a very different culture than Ulrika the Kislevite. Her new "friends", if we can call them that, are particularly antagonistic to her without even realizing it since they are all Lahmians, a Vampire bloodline which almost exclusively relies on trickery and subterfuge to achieve its ends. Ulrika the Kislevite finds such scheming and plotting rather distasteful of course, but Ulrika the Vampire has to learn to live with it, for her own good.

The strong characterization is not something that is monopolized by Ulrika. Her mentor Countess Gabriella von Nachthafen, the various Lahmians in Nuln, young and old, and Templar Friedrich Holmann, a Witch Hunter of Sigmar, are also all portrayed rather superbly and consistently. The Lahmian nature is emphasized throughout the novel and never gets tiring because the situation that the characters find themselves in is so intricate and fragile that a misstep can bring it all crashing down on them.

The same goes for Holmann, whose zealous nature is apparent from the get go, as is his single-minded, focused dedication to his work. He is also the dashing, young hero of sorts in the novel and Ulrika, given her longing for Felix and Max, is irresistibly drawn to him and their romantic entanglement is nearly heart-breaking to watch because their natures are completely inimical to each other. Suffice to say that things don't end well for either of them, even after all of Ulrika's attempts to assert her humanity over her own alien, Vampiric nature.

Vampires generally are never the good guys, or girls as it were in some cases, and therefore finding myself cheering the Lahmians to find who is killing them one by one was rather exciting and surprising. The plot almost moves sideways at times but it is always progressing as well so that is not one of my complaints at all because Nathan plays the guessing game with his readers. Whenever it looks like things are looking up for Ulrika and her new sisters, their world once again turns upside down. And that is the beauty of the novel really because Nathan doesn't make these constant upheavals in his characters's lives over-bearing or a chore to read. They are all fresh and to the point.

It is almost like reading a fantasy murder thriller, and who doesn't love a good thriller?

One of the best tidbits in the novel is a discussion between Ulrika and Gabriella as the two of them travel from Sylvania to Nuln to assist the Lahmians there. The discussion revolves around the different Vampire bloodlines and gives very tantalizing hints as to what really makes them all tick. Ulrika's confusion at all the intricacies is something that the reader can well relate to and I found it to be a nice touch by Nathan.

The issue of different bloodlines among Vampires is not something that I have really come across in the larger Vampiric literature/media out there so this was one of the most unique things about the novel. You definitely get the feel that you aren't reading about your stereotypical Vampires but something different that stands on its own. That all of this connects very well to the larger Warhammer setting is of course a plus

point.

My only real, serious gripe with the novel is its ending. Nathan does a good job of building up this possible ending, giving it a near inevitable feel but when it all rolls around, you are still hoping that the inevitable doesn't come to pass. This ending is all the more poignant and powerful because Nathan doesn't beat around the bush with it. It is a shocking ending for sure and almost callous in its execution. I mentioned how much I liked the simplicity of the rest of the novel and this is that one moment in the entire narrative that I wanted Nathan to elaborate and really draw out.

That he didn't speaks well of his style. He keeps you guessing until the end of the novel and that is not something that many authors can do well. Nathan makes it look too easy in fact, so kudos to him.

If you are a fan of Warhammer Fantasy in general, or a Black Library fan even more generally, or if you have always wanted to partake of more Vampire Counts literature after Jack Yeovil's Genevieve novels and Steven Savile's Von Carstein novels, then Bloodborn is for you. Even if you are a new entrant to the setting, you will find that the book is very easy to get into it and it eases you into the larger Warhammer world with a nice pace and lots of references to events that happen in other novels. So yes, I will most definitely recommend the novel to anyone and everyone.

As for its score, there are slight editing problems in the novel, mostly just a couple name swaps and the odd word here and there that are misspelled and therefore I find it difficult to give the novel more than an 8.5. But, that ending, just that ending, pushes it over the mark and because the whole experience in general is so good, particularly for a returning reader like me.

Therefore, I give Bloodborn a 9/10.

Tazio Bettin says

I literally devoured this story. Four days to read 400 pages means that the story catches the reader. Nothing could be more true than that. I was expecting a lighthearted fantasy story but I was surprised by the ending. It's not bittersweet. It's utterly tragic. Not tragic as in 'the main character dies' (no spoiler here, we're talking about the first book of a trilogy), but tragic as in 'there is no catharsis for the main character'. The story itself starts as a 'find the killer' cliché but soon enough unfolds in unexpected ways. The author knows how to keep your attention through the whole story, and the language, albeit sometimes repetitive in its forms, is pleasant and uncomplicated to read, which is quite refreshing

Anika says

It was about a girl Ulricka who was turned against will by vampire and his sire killed him because of his attitude. So Ulricka was taken under the care of Gabby who taught her a few things. But it does appear that Ulricka serves as like PI and she meets her mortal enemy but they become friends and they help each other. I did not like that their was to physical happening between her and this guy and in the end he died at the hand of her Mistress. The story in my opinion sort of took a long time to appeal to me but it was interesting but I did not like how it ended. I might be still interested in reading the next book in the series. I would not highly recommend it but its okay.

Alice says

I wasn't really sure what to expect from this book. It's part of the Warhammer universe and published with their brand on. I don't know an awful lot about Warhammer so thought I might be left behind. I was wrong!

Ulrika the Vampire follows our eponymous protagonist through her first month's as a young vampire. This is a difficult time for the vampires as something is hunting and killing them. As they try to hunt their killer they are also being tracked and interrogated by the vampire hunters. Trapped between these two foes Ulrika has to learn to control her urges and her powers.

You need 0 Warhammer knowledge to enjoy this book.

Well written and with a nod to Anne Rice's Queen of the Damned.

William says

With its franchise setting and vampire-heavy cast, the titled-with-a-trilogy-in-mind novel "Bloodborn" could have easily been a mess of overused fantasy tropes, forgettable characters, and stock action sequences set to a telegraphed plot. Instead, author Long produces an admirable fantasy-themed mystery with sympathetic characters who live beyond their roles. The cast follows a trail to its cinematically minded climax, for sure, but it's a finale paired with an ending whose impact few would expect from a genre novel. The emotional conflicts are engaging without being overwrought, and there is more than one character readers will be sad to leave behind. Recommended for fantasy fans who might otherwise feel sheepish for picking this one off the shelf.

Ravin Maurice says

I was thoroughly impressed with this book from start to finish.

Being newly introduced to the Warhammer universe I did not know what to expect, and was pleasantly surprised.

This is a true vampire novel with some meat. If you like your vampires tame and non violent, you are in the wrong place!

The story revolves around Ulrika as she begins to adjust to her new life as a vampire. She has been removed from the home of the man who turned her, an event that happens before the book begins, and is taken in and mentored by the dynamic Countess Gabriella, a vampire after my own heart. When others of their kind, the Lahmian bloodline, are being murdered the two are sent to Nuln to help investigate.

I won't get too much into spoilers, but what I will say is that this is a vampire tale with some serious teeth! The vampires are violent and conflicted about their nature, ruthless and viscous predators that are genuinely scared of what big and nasty has decided to come and murder them. If a vampire is scared then you know it's something pretty serious, and it was!

The characters are well crafted, the world is interesting and captivating, and has many elements that one would come to expect from a fantasy novel. It took a little while for the story to really get rolling but it was by no means boring up until that point. Nathan Long has done a truly remarkable job in creating a group of

dynamic female vampires, blending the upper class society persona's that they have had to keep with the vampire politics of the Warhammer world, which leads to some interesting reading. I'm curious to see where Long goes from here, the Ulrika the Vampire series being a trilogy.

Serious vampire fans will not be disappointed!

Bradley says

Very fun and dark. I enjoyed this book very much. Excellent material! =)

Emily says

Worthwhile read. There are some grammatical and other issues that could have been resolved with another round of editing--they did distract me from the read, but not enough to dissuade me from continuing on with the story (because the story is rather good). This book was suggested to me (who knows little to nothing about Warhammer) by a friend (who, it should be noted is a Warhammer fan) in terms of its vampire story and needing little insight into the Warhammer world. It definitely is refreshing to read a vampire story where the vampires are actually monsters, but also have their own "lives" and a society of their own all while dealing with humans and so forth. The protagonist is still likable while admitting to being a monster because she still clings to her human life since she is a new vampire (and it begs to question how she'll go from here--will she remain clinging to vestiges of her human life or will she embrace her vampirism?). The pacing is atrocious, mainly due to the author telling us everything in the beginning instead of showing us how events transpired before this book--which led to a sudden influx of non-stop action. Again, this could have been fixed with another round of editing/drafting. Despite the negatives, I look forward to reading the next two books in the Ulrika trilogy to find out what happens with this interesting story.
