



## The Fierce Reads Anthology: Volume 2

*Ann Aguirre , Elizabeth Fama , Lish McBride , Caragh M. O'Brien , Marie Rutkoski*

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**The Fierce Reads Anthology: Volume 2** Ann Aguirre , Elizabeth Fama , Lish McBride , Caragh M. O'Brien , Marie Rutkoski

This anthology includes short stories from six fierce young adult authors! Inside, you'll find a futuristic zombie tale from Ann Aguirre, a science fiction thriller from Gennifer Albin, a nautical mermaid story from Elizabeth Fama, a story full of unicorns from Lish McBride, a postapocalyptic story from Caragh O'Brien, and a paranormal alternate future from Marie Rutkowski.

This anthology includes the following stories:

Foundation by Ann Aguirre

The Department of Alterations by Gennifer Albin

Men Who Wish to Drown by Elizabeth Fama

Heads Will Roll by Lish McBride

Ruled by Caragh M. O'Brien

Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill by Marie Rutkoski

And the following bonus stories from Vol. 1:

The Witch of Duva by Leigh Bardugo

Glitches by Marissa Meyer

### The Fierce Reads Anthology: Volume 2 Details

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Author : Ann Aguirre , Elizabeth Fama , Lish McBride , Caragh M. O'Brien , Marie Rutkoski

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## From Reader Review The Fierce Reads Anthology: Volume 2 for online ebook

### Sandra says

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### Metaphorosis says

reviews.metaphorosis.com

2.5 stars

I like some anthologies, I'm a fan of free, and lately I've found Tor to selecting great work. Plus, I liked the first *Fierce Reads* anthology, so I opened this up with some pleasure. Unfortunately, this second volume simply didn't live up to its predecessor.

Ann Aguirre's "**Foundation**" started strong, but petered out, lost in a middleground between a strong story and a longer work. As with others in the book, it suffers from almost certainly being written as an introduction to a larger world, and doesn't stand very well on its own.

Elizabeth Fama's "**Men Who Wish to Drown**" felt complete, and was a decent story. It was substantially hampered by stiff language that attempts to mimic the style of an earlier era, but winds up getting in the way of the story. It's a shame, because I thought this was one of the better stand-alone stories in the group, and it is worth fighting through the stilted beginning, but a more rigorous edit would have gone a long way to break the story loose from its crusty foundation.

Caragh O'Brien's "**Ruled**" was promising, but more as an indication of what's in the related work than for itself. It reads very much as a fragment of something larger. There's pretty good worldbuilding going on, but not much actually happens in this particular story.

All in all, a disappointing followup to the first *Fierce Reads* anthology, and a pretty strong confirmation that the purpose here is to offer a sampler or teaser to sell longer work, not to offer stories that are good in themselves. I can't really recommend it unless you are specifically looking for new authors. It's interesting that this collection also includes the two strongest works from the first anthology (reviewed there). Perhaps an acknowledgement that this one is not as strong?

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## Rebecca says

I'm a real fan of anthologies because I'm forever adding books to my collection that I wish I'd had a snapshot into before buying them. Why? Because I knew from page one I hated them. So anthologies are an easy way for me to avoid books, or writing styles, that I can't get on with. Plus, I've found some really great books from YA anthologies so I know they work for me.

This one is no exception. It features some of my favourite authors, but also introduced me to a few new ones. Bonus. It's a combination of teasers that aren't part of the main series, but are useful to find out if you'd like the book, but also has some actual chapters from a couple of books too.

Here's what you'll get with this collection:

Foundation by Ann Aguirre. This is set in the Enclave world, but way before we ever meet Deuce. If you're a fan, which I absolutely am, then you'll adore this extra piece. If not, you will be once you read this, Aguirre knows how to tell a tale and hook you within seconds. It also kind of links to another novella about Thimble too, called Endurance, which is also worth a read. 5/5 for me.

The Department of Alterations by Gennifer Albin. I hadn't heard of this author until this novella. It's super confusing, but mostly about a high profile woman wanting a black market procedure carried out. If you haven't read anything from this series (Crewel series), like I hadn't, you'll be lost but it's riddled with enough teasers to make you want to read on. 3/5 purely because I had no idea what was happening for the most part. Nice writing though.

Men Who Wish to Drown by Elizabeth Fama. This is a unique take on mermaids. What happens if the guy saved by the mermaid doesn't actually fall in love with the mermaid? That's what we usually get so this was a cool take on it. Equally, it's structured as a letter which was a great twist. 3/5 for me because it doesn't really take off, but is really interesting.

Heads Will Roll by Lish McBride. Warrior unicorns. I mean, I feel like I don't even need to sell that. Warrior unicorns people. 5/5. The writing is phenomenal.

Ruled by Caragh M. O'Brien. I didn't like this one. Set in the Birthmarked world, which I'm not familiar with, this story goes nowhere, isn't writing in a particularly exciting way, and basically left me bored. On the plus side, at least I know not to bother with the series now. This isn't to say other readers, especially fans of the series, wouldn't love this, it just wasn't my kind of book. 1/5.

Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill by Marie Rutkoski. I loved this. Initially I was tempted to skip past this because paranormal stuff doesn't always float my boat but I wanted to give it a fair shot and it was incredible. Meet Zephyr, a creature assumed to be evil but who might surprise you. I loved the idea of alternate universes. 4/5.

The Witch of Duva by Leigh Bardugo. This didn't work for me at all which was disappointing because there's also an extract from this authors book "Shadow and Bone" which blew me away. This story isn't set in the same world exactly, but has similar themes, and tells a few myths and old wives tales - a creepy little novella; beautifully written, just fell flat for me because it's not my type of tale. 2/5.

Glitches by Marissa Meyer. I couldn't love this more. 5/5. This stole the show from the other authors in this book and tells the emotional, but awesome, tale of Cinder (before the world of the Cinder series) as she realises she is part cyborg and gets to meet her new adoptive family. It's not usually my cup of tea, but Meyer absolutely convinced me to read it regardless.

A really great, fairly quick, read that fans of YA will love. Do note though, a lot of these short stories are available from Tor. Com for free, which is how I even found out about this anthology.

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### **Kirsty Haining says**

A nice collection of short stories related to the sci-fi fantasy worlds of various teen fiction authors. I was very pleased to get this as a freebie, especially since I'd considered buying one of the short stories on its own.

The volume included stories by Ann Aguirre (related to Enclave and Outpost), Gennifer Albin (a mini-prequel to Crewel), Elizabeth Fama (mermaids), Lish McBride (secondary characters from her Necromancer series), Caragh O'Brien (Birthmarked Trilogy), and Marie Rutkowski (author of The Shadow Society). There were a few previews of the actual novels, as well as two additional stories that were originally published in Fierce Reads Volume 1 -- a story by Marissa Meyer (Cinder), and one by Leigh Bardugo (Shadow and Bone).

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### **Lauren says**

#### **OVERALL:**

#### **Foundation by Ann Aguirre - 3 stars**

I like that the author provided the reader with information concerning how the Enclaves came to be and exactly what happened to drive the people underground. It was a nice little read.

#### **The Department of Alterations by Gennifer Albin - 4 stars**

I loved this little glimpse of how everything happened and the power that was taken away from the people.

Men Who Wish to Drown by Elizabeth Fama

Heads Will Roll by Lish McBride

#### **Ruled by Caragh M. O'Brien - 3 stars**

Did not get much out of the Leon/Peter interaction. I liked the part with Leon and Gaia though. Overall, not a needed read.

Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill by Marie Rutkoski

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## Chris says

Like the first Volume, this volume has short stories followed by teasers (first couple chapters) from the various author's forthcoming books. Also the last two stories "The Witch of Duva" (which is GREAT) and "Glitches" appeared in the first volume.

Standouts in this volume for me were "Foundation" a love story set in at the end of the world. "Department of Alterations" - a more adult than young adult story, very chilling, somewhat like Handmaid's Tale meets Logan's Run.

My favorite, discounting "Duva", would be "Heads Will Rule" which is about an unicorn named Steve, his partner with an interesting get-up, and their desire to put an end to something that despite the fantasy gloss that it is given here, is very familiar to the real world as well.

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## ?Kimari? says

★★?? Foundation by Ann Aguirre

★★?? The Department of Alterations by Jennifer Albin (set in Crewel universe)

★★★★ Men Who Wish to Drown by Elizabeth Fama

★★★★? Heads Will Roll by Lish McBride

★★?? Ruled by Caragh M. O'Brien

★★?? Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill by Marie Rutkoski

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## J K says

This gets four stars because I honestly enjoyed every single excerpt given here, and the potential for greater stories from each of them, even as they tell a complete moment or period in time. Really good good collection of thought provoking stories, each one very different from the last.

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## Marissa says

The second volume of *The Fierce Reads Anthology* follows a similar pattern to the first, featuring short stories and some previews of full-length novels from Tor authors. It also includes two stories that were in the first volume, but there are plenty of new reads included.

The stories included range from the end of the world as we know it in Aguirre's *Foundation* to Albin's world of manipulation in *The Departments of Alterations*, which is accompanied by a preview of *Crewel*, which sounded fascinating, with young women who can change people's lives on a loom.

Fama's *Men Who Wish to Drown* is written in a first person format as a letter from a great-grandfather to his great-grandson about his experiences with a mermaid. This has a strong historical fiction aspect with a smaller supernatural feature of the actual merpeople.

McBride's *Heads Will Roll* is a bit tongue-in-cheek and very fun - it works in a variety of supernatural

creatures and mythological concepts with a vigilante unicorn and a half-Valkyrie. O'Brien's *Ruled* is a nice short, which alludes to a larger storyline, as there are references to a journey. The preview of *Birthmarked* that follows it piqued my curiosity, so I'll be checking out more about that world.

Rutkoski's *Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill* provides an interesting new twist on history as we know it, particularly in regards to the great Chicago fire, by introducing a hidden society with supernatural abilities and a separate world.

A good collection.

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### **Michele at A Belle's Tales says**

Really fun and interesting short reads! Full review on my blog, A Belle's Tales

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### **Ana says**

I'm glad I read this because it helped me decide to not read certain books I was uncertain about. I really am at a stage where I don't want to waste my time. That being said the only author that caught my attention was Marie Rutkoski so I may give *The Shadow Society* a shot.

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### **Beth says**

It's kind of hard to rate this one. If I rated by the actual short stories, I'd probably give it a four. One of the stories rates a five for me. However, all together, it was a bit of a let down. There were two novel "teasers"--the first two chapters of two different novels. I would have just rather had two other short stories by the author, not a "Preview" of one of their full length novels. The short stories before the previews basically felt like prologues to the full novel, which I guess is supposed to entice me to buy the actual novel.

I can't complain too much because this was a Kindle freebie :)

This anthology includes the following stories:

*Foundation* by Ann Aguirre--short story, I believe set in the world of a full length novel, still can stand on it's own.

*The Department of Alterations* by Gennifer Albin--short story, followed by a preview. The short story just felt like a prologue for the chapters.

*Men Who Wish to Drown* by Elizabeth Fama--short story, REALLY good!

*Heads Will Roll* by Lish McBride--short story, different but unique

*Ruled* by Caragh M. O'Brien--short story, followed by another preview, felt more like a prologue

*Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill* by Marie Rutkoski--Solid short story

*The Witch of Duva* by Leigh Bardugo--REALLY good, really creepy, but I loved it!

*Glitches* by Marissa Meyer--Meyer is the only author's whose book I had read previously. I loved *Cinder*, but again, this was a prologue/bonus story for that novel. I liked it because I had previously read *Cinder*'s story.

If I hadn't I probably wouldn't have liked it as just a short story.

My favorites were *Men Who Wish to Drown* and *The Witch of Duva*. I liked the *Witch of Duva* enough that

I want to add Shadow and Bone to my to-read list.

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### **Karen says**

The fact that it took me a while to read this has no bearing on the stories contained in this anthology. The stories were all very well done and held my attention when I got into them. Nothing scary here but some strange worlds with inhabitants who survived by any means necessary. Each author gave a glimpse of a future that was either claustrophobic in it's scope, or has an authoritarian bent, but there are always girls in some type of peril it seems.

The main point is that this was a good read which I totally enjoyed, even if the last three stories I had read in the previous anthology. It happens sometimes.

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### **Rikke says**

3.5 stars - I can't really say if I'll like the anthology as a whole, but based on the stories I've read it could very well be a full 4 stars rating, or it could be a lot lower, so I'm opting for average, but clearly a positive one.

So far I've read 4 of the 8 short stories. And so far I've enjoyed every one of them. I've only read the ones I was expecting to love, though, and I read them before downloading a free kindle edition of this anthology. Doing so anyway, having already purchased the stories I was most interested in, might seem silly, but, obviously, it's my intention to read the rest some day, and obviously, any collection, in which Rutkoski, Bardugo, and Meyer are all included, is worth reading, regardless of how unappealing the cover might be. And despite of a promise of mermaids, and unicorns.

I don't expect to just finish this anthology in one sitting, instead I'll just add my opinion on each story when I finish one:

Ann Aguirre: Foundation - not read yet

Gennifer Albin: The Department of Alterations - not read yet

Elizabeth Fama: Men Who Wish to Drown - 3 stars. It was well-written, but not very compelling. In fact, my reason for rating this good, and not just ok, is that it felt just oldish enough for it to be quaint. Then I'm not very interested in mermaid stories in general, but the traditional take on mermaids did help.

Lish McBride: Heads Will Roll - not read yet

Caragh M. O'Brien: Ruled - not read yet

Marie Rutkoski: Jacks and Queens at the Green Mill - 4 stars. An awesome, and very compelling, prequel to The Shadow Society. I enjoyed this a lot.

Leigh Bardugo: The Witch of Duva - 4 stars. A truly dark, and mesmerizing, Grisha folk tale. Brilliantly concocted. Awesomely twisted. My favorite of the all the companions.

Marissa Meyer: Glitches - 4 stars. The story of the little android, Cinder, is both heartbreaking and very

sweet. And obviously, it does come with quite the futuristic fairytale feel.

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### **Yekaterina says**

Each story is just long enough to make a decision on whether you would read the novel in its entirety. There were almost no spelling or grammatical errors. Each story was unique and different. The authors are all very talented and are very good at capturing and entertaining an audience.

The only downfall was that some stories were a bit confusing and left you confused. This is most likely due to the fact that each section was a snippet and it's impossible to get the whole gist of the story across in a short space. Otherwise- highly entertaining.

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