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Three Slices



Synopsis

Three Slices presents three novellas by modern fantasy writers:
A Prelude to War by Kevin Hearne
After an old friend is murdered in retaliation for his mercenary strikes against the oldest vampires in the world, Atticus O'Sullivan must solicit the aid of another old friend in Ethiopia if he's going to have a chance of finishing a war he never wanted. Meanwhile, Granuaile MacTiernan starts a private war of her own against Loki, the lord of lies, and if it brings Ragnarok earlyâ "so be it.
Not My Circus, Not My Monkeys by Delilah S. Dawson
The number one rule of the circus? Don't kill your volunteers, even accidentally. That's how young magician Criminy Stain ends up on the run in a forest, where he meets a beautiful woman holding a bucket of blood. But is Merissa the answer to his prayers-- or the orchestrator of his ruin?
Interlude: Swallow by Chuck Wendig
Miriam Black is back. Miriam is tired of her curse and finally believes she knows how to be rid of her ability to see when and how other people die. She follows a lead to the mountains of Colorado, where she believes she sees signs of a serial killer she thought she already killed. (Set between THE CORMORANT and THUNDERBIRD.)

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Customer Reviews

First, I'm a fan of the Iron Druid Series by Kevin Hearne, I've never read any of the works in the other two series by Delilah S. Dawson and Chuck Wendig. I think that probably makes a huge difference in how they came across to me. Some stories just aren't good to jump into when you're doing it blind. "A Prelude to War" (Iron Druid Universe) by Hearne - Loved it. It looks back some into the past and some into the future of the coming war. I loved the character development on Granuaile's part and the step forward in Atticus' attempt to head off disaster. I just hope that people don't miss out on this story and start the next book without reading it, because I think it's too important to be missed in the story arc. "Not my Circus, Not My Monkeys" (Blud Universe) by Delilah S. Dawson - It was okay, but I have to say I felt a bit lost in this universe and it wasn't quite working for me. So many animals/men are of the Blud (or vampire) types that it's a wonder that anyone with human blood has survived. (Bludmen, Blud horses, Blud rabbits... the mention of Blud Bunnies gave me a weird flashback to Monty Python "Holy Grail" and the attack rabbits. It was a weird moment and didn't do the story any favors.) I'm not sure why the main character, Criminy Stain, seemed to be taking orders and living in a world of humans when he's clearly more powerful than they are. How can Bludmen be very rare if there are Blud animals all over the landscape? How rare is the Magic he can do? Maybe if I'd have read some of the series it would make more sense. But Stain wasn't someone I cared about much, so I don't think I'll get to ever reading that series. He was interesting, but not a lot there to draw me in.

Okay, this is an odd collection of stories by virtue of its unifying theme: blessed are the cheesemakers. Literally - this is not just any manufacturers of dairy products here, but cheesemakers who for one perfect moment can glimpse the future. I came somewhat reluctantly, as I'm not a huge fan of short form fiction (can sometimes; generally prefer not to), but Kevin Hearne basically made it mandatory reading for the most recent Iron Druid. So I came for Hearne, and I liked Hearne, and then I fell in love with Dawson. First thing I did upon finishing was buy the first book in her Blud novel series. If you are a reader of the Iron Druid series by Hearne, you must read this story to get the full impact of the 8th book in the series. I don't think this is a good place to start the Iron Druid, but I can't be sure of that because it's not where I started. If Hearne achieved the tall order of peppering enough backstory to bring newcomers quickly up to speed, I may have overlooked it. For those who love the series, I believe it is a strong story. In short, the last surviving druid of the old world - who happens to be immortal - trains another. The series focuses on him and her and a rich cast of supernaturals around them as the old-school druid tries to save the world from old gods and the new one brings a modern perspective. It's a good series to start from scratch.

Let me start out by saying that the only reason I got this e-book was because I got the next Iron Druid Chronicles for review (Staked) and that book is prefaced by Hearne telling you to go back and make sure you read the story A Prelude to War in Three Slices. Honestly this makes me a bit grumpy because if a novella is that important to the overall series then it should actually be in the next book...either as a prelude or included as an optional story to read in the back of the book. Telling your reader they have to go and dig up some remote novella available only on ebook sucks. So why did I go and pick up Three Slices? Well I really like Delilah Dawson and this included a story about how Criminy Stain gets his circus. Also I have been wanting to read something by Chuck Wendig for quite some time so this was a good opportunity to get a sample of his writing. So in the end it all worked out well, but I am still a bit grumpy about being coerced into reading this. As with any anthology this was a mixed bag; overall though the stories are pretty good. I am going to write mini-reviews for them all below. If you are an Iron Druid Chronicles fan you definitely want to pick this up for the story that is in here. If you are a Criminy Stain fan (or even if you aren't) Dawson has a very well done and entertaining story in here about how Criminy Stain got his circus. I can't really say much about how the Wendig story relates to the Miriam Black series because I haven't read the rest of that series. All of the stories have to do with tyromancy, which is divination by cheese. Yep, a bit odd...but that is why this collection is cleverly titled Three Slices.

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