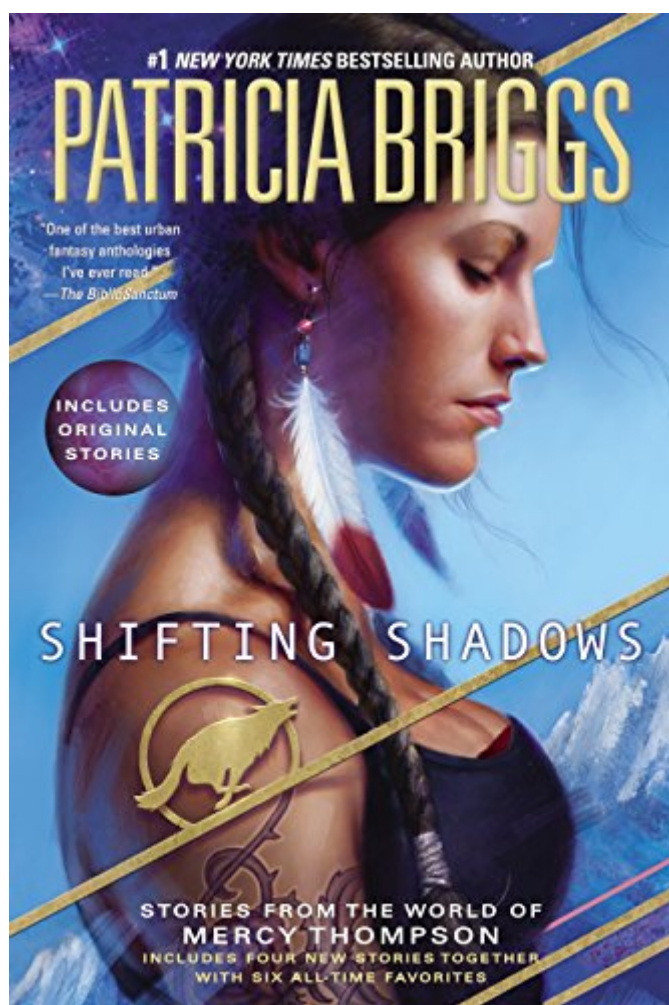


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Shifting Shadows: Stories From The World Of Mercy Thompson (A Mercy Thompson Novel)



Synopsis

Shapeshifter Mercy Thompson has friends in high places—and in low, dark, scary ones. And in this must-have collection of short stories, you'll meet new faces and catch up with old acquaintances—in all their forms...Includes the new stories...“Silver” “Roses in Winter” “Redemption” “Hollow” and reader favorites “Fairy Gifts” “Gray” “Seeing Eye” “Alpha and Omega” “The Star of David” “In Red, with Pearls” “One of the best urban fantasy anthologies I’ve ever read.” The BiblioSanctum

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Customer Reviews

I feel I should start off this review with two disclaimers. One, I'm a huge fan of both the Mercy Thompson series and Alpha and Omega series, so I'm excited to read anything that has to do with

them. Two, I'm not the biggest fan of short stories, especially the ones that aren't directly tied to characters that are well established in a series. I just don't think there's enough of a word count to fully develop things enough for me to get sucked into things. So that being said, I enjoyed some of these stories much more than others. I'll touch briefly on each of them.

Silver - I'm one of those readers who have been dying to see more behind the man that Bran is, especially a look into his past. This story tells the very beginning of his and Samuel's lives as werewolves. It was an interesting addition to the series, but in true to character form, it left more than a few things secret, and I'm not sure if I truly know anything more about Bran from this story than before. Samuel yes, but Bran know. I guess he'll continue to remain a mystery. Oh and P.S. this one's pretty depressing, but I pretty much knew that going into things. Their past had been said to not be a happy one...

Roses in Winter - This was another one that involved a character I wanted to know more about. The young werewolf from early in the Mercy series, Kira. I wanted to see what became of her after she went to the Marrok, and this tells that story, along with a better look into Asil. Very enjoyable.

Redemption - This one's about Ben. While he's a rude and messed up werewolf, and has very little respect for women, I've always loved his character. From the point where he stood by Mercy after the terrible thing that happened to her, I was forever sold on him. This story shows a bit deeper look into this surly man, and also showed him moving on the path towards healing.

Hollow - A Mercy story. What can I say other than I simply loved it. And when Adam came in while Mercy was yet again hurt and in the thick of things, well that just summed everything up perfectly for them. Loved it!

Fairy Gifts - This one was a bit harder to me connect to as the characters weren't anyone I was attached to from the series, but it did show an interesting journey between a vampire and a fae. Just a little bonus story as it were.

Gray - This was another that I didn't quite connect to as it wasn't any characters on my list of favorites, but putting that aside, it was an interesting story.

Alpha and Omega - This is Charles and Anna's beginning, and the story that completely sucked me into their series. I've re-read this opening and the entire series multiple times, and I couldn't help myself but to read it again. I foresee another re-read of their books in my near future.

Seeing Eye - I loved Moira and Tom in the Alpha and Omega books, so it was nice to see how they met. I do wish the story had been a bit longer however, as all we got to see was the attraction between them. I would have loved to have seen the beginning of their relationship, but this story was enjoyable nonetheless.

The Star of David - I really liked David's character from Moon Called, and I always wished to have seen more from him. That wish came true in this story, and I especially liked the way it ended, making it a good outtake in my book.

In Red, with Pearls - Ah Warren, I really adore him. He's so strong yet vulnerable all the same, and I loved seeing this extra story from him. The moral is not to mess with

his mate, and it's a lesson hard learned. All in all, if you are a fan of the world behind these two series, then you definitely won't want to miss this compilation. If you haven't read either series yet, you don't know what you are missing, but that being said, I wouldn't recommend starting here (with the exception of the Alpha and Omega story), as these stories would be better enjoyed with the full knowledge of the rest of the books. So either way, yet again the Mercy Thompson world earns my stamp of approval, and are a must read for any Urban Fantasy fan.

This anthology contains a smattering of short stories set in the world of Mercy Thompson. They span centuries. Some have no discernible link to the characters and storylines we know. Others tie directly in with the series. I enjoyed a few of the stories more than others, but I thought all were worth reading.

Silver - I have to admit that when we were first introduced to a Samuel/ Ariana pairing in *Silver Borne*, it felt a little too convenient for me. Samuel had been pining for Mercy and then all of a sudden, we find out he had this long lost love who shows up just when Mercy picks Adam for her man? Eh. But I will say that this origin story helps. "Silver" takes us back to a time when Samuel and Bran were human. We bear witness as they are turned into wolves and live under the cruel hand of Bran's mother. In dual POVs, the story also introduces us to Ariana and shows us her life, shackled to her power-hungry father. We see firsthand how she became so terrified of wolves and how Samuel came into her life and captured her heart. In some ways, this felt very removed from the Mercy books. It was so long ago that even the telling of the story felt a little foreign. It's hard to describe, but it's in everything from the way the characters speak to their frame of reference. It took me a few chapters to connect to it -and once I did, it was over. But it did what it was designed to do. It makes the events of *Silver Borne* a bit more believable and it went a long way towards getting me on-board with the relationship between Samuel and Ariana.

Fairy Gifts - (previously published) The story surrounds a vampire named Thomas who has returned to the old mining town of his youth. While there, he remembers the events that led to his turning and then, his eventual freedom. The story comes full circle as he reunites with the woman who granted him freedom. It's a story I ended up enjoying more than I thought I would when I started it, but it was very short and just when I got interested, it was over. Plus, it had no core characters from the Mercy series, so it felt a little out of place -or at least, not what I was expecting. Savvier readers than I remember Thomas from *Night Broken* and *Frost Burned*. I guess I am due for a series reread.

Gray - (previously published) This was another short that was well removed from the Mercy storyline. It follows a vampire named Elyna who has finally broken away from her master to return to the home she once shared with her husband. Her happy life is long gone and he is long dead, but it's still a poignant story that allows

her to reconnect to her lost love. I thought this was a good one. Seeing Eye - I really liked this story! We're finally back to folks from the Mercy World. Tom and Moira are actually a couple we meet in the Alpha and Omega series, and this is their origin story. Moira is a white witch blinded in a sacrifice for more power. Tom is a werewolf who comes to her for help when his brother is kidnapped. This one has a little more relationship building than the other stories, which is a win for the romance reader in me. Even in a short time, I felt like I knew these characters and could already feel the pull they had toward one another. Alpha & Omega - (previously published) Easily the best story in the book, this is also the story most likely to have already been read by Mercy fans. It takes place after the events of Moon Called and kicks off the Alpha & Omega spinoff. The story features Anna, a woman changed into a werewolf against her will and badly abused by her pack. She has taken it in silence for years, but she finally calls Bran, the Marrok, for help once she sees an article in the paper about a wolf she had seen in a cage at her Alpha's home. Not only is Bran already aware of the problem, but his son Charles is already on his way to investigate the pack. When Charles arrives, he is instantly drawn to Anna. He realizes that she is not a submissive, but an Omega. She has the ability to calm a dominant wolf. And his wolf sees her as his mate. I absolutely loved this story. I loved that Charles finally gave Anna a way to feel safe. I loved that she found someone who will cherish her and care for her. The mystery of what was happening in Anna's pack was engaging and unpredictable and the ending sets up the Alpha & Omega series, which continues with the full-length novel, Cry Wolf. You could start the series with that book, but if you skip this short story, you are really missing out. The Star of David - (previously published) I thought this story was pretty sad. Poor David had such a horrible time in his transition to becoming a werewolf. He was turned as a soldier in Vietnam and came home to an unfaithful wife. Unable to control the animal inside of him, he killed her and her lover. It cost him his young daughter. Now, she is a woman fully grown and needs the kind of help only he can give her. There is some redemption to be found here, but it's bittersweet. Poor David needs a HEA. Roses in Winter - In the forward to this, Briggs says fans have been asking for ages about Kara's story. After reading it, I can't imagine they won't want more. You may remember that Kara is the young girl bitten and changed into a werewolf as a child, then sent to live with Bran's pack. Here we see her settling in and trying to find peace with her wolf. What is so lovely about her story is the connection she forges with Asail. I loved reading about her in his POV; he is such a great character. I hope to get more of his (and Kara's) story in books to come. In Red, With Pearls - (previously published) Mercy might think Warren is a laid back guy, but we see that's not entirely true, when someone sics a zombie on his boyfriend. Warren takes the offensive with the witch Elizaveta's niece in tow. I liked seeing this

side to him... the reminder that he has to be pretty darn tough to survive has long as he has. I thought the ending wrapped up a little too easy but it was interesting and managed to surprise me. Redemption - Who doesn't want a Ben story?? Ever since Ben was there for Mercy in the aftermath of her attack, I've had a huge soft spot for him. He's snarly. He has issues. And he curses like a sailor. But under it all, he is a damaged man who is trying to put his life together in the first stable environment he has ever known. This story is a revelation for him, as he learns what it means to be a dominant wolf and allows himself to indulge in protective instincts for the very first time. Plus -- there are Mercy & Adam cameos, giving us the first glimpse of them in the anthology. Hollow - A new Mercy story here!! This is set after the events of Night Broken and has some mild spoilers from that book. Be sure to read this after you are up to date on the series. Here, a woman seeks Mercy's help with a ghost problem. Mercy takes new pack member Zach along as she tries to figure out who is doing the haunting and how to make it stop. The story is short, but satisfying and left me hungry for more Mercy and Adam! Deleted scenes - One is a brief Adam POV in the hospital from the end of Night Broken. The other is from Silver Borne: a reunion scene between Samuel and Ariana. It contains my favorite quote in the book: "...I have waited for so long, Ariana. I looked and looked. Then I went on with my life, all the while knowing that you were missing from it." "You don't know me," she said roughly, her throat closed at the thought that he might have been gone. "No," he said with simple honesty. "And yet I have loved you forever." Nuff said. I think any Mercy fan will enjoy this collection. Rating: B

Very conflicted feelings about this compilation. The first few stories I really didn't enjoy. Until Anna and Charles' story, I was starting to feel like there wasn't going to be anything that would be able to hold my attention or interest. Fairy Gifts was confusing. Gray, Seeing Eye and Star of David felt tedious. Silver was okay. Not as great as I hoped but I liked knowing Bran, Samuel, and Ariana's backstories. Alpha and Omega (as mentioned) - loved loved loved this story that delved into how Anna and Charles met. It also allowed for closure in regards to what happened with Mac and how those that had wronged him were served justice. (Which made me so happy. Not embarrassed to say I teared up and felt my heart break a bit with what happened to Mac in the first book) Roses in Winter - I was happy to learn what happened with Kara and even happier that it turned out to be such an intriguing story. In Red, With Pearls - loved the murder mystery story that gave us more insight into Warren. My only issue was that it was a short story. Personally I thought this deserved to be a full blown story that would have allowed more development with the plot and characters, but even as is I'd rate this a 4 out of 5. Redemption and Hollow - just like Warren's, these should have

been full stories of their own. Not short ones and part of the compilation, in my opinion. But just like Warren's, these were very well done. Intriguing situations that hooked you right from the beginning. Despite the slow start, though, I am very happy to have bought this.

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