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A predator stalks a cold northern Minnesotan town. There is talk of wolves walking on two legs and attacking people in the deep woods. Lauren Westlake, resourceful and determined F.B.I Agent, has found a connection between the strange murders in the north and a case file almost a hundred years old. Traveling to the cold north, she begins an investigation that spirals deep into the darkness of mythology and nightmares. Filled with creatures of the night and an ancient romance, the revelation of who hunts beneath the moon is more grisly than anyone could have imagined.

Bitten Details

Date : Published November 21st 2011 by Create Space (first published September 2010)

ISBN :

Author : Dan O'Brien

Format : Paperback 274 pages

Genre : Horror, Mystery, Fantasy, Paranormal, Shapeshifters, Werewolves

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From Reader Review Bitten for online ebook

Luvtoread says

Loved this book! A fast read and attention grabber, I really enjoy Dan O'Brien 's style of writing!

Jessica says

Bitten was sent to me by the author for review. I think it's one that would appeal to those who enjoy supernatural reads with a touch of romance. The story took me a while to get into but once I was into it I was very curious to find out how it would end. The characters are likable and the monster is quite horrific and disgusting in description.

My issue with this book is the language used. The authors style is not bad but not easy to get lost in. He writes with very little if any usage of contractions. This results in a very formal manner of speech which is present anyway but the lack of contractions adds to it a great deal. If the conversation was less how should I put it old fashioned is all I can come up with it would have been I think a different book. I'm not sure if people 50 or 100 years ago even spoke like this but perhaps the author is an old fashioned kind of guy.

The formal manner results in a bit of a dry hard to get into style. It's one that for some reasons bothered me at odd times throughout the book. In the beginning a great deal and I would put it down look at it and sigh. Then pick it back up as review books I force myself to read no matter what and once I got a little ways in I would really get into the story and it wasn't noticeable. Then a conversation would take place and I'd be thrown off again but by then I was into the story so much and wanting to know what would happen so I would push through.

Then later in the story the language became very in your face going from Victorian to motherfucker thrown about which really threw me as the character saying it yes totally but to go from one to the other was very noticeable.

The book wasn't bad and has many raving reviews on amazon and goodreads. I'm not going to say this book will not appeal as I got into it myself and found things in it I liked but it's not perfect, many others based on those reviews clearly loved it so yes if you like supernatural with a different twist try it. I myself would call it good and leave it at that.

My thanks to Dan for the review copy.

Blakely says

My synopsis of BITTEN by Dan O'Brien:

Lauren Westlake, an F.B.I. agent, arrives in a small Minnesota town after opening a cold case file. A killer is on the loose. But Lauren and the local police department must figure out if their killer is human, animal, or...other?

First, the downfalls:

O'Brien seems to stumble into the stereotypical trap that a woman only has something negative to think upon

meeting another woman. This immediately left me questioning the believability of the main heroine, Lauren. As an F.B.I. agent, wouldn't she notice deeper traits or have gut feelings rather than allow herself to get sidetracked by someone's heavy makeup or hot-pants? Now, while I kept a sense of humor about it -and could have easily created a drinking game out of it- I can't help but comment that it is mathematically impossible to have that many hussies and harlots in one small town.

(Although, to be honest, I've never been to Minnesota.)

Also, O'Brien repeats information a lot more than is comfortable. Characters should be used to relay information to the reader. However, I found myself reading the same conversation, only between different characters. Or Lauren would think something and then turn right around and say those exact thoughts to another character. Then why, as the reader, did I need to know she was thinking them right before she said them? (Now, having read that, pretend you have to listen to me tell someone else the exact same thing. Redundant.) O'Brien needs to give his readers more credit to connect the dots. I can do it. I had my mental pencil ready to go and everything.

Now, the goodies:

While there were a few downsides to O'Brien's work, there were numerous positives and unexpected treats. I was immediately intrigued by his beautiful way with words and wintry landscape. I hate to be cold (I despise it, actually), but he made me long for thigh-high snow and icy tree branches snapping in the darkness as I read. Every major event became a vivid portrait. The atmosphere is cozy yet alarming. It is reminiscent, at times, of the campy early nineties television show 'Twin Peaks', as well as 'Wolf Lake', a show that focused on small town mysteries and dark werewolf secrets.

O'Brien especially delivers the "cringe" factor. Pushing the reader in all the right ways, the extra bits of gore are definitely appreciated. If a body has been disemboweled, I want to see it go the distance. And O'Brien does just that.

What really stands out, however, is O'Brien's incredibly unique and macabre twist on the traditional werewolf story. Through a series of run-ins with key individuals, the main character learns that not one, but two individuals are responsible for the bodies littering the frigid woods. I cannot add more for fear of spoiling it for others. And I would hate to do that.

Bottom line:

Dan O'Brien's BITTEN adds a fresh twist to the traditional werewolf story. A great read for any horror or supernatural fans. And the ending totally hooked me into the sequel. So get to it, O'Brien. I want more.

William Krauss says

The best werewolf book I have read in a long time if ever!

I love the characters and the story. It was very exciting and sexy. You really get to care about the characters and the story keeps you engrossed the whole time. Well done!

Bette says

Mystery, suspense, fantasy, romance are the many elements of this story. Some might call it dark fantasy, some might call it horror. But I think the horror never developed for me as I kept thinking of the opening pages – and to me it was a time warp. A time warp never explained or developed and because of that I never really concentrated on the story.

Sydney Squidney says

Mostly, I admire people who have the courage to publish their writings, exposing themselves to the world that includes criticism and rejection.

The author of Bitten surely created an interesting spin on werewolf attacks that won't soon be forgotten, and I thank him for putting forth an innovative take on the werewolf genre.

However, the story, despite having a great plot idea, suffered from poor structure and lacked sufficient editing, so I am glad my copy was a free kindle read.

Often the character dialogues blended; I had to re-read to see which character had said what because they seemed to mimic each other when congregating...

Some scenes seemed banal and exhaustingly boring to get through, while other scenes ended abruptly and you had to accept what felt like missing chapters inbetween them.

Additionally, there were things I kinda rolled my eyes about in this book such as the main character seemingly dropping all good FBI sense and becoming in heat when around her male interest; I kept having to brace myself everytime I realised these two characters would be in a scene together.

So just a warning to those like me not interested in romance with their werewolves.

I reckon if you like your monster offenders to be faced with a fully flexed Fabio, you might get a kick out of that element, though I personally feel this story could have gone better without the sensual undertones.

It wasn't a total letdown, the gore was pretty good and the editing wasn't egregious, the concept was creative and really interesting, but Bitten could benefit from more carefully constructed structure, beta reading and realistic dialogue.

I really do think the plot idea was good, and I honestly feel like it could and should be re-worked into something a lot better.

Arlena says

Author: Dan O'Brien

Published by: Create Space

Age Recommend: Adult

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Raven Rating: 5

Blog Reviewed For: GMTA

Review:

"Bitten" by Dan O'Brien was indeed a good thriller with some suspense and romance.

The story is of how a predator stalks the small town of

Locke, Minnesota and a FBI agent Lauren Westlake come to

town and opens up a investigation that takes the police department to levels it's never been before. I believe the author did an excellent job with bringing out the best in the characters: Lauren, Sheriff Montgomery, Mrs. Meadows, Deputy Matthew, Dominic, Hecate, and Briar Winston. Now you will have to read to see who is who! But just a little....

After Lauren meet with Hecate and drinks her tea(which was a potion), she soon learns that they are dealing with two men.... one who wants to be a werewolf and the other one wanting to be a man. Is it a beastly animal or a psychotic man? This leaves the Sheriff, Lauren and the rest of this posy wondering who is this killer. It is a interesting ride on how they find out.

I find "Bitten" a very interesting good read and you will find it hard to put the book down. There are even some laughable scenes, sexual activity and graphic language, however, if you like a good thriller this book is for you.

Read more: <http://www.greatmindsthinkaloud.probo...>

Romancing the Book says

Reviewed by: Indera

Book provided by: Publisher

Review originally posted at Romancing the Book

Murder, Werewolves, Urban Myths, Small towns, and FBI Agents! A perfect combination for this exciting, thrilling, gory murder mystery with bits and pieces of romance and paranormal!

I did enjoy the actual writing in the book. Author Dan O'Brien uses very descriptive writing. Many times while reading I felt I could just close my eyes and be in the scene and in the moment. It is refreshing to read a good mystery that is exciting and very descriptive. It allows me to connect with each character in the story. Warning, the scenes do tend to be a bit gory and much like a horror movie. There were many times I had to shiver after reading the graphic and colorful writing. I would not recommend this for the sensitive or squeamish type.

The back story is good. It wasn't the normal werewolf story I normally read. In Bitten there is some back story which shed light regarding many myths concerning werewolves and urban myths. The story put a little twist on the normal werewolf story. I love the twist of what happens to a person bitten by a werewolf. I also like how the stories weaved together. You have a detective investigating mysterious murders and a werewolf that seeks someone of his kind to resurrect his own supernatural race. I did want a bit more of the back story. I expected to learn more about the supernatural and mortal realms (and the new twists) along with more history of the characters and their ancestors.

Among the gory murders and the mutilated bodies author O'Brien finds a way to tie in a bit of a romance. The romance aspect of the book is also enjoyable with Agent Lauren Westlake. She is your no nonsense career driven FBI agent that gets "bit" by a love bug and turns into a young batty eyed girl in love. Many times in the novel she struggles with this persona because she is expected to be a tough and rough detective, but ends up all doe eyed and giddy over her guy Dominic. I think this part of the story was written well. I normally don't like to read too many stories with a strong independent woman who suddenly falls apart when she falls in love. The author did a good job of giving us romance book lover's bits and pieces of romance and attraction mixed in with horror, mystery and intrigue.

There were many other strong characters in the book including Sheriff Montgomery and by the end his relationship turns endearing and almost fatherly with Lauren. I loved the characters and their development. Sheriff Montgomery was not keen on having some FBI agent in his territory but as events unfolded he slowly starts to trust agent Westlake. This makes the story believable as most small town folks don't want outsiders in their town! Another favorite character of mine is the transient bum. Throughout most of the book he is referred to as the vagrant or the transient and is of no use at all. Eventually with the help of Agent Westlake he opens up and ends up assisting in the investigation. Hecate was another memorable character. She plays an important role in finding who or what is killing in the small town of Locke Minnesota. Her twist is she serves as a "Guide for the Mortal Realm" and has a very unique way of helping out with the investigation.

One complaint was the story just ended and left me wanting more with Lauren and Dominic. The ending left me with the impression that Detective Westlake's adventures will continue (with another "paranormal subject") so I will look out for another adventure with this quirky FBI agent. I look forward to seeing what other twists Dan O'Brien can come up with for the next paranormal subject. I do recommend this book for those readers that love a good mystery with lots of gore and suspense.

Bookworm007 says

I wish anyone reading this could have watched my facial expressions while I read Bitten. When was the last time you read a book that got real reactions out of you? I laughed out loud at times, stared at the page with a hand covering my open mouth in shock at others. That might seem dramatic but I got really into this story. This is a thriller taking place in the unlikely location of Minnesota. The main character, Lauren, is a strong woman who knows what she wants and how to get it. It is mostly a thriller but has some romance in it as well. I liked the romance parts but I liked more how the author didn't go overboard with the sultry glances, doomed romance thing. If you are a fan of horror films, you would like this book. Being a huge lover of all things macabre myself, I loved the way the creature was described, it was truly repulsive. Werewolf, paranormal romance type books are everywhere these days but the quirky characters in this story and the situations they encounter set it apart for me. I would definitely read the sequel, which I hear is in the works!

Inez West says

Suspenseful

If you like sci-fi horror detective thriller this is a good book to read. You know who the real werewolf is, but the relationship between the characters develop nicely and ends the way you expect. The Hecate character was not really necessary to the story, that information could have been found in a book, more an indulgence on the author's part.

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

For a full review see the Bitten by Books website: <http://bittenbybooks.com/>

Natacha Lalande says

To read the full review: <https://natachabooksreview.wordpress....>

I enjoyed the story, while a side of me wished we wouldn't have learned who the werewolf is until later in the book, it's entertaining to read about the werewolf helping the Sheriff's team and Lauren. I liked the description of what they see and hear, so it becomes easier for us, the readers, to visualise while reading.

I love supernatural stories with vampires, werewolves and other creatures. What i enjoyed about the werewolf in this book is that it has it's own lore, which isn't like in other books or movies with this creature. 4/5 stars.

Karielle at Books à la Mode says

Bitten (Lauren Westlake Mysteries #1) by Dan O'Brien

Page Count: 274

Release Date: 16 April, 2012

Publisher: self-published

Source: Complimentary copy provided by author in exchange for an honest and unbiased review (thank you!)

I reviewed O'Brien's *The Journey* back in July, and while it didn't exactly strike my fancy, I decided to give the author another try with this one. *Bitten* flows in a slightly different vein, with the same eerie glow, but a more developed plot, cast, and structure that made it way more enjoyable.

The victim toll of brutal, violent murders is rising in the previously quiet and uneventful town of Locke, Minnesota, and federal agent, Lauren Westlake, arrives, determined to find out who—or what—is behind the random slaughters. While she is unfamiliar with small, cold Locke, the town regulars are convinced that there has got to be something beyond government measure responsible for the uncorrelated events... a conviction Lauren, herself, soon painfully discovers.

As far as horror literature goes, O'Brien has a direct, unabashed writing style that is descriptive, shocking, and just detached enough to be highly appropriate for the content conveyed. It is, however, too choppy at times, and the author seems to have a bit of an aversion to contractions, which made *Bitten* overall a difficult read. Vocabulary- and structure-wise, the book is pretty minimalist, but because of the unclear and unkempt writing, you have to trudge through this one.

The characters are too disinterested and flat for me to have felt anything while reading. While there is a bit of romance, nothing really stirred inside of me because of how unfamiliar I was with the involved parties, even by the end of the book. The poor characterization certainly detracts from my enjoyment of the novel, but its mystery/thriller elements prove that it is primarily plot-driven, which makes up for lack of persona somewhat.

My biggest problem with this book is the stilted dialogue, which branches off of poor characterization and goes hand-in-hand with the contraction-less diction. If the way characters think and talk just doesn't seem realistic to me, there is a 100% chance I will pick it apart. Let me tell you: "I am not sure that it would be the best idea..." is a severely outdated, awkward, and yes, awkwardly outdated, way for anyone to speak in any modern era. *Bitten* is completely composed of sentences like that, which, if you're like me and enjoy REAL dialogue, may have you tearing your hair out by the roots after a while.

I'm not completely ripping Bitten apart, though. I was impressed with O'Brien's ability to carry out a dark, sensual undertone throughout the entire novel. I couldn't turn one page without a sense of foreboding, of unease, and that kind of effect on a reader is quite an achievement. The aspect of werewolves is fresh, too. Bitten does not have your typical romanticized shapeshifter/alpha-male hero; instead, we've got a creepy, gruesome, and completely uncensored monster roaming about—the original werewolf.

Love: "We let others complicate our lives. We choose to live that way. We choose to include people in our lives."

Pros: Hint of romance // Vividly and gruesomely descriptive // Dark, foreboding mood // Highly thrilling and shocking // Creative incorporation of werewolves

Cons: No contractions found anywhere // Very choppy, difficult style // Unsatisfying ending // Lots of typos // Stiff, unrealistic dialogue // Flat, shallow characters // Slow-moving

Verdict: Aside from the undeveloped cast of characters and disconnected style, Bitten is a promising story that will appeal to lovers of shapeshifters, literary horror—the good ol' blood and guts—and mystery. A decent read, Bitten is a werewolf novel with serious bite!

6 hearts: Satisfying for a first read, but I'm not going back.

Rebecca McNutt says

Bitten is a lot like *Twilight* in many ways, another short-lived paranormal romance novel that fits a trending pattern of numerous books just like it flooding the market. It's not a book I'd ever read again.

Martha Cheves says

Bitten – Review by Martha A. Cheves, Author of *Stir, Laugh, Repeat* and *A Book and A Dish*

"Agent Lauren Westlake. Yes, I know about you Agent Westlake. What are you an agent of I wonder?" posited the woman quizzically. "Right. So yeah, anyways. About the creature?" The woman folded her hands across her lap and sat back. "There are many creatures in this world, Lauren of the Lake Tribes of the West. My question is what are you an agent of? We all represent something in this world. What do you represent?" Lauren looked at the woman strangely, feeling claustrophobic. "I am an agent of the federal government," she replied mechanically. The woman was not convinced with the answer. "That is to say you are an agent of a rock, Lauren of the Lake Tribes of the West. Would you like me to read your life?" "My life? Lake Tribes of the West? I thought you had information about the creature." "I have information on a great many things, Agent Westlake. What information do you have for me? Nothing in this life is free. A cycle of reciprocity, surrounded and envelopes us, even if we do not see it." Lauren gripped the edge of the chair, lifting her body. "I think there has been a misunderstanding. I thought you had something to tell me..." The woman waved the agent down with a quick movement of her hands. "Let me begin then. I am called Hecate. I serve as the guide from this world. Not the only guide mind you, but a guide nonetheless. I am an agent of wisdom and of truth. And you, daughter of the Lake Tribes of the West, what are you an agent of?"

Federal Agent Lauren Westlake had been in Locke, Minnesota for just a few days and she is now conversing with a another crazy woman. The first was Madeline Leftwich who for years sat every night at the train

station waiting on her mother to pick her up. Now Madeline is dead and the particulars of her death are what keeps Lauren in her seat as she listens to the puzzling comments coming from Hecate. Madeline, as well as another woman found at the lake, had both been murdered by what appears to be the same 'person.' Both were mutilated with patches of skin removed. After catching a glimpse of what Lauren believes to be the murderer, she is convinced it isn't a person she's perusing but a monster of some type. From what she saw, it's large and it's hairy. Definitely not human.

Dominic McManus has had his own encounter with Hecate. She has given him hope for the future. She has 'read his life' and assured him that there will be someone coming that will help him. But Dominic sees his time running out and needs help fast. Could Lauren possibly be the one he's been waiting on?

While reading Bitten, I felt as if I was reading a possible script for one of the supernatural shows on television involving vampires and werewolves. I also felt that it might even be a script for Criminal Minds. This book would fit both. The questions I kept asking myself as I read were – is this monster a werewolf? - is Dominic the monster? - could it really be just a crazy maniac? And then I would tell myself – if this book were made into a movie I would spend more time hiding my face from the screen as I got the heck scared out of me. Bitten is a true thriller!
