



Kiss of Pride

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SOME MEN ARE TOO BAD TO BE TRUE...

Is he really a Viking with a vampire's bite? An angel with the body of a thunder god? A lone wolf with love on his mind? Alexandra Kelly, his prey, thinks Vikar Sigurdsson is either flat-out crazy or he's trying to maneuver her into his bed--which is hardly where a professional reporter should conduct an interview, tempting as that prospect might be.

SOME MEN ARE TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...

Until Vikar does something a teensy bit unexpected, and Alex begins to wonder whether her mystery man could really be everything he says he is: a Viking Vampire Angel on a thousand-year-long mission with his pack of sinful brothers—and a man who's finally found the woman of his dreams. By then, Vikar is already wrapping his chiseled arms around Alex's body...and sinking his wicked fangs right into her neck. If this is sin, why does it feel so good?

Kiss of Pride Details

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From Reader Review Kiss of Pride for online ebook

Angela (Angel's Guilty Pleasures) says

Kiss of Pride is book one in the *Deadly Angels* series by Sandra Hill and narrated by Erin Bennett.

Well I really wanted to like this book. I found the concept of Viking Warrior Angel Vampires to be cool, but unfortunately *Kiss of Pride* didn't work out for me. I had a tone of issues.

To start I was confused throughout the book. The explanation's of things where confusing. We have the Vangels, the good guys, then Lucipires, the bad guys, and then their are their servants who have all these weird names and I couldn't figure out what they do or their purpose. If I had had the eBook or Book copy I could have re-read that section and seen it with my eyes to try to understand, but I was listening to the audio.

I didn't care for all the sin, redemption, and crimes against God that are showcased throughout. Most where just run-of-the-mill kinks and non-vanilla sexuality. At one scene the 7 Vangels are reading the details online about the Sex Cruise the Lucipires are putting on to get souls and when they read all the different things to happen, well they come of as old aunties. Then we have Alex's danger; which is that she is contemplating murder or suicide from depression, because of the death of her husband and daughter by drug lords. This is made a big deal of only; because both are SINS.

Alex's backstory wasn't all that good and came across as a way to manipulate the story and reader. The author only obsesses on Alex's backstory when the story needed angst, but then it's quickly forgotten, so we can have some goofy hijinks and idiotic dialogue. At another point in the story Alex flips out over Sigurdsson having more then one wife and concubines, but that issue was never discussed or resolved, it was just a way to get Alex outside, so the Lucipires could get to her. Manipulation!

Then at one point into the story the author uses 9/11 for one of her Vangels backstories, having him hold himself responsible for letting this happen. Using this convenient background detail to give weight to the character felt a little skeevy. Their where more backstories like this throughout to give weight and depth to the Vangels, but it didn't work.

I didn't care for all the different references to things in the 20th century; like Twilight, Sookie Stackhouse, Anne Rice, Buffy and more. At first it was funny, but then it got tiresome. They where overwhelming and redundant. I know the author was trying to be funny, but it was to much. It need less of this.

The romance between Alex and Sigurdsson. I didn't feel it at all. It was to be this fated connection between them, but their was nothing tender, just a bunch of silly lines. And, then we have the near-sex that they have, which was laughable; because no they can't have sex before marriage it's a sin, but having any sexual relations before marriage is a sin, but the non-sex is a lesser sin....

Last, we have the whole blood cleaning thing which turns both Alex and Sigurdsson on. I wanted to know if this is just them or does it happen with others? It was never clear. From what I got the Vangels have to drink the blood of those tainted by the Lucipires to cleans them of the taint that slowly crops them to do sins, but also this cleansing is needed for the Vangels to survive. It was all a bit too confusing and not well explained. At one point I was upset about a scene where they do this blood cleansing thing; because the Vangels are all about free will, yet Sigurdsson takes it away from Alex at one point. What got me is God is all about the free will and this was so contradictory. Yes, they are to save the sinners, but that doesn't give them the right to take that choice away.

Kiss of Pride was all over the place with contradictions, manipulative backstories, punishing the sinners, redemption, and more. I was so confused and frustrated. I'm not sure as to why I listen to the whole audiobook. I keep asking myself why I did. I have no plans to pick up another book in the Deadly Angels series.

Audio: Narrator Erin Bennett was acceptable. Her voices were distinct and I knew who was who when talking. I could tell the difference between male and female, but also the different characters. I wasn't overly impressed only because I didn't care for the story. Nothing against Bennett.

Rated: 2 Stars

Ren says

From Sandra Hill's web :

"Expect not just Viking Navy SEALs with this book, but a **Viking Vampire Angel Navy SEAL**. Wild doesn't begin to describe my Vangel Trond Sigurdsson. Let's just say the SEALs may never recover"

Bold : BDB by J.R.Ward + Guild Hunter by Nalini Singh + Viking NAVY SEALs by Sandra Hill herself : THAT!!

Wonder if he's virile too? *grin*

And I will make sure to read this, since I'm fans of Sandra Hill's books (don't judge me, people)

UPDATE

Via Jen, one of my Goodreads friend, the hero not NAVY SEALs. It's his bro that took a training to be SEAL.

Awww :(

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review Courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: An intriguing new twist on vampires and angels. Quirky humor that will have you laughing but really slow pacing hinders the story.

Opening Sentence: Out of the barren glaciers and snow-capped mountains, fjords emerged like shimmering snakes, and a god-like race was created.

The Review:

Viking vampire angels or vangel as they call themselves are a captivating new "species" in Kiss of Pride. The seven sons of Sigurd have royally angered God by their defiance of the seven deadly sins. The Vikings have rejoiced in their evil and vile ways. They don't care at all for their fellow man. God has decided they should be punished but the archangel Michael intervenes with an idea to create an army that will help fight off the demon vampire army created by Lucifer, called Lucipires. The seven Sigurdsson brothers are cursed

as vangel for 700 years. They must redeem themselves by saving the souls of the damned. The brothers are good at saving others but not themselves and they keep getting years added on to their sentence.

Vikar Sigurdsson suffers from the sin of pride, hence the title name. He has been a Viking vampire angel for over one thousand years and he can't complain too much about his time served except for not having sex in over one hundred years. Sex adds a lot of time on his sentence. Vikar has been tasked by Michael to renovate a hotel/castle in Transylvania, Pennsylvania (yes you read that right) into a place for vangel to stay when they are not on a mission or for gatherings.

Alex Kelly is sent to the vampire tourist trap of Transylvania, Pennsylvania to write an article about Vikar and the castle/hotel. Vikar doesn't agree to an interview and tries to send her away until he realizes that she has been compromised by evil and must be saved. Alex's husband and daughter were killed by a Mexican cartel two years before and she wants revenge in her daughter's death. Vikar decides to take it upon himself to save Alex and basically imprisons her at the hotel. The Mexican cartel also have it out to kill Alex if she travels back home to Washington, D.C so staying at the hotel is really in her best interests.

The hierarchy of the world in Kiss of Pride is well thought-out but confusing at first. There are different levels to the vangel and demon society. Everyone has their own rank and skill within their society. The vangel can also time travel but it is more of an unneeded side note since they are told they are no longer going to travel back in time. They will be working in the present time to help save souls.

I enjoyed Sandra Hill's hilarious and quirky writing style. Although at times it did make it hard to take the characters seriously. Transylvania, Pennsylvania is a mecca for living like a vampire. This town has hit the jackpot due to the craze of Twilight and True Blood. All the businesses have vampire-like names. Employees and customers alike all dress up like vampires. Comparisons to other vampire fiction are brought up throughout the book.

Kiss of Pride's character driven plot leaves out quite a bit of the action that would have added to the suspense of the story. When Vikar and a couple of his brothers race off to fight some Lucipires the story just skips over it to when they come back from the fight. Even some seriously dramatic plot points just kind of fizzle out and it never really explains why.

Vikar is a likeable guy even though he likes to hide it behind his rough Viking exterior. I just found it very hard to believe that he would pass up sex with Alex because he didn't want to extend his sentence. Vikar and Alex do participate in some near-sex that is quite hot.

Read Kiss of Pride just for the Viking Vampire Angels. Now that the world has been established I am really looking forward to the next book in the series, Kiss of Surrender, which I think will follow the story of a Navy Seal vangel.

Notable Scene:

"In any case, methinks you have found your life mate," Sigurd went on.

"Do vangel get to have life mates?" Vikar asked, when he should have just kicked Sigurd out of the bedchamber.

"I do not know. We should ask Mike when he gets here," Sigurd replied.

"Have either of you ever considered applying for entrance to the Clueless Hall of Fame?" Alex asked with exaggerated sweetness.

“Aaarrgh! We are not asking Mike about this because it does not matter. She is not my life mate. I am just saving a sinner,” Vikar explained. “Now go, I’ll call when she is ready.”

Sigurd left with a little wave.

When Vikar turned his attention back to Alex, she was no longer squirming under him, but instead shooting icy daggers at him with her cold green eyes. Cold eyes, fiery breath . . . should be a contradiction but somehow fit her outraged demeanor.

“When I’m ready?”

“I just meant—”

“Save it for someone who cares.”

The Deadly Angels Series:

1. Kiss of Pride
2. Kiss of Surrender

FTC Advisory: HarperCollins/Avon provided me with a copy of Kiss of Pride. No goody bags, sponsorships, “material connections,” or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Juletta Gilge says

This book is a modern treasure. I cannot explain how awful and amazing it truly was.

Pamela ?I Blame Wizards? says

Sandra Hill is either a madwoman or a genius. This book was either the worst piece of erotic fiction I have ever read, or a brilliant work of satire. I’m just going to have to read the next book in the series. You know, for science.

Patricia says

I’ve heard of this author before and I actually try to broaden my horizon (aka give as many authors as I can a chance, so I’ll one day be even more broke) when it comes to paranormals, except this book is mostly a regret.

This story makes me wonder if the author was on crack. In a good way, this is a story about ex-**time-travelling Viking Vampire Angel Navy Seals**, which is so made of win that I can’t even stop to think about the many loopholes. In a bad way, this is supposed to be taken seriously, and I just.. I’m so confused.

My actual problem, though, is that Hill tends to first do or reveal something huge and then just disregard it.

For example: She made God appear in the beginning of the novel. I mean, creating believably interesting and complex immortals should be a required class or something, but God? Seriously? GOD? In this book **the hero, Vikar**, was a huge sinner and had to choose: Either go to hell forever or make up for all the evil things he has done, fighting for the Archangel Michael against Demon Vampires and saving humans from them, cleansing their blood if need be. (Yeah. I know. *Vleensing*)

And when **the heroine, Alex**, appears and is full of not cool emotions, Vikar realizes that she has to be cleansed. So he does that - and cleansing means, bite her, drink her blood, give her yours and repeat - and feels super-attracted to her and she feels the same, but she doesn't believe him. I mean, sure he bit her and all, she doesn't believe he's a vampire, but she still sticks around because, heck, no problem with people biting you, right? oô Yeah.. Again, #crack fic?

Except no. If this book is supposed to be a crack fic - meaning funny and light-hearted, then it falls flat on that front. Any depth has been sucked right out - um, I mean, this book has been cleansed of the funny. And the depth.

Remember how I said the author first created something, then disregards it?

The author gave the heroine a sad background-story: (view spoiler) And although that is an actual issue (the same as her not believing the hero) it's not actually dealt with. It just disappears without any mention. - If you give characters a history, then talk about it, because otherwise it all just feels fake. Same goes for the hero who was a huge bastard in his past.

I like the whole second chances, new beginnings part of the book, but I think you can't eat cookies without baking or at least buying them, and they definitely did neither of these things here. Moving past that, the portrayal of sex and sexuality was slightly..

Again with the mentioning of thing, and not really dealing with it at all. The worst offender is probably the mention of CSA and the entire "sexwork is evil"? Another character was tortured by the Big Bad, and when he returns he's just.. okay about it all. We've earlier in the book been told that the torture often includes some perverse sexual stuff that's super traumatizing, but I guess dealing with it was.. above page limit? Who knows.

(I'm totally aware that I, too, am first mentioning #bad thing and then not going into detail. I'll say it's Kiss of Pride's bad influence.)

The romance didn't work out for me at all, though I'll have to admit that at some point I did think they were cute. It's like.. if about 70 percent of the book had been cut or rewritten, this might have been a very good book.

(Alas, future self. As you can see, I had expected something way different. In any case, I don't think you'd want to read any of the sequels, but I do think that you should check out some of Hill's other novels!)

First Thoughts: (view spoiler)

Vanessa theJeepDiva says

I have to admit, time traveling Viking vampire angels is a first. This book was several firsts for me. It is the first and certainly not the last Sandra Hill book for me. This is also the first Viking book I've ever read. I'm also not sure what I expected going into Kiss of Pride, but it is definitely not what got. What I got was a book that mixes so many different elements that are extremely popular in paranormal romances at the moment, a group of highly entertaining vangers, a cynical/sarcastic heroine, great plot, and a surprisingly humorous story. I easily see myself telling all my booky friends that they must read this book. They must all read it now!

Vikar Sigurdsson has been a bad bad Viking. Actually he and all 6 of his brothers have been overly indulging in the seven deadly sins. God has decided they must pay for their transgressions. He appoints the archangel Michael to oversee their penance. The Sigurdsson fellas have a hard time completely breaking all of their a-Viking habits and their 700 year penance just keeps growing.

Alex has lost the most important thing in her life. This loss has changed her for the worse. She is not a happy person. She is contemplating doing very bad things to the people who took from her. Alex has misplaced her beliefs. Divine intervention sends her on a new assignment. She has been tasked with seeing what the story is behind Transylvania, Pennsylvania.

As soon as Vikar sees Alex he knows that he has to save her from the evil that has tainted her. Alex is struggling with trying to figure out how surfer guy plays into an entire town going vampy. She will get the story though, even if she must go along with his craziness to get inside his castle. Once inside she discovers there is more than just a story about an overly vampy town. Alex and Vikar also discover they can't and don't really want to keep their hands off of each other.

There are so many awesome aspects in the pages of Kiss of Pride. I loved the characters. They are numerous and individually distinctive. I loved the VIK, the seven Sigurdsson brothers. I am hoping that Hill plans on creating a book for each of them. I enjoyed the "near-sex," it was amusing to see Vikar and Alex and the way they bent the rules just to be together. I was not expecting humor and this book is hilarious at so many times. I liked the religious/biblical aspect. The Viking vampire angels are out there doing God's work. They're saving individual souls and battling the evil Hell vamps.

Trashy Katie says

I was thrilled when I first heard of the absurd premise: Vampire Viking Angels (or should it be Viking Vampire Angels or Angel Vampire Vikings?). I so desperately wanted to like this book and I just couldn't finish it. I gave up about halfway through.

Minor Spoilers Ahead

These VVAs as I call them, are tasked with saving souls that have been targeted by demons. I was fine with this. I was not fine with the Christian messages that got more and more heavy handed as the book went on. The heroine lost her husband and child to a car bomb set by someone (I think maybe a mobster, but I'm not sure). She understandably wants to kill the man who murdered her family. The hero VVA was in the middle of trying to convince her to give up her vengeance in order to save her soul. I was not okay with this. The

heroine is completely justified in her anger and need for justice. Additionally, she might be just fine with damning her soul to get it. I suspect I'd be tempted, if I were in her shoes. I just couldn't keep going after this and I'm not sure I'll even attempt the next book in the series.

Mandi Schreiner says

Long ago God created “good” vampires to fight the dark ones that roamed the earth. Vikar Sigurdsson and his six brothers are all Vikings who have disappointed God with their many sins. Ready to banish the race from the Earth altogether, Archangel Michael stepped in and came up with a plan for “good” vampires to be created. And so the “Viking vampire angel” was born. They are actually more angels in training. For seven hundred years, Vikar and his brothers have to do penance, doing Mike’s (yes, they call Archangel Michael just Mike) bidding against the evil Jasper and his bad demons. Of course, over these 700 years, Vikar and company haven’t lived saintly lives (although they try) so years and years have been added to their sentence. While Vikar was suppose to be free in the 1500’s, it is now current day and he still has a few hundred years to work off. Vikar’s sin is his vanity.

He finds himself in Transylvania, Pennsylvania. In another month, The Reckoning will occur, a central meeting for hundreds of “vangels.” In order to prepare, Vikar has been instructed to turn a ruined castle into a working mansion in order to house all those that are coming into town.

Alexandra Kelly works for the World Gazette magazine in Washington, DC. Two years ago her husband (they were legally separated) and her young daughter were murdered by a drug cartel. (hello – this isn’t lighthearted and fun) Two of the cartel members were headed for trial soon, but rumor has it they might get off on a technicality. So Alex has been thinking in her mind of murdering them herself. (Yes, I was eye rolling at this point) Her boss sends her to Transylvania to cover the story of weird vampire sightings up there, which is how she ends up on Vikar’s doorstep. Once inside, he can smell the sin or the future sin upon her, and he knows she must be cleansed or more demons will start hunting her. He wants to save her. Alex wants to stay to get the story, although she soon realizes the truth of the situation she is in.

I am not super familiar with Sandra Hill’s work, so when I heard about this new series, and read the crazy blurb and saw the interesting cover, I had to try this one. While I tried to read it and go with the silly, campy feel of the book, by the end I just didn’t enjoy it. I’ll try to explain why.

First of all, Alex lost her husband and five-year old daughter only two years ago. And while we are told she wallows in self pity and fury, I never saw that. Apparently she is also set on revenge if the killers walk free. Her sin is that eventually she wants to murder these men – again, her character never came across that way. To me, she was this happy go-lucky, laid back woman who pretty easily believed in vampires and angels and felt safe living with all these huge, strong men. All of that just didn’t sit well with me.

Next up is Vikar. I never once thought – damn, Vikar is sexy. He came across to me more as a goofy oaf, than sexy. I get that this book is lighthearted (even though that clashes with the heroine’s backstory) but even in the more funny books I read, I still want to have a romantic feeling while reading. And I never did in this one. It’s all so cutesy.

“That’s not a halo. It’s just the moon hitting off that round mirror over there and reflecting back here.”
“If you say so.” She was clearly unconvinced. “I think it’s kind of cute, that you would have a halo around your penis.”
Cute? A man does not want his cock to be cute. “It is not a halo.”
She leaned forward to study it closer. “Let’s see if you taste holy.”

Every sex scene seemed to be like this, which made my do an eye roll.

Vikar is a lovable dude, as is all his brothers. They are all friendly and warm. There were a few times I smiled, but it was all just too much. Even the demon was cracking jokes, and making pop culture references and it just didn't appeal to me.

There was also a young vampire named Armod, who before he was turned, was used as a prostitute, spreading AIDS and other diseases to all his bed partners (Gross). There is a moment in this book where he asks Vikar what it is like to lose your virginity – and Vikar questions him because Armod is no virgin. But Armod meant his “heterosexual virginity.” (as he was forced to have unwanted sex with men). Which was really sad if you think about it. That combined with the murder of Alex's daughter only two years ago – is an odd pairing with the very lighthearted tone of this book.

At the end, I wasn't convinced of their love. Why did Vikar really fall for Alex? I wanted to see more emotion from Alex concerning her lost daughter too. This book and I'm guessing this series is not for me.

Rating: D

Katie Michaels says

I really, really wanted to love this book. Come on! Viking vampire angels?? That sounds awesome, right? Only... it really wasn't.

The basic premise is that back in the day, the Vikings pissed off God with their heathen ways and worship of other deities. He was going to smite them all, until the Archangel Michael convinced Him to give them a chance at redemption. They would live as vampires/ angels-in-training for hundreds of years. Their mission is twofold. --1-- To fight demons who wish to harvest human souls to hell. And --2-- to help those humans set on a sinful path --to change to a righteous one. Seven brothers make up the head of the vangels (yes, they are called vangels.) And Vikar is the head of the family.

It's now modern times and the vangels are gathering for a big meeting with Michael. Alex, a reporter, is sent to do a feature on the town where this is happening... a town that's developed a vampire-craze. But she quickly becomes a mission for Vikar. Alex is dealing with a devastating loss and she is contemplating some heavy-duty revenge. Vikar must help her find her way and ends up falling in love with her in the process.

There are just so many things that didn't work for me in this book. The biggest issue is the tone. There is a slightly cheesy vibe going throughout. Twilight, Sookie Stackhouse, Anne Rice and Buffy references abound. So much so, that they were completely overwhelming and redundant. Just when I thought she couldn't possibly reference Twilight another time... she would do it again.

As I mentioned, the good guys were called "vangels;" their enemies are "Lucipires." The names alone felt trite. Beyond that, their little town was called Transylvania (Pennsylvania) and it featured every conceivable vampire-fan stereotype.

The vangels call the archangels "Mike," "Gabe" and "Rafe"... which might lead you to believe that the religious elements are tongue-in-cheek, but that's not the case. The religion in the book is the real deal. They don't take the name of the Lord in vain, they pray a lot, and they try not to sin. Which means no sex. Instead they've got this running shtick about "near-sex" that follows our couple up to the very end of the book.

When our couple falls in love, it's like listening to two teenagers. "I love you the most" -- "No, I love YOU." -- "No, I love YOU." Pure saccharine. But for the life of me, I can't figure out why. Vikar is a thousand years old and I saw nothing so exceptional about Alex that she would make him fall in love so quickly and completely. And as for Alex's perspective: Vikar has basically held her prisoner and has taken over her life. But she is decorating his castle just days after he takes her captive. She forgives his bad choices at the speed of light. Why? I have no idea.

It appears that the Viking language is marked simply by putting an -ing on the end of a word. We got boyling, girling, sweetling, dearling, and heartling IN ABUNDANCE. Like just about everything else, it was too much. Everything is overdone. There is no subtlety anywhere.

The relationship resolution is predictable and the ending is a one-two punch of unbelievable convenience and sickening sweetness.

I appreciate the author attempting to give us the best of all worlds by combining Vikings, vampires and angels into one breed of uber-hero. (The next book's hero is a Viking vampire-angel Navy SEAL!) But it just didn't work for me. 2 stars.

**ARC Provided by Avon*

Karla says

WARNING: GIFs GIFs GIFs. Also SPOILERS and SHAMELESS PICSPAM.

Despite having less than positive experiences in the past with Sandra Hill, I still ventured into this new series of hers for two of the **Worst Possible Reasons**:

- 1) I was dared to read it and my life is one sad story of reading crap books because my inner snark demon rules the roost & my GR friends callously take advantage of that; and
- 2) from a distance, the cover model sorta kinda looked like a young Michael Biehn, albeit not nearly as smokin'. Don't believe me?

So, going into this shielded by bulletproof 80s-era hotness, I thought I'd be able to weather the storm. But I had forgotten one thing:

When reading Sandra Hill, **the odds are always stacked against you.**

Approximate visual

Ze Plot:

Alexandra Kelly is a reporter with a dead husband and kid, thanks to Mexican druglords, and is nursing plans to do them in while they're on trial. But she's got a new assignment to focus on that sidelines her plans of revenge: going to a newly-minted Transylvania, PA and writing a story on the economic rejuvenation of a town that transformed itself into a Tourist Destination From Hell by having everything and everybody have a Dracula theme. Lording over it all is the mysterious Vikar, a lord or some such thing who lives in a castle

that is undergoing renovations for a hotel. (A total lie. It's actually going to be a Central Command for fighting the Forces of Evil.)

Sparks fly between Alex and Vikar, and she's suddenly moving in and choosing the drapes while banging out lame draft after draft of her article. She also is pretty accepting of Vikar's story that he's a Viking Vampire Angel ("vangel") serving out penance for his bad pagan Viking crimes by working for St. Michael the Archangel (called "Mike Archer") for the past millennium, fighting the evil minions of Satan's sidekick, *Jasper*. Far from being threatening, the scenes with Jasper had me imagining him as Saddam Hussein. (Thanks for that visual, sis. :D) Jasper's torture of evildoers, such as a female kiddie pornographer, runs along the lines of putting big vibrators up her orifices and having any random demon get oral sex whenever they walk by. He doesn't reside in Hell, but the next level up, a place called Horror. I don't even....

Vikar uncovers a plot by Jasper to hold a "Sex Cruise," which will collect a huge number of people in one place to sin and therefore be ripe for harvesting as demon minions. The planned cruise events are such "perverted" things as Naked Pole Dancing (gasp!), Orgies (horrors!), and S&M (you don't say!), which are affronts to the Eyes of God. So it's a race against time for Vikar and his posse of hunky vangels (6 of 'em! Guess how many books will probably be in this series?) to thwart the cruise ship from even leaving the harbor.

Of course they succeed. And it's really, *really* boring. Vikar gets his dumb ass caught and spends some time on Jasper's slab, apparently getting the Vesuvio treatment from a horde of horny minions. (Don't worry, he has no emotional scars whatsoever from the ordeal.)

Alex's plans for revenge become totally moot due to off-page magical resolution (cop-out!) and now that she is sin-free, she's made immortal so neither hero nor heroine have to give up anything. Well, she can't have kids if she's immortal, but I'm betting that in a later book she'll be miraculously knocked up. The IMPORTANT THING is that now *finally* Vikar can bone Alex without feeling like he's sinning (Sex outside marriage! Heavens to Betsy!) and the whole weird ageless "family" of poseur vampires that chug something called "Fake-O" instead of real blood moves to Forks.

Or not.

For wading through that, have some gratuitous eyecandy:

Thoughts?

OK, I knew what I was getting into. I knew there was **No Freakin' Way** that Sandra Hill's vampires would be cool or awesome. So I didn't go into it expecting kickass fang-bearers like the *Near Dark* family:

Why don't the Aliens actors simply make movies with each other until the end of time and turn the world awesome?

But I sorta kinda *maybe* expected that I wouldn't get slapped with so much hokey proselytizing about sin and redemption and crimes against God that are just run-of-the-mill kinks and non-vanilla sexuality. The 7 Vangels ("The VIK") clutch their pearls when reading the itinerary of the SEX CRUISE, gasping at all the depravities that will be going on, but what we're actually told is on the agenda is like what I mentioned above. Does not compute. They just come off as prudish old aunties. Likewise, Alex's danger is that she's contemplating murder OR suicide from depression, which is made a big deal of because both are SINS.

Sandra Hill is known for Teh Funneh. Not my kind of funneh, but she's done this humor schtick in practically all of her books. She shouldn't touch Serious Shit with a 90-foot pole. And I'm not even talking

about her whack theological world-building with God making cameo appearances and St. Michael yukking it up as straight man to The VIK and her sin vs. penance scheme that is either totally earnest or just making fun of the whole concept.

Early on, we get the idiotic detail that one of The VIK holds himself singly responsible for letting 9/11 happen, thus giving Jasper a huge crop of souls even though, rest assured, the majority of them went to Heaven. 9/11 isn't a raw wound for me as it is for some, but even I did a double-take and said, "Oh no she didn't!" Using 9/11 as a convenient background detail to give weight to your character felt a little skeezy.

Then there's the matter of Alex's estranged husband and daughter getting killed by druglords. She obsesses about it only when the story needs some angst, but then is quickly forgotten for the majority of it so that we can have the standard goofy hijinks and inane inner dialogue of Alex checking out Vikar's ass. Not only is Convenient Family Slaughter an obnoxiously overused device to give a hero or heroine ready-made character "depth" (as well as making them totally untethered and able to drop everything for that HEA), here it came across as doubly offensive in the way it was pulled out of storage solely to manipulate story and reader at Very Important Times.

God, I've been at this review forever. I need a break.

Ahhhhh, much better.

To cap it all off, Hill tosses off the detail that one of The VIK, Harek, has been time-travelling to 1943 Germany and is just **devastated** by the death camps, but for the rest of the time we see him, he shows no signs of it having any lasting impact on his psyche. I know he's been doing this vangel stuff for the past thousand years and has probably seen all kinds of nasty stuff, but I do think that the Holocaust *probably* stands out in History's Worst Atrocities. If Naked Pole Dancing gives him vapors and a sense of urgency and purpose, then wholesale genocide seems like it'd make a *bit* of a lasting impression. Just throwing that out there...

Sandra? Hon? Stay away from the serious shit. Please.

Last, but not least, the connection between Vikar and Alex. I didn't feel it at all. Even though Vikar is destined to "save" Alex from becoming turned by the Forces of Evil, if not tortured and killed, I didn't get the feeling there was much of a fated connection between them, nothing tender or angsty. Instead of simple ovary-bursting lines like this:

We get:

"I can feel your woman-dew weeping onto my chair. So much of it comes from your widespread thighs that it drips down to the wood of my chair and rolls down to coat my ballocks."

So, gentle readers, as we draw this review to a close (finally!), I only have one thing left to say about this book:

T.M. Payne says

Book: Kiss of Pride (Deadly Angels #1)
Author: Sandra Hill
Publication Date: 4/24/2012
Reviewed by: Tammy Payne- Book Nook Nuts
My Rating: 4 Stars

REVIEW

*May contain spoilers *

I read this book originally back in 2013 with no clue about leaving a review.
I truly enjoyed this book and now I have the audible also.
We get not just Vikings but we get Angels and Vampires too. How?
Well Michael is forming a new enterprise. He is given approval from the highest power and his boss God.

Vangels. Yes, Viking/Angels/Vamps and we get a band of brothers each whom has lead nasty lives all have done one of the seven sins.

This story focuses on brother Vikar

We go from past to future and these brothers now are shown the ways of what their life was. Vikar' poison was Pride. His given goal is to stop a woman from doing a mortal sin and in doing so, he has fallen. Alex is here to interview Vikar and she is in for a real treat. This book gives us humor, romance and suspense. Can the all might Vikar gain his goodness? And keep the woman?

Pickup your copy of this book. It starts slow in a way but wow when it gets going its fantastic

I borrowed this book from my local library.
Kiss of Pride

Anna Serene says

Attempted on 7/27/16

Dnf'd @ 28%

~~~~~**Before Reading**~~~~~

I'll take a wack at it lol

~~~~~**After Reading**~~~~~

I just can't.

I tried.

I failed.

I can't do this to myself. I don't need to put myself through it.

I just can't.

Tamara says

oh god never again. How hard is it to write silly sexy fluff without including rape, torture, AIDS, slut shaming, dead children, guilt, the holocaust, regressiveness and gut churning cod christian sanctimony, and somehow expecting us to laugh? Really hard apparently, because this book couldn't do it.

Ann says

Wow what a great book love the characters in this book can't wait to read the rest of the series

Dianne says

Sandra Hill has always been so good at writing Vikings and time-travel. Her earliest works are among my favorite books (The Outlaw Viking in particular) so I think that that is why she thought that if she took her Vikings and stuck some fangs on them and then added a lot of religion into the book that this would captivate her core audience.

This book has all of Ms Hills tried and true moves so if you love her works you may really love this. Unfortunately, it takes more that updating Vikings to Viking Vampire Angels who have sinned to captivate me.

Alex Kelly goes to Transylvania (not not the country, a small town in PA) to write an articles for her newspaper. Her editor believes that this job would be a good thing to take her mind off the fact that the men who kidnapped and killed her husband and 5-year-old daughter, are going on trial soon. Instead, Alex is captivated and enchanted (after a while) by a town that trades in Vampire themed businesses and the hunky Viking who seems to be the head Vampire/Angel/Viking.

I couldn't get beyond the thinly veiled religious theme and I could not justify the punishments of the Vikings fitting the crimes. Perhaps the later books will be able to justify this.

Amanda Ryan says

Redonk Nutshell: Viking turned Vampire-Angel finds himself falling for a mortal journalist

Alexandra Kelly is sent to a rural town in Pennsylvania that has renamed itself Transylvania. Why you ask? Because a new mysterious resident has moved in and purchased the derelict castle on the mountain and is

rumored to be turning it into a hotel. It's dark. It's mysterious. And, hey, vampires are all the rage so let's go hog wild! When Alex shows up to meet aforementioned new resident, Vikar Sigurdsson, he's not at all what she expected. He's no Bela Lugosi, but more a young Kevin Costner. With board shorts and flip flops.

Vikar Sigurdsson is a several hundred year old Viking-turned-vampire angel (takes deep breath), who is on God's mission to redeem the souls of those close to succumbing to sin, specifically at the hands of Lucipires, i.e. vampires made through Lucifer. He's renovating the large castle estate specifically because of the upcoming Reckoning - not to be confused with The Rapture - a meeting of archangels, vangel's, and other supernatural beings doing the work of God. There's serious sparkage between Vikar and Alex, but Vikar is so close to redemption that he doesn't want to screw it up by giving in to the temptations this woman poses to him. So they find ways around it.

The biggest problem I had with this book was trying to figure out if I was supposed to take it seriously. It's really funny at times, purposefully so, and other times it's hysterical for the sole reason that it's just ridiculous. The way Vikar speaks (he takes my loathing of pet names to a new extreme)...the whole Viking/Vampire/Angel thing (pick one already, gah!)...Archangel Michael being called "Mike," (really?)...a "sin cruise" where our villain hopes to lure in a slew of potential souls...it's just...downright ridiculous.

I really struggled to finish this book, though finish it I did! I had to read it lightheartedly. There were times I started to take seriously what was unfolding on the page and had to stop myself at risk of throwing the thing across the room. I'd take a deep breath and remind myself to think of it as a parody. I can only really hope that this was the intent Ms. Hill had. Otherwise, well, I kind of feel a bit like an arse. Oh well. I suppose it's bound to happen at some point, eh?

Anyone else read anything by Ms. Hill? Are her other books like this, heavy on the sarcasm and outlandish plot?

Judy & Marianne from Long and Short Reviews says

Ms. Hill has turned her favorite theme of irreverent and sexy Vikings and sent them on a journey no Viking was ever meant to go. The result is an amazing array of characters who battle the ultimate evil all the while entertaining readers with that unique sense of comedic timing Ms. Hill has honed to perfection. It's not as light and fluffy as I'm used to but there is an awfully good reason for that. Ever hear of Viking vampire angels in training? No? Then get settled in a comfy chair because this adventure is going to astound fans of paranormal romance with its freshness and interesting interpretation of a few Christian beliefs all wrapped up with a hero with attitude and a heroine who isn't afraid of his teeth.

First off, I want to give credit to Ms. Hill for making St. Michael the Archangel funny. Ironical that I've been aware of his role in religious history, but that's where he remained – sort of forgotten and I never gave him much thought. He did his job, played his role and that was the end of it. Not according to Ms. Hill. And I adore her for it. It's like she brought him to life; teasing readers with the possibility that there is a vital role he could be currently playing somewhere on this Earth even in this day and age. He's personable, snarky but loving, extremely alpha and commanding when he has to be and he never loses focus. He's a good one to have at your back and on your side, provided you stay on his good side. And that's where the heroes of the story come in because in the beginning, they are totally not on his good side. In fact they're so bad it's insulting and yet, there's St. Michael's belief that they are redeemable. It's the whole question of how to get stubborn macho full of themselves Vikings redeemed that makes not only this story line work but is enough

to base an entire series on.

Early on, the author made it very clear to readers and in fact draws the line in the sand as to who and what, was evil. She did that by taking readers to a scene of torture. What I found most fascinating was the intent and level of the sexual violence. It's not a long and drawn out scene; it's akin to having a tooth yanked out. There are a lot of romance books out there that have BDSM elements and it's considered erotic and a bunch of other stuff. What Ms. Hill did was take that and debase it; had the bad character twist it as only a minion of true evil could do. It made me uncomfortable because I have read a few stories with BDSM and enjoyed them but seeing it in this different light made me feel twitchy. The author got her point across. The bad guys are really bad.

Finally, I can get to the hunky hero, Vikar. I thought he was yummy, exasperating, but delicious. His emotions are all over the place for the heroine, Alex, but he can't figure out why. He has to save her but she fights him all the time. The things he has to do and say to convince her had me laughing many times. He certainly is very manly, dedicated and very tempted. Wait until readers get a glimpse of 'near-sex'. I alternated between fanning myself over the very sensual and satisfying relationship scenes and laughing out loud at his gullibility. He can't seem to resist her no matter what he tries and there's a very good reason for that. I enjoyed his internal conflict and the various facets of his personality. In no way is he perfect, but he's certainly the kind of man who is close to being it.

Alex is a woman who has a lot of learning to do. Not just about the war between the good and evil vampires but about herself as well. Her journey is full of emotional growth and facing the truth. She has to forgive, to go on and embrace what's really important and to do that, she has to let go. Of what, only readers will know. It's a pretty heavy burden. It starts off innocent enough but it quickly spirals into a war of trust and love against temptation and hate. It doesn't help her case that the heroine is more stubborn than a mule and as sneaky as a fox. She makes it very hard for Vik to earn his wings because she's pure temptation and she likes him, a lot. I enjoyed her dialogue but one of the funniest aspects was her journal entries. Actually they were pretty hysterical because in each chapter she gathers more information that skews what she thought she knew and she has to rewrite the intro to her story every time. What makes them worth reading is a reader can see her understanding and perception advance the more she learns. In the beginning she's cynical and dark but there's a complete 180 degree turnaround by the time of the final entry. It's its own happy ever after.

Secondary characters are seductive. I'm not referring to sex although there were a few that it certainly could apply to. What I mean is Ms. Hill introduced each man who will either play an integral part in helping the protagonists reach their happily ever after in *Kiss of Pride* or will eventually have their own story. The author teased me with bits of information that made these men worthy of interest and curiosity. How is the author going to cure a Viking vampire angel of sloth or rage? All the men have their crosses to bear and some are lengthier than others because, being Vikings, sometimes they just can't help sinning, just a little. Of what I saw of the men who helped fight the battles, save their friends or ate tons of food with gusto, I imagine their stories are going to be as exciting and thrilling as this one was.

Jasper is the mega-villain. He has his favorite evil minions and when he is displeased with any of them, he does bad, deviant and horrific things to them. The author left me with no doubts - not only is he evil, but killing him is the best idea, ever. In addition, what he does with his 'collected souls' is quite inventive, in a sick, psycho sort of way. Again, visualizing it might give a reader the heebie-jeebies, so be warned. Thank goodness the author had those incidents occur few and far between - they were so dark they could have easily overshadowed the tone of the story. I'm glad Ms. Hill kept it on the brighter side of things...like the pre-dawn hours.

Truly, this book has so much going for it that it's hard to know where to stop talking. I really enjoyed the struggle between Vik and Alex to build a relationship, I was fascinated by the whole concept of Lucies versus Vangels, I was impressed by the descriptions of the foul demons, and I got a kick out of how regular

life, like shopping and eating, were smoothly worked in. You know, it's life, "mushroom and cheese omelets, it's no big deal, 'Oh, look, there's a great deal on sheets ..."see you later,gotta go kill a demon" -- normal Viking stuff.

If readers enjoy a little dramatic action and bite with their laughter then Kiss of Pride will have you clamoring for more. Ms. Hill has created a truly special and enthralling world that makes Vikings sexier than ever. Be still my heart. The fact that these vampires are the good guys makes enjoying their toothy attentions so much easier. They are all hunky action heroes who have to earn their wings. They brawl, argue, fight and have honor with a capital "H". They are worth redeeming and each and every one I was introduced to in this book proved it. The question is, how? I can't wait to find out. Kiss of Pride was an awesome read.

Talk Supe says

Light. Ridiculous. Funny. The sexiest near-sex I have ever read! On top of that, these are Vikings turned Vangels (Vampire Angels) under the strict tutelage of Arcangel Michael. Fierce warriors who are at war with Lucipires, fighting over souls who are on the verge of committing mortal sins.

Vikar and Alex's love story is your typical rogue meets the stubborn heroine and all those delicious wooing and romance one finds in romance novels. Sure it follows a formula but Sandra Hill worked it real good, managing to accomplish its goal: entertain.

A good break from the dark, forbidden and heavy PNR stories I've been reading lately.

Riverina Romantics says

This was my first Sandra Hill read and I am extremely happy to have read it.

The paranormal world that Sandra has woven brings together some well used aspects but also adds a lot of exciting new ones.

Vikar is not only a Viking Warrior but he is also an angel and vampire – so put it all together and he and his brothers are Vangle's.

So you get the mix of alpha Viking dominance along with the bad boy appeal of a vampire, then the good guy qualities of an angel. And each aspect plays a big part in their personalities. Because they are vampires, they need blood to keep their skin from going translucent, their Viking status means they talk in the old tongue giving the story a good mix of contemporary and historical. And the angel nature means they are hymn singing, non-blasphemy swearing, heavenly men with high morals.

At times I did cringe over the corniness of some of the historical dialogue and in others it made me sigh.

"Alex relished his odd endearments....sweetling, darling, and once in the midst of their near-sex, heartling."

Near-sex you say? Yes this was a new term for me too. Because Vikar is a heavenly being it is a sin to have sex before marriage, so they created the term 'near-sex' and Vikar and Alex had a lot of it. At one point I had reached my limit and wanted to scream "FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, PUT TAB A IN SLOT B" so it was quite frustrating and I think if the second book in the series is similar with the 'near-sex' it might move from

a funny term to an annoyance, but it worked relatively well in this story.

I really enjoyed the band of brothers and can't wait to get to know them all...especially Cnut. Now if you had to do a double take on the name you are VERY, VERY naughty and had the same problem I did. Every time Vikars brother Cnut was in the story I couldn't help but give an internal giggle. I may be dyslexic, but every time his name was written, I read something completely different. And just to add, my Kindle actually read his name so it sounded more like Canoot – which I really like.

In brief, I really loved the world Sandra has built. The characters are highly enjoyable and I'm eagerly anticipating the next story. Although there were cheesy lines that did make me cringe on occasion, I truly loved Vikar and Alex together and would recommend this book to paranormal fans.
