



## Lips Touch: Three Times

*Laini Taylor*

Download now

Read Online →

# Lips Touch: Three Times

*Laini Taylor*

## **Lips Touch: Three Times** Laini Taylor

Three tales of supernatural love, each pivoting on a kiss that is no mere kiss, but an action with profound consequences for the kissers' souls:

**Goblin Fruit:** In Victorian times, goblin men had only to offer young girls sumptuous fruits to tempt them to sell their souls. But what does it take to tempt today's savvy girls?

**Spicy Little Curses:** A demon and the ambassador to Hell tussle over the soul of a beautiful English girl in India. Matters become complicated when she falls in love and decides to test her curse.

## **Lips Touch: Three Times Details**

Date : Published October 1st 2011 by Arthur A. Levine Books (first published October 1st 2009)

ISBN : 9780545055864

Author : Laini Taylor

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Short Stories, Romance, Paranormal, Fiction

 [Download Lips Touch: Three Times ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Lips Touch: Three Times ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Lips Touch: Three Times Laini Taylor**

---

## From Reader Review Lips Touch: Three Times for online ebook

### Hannah Greendale says

Click here to watch a video review of this book on my channel, *From Beginning to Bookend*.

Nectar and spice, goblins and demons, memories and sorcery abound in three tales of supernatural love that hinge on a kiss that's unlike any other kiss.

Readers who've only just begun to explore and fall head-over-heels for Laini Taylor's recently released books will be equally enchanted by *Lips Touch Three Times*. Taylor employs an imaginative approach to writing that's uniquely her own and, despite being one of her earliest published works (first released in 2009), *Lips Touch Three Times* is no exception.

Drawing inspiration from mythology, fantasy, and various religions, Taylor crafts a spellbinding array of characters and locales. She enriches her creations by embroidering everything from the tangible, such as characters or clothing, to the intangible, like dreams or desire, with words evocative of mysticism, whimsy, and romanticism.

*His eyes, very dark, canted elvishly upward at the outer corners and were surrounded by delicate bruises of sleeplessness, bluish and tender, giving him the look – [she] fancied – of a poet who had been up all night with a candle and a quill, memorializing a beautiful lady who had fallen from the aristocracy to die penniless of a fever, perhaps in a snowbank, leaving, of course, an ethereal corpse.*

While Taylor's stylistic writing flair remains wonderfully consistent throughout, each of the protagonists in her stories infuse the narrative with their own individuality and longing.

In "Goblin Fruit," Kizzy is a seemingly average teenage girl, relegated to hovering in the shadowy corners of her high school where she watches the attractive popular students from afar. She's unaware that her "spell-casting eyes" and "wild hair, and hips that could be wild too, if they learned how" make her a natural beauty. Where her dislikes are parochial – her unruly hair, her ankles, being seen in public with family members – Kizzy's desires are far more sophisticated:

*She wanted to make love on a balcony, ruin someone, trade in esoteric knowledge, watch strangers as coolly as a cat. She wanted to be inscrutable, have a drink named after her, a love song written for her, and a handsome adventurer's small airplane, champagne-christened Kizzy, which would vanish one day in a windstorm in Arabia so that she would have to mount a rescue operation involving camels, and wear an indigo veil against the stinging sand, just like the nomads.*

Kizzy's family is just as unorthodox and strange. They prefer singing songs in a foreign, unknown language over watching television, and Kizzy's grandmother tells stories of goblins luring young maidens with luscious fruit then slowly sipping at their souls until the maidens wither their way to an early death. What her grandmother doesn't tell her is that goblins have the power to shape-shift, so when a new boy of unparalleled attractiveness arrives at Kizzy's school and takes a special interest in her, she's not inclined to question whether he could be the death of her . . .

"Spicy Little Curses Such As These" introduces Anamique (Ana), a young beauty with eyes that are "lonely, and haunted, and hungry" because she has reason to believe she was cursed by a demon to never speak.

Fearful that uttering so much as one word will kill everyone within earshot, she goes a lifetime refraining from using her voice.

*She kept her own voice like a bird in a cage. She imagined it as a willful songbird with a puffed breast, its feathers gray like her eyes, with a flash of peacock blue at the neck, and the cage an ornate prison of rusted scrollwork with a little latched door that she never dared open. Sometimes the urge to do so was nearly overpowering.*

When a handsome young soldier enters her life, Ana yearns to speak aloud her love for him and begins to question the validity of the curse. If she's wrong about the curse, then her voice can at last be set free; but if she's right, then an utterance of love will kill the man who is her heart's greatest desire . . .

Finally, "Hatchling" puts forth a red-haired girl with porcelain skin named Esmé whose entire world is upended by one small, unexpected change:

*Six days before Esmé's fourteenth birthday, her left eye turned from brown to blue. It happened in the night. She went to sleep with brown eyes, and when she woke at dawn to the howling of wolves, her left eye was blue.*

The reason for Esmé's transient London-life with her mother is unveiled in this multi-layered story that not only crosses the known world with mythical realms, it explores the idea of (view spoiler). Readers will pass through one diaphanous veil after another while traveling alongside Esmé as she wades through her memories and navigates the unbridled intensity found in a kiss . . .

With first kisses being central to all three stories, *Lips Touch Three Times* has plentiful imagery that speaks of virginity, fertility, and sexual appetite. By bestowing the narrative with mention of plump fruits, hungry mouths, and tongues getting a first taste, Taylor successfully portrays passion and sexual desire without resorting to more gratuitous measures.

Further enhancing the book's succulence are the vividly rendered illustrations created by Taylor's husband, artist Jim Di Bartolo. His hyper-stylized representation of caged birds, flame-licked demons, and defiant maidens – set against a backdrop of gray and blushing with pinks and reds – accurately capture the sorrowful nature of Taylor's stories.

What is arguably the book's only weakness is more than made up for by Di Bartolo's artistry: *Goblin Fruit* feels incomplete, but an arresting illustration at the end of the story provides a sense of closure.

Filled with mystery and magic, and glowing with the gloomy, fanciful elegance that's the hallmark of Laini Taylor's linguistic genius, *Lips Touch Three Times* is a dazzling collection of short stories.

---

## **Steph Sinclair says**

Actual rating: 3.5 stars

I've been hearing lots of awesome things about *Lips Touch: Three Times*. And while it did not overly blow me away, it did not disappoint me either. There is something magical about the way Laini Taylor weaves her words into these three short stories. No doubt about that. *Lips Touch: Three Times* can best be described as a

3 course meal. *Goblin Fruit* can be likened to an appetizer: small and simple. It's not enough to calm your hunger, but enough to pique your interest for the remaining meal. She tells you just enough about the story to wet your palette, leaving you wanting more. So you continue onto your entre, *Spicy Little Curses Such As These*. You continue to devour the story laid out before you and before you know it, it has come to a subtle end. You are satisfied, but something better awaits you...dessert, *Hatchling*. You slowly savor every bite, tasting the individual flavors, teasing your taste buds. And it does not disappoint.

Reading the above paragraph would make you wonder why I didn't give this book 5 stars, wouldn't it? I think short stories and I have issues. They just might not be my cup of tea. It's not that I found any of the stories bad, because they were very good. It just wasn't enough for me to truly connect to the characters. This book is most definitely a page turner and has the ability to keep you on edge. I was impressed with Taylor's ability to paint 3 vivid worlds/cultures with such few pages. That is a skill many YA authors seem to lack these days. Taylor is absolutely an author to keep an eye on.

I didn't really know what to expect when I started reading this book. I was pleasantly surprised to see the beautiful drawings that prefaced each story. They told just enough of a part of the story to entice your curiosity. (Interestingly, they were drawn by her husband. Thumbs up for the awesome team effort!) After finishing *Goblin Fruit*, the shortest of the three, I was surprised by the ending and intrigued. It was also my least favorite of the three simply because it caused images of Bella/Edward or Nora/Patch to dance on the edge of my memory. However, the story did not agitate me as theirs would. At least the ending matched where the story was heading.

*Spicy Little Curses Such As These* was better for me and it neither surprised me nor upset me. It easily kept my interest, however, and the characters seemed slightly more relatable. Once again the writing was beautiful and I feel Taylor captured that time period perfectly.

*Hatchling* was by far the darkest and coincidentally, my favorite. It's also the longest story of the three. I was really caught up in the mythology that Taylor used and was very interested in figuring out the mystery behind Esme's past. Let me just say that Laini Taylor is a master at the "show, don't tell" rule. The back story of Mab, Mihai, and The Queen was told so perfectly. She doesn't tell you everything all at once in a huge info-dump, but rather slowly reveals everything you need to know at just the right time. Honestly, I would have been happy to have an entire, full length story of *Hatchling*. It was just that interesting to me.

All in all, I'm really happy I picked up *Lips Touch: Three Times* and I really can't wait to get my hands on *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*.

More reviews and more at [Cuddlebuggery Book Blog](#).

---

**??Erica?? says**

**The term this book brings to mind is "wickedly delicious."**

It is the literary embodiment of my body's reaction to this gif:

UMPH. OKAY.

I originally put this off because I didn't feel like reading short stories that didn't have enough time to build a love for the characters or plot.

Oh how wrong I was. **This was absolutely extraordinary.** Laini Taylor is a mind-blowingly good writer with an insanely fantastic imagination. Each story (there are three as you may have guessed from the title) are vivid creative blendings of reality and fantasy, each with a single kiss that holds importance to the plot in some way. And no, it's not a cheesy romance type of kisses. They are dark and twisted and oh so powerful. The stories themselves aren't overtly sexual or explicit in any way, yet they have a very strong undercurrent of sensuality and physicality.

~\*~\*This also may make it onto my "all-time-favorites" bookshelf. We will see.\*~\*~  
(I usually let the book sit for a day before I make a decision.)

P.S. Also, in my hunt to find the perfect gif, I also found this was suitable as well.

---

### **Sarah (Starry Night Reader) says**

Goblin Fruit-3.5/5 stars. I enjoyed it because of course it was beautifully written and magical, but nothing here felt special.

Spicy Little Curses Such As These- 5/5 stars. This story grabbed me from the beginning and had a fairy tale aura. Felt rather tragic.

Hatchling- 5/5 stars. This one could be a book of its own. Such an imaginative, dark, intriguing story.

For the record, I'm not a huge fan of short stories. But I'm thinking Laini Taylor can do no wrong.

Also, gorgeous artwork.

Basically, any artist/author dreams have been completely ~~inspired~~ shattered after reading this. Nothing I ever do could be this good.

---

### **Trudi says**

Laini Taylor can string words together like pearls, her paragraphs glittering like diamonds on black velvet. She builds landscapes out of the ether and births characters of blood and solidity. When I read her I am a woman possessed -- consumed, enchanted and enthralled. I am a child, gripped by a child's wonder and insatiable hunger for stories. I am in love with this woman and her pink hair and beautiful, crazy mind (where I would live if it were only possible).

What kills me is that some of the most heart-stuttering gorgeous prose I've ever read is to be found hiding behind some truly awful, misleading covers. It's amazing to me that Laini Taylor's fledgling, phenom writing career hasn't been completely sabotaged by the cover art chosen on her behalf.

Take this book for instance: the first cover is ... adequate, yet still terribly misleading of content and themes, while the second is just plain *bad*. Quite frankly, it stinks -- a Twilight-ish, vampish, Fifty Shades of Lipstick embarrassment.

That's just one example. Then came along the cover for *Daughter of Smoke & Bone*. Seriously? Try convincing someone that they MUST read this book working only with that confused and stupid cover.

Despite being constantly cover-challenged, Laini Taylor is blazing a permanent mark on the literary trail traveled by unique and intrepid storytellers. In the Author's Note, Ms. Taylor describes herself this way:

Like a magpie, I am a scavenger of shiny things: fairy tales, dead languages, weird folk beliefs, fascinating religions, and more.

I, for one, cannot wait to find out about the *and more*.

---

## Tatiana says

**Update 4/23/2017.** "Hatchling" might be the best work of Taylor's to date.

I am familiar with YA literature enough to know how horribly, horribly wrong a collection of short stories about kissing can go (see, for example, *The Eternal Kiss: 13 Vampire Tales of Blood and Desire and Kisses from Hell*). Let me tell you, "Lips Touch" is not *that* kind of book. This book is simply magical.

Laini Taylor grabs your attention with the first lines:

*There is a certain kind of girl the goblins crave. You could walk across a high school campus and point them out: not her, not her, **her**. The pert, lovely ones with butterfly tattoos in secret places, sitting on their boyfriends' laps? No, not them. The girls **watching** the lovely ones sitting on their boyfriends' laps? Yes.*

*Them.*

*The goblins want girls who dream so hard about being pretty their yearning leaves a palpable trail, a scent a goblin can follow like sharks on a soft bloom of blood. The girls with hungry eyes who pray each night to wake up as someone else. Urgent, unkissed, wishful girls.*

*Like Kizzy.*

How can you possibly resist this gorgeous writing? I know I couldn't.

The book consists of 3 stories, or rather, fairy tales based on Irish, Hindu, and Zoroastrian folklore. Each tale is about a kiss, the kind of kiss that changes lives, turns the world upside down, a kiss that can kill or bring you back to life.

The writing is superb, the descriptions are gorgeous and the mythologies Laini creates are unique and enchanting. There is passion and love and tenderness in these stories. I remember shivering and smiling at the end of each one.

The book is also beautifully illustrated. The fairy tales are preceded by short graphic stories which do not reveal the content on the tales themselves, but serve as sort of pre-stories whose details are revealed in the main tales.

My only complaint about "Lips Touch" is that there isn't more, otherwise the fairy tales are irresistible and delicious as the kisses they are about. This book is definitely one of the best I've read this year so far.

## Arah-Lynda says

Boy howdy! Where did this goddess of words with the pink hair come from? I am not usually a big fan of the short story, but I do declare, I will read anything this literary seductress writes, even her stroked out grocery list, so send them on down, and I will eat them up.

Why oh why, would I, with my meagre abilities, even try, to persuade you to read these stories, each of which involve a kiss, when Laini herself awards us a brief glimpse of what is to come.

### **Goblin Fruit** (my favourite)

*There is a certain kind of girl the goblins crave. You could walk across a high school campus and point them out: not her, not her, **her**. The pert, lovely ones with butterfly tattoos in secret places, sitting on their boyfriends' laps? No, not them. The girls watching the lovely ones sitting on their boyfriends' laps? Yes. Them.*

*The goblins want girls who dream so hard about being pretty their yearning leaves a palpable trail, a scent goblins can follow like sharks on a soft bloom of blood. The girls with hungry eyes who pray each night to wake up as someone else. Urgent, unkissed, wishful girls.  
Like Kizzy.*

*Kizzy wanted it all so bad her soul leaned half out of her body hungering after it, and that was what drove the goblins wild, her soul hanging out there like an untucked shirt.*

### **Spicy Little Curses**

*Kissing can ruin lives. Lips touch, sometimes teeth clash. New hunger is born with a throb and caution falls away. A cursed girl with lips moist from her first kiss might feel suddenly wild, like a little monsoon. She might forget her curse just long enough to get careless and let it come true. She might kill every-one she loves.*

*She might and she might not.*

*A particular demon in India rather hoped she would.*

*This is the story of the curse and the kiss, the demon and the girl. It's a love story with dancing and death in it, and singing and souls and shadows reeled out on kite strings. It begins underneath India, on the cusp of the last century when the British were still riding elephants with maharajas and skirmishing on the arid frontiers of the empire.*

*The story begins in Hell.*

### **Hatchling**

*Six days before Esme's fourteenth birthday, her left eye turned from brown to blue. It happened in the night. She went to sleep with brown eyes, and when she woke at dawn to the howling of wolves, her left eye was*

*blue. She had just slipped out of bed when she noticed it. She was headed to the window to look for the wolves – wolves in London, of all impossible things! But she didn't make it to the window. Her eye flashed at her in the mirror, pale as the wink of a ghost, and she forgot all about the wolves and stared at herself.*

*It was no trick of the light. Her eye was an eerie white-blue, the color of ancient ice in a place that never thaws, and as startling as it was, there was something profoundly familiar about it too. Esme's blood quickened as a shock of memories pulsed through her: a world of snow and spires; a milky mirror framed in jewels; the touch of warm lips on hers.*

*Esme swayed on her feet. These weren't her memories. This wasn't her eye. She clamped a hand over it and ran to wake her mother.*

As a prelude to each of these stories Jim Di Bartolo graces these pages with graphic illustrations, which in themselves are well worth the price of admission.

Gather round boys and girls and listen to these fairy tale type stories from a writer of unparalleled imagination and singular panache.

Woot! Woot!

---

## Taylor says

### 4.5

*"The wicked in this part of the world endured rueful decades of early death, and the Fire burned hot and bright and remade them all, and they were all in their turn born back into the world as carp and macaques and salamanders and mosquitoes with no recollection of their human lives or the Fire that followed, but only faint memories of music, like wisps of a dream, from their last glimmering moments in Hell."*

...

Well, **Laini Taylor is a goddess**. And this book and *Strange the Dreamer* are proof.

*Lips Touch Three Times* is a collection of three short stories with beautiful illustrations by Laini Taylor's husband, Jim Di Bartolo. This has been on my radar for quite some time, and **I'm so glad I've finally read this**.

This book is **gorgeous** .

Laini Taylor's writing is like drifting through a waking dream. It's vivid and rich, but it never feels too purple. There were moments in this collection where I'd come up for air and realize that my reality *wasn't* this book, and **I was genuinely sad**. It's hard to describe how breathtaking Laini's prose truly is.

I'll give you a taste of her words:

*“Kissing can ruin lives. Lips touch sometimes teeth clash. New hunger is born with a throb and caution falls away. A cursed girl with lips still moist from her first kiss might feel suddenly wild like a little monsoon. She might forget her curse just long enough to get careless and let it come true. She might kill everyone she loves.*

*She might and she might not.”*

...

*“Staring at her face, she began to fancy her outer layer had begun to melt away while she wasn't paying attention, and something - some new skeleton - was emerging from beneath the softness of her accustomed self. With a deep, visceral ache, she wished her true form might prove to be a sleek and shining one, like a stiletto blade slicing free of an ungainly sheath. Like a bird of prey losing its hatchling fluff to hunt in cold, magnificent skies. That she might become something glittering, something startling, something dangerous.”*

Each story was fantastic in its own way. *Goblin Fruit* was dark and delicious, and it was so easy to connect with the main characters' dreams and desires. Kizzy lives in our world and goes to high school like every other teenager, but her life is anything but normal. **Ghosts haunt her yard, old stories bleed through her family's past, and monsters lurk in unexpected places.** It thrilled and terrified me, every second of it.

*Spicy Little Curses Such as These* had setting and atmosphere *for days* I adored how Hell and the afterlife played a huge role in this story, and the characters were all delightful. The ending gave me **chills**, and I was enthralled with Laini's portrayal of young love and the difficulties that come with it.

My one complaint with this entire collection was the fact that *Spicy Little Curses* took place in colonial India. **All of the central characters were white**, which didn't make sense to me.

The last story, *Hatchling*, floored me. How the hell am I supposed to cope? **I'm obsessed and I need a full-length novel.** The story was so intricate and complex, and the way everything connected in the end was **pure magic.** I can't breathe and I'm so in love.

I adored how the illustrations for each story were placed at the beginning; as I read each tale, I was able to piece together the world and the narrative based on Di Bartolo's gorgeous artwork. **It gives a taste of each story to come, and I couldn't have been happier.**

It's strange. All three stories were so different, but each one left me...**aching.** There's a sense of longing I feel every time I read Laini's writing. It's like her words sing to my soul in such a way that it wants to lift out of my chest. **That's the best way I can describe how gorgeous her work really is.**

This was so so *so* good. If you're a fan of beautiful writing, or just want a wonderful short story collection to fly through, **pick this up.** It might not be for everyone, but it certainly sang to my dark, twisted, romantic little heart.

...

*“Is that all souls are for?” Esmé had asked him earlier. “For when we die?”*

*Mihai could have laughed or cried when she'd asked him that. In all its simplicity her question was like cupped hands holding the meaning of his life.*

"No," he'd said. "They're for living too."

---

## Lamia says

This can also be seen at [The Book Eater](#)

I truly feel like anything I say couldn't do this book justice.

So, in my endeavor to describe my \*cough\* "feelings", I made a pie chart (I love pie charts).

This book was was *amazing*. Well-written. Gorgeous, gorgeous writing. Touching characters. I just... I loved it. Every story was better than the last. Enchanting, horrifying, beautiful and captivating. The way Taylor writes... Again, I don't know what to say. She pulls you into the universe she created like no others and makes you truly experience the story she's telling. Her writing grabs you and doesn't let you go. You get attached to the characters, feel their joy and their horror, all the while sinking deeper and deeper into the mesmerizing universe she presents you with.

The way she manages to combine such a vast array of emotion into one story is mind boggling. This book feels like a rainy afternoon spent cuddled up in your blankets with an amazing book and a tub of ice cream. It's a treat you've been waiting for, and savor slowly to keep it as long as possible. It's the kind of book you keep reading at night, secretly, while you're supposed to be sleeping simply because you just can't stop reading.

While the first story was short, sensual and surprising, the second and third ones were longer, and therefore had their own universe and set of rules. And the writing. God. Her prose is lyrical and flows perfectly. She uses recurrent imagery so well that you can almost picture everything. I kept literally stopping in the middle of a chapter to think "wow, this sentence is gorgeous."

Also, I'd just like to point out that not once, while reading this book did I think anything was remotely wrong with the character development, the pacing, the plot or just... anything. This is rare, people. Very rare. Everything made perfect sense. So much sense, actually, that when Taylor later explains her definition of the "Hell" she used in the second story, it wasn't necessary, because she told it in such a way that it was obvious for anyone, even those not versed in Hindu beliefs like me.

If you're still not convinced, here's a quote:

*"[...] they thought the same thoughts as completely as if a butterfly traveled back and forth between their minds, bearing ideas on its legs like pollen."*

See? So pretty. So cute and perfect. Sigh.

Really. I'm re-reading myself and I have *not* done this story justice. Don't take my words for it. Go read it. You won't be sorry.

---

## Elise (TheBookishActress) says

This is a story collection that I have very mixed feelings on, so **I'll be color-coding my thoughts**. ? will be for praise, ? will be for criticism.

## // GENERAL REVIEW

? **The writing is luscious and beautiful**, with great atmosphere and tone. Maybe not *quite* as spectacular as her later writing, but she's definitely showing a great beginning here. And I love the addition of artwork!! I mean, just look at this.

? In general, **this is a really great piece of 2000s YA**. Unfortunately... **it is also a piece of 2000s YA**. I'm sure this could be considered awesome feminist lit back in 2009, but between some of the fatshaming, **I'm-not-like-other-girls** mentality, and weird **exoticism / appropriation of Indian mythology** - we'll discuss this a bit later - I found myself getting just a *bit* annoyed. Or maybe a little more than a bit.

? **Taylor's characterization is good**. She's great at conveying entire swaths of characterization in just one or two lines.

? **It's just not quite as good**. The characterization shown here would've stood out in the 2009 YA world. I don't think it does anymore. I do think she's quite improved on characterization and writing as she's grown; this book just doesn't deliver to the same degree as her later *Strange the Dreamer*.

## // STORY REVIEWS

# *Goblin Fruit*: This is a story you have to read to the end, because 98% of my enjoyment of this came from the final page. Unfortunately, I was not a fan of the dialogue - it felt quite cheesy compared to some of the Zuzana / Karou dialogue in Taylor's later *Daughter of Smoke and Bone* trilogy. I also wasn't a fan of some of the borderline fatshaming and definite vibe of I'm-not-like-other-girls.

# *Spicy Little Curses Such as These*: I have... very mixed feelings on this. I liked the writing more than I did for *Goblin Fruit*, as it felt closer to Taylor's later prose, and I thought the character work was great. The ending was especially fabulous.

And yet... **holy shit, the cultural stuff is bad**. I'm sorry, but setting your story in India for the mythology - not only that, fucking *colonial* India - and having your entire cast be white European colonists?? Not a good look. Not a good look at all. It made me *super* uncomfortable to even read this. You can tell from the *title* that this is going to be a oh-India-is-so-exotic circlejerk, and guess what? It is.

# *Hatchling*: This was probably my favorite; it's the one where the writing and character work is strongest and closest to her later works. The only thing is, um... **this basically feels like softcore DoSaB**. The plot and character concepts are in some ways *so* similar to her later books that I don't think this felt new to me.

VERDICT: Some good thoughts, and I definitely understand the hype, but too many issues for me to really love this. It was definitely interesting to see how Laini Taylor has evolved as an author; you can see that it's the same author, yet her later books just have another level of depth that isn't so present here.

Blog | Goodreads | Twitter | Youtube

## Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

Hubby... just put the NFL network on, he'll forget I'm alive.

Kids.... they can fend for themselves.

laundry, soaking wet in the washing machine... I'll wash it twice, no one will ever know.

Dishes.... that is what paper plates are for.

I initially read around 35 pages and knew I had something special. I planned on finishing story #1 and that was it. Like a magic spell, I picked up the book and not only finished the other stories but did not move my ass at all from my little corner on the couch. My dog did try to get me to move as evident of her collection of toys all over my legs and couch but I wasn't buying her game. This was major selfish "me" time!

Ok, back to the book. 1st time authors, if you want like a "how to" guide, check out Laini Taylor. Her words are so beautiful. You know how when you do a review you want to share maybe a line or two from the book, to show off how well the author writes? Well, I kept thinking, this would be a great line, nope, this one is even better. No, this IS the one. I then realized the entire book is made up of lines that deserve to be read, highlighted and shared by everyone.

I will not only keep this book but it will be shared with my kids and hopefully with their kids. I never thought I'd say that about a book that wasn't already labeled a "classic". So, what am I trying to say....

Go read this book. I'll stand by my recommendation until the last page!

---

## Anna \*no longer in use\* says

Look at this quote:

*“Kizzy wanted to be a woman who would dive off the prow of a sailboat into the sea, who would fall back in a tangle of sheets, laughing, and who could dance a tango, lazily stroke a leopard with her bare foot, freeze an enemy's blood with her eyes, make promises she couldn't possibly keep, and then shift the world to keep them. She wanted to write memoirs and autograph them at a tiny bookshop in Rome, with a line of admirers snaking down a pink-lit alley. She wanted to make love on a balcony, ruin someone, trade in esoteric knowledge, watch strangers as coolly as a cat. She wanted to be inscrutable, have a drink named after her, a love song written for her, and a handsome adventurer's small airplane, champagne-christened Kizzy, which would vanish one day in a windstorm in Arabia so that she would have to mount a rescue operation involving camels, and wear an indigo veil against the stinging sand, just like the nomads. Kizzy wanted.”*

The amount of characterization found in that one quote, on that one page, can put most of the books on my shelves to shame. Laini Taylor crafts worlds, storylines and characters with so much talent, they play out in your head like vivid dreams in which you feel everything, you can touch everything she describes and be everything she creates.

**She's so good it hurts.**

This collection of short stories again proves that she can turn the slightest legends into powerful stories and

can make a very minimum amount of pages feel like a complex adventure. The writing is brilliant and the art (by her husband) is a beautiful addition.

The first story- Goblin Fruit was the shortest but my favorite. It had all the elements that I love in a story and an inconclusive ending that felt appropriate and somehow charming. **5 Stars it is.**

Spicy Little Curses took me a few chapters to really get into but I loved it by the end. **4,5 Stars** and a whole lot of love.

*“This is the story of the curse and the kiss, the demon and the girl. It's a love story with dancing and death in it, and singing and souls and shadows reeled out on kite strings.”*

The last and the longest Hatchling was my least favorite but that doesn't mean that much. It was slower at some parts but it was the one with the most complicated and developed plot line. While the first two read like fairy tales this one seemed more like an actual fantasy novel- on less than 200 pages. **4 Stars.**

*“Like a magpie, I am a scavenger of shiny things: fairy tales, dead languages, weird folk beliefs, fascinating religions, and more.”*

-Laini Taylor in the Author's Note

In the end two things are certain:

One: **I adore this author too much.**

and

Two: **This is a fantastic book.**

---

## **karen says**

i was not expecting to five-star this. i must confess - i hate the title and i hate the cover art (although i love the internal illustrations)

aren't those much better?? something about the color palette on the cover is upsetting, the covergirl looks vapid and whorish, and the title makes it seem like some teen heartthrob novel, which is it not. what it *is* is a sequence of three fairy tale-ish stories.

the first one is my favorite, and this one *is* a first-love story, so what? a frustrated girl from an old-world gypsy family living in a regular all-american town who does not fit into the high school full of beautiful "normal" people until a handsome stranger appears. yeah, the skeleton of the story is your basic fairy tale archetype, but the language with which she structures it is perfectly modern and evolved into what comes across as a very contemporary story.

kizzy and her two friends have pitch-perfect exchanges and bantering sessions that just leap right off the

page. her frustration and dissatisfaction and wanting are perfect and believable and i tore through the story, wanting to get to the end and not knowing what kind of resolution the author would choose. (the *perfect* one, of course!)

the supernatural elements of this story; the goblins and the fruit they try to force into the mouths of maidens - i mean, it's not a subtle metaphor, but the way this woman writes just carries the reader along in a wave of perfect phrasings.

here is an overlong passage you can either read or not.

*kizzy had never met her - mairenni had stayed behind in the old country - but her grandmother said she looked like her. there was a single sepia photograph of a girl in a doorway, full-lipped, with eyes that seemed to sparkle with secrets. kizzy had always been fascinated by her - truth be told, she had always identified more with that wild girl who almost sold her soul for the taste of figs than with her grandmother who kept her lips tight shut and never hungered for forbidden things. but though she stared at that photo, and even saw the shape of her own eyes and lips mirrored back at her, kizzy just couldn't see herself in that long-ago girl, ripe and thrilling and flush with a weird species of beauty the young have no vocabulary for.*

*kizzy was so busy wishing she was sarah ferris or jenny glass that she could scarcely see herself at all, and she was certainly blind to her own weird beauty; her heavy, spell-casting eyes, too-wide mouth, wild hair, and hips that could be wild too, if they learned how. no one else in town looked anything like her, and if she lived to womanhood, she was the one artists would want to draw, not the sarahs and jennys. she was the one who would some day know a dozen ways to wear a silk scarf, how to read the sky for rain and coax feral animals near, how to purr throaty love songs in portuguese and basque, how to lay a vampire to rest, how to light a cigar, how to light a man's imagination on fire.*

*if she lived to womanhood.*

the second story reads the most like a typical fairy tale, mixed with biblical and classical mythologies. the story of a woman cursed with silence, told that if she ever utters a sound, her voice will destroy all who hear it. she lives her life believing in this curse until her doubt is awakened by... a handsome stranger. the tension in this story is built up so carefully, raising questions about blind faith and trust vs. hard evidence, with some field trips to the underworld. this story, too, seems darker and sexier than most fairy tales, or at least more so than ones i would expect scholastic to publish. this is an applauding tone, not a critical one.

the third story is the longest, and reads more like a fantasy short story than a fairy tale. but that might just be my unfamiliarity with these particular themes.

most fairy tales are set in a recognizable location with some fantastical elements thrown in to make them more appealing to a younger audience, but not so fantastical that the moral or lesson is not recognized as being applicable to the real world. this one is all world-building and shapeshifting and body-snatching, with very little to anchor it in a recognizable environment. it is still great, it just didn't feel as much like a traditional fairy tale as the previous two.

this story is also a little bit creepy, and it is about possession and love and protection and selfishness and how both motherhood and romantic love relate to all of the above.

i am so grateful to ariel because when we were at the suzanne collins midnight magic party and i had to pick one hardcover book to buy to get my free mug,

she talked me into this one instead of *beautiful creatures* which has a beautiful cover, but is a way crappier book. she helped me dodge a bullet there because friends don't let friends buy crappy books on their birthday. plus, signed!!

i am a happy girl.

come to my blog!

---

## **Kat Kennedy says**

To those of you who haven't read this book, what are you doing right now? If your answer is anything other than "Purchasing this book and getting ready to read it" then I'm afraid that you and I might just have to come to some kind of disagreement.

There is something enchantingly, alluringly fantastic about this book. From it's beautifully written stories to the amazing drawings and the characters within. This book is like a beautiful, wild romani woman with her ankle bracelets, bare feet and twirling skirts. Mysterious, beautiful, dangerous and entrancing.

Not that Babcia approves of gypsies. Apparently they stole her chickens during the war and she's never forgiven them since. True story. She never rants about the Germans, she'll tell you that the Russians are worse but if you even mention the Gypsies she'll start a Polish rant the likes of which my Irish born and bred self had never imagined until I saw it with my own eyes. Though apparently gypsy tears are THE thing this season to put in your charms.

Why can't other female protagonists in YA literature be as awesome as the girls in this? I had a fangirl try to tell me that Luce from *Fallen* was a real girl, and therefor relatable, because she was a spineless, boring teenage moron. Well, I think Laini Taylor just provided the ultimate bitch slap to that theory. Kizzy was a hundred times more relatable and real without the downside of being so miserably pathetic that she'll probably be doing Daniel Gregori's gardening in a slutty maid outfit just so he'll acknowledge her existence.

[image error]

Oops... too late.

Well, at least she isn't some deranged and mentally unstable stalker without a shred of dignity like Nora from *Hush, Hush!*

[image error]

\*Cough\* Moving on...

You know what I love the best about this book - the inevitable Europeanness of it all. Even when she didn't mean to. I mean, the stories mostly ended out happy or open ended but there were consequences or time lost or bargains made or things given over. Nobody turned into a vampire without any consequences, gave birth a lochness monster and then defeated the bad guys without a single blow.

It was all so gritty and filled with sacrifices, loss, but redemption and possibility.

[image error]

But not in that way...

---

## Taneika says

### More of my reviews can be found at [Flipping Through the Pages!](#)

After picking up the little pieces of my brain and putting it back together after the masterpiece that was *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*. I thought I'd give my brain a little time to get working again before reading anything else by Laini Taylor. *Lips Touch* is wonderful. Just plain wonderful. It's a collection of three short stories that has kissing, magic, fantasy creatures and that beautiful, beautiful thing that is Laini Taylor's prose and imagination. I love and *envy* Taylor's imagination and her incredible story telling ability. Each short story just gets progressively better and better. You'll think you've had an incredible taste of what's in store after you've finished *Goblin Fruit* and just when you think it can't get any better then *Spicy Little Curses Such As These*, Laini Taylor pulls out the big guns and has *Hatchling* bewitching your mind (I've been re-reading Harry Potter...) and believe me, will have you begging for more!

#### **Goblin Fruit:**

In approximately 35 pages, Laini Taylor manages to write an incredible story with developed and complex characters and this to me, is a great feat. Kizzy is interesting, different and intriguing and has always been on the sidelines and has wanted that extra *something* in her life. This was the shortest of the three, but Kizzy's story will have you laughing and doing double takes the entire time. It's not as dark and gritty as the others, but the goblins and their fruit are fascinating, and is aplenty in so few pages.

#### **Spicy Little Curses Such As These:**

There was so much meaning in this story. Estella once made great sacrifice to a demon, and due to that, has been forced to make heavy decisions every day of her life whilst living in Hell. In order to save children, the demon says she must make sacrifices. She makes these sacrifices but when she is forced to place a curse on a baby named Anamique, the demon eventually gets more than he bargained for. Due to the curse, Anamique grows up mute, unable to even murmur a sound for the chance that it will kill anybody who hears it. She is teased and lives her life lonely until a soldier named James, finds her diary and falls in love with her. The romance that unfolds is breathtaking, beautiful and heartbreaking. Throughout, many sacrifices are made, but many lessons are learned.

#### **Hatchling:**

This was easily my favourite of the three! It BLEW MY MIND. The mythology was brilliant and once again, Laini Taylor has written a more complex and deep plot in 100 pages that many YA authors have tried (and failed) to do in their entire series. I WANT THIS MADE INTO A MOVIE. Or maybe I don't... Ohh, I don't know!! The world of the Druj is shocking and incredible. The Druj Queen keeps human children as pets until they reach child bearing age. This has so many stories rolled into one. Mab was the Queen's pet once, and her treatment was unbearable, it was absolutely horrible. When Mab is forced to have a child (literally, *forced*), we are told of how she managed to escape with her baby and what becomes of them once she becomes of child bearing age. Esme is incredibly three dimensional, and at first you may just think this is the story of Mab and Esme. But, it's not. This is only the tip of the iceberg and there is so much folklore and incredible world building. The 'villain' and characters who you think are just minor at first, turn out to have incredible stories of their own and Laini explores them so deeply and wonderfully that this will have you

absolutely begging for more!

The illustrations are mind blowing. To call them beautiful would do them injustice. At first they don't make sense, but once you've finished, you realise they capture the true essence of each story. Jim Bartolo is so incredibly talented!!

I would include photographs I took in this review, but I'm not very good at inserting images into GR reviews :) so they can be found on my blog's review!!

---

## Vinaya says

I read the first story in Lips Touch about two months ago. It was... interesting. The writing was great, very picturesque, but the story per se didn't meet the expectations I had set for it after reading all the rave reviews on Goodreads. So I put the book aside for a while and finally picked it up yesterday when I was sitting in my new workplace with nothing else to do. I was Blown. Away.

Reading Lips Touch is like peeling an orange. At first, you break the skin, and you can feel the soft pulp underneath, smell the sharp tang of the juice and savour the anticipation of what is to come. This, for me, was the function that *Goblin Fruit* served. There was beautiful prose, haunting imagery and amazing characterization, but the oomph factor was yet to come...

And then, two months later, I got to *Spicy Little Curses Such As These*. Now, as an Indian, I am understandably critical of books that are set in India, and use Indian mythology. Too many books about the colonial period tend to be either corrective or apologist, and I hate that authors want to change history like that. Laini Taylor, however, got it just right. Her writing was not flowery and overly descriptive, but in a rarely-seen display of skill, she managed to convey the hot, arid, uneasy atmosphere of colonial India with a few well-placed words. I could almost *see* the British with their desperately superior attitude, their discomfort with the foreignness of the land they were living in, their disdain for an Englishwoman who had 'gone native'. This might actually be my favourite story of the three simply because it portrays the setting and atmosphere of the entire story so very beautifully.

Hatchling was a revelation of its own sort. The sheer diversity of Taylor's work makes me want to love her forever and ever. From Middle European mythology, to Hindu and Zoroastrian, she manages to subtly pick and choose her cultures without drowning the reader in a sea of unfamiliar information. What also truly astounded me about this story is that Taylor manages to weave three separate stories into one short story. That takes skill... and balls. You go, girl!

The deceptively simple narrative hides a host of very subtle, very beautiful undertones that capture the imagination and the intellect. Lips Touch is truly a work of art, not to be missed by those of you laggards as are still on the fence about reading this book. Go. Now. Read it!

P.S. Thank you Tatiana for recommending this amazing book to me!

---

## Lora says

Three stories. Three girls. One thing in common: each lady has not been kissed. And their first taste of that special time when lips touch won't come without a price . . .

The wife and husband team of Laini Taylor and Jim Di Bartolo sure do make for a sumptuous collection of stories. I'd be hard-pressed to choose which is more beautiful: Taylor's writing or Di Bartolo's illustrations.

Let me give you samples of each:

*"With a deep, visceral ache, she wished her true form might prove to be a sleek and shining one, like a stiletto blade slicing free of an ungainly sheath. Like a bird of prey losing its hatchling fluff to hunt in cold, magnificent skies. That she might become something glittering, something startling, something dangerous."*

*"Kissing can ruin lives. Lips touch, sometimes teeth clash. New hunger is born with a throb and caution falls away."*

*"And Esmé remembered in a rush - the wolfsong, the haunting, lyrical spirals of it in the dawn quiet and the feeling of euphoria that had attended it. Even in recollection the howling uplifted her like the crescendo at the end of a symphony and made her heartbeat quicken."*

(I would eat their fruit . . .)

(These are even more gorgeous in person . . .)

(Makes you want to have red hair . . .)

Now, if those stunning snippets aren't enough to make you want to read this, ~~there's something wrong with you~~ I don't see how anything I can say will convince you to read this.

Very close to four stars . . . 3.5. Definitely recommended.

---

## **Meredith Holley says**

When you want to take a story that someone else has told and make it your own, do it like this. If you want to write a story, recognize your own magic, your own style, and add it to the story you want to steal. If you want to write a story, do what Laini Taylor did, and absorb the story, wait until it has seeped into the interstitial places of your writing, and give it back to your reader. Make it beautiful and true. And the only way you can do that is by figuring out what to you is beauty and truth. So many writers try to figure out what made something beautiful to someone else. They try to say, what made the Trojan war beautiful to Homer? What made Harry Potter beautiful to J.K. Rowling? And they try to imitate that. They don't say, "What makes this story beautiful to me?" Well, Laini Taylor told us what makes these stories beautiful to her.

So, I'm a little expansive tonight. I'm a little drunk. I'm not usually one of those drunks who goes around telling everyone she loves them. In fact, I've been told I can recite a pretty good story while drunk, even if I don't remember it a few months later. I usually don't remember who I told stories to anyway, drunk or not drunk, no offense. Anyway, I just want to give this book a hug and tell it I love it. I love you, book. Like, in the full, Wayne's World sense of the word. I love you, book. Damn, every time I write "book," I spell it "bood." Sorry.

I love this book in a drunk, college-high-school kind of way. I love this book like, "Wait a second, what have we all be doing, standing around fighting over whether vampires are sparkly or not?" So, it turns out there are people out there writing real love stories and fairy tales. There are people reading great writing like Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market*, getting inspired by them, and then writing these wonderful tributes to

them.

I think, when anyone writes anything great, their ultimate hope has to be in some kind of legacy. They have to hope that their great writing will inspire something beautiful in the future, some kind of strength and inspiration. I think it is a tribute to the traditions that Rossetti, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism created that Taylor could create something as beautiful as this book. And then, hopefully her writings will inspire someone else, and the stories of goblins, hell, and eternal life will continue. It is like how Shakespeare reminded us that 13-year-olds falling in love doesn't always end for the best. And, look, that story has continued in tradition because of him. Hopefully we will all, likewise, remember not to eat goblin fruit because of Taylor, not to doubt our own curses or our own mortality.

I had intended to talk about how some authors are natural with language, and how some authors know how to integrate a magical, traditional feeling with really modern writing. I don't really feel like talking about that now that I am writing this. Maybe I will have more to say about that in the morning. Anyway, it's not like Taylor tried to add a bunch of 'ye's to her writing, or like she tried to end everything with "e" like, unfortunately, some authors do, to give a sense of ye olde timmes. Taylor shows everything beautifully, and in doing so she shows how "modern times" are not removed from tradition and magick(e).

I like how this book is not about kisses, is not about love. When I first picked it up I thought it would be an emo version of Gossip Girl, but it is not that. It is about evil kisses, lips shutting in silence, and kisses that are sense memory. I like how this book is about loyalty and strength. I like how it is about curses. This book is beautiful, and in true, drunken or non-drunken spirit, I love it.

---

## Emily May says

Beautiful words, beautiful stories, beautiful characters... you know, this is just one damn beautiful book. I am in awe of it. Can you fall in love with a book? If so, I'm guilty. I don't mean to sound condescending to young adult readers (I am one) but this book simply does not deserve the readership that thought Twilight was the best book ever written.

Everything about the marketing and presentation of this book does not convey how truly wonderful it is. Firstly, though the cover illustration is a stunning work of art, I think it tends to immediately appeal to younger readers and rule out an older audience. It's pretty... but it looks like a children's book. Same with the title... it's cute, *very cute* and it's quite a subtle representation of what the book is about... but again, it sounds like a cutesy Twilight-style romance. Another thing it has in common with *the saga* is the genre it is categorised in: paranormal romance.

But to say that Twilight and Lips Touch: Three Times are both paranormal romances is like saying tin and platinum are both metals. **It's in an entirely different league.** And I almost didn't read this because I saw reviews saying the first story was just like Twilight. **No, no, no.** The very main difference between the two is that Laini Taylor remembers the basic principle of quality writing.

Let's look at Bella Swan for a second... after four books what do we know about her?

- 1) She's that girl who's in love with a vampire
- 2) She's that girl who's in love with Edward Cullen

3) She's that girl... um, that's about it.

In one paragraph of that first story called 'Goblin Fruit', that according to some is "just like Twilight", this is Kizzy:

*"Kizzy wanted to be a woman who would dive off the prow of a sailboat into the sea, who would fall back in a tangle of sheets, laughing, and who could dance a tango, lazily stroke a leopard with her bare foot, freeze an enemy's blood with her eyes, make promises she couldn't possibly keep, and then shift the world to keep them. She wanted to write memoirs and autograph them at a tiny bookshop in Rome, with a line of admirers snaking down a pink-lit alley. She wanted to make love on a balcony, ruin someone, trade in esoteric knowledge, watch strangers as coolly as a cat. She wanted to be inscrutable, have a drink named after her, a love song written for her, and a handsome adventurer's small airplane, champagne-christened **Kizzy**, which would vanish one day in a windstorm in Arabia so that she would have to mount a rescue operation involving camels, and wear an indigo veil against the stinging sand, just like the nomads. **Kizzy wanted.**"*

YES. In just one paragraph, Laini Taylor has created a far more complex character than Stephenie Meyer ever managed. And let me just say, this book is hard to quote from because the entire thing is a quotable masterpiece, you can find something beautiful in *every single paragraph* on *every single page*. I actually took longer than it would normally take me to finish a 250 page young adult novel, and not because it was hard work, but because I would read a few sentences, think "wow", and go back and read it again. And again. My only fault with it is that I finished the last story and wanted to cry because there wasn't any more.

Who is this Laini Taylor who seems to have appeared out of nowhere all of a sudden with her extraordinary writing and her pink hair? I don't know but I do know I'll be getting my hands on her future work if I have to sell my soul in exchange (yeah, that was a bit melodramatic but I haven't come out of fairyland yet). Read this, spread the word. 'tis fantastic!

---

## Aimee ♥ | Aimee, Always says

### Overall:

**Laini Taylor is a master of crafting darkly gorgeous and deliciously unique tales** with all sorts of unearthly creatures. Each story featured strong heroines with very different personalities, and the same goes for the men they touch lips with.

As usual, it was hard to get into her very flowery and descriptive writing, but nevertheless I enjoyed *Lips Touch: Three Times* as a whole.

### **Goblin Fruit: (4 stars)**

Laini Taylor works magic with this story. I mean, who else can create such beautiful, eerie tale with depth in just 54 pages?

The actual story was so **dark and whimsical**; you can't not get sucked into it. We're told of goblins, ghosts, swan wings in coffins with the dead--all of those disturbing bedtime stories rolled into one.

Our main character, **Kizzy, was so well-developed and realistic**. She's a girl with dreams and so many *wants*, just like all of us. She also has a "love interest" here, and I did ship them pretty early on.

Again, the only reason I didn't love this was because of the writing. **The flowery writing worked well with the story**, but not with my brain, and the humor was lost on me.

### **Spicy Little Curses Such As These: (2 stars)**

Short Story Syndrome (I'm totally making this up) has finally caught up, and **the insta-love in this story hits me hard**.

The writing was somewhat harder to get into in this one as well, probably because a lot of it also takes part in the real world (AKA not Hell) so the flowery writing didn't work for me in those parts.

I couldn't get a sense of the characters too much, either. **Anamique lacked a strong personality** for me, and I can't say anything much about her aside from the fact that she's gorgeous and has a lovely singing voice. I found James to be dull as well.

Despite those, as usual, Laini Taylor weaved together an absolutely stunning story. It started off and ended equally fabulously--no spoilers though!

### **Hatchling: (3.5 stars)**

"Hatchling" is the longest of the short stories featured in *Lips Touch: Three Times*, and it's certainly the one with most depth as well. **It was weird, odd and disturbing**, but in a totally holy-cow-how-are-you-such-a-genius-Laini kind of way.

It features Esme, a young heroine with a dark past--and a dark *present*. You're going to discover the truth behind her "condition" along with her, not before or after.

There were three romances in this story, two that I didn't care for, and one that didn't really play a big role in the story but I adored dearly. **The romances were realistic**, though, although I don't think I can mention in what way in fear of spoilers.

Laini Taylor weaves such **unique mythology and intricate details** in this short story, sometimes a bit too detailed for a reader with goldfish attention span like me, but enchanting for the most part.

Deadly Darlings | The Social Potato | The Book Geek | Twitter | Instagram

---