



Blood Games

Chloe Neill

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While Merit didn't choose to become a vampire or Sentinel of Cadogan House, she vowed to fight for her House and its Master, and she's managed to forge strong alliances with powerful supernaturals across Chicago. But even though Merit has had wild adventures, this may be her deadliest yet...

A killer is stalking Chicago, preying on humans and leaving his victims with magical souvenirs. The CPD hasn't been able to track the assailant, and as the body count rises, the city is running out of options. Vampires and humans aren't on great terms, but murder makes for strange bedfellows. Can Merit find the killer before she becomes a target?

Blood Games Details

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From Reader Review Blood Games for online ebook

Heather says

I didn't love the last book but with Ethan challenging to head the GP I figured this one might have some good stuff to work with. Unfortunately I was disappointed. So the Cadogan vamps realize something is wrong with Darius and decide to step in. Takes one rescue mission and a bag of salt. Much of the rest of the resolution is done off the page in the UK. The big, bad challenge amongst the Masters is highly anticlimactic. Some psychic stuff and then a chance for Ethan to show off his physical strength. Nothing we haven't seen before. Again, the main vote is off page and Ethan gets the results via text. The plot with the human serial killer actually seemed most interesting since I love Mallory's character and the rebuilding she's been going through. And the biggest disappointment was the BS pulled by Ethan. For goodness sake he DIED for Merit earlier in the series. He can't have an honest chat with her? And the past actions that had him all twisted were not a big, shocking revelation. I don't understand them anymore. At one point Ethan asks if anything will be easy for them and my response is no, not if the series is going to continue since there has to be contrived conflict. I'm getting tired of hearing about what it means that Merit is Sentinel, how she's wearing her ponytail, and Ethan's honor. Plus my gut reaction to any guy who repeatedly gets down on one knee in front of the woman he loves seeming to propose only to grab a napkin or fork off the floor laughing at her is a jerk. Some series can last many books and still be original and delve into new territory. This doesn't seem to be one of them any longer.

Sharon ∞☞ is an emotional book junkie ☞∞ says

Ethan and Merit, Merit and Ethan...that's all I really care about but unfortunately there's some other stuff thrown in. Like Ethan waiting to see what comes next in his challenge for the GP and naturally some crazy is running around killing people and Merit has to step in and take care of business. What else could you want? Naked Ethan? Oh yea, there's that too! ;)

I'm just going to get right to the point...I'm all for more drama from Darth Sullivan but really? That did seem a bit trivial especially at this point in time. However, the pluses were that it was minor and Ethan just does so many yummy things that really I *shouldn't* even care.

But Merit? She was flipping a-mazing. She just gets better and better. She really stepped up to the plate, took names and kicked ass!

I think CN enjoys teasing us too much with the almost sex scenes. This time she is forgiven especially for the "*Merit waking up hungry*" scene. Oh-la-la...who knew sex and blood could be sooo hot? phewww!

And there's plenty of the old gang around...Catcher, Mallory, Jeff, Grandpa Chuck, Jonah, Lindsey and Luc. I did miss the shifters though but I guess you can't fit in everyone .

There's also a new vampire in town that has some history with Ethan. It brought back memories of the first couple of books. I'm still not sure if I'm happy it didn't go there or not. And oh yea, Amit....I hope we get more of him!

The murders were interesting. I really like the "play" on them. I only wish more time could have been given

to it so it would be more developed.

The drama with the GP was even better. The outcome for Ethan was....well, surprising but I did love how things turned out. I can't wait to see how the next few books will go. Definitely looking forward to the novella coming out with Ethan and Merit and more of those "fake" things! ;)

Favorite quotes

♥ "Oh, François," I breathily said. "You'll have to hurry. My boyfriend will be back soon."

♥ "I keep a notebook. I intend to make you mine, Sentinel. Not just for tonight, or for tomorrow, or for the decade. For eternity. And I'll have my ring on your finger. I'll have the world know that you're mine. I suggest you get used to the idea."

♥ "I enjoy all sides of you," Ethan said, reaching out and grabbing my hand, linking our hands together. "But your wild side is particularly enjoyable."

♥ "He roared with laughter. "Ah, Sentinel. The look on your face." He doubled over with laughter. "Such terror."

I kept swatting. "At the thought of marrying you, you pretentious ass."

Ferdy says

Spoilers

Not impressed... There was way too much focus on Merit, Ethan, and their silly feelings for one other... So much so I couldn't even enjoy anything else, not that there was anything else particularly exciting going on.

Random thoughts:

-The plot was all over the place, there was a pointless villain-of-the-week/murder investigation that added nothing to the story... The other arcs centered on Ethan's bid to rule the GP and Ethan's lame secret (which was that he was a giant-blood-drinking-murdering manslut/player like every other UF hero that ever was). I didn't care about any of it. Nothing exciting or surprising actually happened... The fact that Merit's narration was rubbish didn't help matters, her thoughts were so generic and cheesy.

-Merit pissed me off pretty much straight away when she let Ethan win a race they were competing in. She let him win because she thought it would be oh so good for his ego and that his crazy fangirls would love it. What a Mary Sue... Ethan didn't need a bigger ego and his fans would have still loved him either way, the giddy cow shouldn't have held back in the race.

-Merit was an overbearing, weepy fishwife when it came to Ethan. He kept pushing her away but as usual she had to keep begging for scraps. She was such a doormat, it was pathetic how she ran around after him when he kept telling her to piss off, her whole world revolved around him, she was nothing but Ethan's girlfriend for the most part. A lot of the times she came across as more of a mother to him than girlfriend. I wish she'd grown a spine, had some self respect and left him to his sulky moods and for once made him work

for her attention. She needed to stop being such a Mary Sue pushover when it came to all things Ethan.

-Ethan and Merit had very little chemistry. Merit was so vanilla... Why would anyone be interested in someone so BORING? She had no endearing qualities whatsoever. Ethan wasn't much better, he still wasn't very leader like and he didn't read as a centuries old vampire either... He came out with the most cliched lines, there was nothing clever or cunning or wise about him. He didn't come across as powerful, competent or experienced... And when he was trying to be broody and mysterious he instead came across as sulky and petty. Most of the time it was like he was playing dress up. I honestly couldn't figure out what Merit loved about him, he treated her like rubbish and he was utterly charmless.

Even though they'd only dated for a short while, both of them said they were going to be together forever which should strongly suggest they had a deep connection of some sort. But I refuse to believe in their supposed deep connection when Ethan couldn't be bothered to talk about his past when Merit begged him to tell her... If he couldn't open up and trust her they couldn't possibly have had a profound, one of a kind sort of bond with each other. It doesn't make sense, and it makes all their talk of forever and true love sound cheap and shallow.

-I'm bored of Merit having to deal with Ethan's many exes and his snooze-worthy secret past. Why not the other way around for once? I'd love to see Merit having a secret, dirty past that actually bothers Ethan (her connections with Jonah/Morgan have never been threatening or remotely interesting since neither are proper exes).

It'd be great to see a different side to Merit, one where she's not so vanilla, and one where she actually has had lots of fun, attitude and madness. It would make her 100% more interesting. Having to meet Ethan's millions of past lovers in every other book is just dull and repetitive.

-Merit constantly protecting Ethan and putting his life above hers only made him look weak and pathetic. And him being more or less cool with her going into danger for his sake made me dislike him intensely. So yea, Merit being all alpha about Ethan's safety only made him come across as a coddled, damsel in distress weakling.

There's nothing remotely attractive about a hero who runs to safety whilst the heroine endangers herself for him.

-Ethan's behaviour towards Merit was exactly like earlier books, he treated her like rubbish. Any growth they had together as a couple went out the window. Ethan was back to his lying, distant, douche self... And instead of Merit properly challenging him, she either begged for some sort of communication or waited submissively to the side whilst he stopped acting like a melodramatic teen. Honestly, it was like reading a YA novel the way he was acting, and his secret wasn't even that big a deal... The fact he couldn't trust Merit with it showed how little he thought of her.

What was most irritating was when Merit basically accepted that Ethan was old and couldn't change his ways, thus she would bend and compromise and put up with any half truths, manipulating, and lying he did in the future. So yea, Ethan will get away with not sharing and opening up to Merit whilst she gives all of herself to him... since when have one sided relationships been romantic or healthy?

Ugh, what is with every PNR/UF hero never being able to compromise for the heroine yet all she ever does is compromise and change and bend for the hero's sake?! Why don't the so called heroes ever get called out on their double standards and hypocrisy? Why don't they love the heroines enough and put as much into the relationship as the heroine does? Why can they act like douches and be forgiven straight away whilst heroines are punished for smaller things?

It's fucked up that women in most genre fiction are portrayed as having to give everything, and be forgiving/understanding/grateful when they get nothing in return whilst men can do whatever the hell they want because they're men and they have man-reasons. Ugh.

-The portrayal of female characters in the series has been rubbish, pretty much any female in a position of leadership/power has either been evil, desperate or incompetent. Nicole was kind of the only one who turned

out half decent, but even then she had to resort to blackmail, threats, and slyness to achieve her goals, and at the end it was made clear that she was sneaky and untrustworthy... Heaven forbid, a female leader who doesn't turn out crazy or evil or incompetent. The only decent/honourable leaders have all been male so far. Apparently women in power don't know how to do their jobs or are crazy.

-Merit was mostly surrounded by guys, it was irritating that whenever she was around them she was usually the only girl there. Her best friends were meant to be Mallory and Lindsay yet they shared very few scenes together compared to the male characters. Merit didn't even mention her mum or sister more than once, yet her dad and granddad got loads of mentions in comparison. Also, all the various female hating going on was tiresome especially when Merit got along with all the guys.

-I hated how the RG were portrayed, they were meant to be there to keep an eye on the vampire masters but instead they turned into a tool that Ethan/Merit used as and when they pleased.

Why don't the RG tell Merit and Ethan to piss right off, they're only interested in themselves, Merit's not even a proper member. She's done nothing for them that doesn't involve Ethan or her House, the members are meant to be there for other Houses but she only cares about using them for herself... That would be fine if she and everyone else didn't act like she was such a wonderful speshul little snowflake.

-I didn't need to be reminded every other sentence that Merit was a Sentinel or whether she put her hair in a high ponytail or not. I also didn't need to know what Ethan's eyes looked like every 5 seconds or what outfit he was wearing, it was irrelevant.

-Merit was a terrible friend/sister/daughter, all she cared about were the vampires and guys in her life. Everyone else came last. Her friendship with Mallory no longer seemed genuine, it was like Merit only experienced emotions when it came to the menfolk. When Mallory was kidnapped, I got no sense of fear or caring from Merit at all. I really don't think Merit would give a fuck if any of the women in her life dropped dead as long as the men in her life were okay she'd be cool.

-Merit's whole identity was based around Ethan and being sentinel. She was rather empty in that nothing else really mattered to her. The fact she barely mentioned most of her family, her old life or friends just made her come across as a blank slate with no history, no experiences, and very few meaningful relationships outside of Ethan. I needed more from Merit than her issues/feelings for Ethan or the latest vampire/murder drama... She just didn't have personality or dimensions.

-I take it from Ethan's repeated character regressions throughout the series any future growth he shows will be meaningless as he'll no doubt act like a petulant, immature child again when it suits him. Naturally, Merit will lovingly lie down, make excuses and be his doormat.

-Why do so many characters act in awe of Ethan and his lame speeches/dialogue?! Merit and Mallory all but swooned when Ethan said something about Merit blossoming, it was such a mundane thing he said but they acted like he'd said something oh so profound and poetic. I didn't get it. Even Catcher was more swoony when he was all domesticated and comfortable with Mallory. Ethan and his relationship with Merit on the other hand came across as forced and trying too hard to be swoony and romantic. It didn't work for me.

-Merit judging and looking down at the nymphs was well out of order. It was clear she thought they were nothing but shallow twits and that she was better than them. She'd only ever encountered them a handful of times yet she judged every single one of them based on those brief encounters. Even though she was a judgmental, sexist prick she went around acting like she was fair, just and good. Ugh, give me a break.

-The games Ethan and Nicole had to go through were underwhelming, they were just like the tests Lissa had to go through in the last *Vampire Academy* book. I expected something more challenging and interesting.

-Ethan's fake proposing didn't impress me, I'm sure it was copied from some character on tv (I think Jim from The Office).

-The whole Europe/London vampires being backward and wrong whilst American vampires were oh so forward thinking, clever and free irritated me. It was as if anyone who was European were portrayed as idiots stuck in the dark ages whilst America was all about freedom and fairness. Ugh.

-The moral of the story: Women should be patient, supportive and understanding whenever their boyfriend/partner lie to them, push them away and treat them like crap. That's their job — to be a doormat. And it doesn't matter how violent, repulsive, slutty, and evil a man was in his past, as long as he says he's not like that anymore it means that his past actions can be excused.

A huge disappointment overall, I keep hoping that the series will get back on track and be as fun and entertaining as the first few books but instead the characters get more insufferable, the relationships more cheesy, and the story more cliched.

Cocktails and Books says

4.5

My first thoughts when I finished BLOOD GAMES was "my how Merit has grown". And that's a thought that has stayed with me after I've fully digested the tenth book in the Chicagoland Vampire series. As with the other books in the series, Merit and Ethan always have someone coming after them for one reason or another. But in the past, Merit has had a hair trigger when it came to her emotions. She was quick to jump to conclusions, fight or push Ethan away. But in BLOOD GAMES, Merit shows just how much she's grown in her relationship with Ethan. She may get pissed at him, but she never doubts their love and is steadfast in standing by her man.

As Merit tries to solve the murder of CPD officers son, Cadogan House prepares for Ethan's challenge as President of the GP. It's a tough challenge for Ethan, because it's stirs up things from his past. It's tough for those close to Ethan too because of the emotional upheaval this causes. But it also shows just how loyal those close to Ethan are to him, Merit and everything they believe in.

This is a series that I absolutely love and I greedily devour. Chloe Neill continues to weave a story that entrances and characters that are an absolute pleasure to follow.

Chelsea ♥Peril Please♥ says

UGH. One of my fav series of all time-thanks for the Xmas present, Jenny!

4.5 stars

And so I'm finally caught up.....I can't say I wasn't wanting a *little* more. Like, you know, a certain something that would have been abso-freaking-lutely adorable...but sadly I am still left waiting. And that's okay, I suppose...but I NEEDS IT. And **soon**. My fragile little heart can't take the teasing anymore lol. Or maybe it

can....it's pretty cute, really, how much Ethan loves and adores Merit. I know I gush a lot about this series, but it takes a special kind of author to write this many books and still have a steady story-line.

At times does it seem repetitive? Maybe a little. There's always a mystery they need to solve. They are always fighting to stay in good light with both the Vampire politic world and the citizens of Chicago. And, a lot of the time Ethan and Merit fight-like most couples do. It's different now, though. It's more about not wanting the old you to interfere with the new and improved you, not wanting to lose the love of your life because of your past wrongs...and I get that. It's adorable to see the fear of losing Merit in Ethan's eyes. And it's clear **she is his world**. I love it and cherish these moments, especially when he plays that possessive, jealous card....yum.

I refuse to write a lot more, because I want to write a good ARC review for book 11-but just know, things are changing, more enemies emerge in each new installment, and Ethan just becomes sweeter and sweeter...a certain Mallory scene comes to mind from the end of the book-**Ethan, I love you, you sweet, adorable, loyal hunk of a man.**

So, again, more quotes.....Ethan has some of the best ones ever. Seriously. But Merit's are pretty great, too...

Ethan's shining moments:

This is exactly what I feared would happen. That you'd end up hurt because of me, because of Darius. I have known fear," he quietly said. "I've soldiered, seen men die, walked toward death's door and gone through it. But I have never known fear like the sight of you unconscious."

His frustration was nearly palpable, his magic irritable. "I do what I do to protect you. That I trained you to fight, to bear a sword, to act with honor, doesn't negate the fact that I would give my life for you, Merit."

**If he'd been afraid to tell me this-how much worse was it, at least in his own mind?
"That look in your eyes paralyzes me, Merit."**

Merit's moments:

"If you're going to yell at me, do it in English please. I'd like to understand the insult so I can frame an appropriately pithy response."

"I expected you'd be starving," Ethan said. "So I asked Margot to bring this up."

"Why do people always think I'm hungry?"

"Because you're always hungry."

"Well, I did run three miles today."

"Liege, Merit. Dinner is served."

I braced myself for fish stuffed with more fish, or a mousse of meat. But the meal that stared back from gleaming white plates was perfectly normal. Bacon cheeseburgers with hand cut fries and tumblers of chocolate milk shakes.

He smiled at me. "I decided for our award dinner we might have a meal that suited us both."

"I've never loved you more."

"Are you talking to me, Margot, or the burgers?"

"Yes," I said.

For more of my reviews, please visit:

Jennifer says

★★★★½

Blood Games is the tenth installment in Chloe Neill's urban fantasy series titled: Chicagoland Vampires. Each book in this series has a strong mystery element and although this one had a murder mystery to solve, it is more focused on Ethan's future in the GP. My favorite part in this book though was some confirmation on the direction of Merit and Ethan's relationship. Whoop Whoop! If anything, this story will keep readers motivated to continue the series.

My favorite quote:

"I knew there were Web sites devoted to Ethan. I might, in a moment of curious weakness, have visited Ethan SullivanIsMyMaster.net and smiled at the bloggers' obvious adoration. But underwear? Underwear!"

Alex is The Romance Fox says

The 10th book in the Chicagoland Vampires series and the author is still keeping me interested in the compelling and fresh urban fantasy world she has created.

I enjoyed this book but there were a few things that just did not do it for me.

The story opens with a murder of a human that may be linked to the vampires. Soon becomes clear that there is a serial killer on the loose that likes using tarot cards as his signature. Although this is one of the plots, nothing really happens until the end when the killer is revealed.

Then the part where Ethan and other vampire Masters are being tested for the position of the leader of the GP.....the vampire Nicole and the whole process was a bit much for me.

And then when Ethan goes back to his old habits of not trusting Merit enough to tell her about a message he received that has obviously shaken him. What the hell...I thought he and Merit had gone past the whole trust issues thing!!!!

I did like seeing the relationship between Merit and Mallory getting back to being friends again. It's really odd...because I was not exactly loving Mallory until this book....but now, I really like her.

The twist at the end leaves one wondering...where to next.

I just hope that the author can continue keeping this series as fresh and interesting.

Zee1 says

HO-LEE SHIT.

I literally did not see a single thing in this book coming. NOT ONE.

(Can I just say,the first half of this series was great and well paced, but House Rules on wards is UHMAZING!)

Damn. Ethan is PERFECTION. I mean... whoa. swoon, sigh, drool, weak knees, all of it.

Merit is amazing, I can't not love her and her appetite.

I'm just.... going to be awake for a while thinking about this

Lauren says

Ethan's decision in the previous book, Wild Things, to challenge Darius for the GP council head has been weighing on Merit. She knows his intentions of declaring his challenge are for the good of all vampires, but she cannot get the dangerous side effects out of her mind. She knows she has to protect Ethan at all costs as his Sentinel, but also as his lover. When a friendly charity event is visited by a gunman and strange murders begin popping up over Chicago, Merit has her plate full. Add in Ethan's sudden secretiveness after he receives a letter, and you have an action packed novel. Can Merit do her duty and protect Ethan when he's thrown himself into the gauntlet? I guess you'll just have to read it to find out!

One of the biggest things that simply blew me away was that the realization that Merit has only been a vampire for a year. She has 10 books of crazy, action packed stories that have all taken place in the timeline of a year. It's mind boggling. She loved, lost, and loved again. She's had to do things that no one human nor vampire would ever dream of being involved. She has changed so much over the last 10 books. She's a confident, fierce, protective Sentinel for the Cadogan house yet she holds within her such fiery passion and conviction when it comes to Ethan, her house Master and lover. She also has a sweet tooth and knack for witty comebacks that I just absolutely love.

Another positive note is the return of Mallory. After her stint in witch rehab, Mallory is almost back to herself. Now granted, you can never really trust someone after they've gone bat shit crazy, but Merit wants Mallory back in her life. Mallory is slowly but surely keeping her dark magic side in check. She and Catcher

are mending their battered fences in their relationship.

Now, one of the most frustrating things in this book is Ethan's step back to his old closed off introverted ways. His past has come home to roost and he cannot bring himself to let Merit in on the truth. He would rather push her away than actually let her in. Now, he does have some motivation as to why he doesn't want to tell her the truth, which I somewhat understand. However, I thought his brooding, emotional challenged days were over. There were many times, like Merit, I wanted to punch him in his pretty face. Yet, he has this remarkable ability that even when Merit is angry at him to still show his unconditional love. Ethan is complex 400 year old vampire and boy do I love him for that.

This book to sum it up is SIMPLY AMAZING! After some less than exciting previous installments of one of my favorite series, Blood Games has revived the life back into this series. The Chicagoland vampire series by far has one of the best cliffhanger endings I've ever read in one of the earlier books. I have never before been so dumbfounded and upset about a cliffhanger ending. I'd like to extend a thank you to the publisher for granting me the privilege of an ARC of Blood Games. I had to fight myself every day on just stopping what I reading so I could find out what Merit and Ethan had gotten them into this time.

[http://saintsandsinnersbooks.wordpres...](http://saintsandsinnersbooks.wordpress...)

Jilly says

Merit has some major daddy-issues. That can be the only reason she puts up with the bullshit that is Ethan Sullivan - her very hot&cold boyfriend. I mean, seriously? Girl, you need to get some dignity.

That's right, after all of the b.s.: Ethan telling her that he is going to propose, they are together forever, he would win her back - after breaking up with her - and after pushing her away when he was first resurrected - he actually pulls the same crap again in this book. He is being blackmailed (again. That's right, they are blackmailed in **every single book.**), Ethan completely shuts Merit out and treats her like crap. AGAIN!

"I'll do whatever I think is best - whether or not that includes you."

Wait a minute, dude. Didn't you just tell this girl that you were going to propose to her last night? Didn't you tell her that she is your "forever?"

And, speaking of this "proposing idea". Ethan thinks it's hilarious to fake like he is about to propose to Merit every few days or so.

He had a penchant for going down on bended knee - and straightening a hem or helping me with a shoe. "Nobody finds that amusing."

Diek Ethan: ***"I find it excessively amusing."***

a message to Merit

Does Merit bitch-slap Ethan? No, she uses the technique that she has used in all previous books when Ethan

treats her like crap: groveling. She works harder to win back his affection and sooth his poor little butt-hurt feelings. Aww, poor widdle Ethan is upset. Let's give him something.

It's so freaking frustrating!

But, considering Merit's father, and how he withholds affection and approval to get his children to do what he wants; Merit is picking a man who uses the same carrot & stick approach in their relationship. He is constantly dangling the carrot of engagement and love just outside of Merit's reach. And she is on a treadmill of trying to perform well enough to get the carrot. If she slows down too much and displeases him, she gets the stick of his rejection. It's actually a really sick relationship.

Aww, but Ethan is an alpha, and we love book alphas, don't we?

Um, an alpha is one thing - but a baby who throws temper tantrums and takes his frustrations out on his girlfriend is totally different. A good alpha is a strong leader who can handle the pressure without kicking the puppy when he gets home. Ethan has totally lost his alpha status in my eyes.

Elizabeth says

Blood Games.....that name!

? Sh3lly - Grumpy Name-Changing Wanderer ? says

I feel like this series has reached the Tobey Maguire Spiderman 3 period where it got really cheesy and there was product placement everywhere.

Ethan has achieved Spidey status... he has fangirls and there is even a version of Comicon in this where panties are sold with his face on them!

And of course, Merit is dumb about it and has no sense of humor. Which makes it all the more insufferable.

So we get LOTS of relationship angst in this one. *Secrets* from Ethan, angst about Ethan's past (hint: shocker, he had lots of sex before Merit)... at least they BITE each other in this one. I was actually surprised by that scene.

There's a cliffhanger that I'm not even that interested in...

The GP thing was pretty boring, but slightly more interesting than previous books.

I am SICK of Ethan always calling Merit SENTINEL. If she is his mate for "eternity," he needs to learn more about real intimacy. He even calls her that when they are alone. FFS

Ethan is 400+ years old and Merit acts like he is a baby. She is not even a year old vampire (or barely) and is supposedly such a bad-ass that she needs to "protect" him constantly. Seriously. This is just ludicrous.

Where is my sexy Ethan from the earlier books? I grieve for him. Every line he says is forced, fake, and uncomfortable. It's just complete eye-rolling at this point. He just seems weak and obnoxious now. :(

Nicole just seems like a recycled version of the first female villain from Navarre House. I don't even remember her name now. It doesn't even matter at this point.

Yes, I have giffed this review out. Wait. This gif is better than this book:

All the side characters are just window dressing at this point. I find myself annoyed when they even make an appearance now because I know the writing is going to be so stiff and forced. This hasn't reached Sookie Stackhouse levels yet, but it's **close**.

I was really disappointed in the whole "psychological testing" Ethan and Nicole had to go through for new head of the GP. Cheesy. Most of it happened off-page, really. I just don't think the author has the writing chops to produce the world-building required for a 10+ book series.

Well, I've committed to one more book in this series and then I am throwing in the towel. So sorry if my review is annoying to those who love the series. I want to love it. I used to. Obviously tons of people love it, so maybe it is just me.

Previous post

Because I've gotten this far and I keep hoping they'll get better and I'm a glutton for punishment.

Lauren says

Blood Games

4 Stars

As Cadogan House and it's Master, Ethan Sullivan, await the response of the Greenwich Presidium to his challenge for leadership, Merit has her hands full assisting the CPD on a case involving several murders staged to look like the work of vampires and other magical practitioners. Can Merit stop the killer before he strikes closer to home?

There is a lot going on in this installment of the Chicagoland Vampires with three separate storylines.

Nevertheless, Neill manages to pull it all off nicely, and there are a couple of surprising twists at the end that should make for interesting reading in upcoming books.

The "games" mentioned in the title may refer to any or all of the plot lines including the serial killer who uses Tarot cards to stage his victims, the obstacles that Ethan must overcome to assume leadership of the GP, and the machinations of a mysterious traitor siphoning cash out of the GPs bank accounts. Each is well-developed and resolved satisfactorily.

As always, there is tension and angst in Ethan and Merit's relationship as he refuses to let her in on the secrets of his past for fear of losing her. With time, stubbornness and a cunning scheme or two, Merit manages to wear down his resolve and their romance is the stronger for it.

The only disappointing element is Neill's failure to (view spoiler) Oh well, there is still time for the remaining books. A girl can hope!

In sum, entertaining and action packed with just the right amount of drama. Looking forward to **Dark Debt**.

Carmel (Rabid Reads) says

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

***** Review contains minor spoilers from previous books in this series. *****

There are two main plot threads in Chloe Neill's latest CHICAGOLAND VAMPIRES installment, but in all honesty I only had eyes for one. The Tarot murder mystery was interesting enough in itself; I liked seeing Merit & Mallory finally getting back on track, and I enjoyed deciphering the riddles left behind by the killer. However, after the way WILD THINGS ended, my focus was entirely on Ethan's GP candidacy, and given the title of this book I was a little surprised that the author didn't concentrate more on the latter and less on the former. That point aside, in BLOOD GAMES readers get to meet Amit Patel (the most powerful vampire in the world!), discover Neill's version of THE HUNGER GAMES, and no CV novel would be complete without... Sullivan acting like a douche.

I really liked the way that the GP plot line played out; from Darius' fall from grace, to the trials, to the unexpected end result. Nicole Heart, Ethan's American competition, does kind of come out of left field though. Perhaps I missed it, but I think some reference should have been made to her before now. I also wish that The Sentinels Games would have evolved past the intimidation stage. That being said, I loved the psych and phys tests that the candidates had to undertake because vampires are an all-or-nothing kind of supe, meaning the BLOOD GAMES were to the death. The physical trial was nail bitingly spectacular with burning buildings, trolls and unforeseen duplicity. I won't pretend to understand how the GP tallies points, but the winner will leave you wondering.

No CHICAGOLAND VAMPIRES review would be complete without a mini Ethan rant, so here it comes! After an attempt is made on his life, the master of Cargodan House receives a note that he refuses to share with Merit because for some inexplicable reason he thinks that lying to her somehow qualifies as protection. Yes, THIS AGAIN. So, of course they end up at odds, seeds of doubt are planted, and the happy couple goes from mock proposals to butting heads. I've said this before and I'll say it again; will this 400+ year old vampire never learn!? At least their tiff does lead to some light being shed on Ethan's past with Balthasar, and after Merit proves once again that she's in it for the long haul some genuinely tender moments ensue. I

loved them together in the later chapters, but couldn't help feeling a little frustrated by the fact that the 28 year old novitiate continues to be the more mature one in this relationship.

The author stays true to her Chicago roots by making the city's famous food and landmarks integral parts of the story. I liked the correlations between the locations and the Tarot murders, and the Ombuddies were amazing as usual. The ending was a bit of a head-scratcher followed by a startling cliff hanger, but all of this just goes to prove that Chloe Neill's still got it! BLOOD GAMES is a high octave read peppered with awesome fights, heartfelt moments, and developments that shake the very core of the CHICAGOLAND VAMPIRES universe.

Elise ✕ a.k.a Ryder's Pet ✕ says

?????*Eh*?????

Re-read: 05.02.2018

Not such a bad re-read. Probably because I didn't remember all that much about it. Which is actually surprising. Anyways, to the next re-read. Soon done.

The characters:

- **Caroline 'Merit' 'Mer' Evelyn Merit** (becomes vampire at 27, but is 28 in years), Sentinel of the Cadogan House.
- **Ethan 'Liege' 'Darth Sullivan' Sullivan** (394, though became a vampire at 30), master of the Cadogan House → dead, but is back from the dead.
- **Mallory 'Mal' Delancey Carmichael** (28), Merit's bestfriend and a fourth-class sorcerer, a master of the First Key; power.
- **Charles 'Chuck' Merit** (in his sixties), Merit's grandfather is the Ombudsman; a 'liaison' between the regulars and the sups.
- Chuck's team:
 - ? ? his secretary, **Marjorie** (50),
 - ? ? the computer prodigy and a shape-shifter, **Jeffrey 'Jeff' Christopher** (21),
 - ? ? a fourth-class sorcerer and a master of the Second Key; weapons, **Catcher Bell** (29),
 - ? ? and there's also a Housed vampire who works for him that not even his colleagues knows about.
- **Joshua Merit**, Merit's dad sucky dad.
- guard of the Cadogan House, **Lindsey** (115) and who is also a psychic, and a good friend to Merit. Also dating Lucas.
- **Lucas 'Luc'**, ~~the Captain of the Cadogan House guards, now House Second~~; back to being Captain.
- **Malik Washington**, ~~Second, House Cadogan, now Master of Cadogan House, until Ethan takes back leadership~~; back to being Second.
- **Morgan Greer**, Master of Navarre House, (72, though looks 28) Merit's sorta ex and a weak man.
- **Gabriel 'Gabe' Keene**, Apex of the Central North American, Jeff's pack leader (love him).
- **Darius West**, head of the Greenwich Presidium and a total dick.
- **Seth Tate** (36), former mayor of Chicago and a fucker. A part of him, that is; His twin brother Dominic was evil and lived inside of him. Seth is technically good. He's (view spoiler).
- **Scott Grey**, Master of Grey House.
- **Noah Beck**, the leader of Chicago's independent vampires and a Red Guard 'RG' (a vampire Secret Service, of sorts).
- **Jonah**, the Guard Captain, Grey House and a Red Guard, has a crush on Merit.

- **Franklin Theodore Cabot**, was the appointed receiver of Cadogan House (*Darius West, head of the GP, had decided he didn't like the way the House was run, "Frank" had been sent to Chicago to inspect and evaluate the House*). He sucked big time.
- **Berna**, shifter, and ended bar and worked the kitchens at Little Red (the Ukrainian Village watering hole where the Pack hung out in Chicago).
- **Diane Kowalczyk**, Chicago's new mayor.
- **'John Q.' McKetrick**, a former military type with a raging hatred of vampires. He now the head of the Office of Human Liaisons, or OHL.
- **Michael Donovan**, was the House Cadogan's security auditor (in book #7). A Rough, who turned out to be evil.
- **Damien Garza**, a member of the Pack.

Tears rushed into my eyes, and I knuckled them away. "Damn it, Ethan. How do you come up with things like that?"

"I keep a notebook. I intend to make you mine, Sentinel. Not just for tonight, or for tomorrow, or for the decade. For eternity. And I'll have my ring on your finger. I'll have the world know that you're mine. I suggest you get used to the idea."

With a frisson of excitement speeding my heart, I decided I'd find a way to adapt.

Quick basic facts:

Genre: - (Adult) Paranormal Romance/Urban Fantasy.

Series: - Series, Book Ten.

Love triangle? - (view spoiler)

Cheating? - (view spoiler)

HEA? - (view spoiler)

Favorite character? - Ethan 'Liege' 'Darth Sullivan' Sullivan.

Would I read more by this author/or of series? - Yes.

Would I recommend this book/series? - Yes.

Will I read this again in the future? - Yes?

New Rating - 3 stars.

First read review:

"I keep a notebook. I intend to make you mine, Sentinel. Not just for tonight, or for tomorrow, or for the decade. For eternity. And I'll have my ring on your finger. I'll have the world know that you're mine. I suggest you get used to the idea."

My casting:

Not the best book in the series, but still very good :D

Rate: 4.5 stars.