

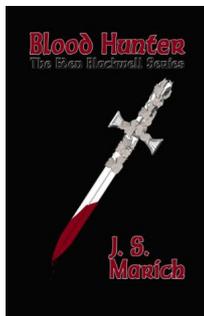
## “BLOOD HUNTER (THE EDEN BLACKWELL SERIES)” (Book Review)

Written by Sheila Shedd  
Saturday, 21 May 2011 12:02

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Eden Blackwell is a complicated young vampire. She wants her childhood friends to love and accept her, despite their paltry human attributes and their disgust at her recent choice to become a preternatural bloodsucker. Eden was reborn into an ancient coven, run by the sexy and powerful Lucius, a better looking, undead version of Hugh Hefner, but now she does what she can to exist in the world of mortals.



And why not? Vampires, werewolves and even the occasional zombie now live practically side by side with the human population in all the major civic centers, have the same legal rights, and even claim to have souls. Unfortunately, this integration of beings with disparate needs and desires causes a bit of tension in society. Eden does her part by serving the powerful Catholic Church as a preternatural bounty hunter. She will strong-arm her own kind if they step out of line by working with the police, solving mysteries and catching nightstalkers. Well, it takes one to know one.

BLOOD HUNTER ( [Asylett Press](#) ) is the first in J.S. Marich's (pictured above) series of preternatural detective novels featuring the lovely Eden Blackwell, a raven-haired, boot wearing, double dagger toting, reluctant wild-thing. She barely gets by on bounty collection, but someday police work might pay off in more than just romance and excitement, allowing her to

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keep up with her rent and filthy piles of laundry.

Her adventure reads like a well-planned screenplay, visuals are tangible and characters are familiar, round and believable, their dialogue laced with pithy comebacks and asides. In fact, the text is almost over-laden with details that delay the plot at times, working against the rush of excitement Marich skillfully builds up for the reader. This intricate stylistic choice doesn't affect the worth of the novel, but it can slow one down.

Aside from these descriptive digressions, the story is furiously paced and contains several amusing threads that intrigue the reader to continue the series. Marich balances humor and satire nicely with serious crime, psychological depth and very well described gore. For example, the reader will agree that it is better not to have chunks of intestine floating around in one's cup of blood.

Marich describes an urban landscape 50 years hence, where the only visible alteration is in the population; muscle cars, weaponry, medical science are all left unchanged; you'll find no sci-fi here. Religion and prejudice is the enemy of the monster population, and, though the government is working toward enfranchisement, normal humans consider them pariahs and segregate themselves into gated communities whenever possible. This leaves the grittier city outskirts at the mercy of the creatures of the night who try to abide in peaceful marginality, without ripping humans apart for dinner. Fortunately for Eden, they don't all succeed in controlling their carnivorous instincts.

Marich's tone and style, her characters and the subtle reluctance of her heroine create a sophisticated twist on this common theme, and BLOOD HUNTER is, well, cool. The author is also running a beautifully animated website that includes a description of her other horror work, The Necromancer Series. Book one is QUEEN OF THE ZOMBIES, and, like BLOOD HUNTER, it appears to be a fresh look at female charged carnage.