



## Night's Edge

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*Dancers in the Dark* by *New York Times* bestselling author Charlaine Harris

Dancer Layla Rue Le May's childhood prepared her to handle just about anything, including her aloof partner, Sean McClendon, a three-hundred-year-old redhead vampire. Even so, when she somehow acquires a stalker, Layla Rue is surprised to find that Sean is the only one she can trust.

*Her Best Enemy* by *USA TODAY* bestselling author Maggie Shayne

Kiley Brigham refuses to believe there's a ghost in her house, but when an unseen hand leaves a bloody message on her bathroom mirror, she's forced to turn to local psychic Jack McCain. As the two work to uncover a long-buried secret, Kiley finds that she's haunted not by spirits, but by thoughts of Jack.

*Someone Else's Shadow* by Locus Award-winning author Barbara Hambly

Maddie Laveau worries about her young roommate, Tessa, when she stays late to practice ballet in the old Glendower Building -- and when Tessa goes missing, Maddie enlists mysterious tenant Phil Anderson to help. But is Phil the white knight she needs, or the predator she fears?

## **Night's Edge Details**

Date : Published July 28th 2009 by HQN (first published October 1st 2004)

ISBN : 9780373774289

Author : Maggie Shayne , Charlaine Harris , Barbara Hambly

Format : Paperback 368 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Paranormal, Romance, Anthologies, Paranormal Romance, Vampires, Urban Fantasy, Fiction, Short Stories, Supernatural

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## From Reader Review Night's Edge for online ebook

### Shannon (Savage Temptrest) says

"Dancers in the Dark" by Charlaine Harris starts this anthology with the novella about dancers Layla and Sean. These dancers actually made an earlier appearance in "All Together Dead" by Ms. Harris where they performed at the vampire summit in Rhodes. This story focuses on how the two met and fell in love while dancing together for the Blue Moon Entertainment Agency that specializes in human dancers performing with vampire dancers. Layla and Sean connect because both are trying to forget their pasts, and live in the present through dancing. They both hold the key to a bright future as dance partners and possibly more, but only if Layla's past doesn't destroy what they are trying build. An entertaining story, Ms. Harris never ceases to amaze me with her short stories and books in the Southern Vampire Series. Any fans of Sookie Stackhouse will enjoy this story!

"Her Best Enemy" by Maggie Shayne was a very funny and suspenseful addition to this anthology. Kiley is a reporter who's column discredit local psychics in Burnt Hills, NY. She doesn't believe in the supernatural, and thinks all psychics are liars and thieves out to swindle people out of their hard-earned money. However, when she experiences some supernatural "incidents" in her new home, she is forced to enlist the help of a local psychic she has been trying to discredit for months to no avail. Although Kiley and Jack are "enemies" because of their professions and beliefs in the supernatural, the attraction and chemistry between the two just can't be denied while they try to discover the mystery surrounding the haunting of Kiley's house. Ms. Shayne mixed this short with wonderful blend of humor, sexual tension, and mystery surrounded by suspense. This was a very entertaining story for all Maggie Shayne fans, or even people who have never read anything from this author before! A definite must read!

"Someone Else's Shadow" by Barbara Hambly-I have to say I didn't really like this story for this anthology. The story focused on Maddie, a dancer and tarot card reader with a shaded past, whose trying help her roommate Tessa overcome the nightmares and sleepwalking she is succumbing to on a nightly basis. Maddie knows it has something to do with the Glendower building where Tessa dances, and Phil Cooper, the guy who rents a studio in the building and resides there. The story just did not mesh. It went in several directions, and I almost didn't finish it, hence the reason I didn't devour it the first day as I would most new books I buy. The love aspec between Maddie and Phil was way too fast, and it just kinda got stuck at the end of the story and just wasn't plausible.

Overall, I enjoyed the book for the paranormal stories, and I really enjoyed the first two stories. I would recommend this to all die-hard Charlaine Harris and Maggie Shayne fans because you just have to read these two stories!

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### Darcy says

I liked the first story which was set in the Sookie universive with people who made cameo apperances in later books. The others were just ok.

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### **Weezie says**

As with most works by Charlaine Harris, I really enjoyed Dancers in the Dark. I love the diverse characters she creates and the way this short story blended in with a glimpse we caught of the dancers in the SV series. I do wish there had been more of a build up between Sean and Layla before they inevitably fell in love, but with most novels in this subgenre... it is what it is.

This was my first time reading anything by Maggie Shayne and while I enjoyed Her Best Enemy, I found myself rolling my eyes at the characters. I'm a sucker for clichés but this one was almost over the top and the instalove had me reeling. Probably won't be picking up anything else by her but the story was generally ok.

This was also the first Barbara Hambly story I had read as well and while the story was ok and I like the plot, there were a few times where the story seemed very jumbled and the lines of dialogue didn't make a whole lot of sense. Maddie's inner monologue was a little disorienting to read and several times I had to reread whole sections to figure out if she was talking about Phil, Sandy, or the shadow man.

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### **Margaret says**

This is collection of three novellas, each with a paranormal theme and a romantic connection. The main female characters all have histories of abuse or at least bad experiences with men. They are all easy to read and quite enjoyable.

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### **Hope says**

I was disappointed with Ms. Harris's story, and didn't read more than a couple pages of the 2nd story, but I loved Ms. Hambly's story! The barrier between the main characters made sense, instead of being contrived. The female lead dealt with her own problems, then invited the male lead to her life - she didn't need a man to make her complete. The writing was delicious, and the sexy bit were realistic and quite romantic. I can see myself in this sort of relationship. I kind of have a crush on both the main characters, truth be told ;)

Overall, it's a good enough collection of romance stories. If you're not a romance fan, just read the last story, "Someone Else's Shadow" by Barbara Hambly.

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### **Kristin says**

The stories weren't bad but rather a bit disappointing. I really liked Charlaine Harris' story.

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### **Jenny Robinson says**

This is probably the BEST Sookieverse book. The short story of the 2 vampire dancers in Sookie Book 7. The story is so sad, but Sean the vampire...I am in love with. These two characters are so well written. I fell

in love with both of them. It is simply one of the best stories I have read in a REALLY long time. Sad, uplifting, romantic, all the good stuff. Layla and Sean. Absolutely awesome.

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### **graveyardgremlin says**

I just finished Maggie Shayne's short story, *Her Best Enemy*, and enjoyed it a lot. Yes, the plot is rushed and I didn't believe they could love each other that soon at the end, but it was a really fun story! I would have liked it better if Ms. Shayne had left them just starting out in their promising relationship and not dropping the L-bomb at the end - it felt too forced and cheesy. But as I said before, it was very fun, and an easy and fast read too! :)

4/5 stars

*Someone Else's Shadow* was another very good story. I really liked Maddie, and while the love angle was again very fast, but at the end I appreciated that the author addresses how fast they fell in love. As with the first story, the ghost angle was creepy and made the whole atmosphere of the story come alive. The chemistry between Maddie and Phil was palpable and it did make me feel like they could in fact fall in love that fast. A great short story!

4.5/5 stars

*Dancers in the Dark* was another good tale in this anthology. Rue was a likable protagonist who had a horrible past, and while Sean could have been brought to life (ha!) more, he was still a good hero for her. The plot was well-done and I never got annoyed at Rue for feeling sorry for herself or anything, which can happen in stories similar to this. All-in-all it was a fascinating tale.

4/5 stars

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### **Kelly says**

Three paranormal romances with some suspense. Some do it better than others.

"*Her Best Enemy*" by Maggie Shayne

Kiley doesn't believe in anything she can't see, but it seems there is a ghost in her new house. Of course, her only hope lies with the psychic she's been trying to prove a fraud.

"*Someone Else's Shadow*" by Barbara Hambly

Maddie senses something evil in the building where she teaches belly dancing, but a girl has to pay the rent. Is Phil helping her or is he the malevolent force she feels? The final showdown was unusual and unexpected.

"*Dancers in the Dark*" by Charlaine Harris

Layla is desperate to earn enough to pay her bills and go to college. Desperate enough to audition to dance with a vampire and agree to being bitten as the finale. But she's also desperate to stay hidden and hopefully safe. With such an unusual vampire crew, it made up for the mediocre mystery.

<http://bookcrossing.com/journal/4133250>

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### **Cherie says**

I started reading this book over the weekend and I really enjoyed the first story, *Her Best Enemy* by Maggie Shayne. I'd always thought of Ms. Shayne as somewhat of a fluffy-bunny, happily-ever-after type of

romance writer, especially after the first story I read by her from the *Out of this World* anthology. Not in a bad way per se, just more in the way that romance novels bore me. In any case, *Her Best Enemy* was a wonderful haunted house story, and though parts of the story were fairly predictable (the gal and the guy DID hook up of course), the rest of the story was intriguing right up until the very end. Bravo! I wanted to write this while the story was still fresh in my mind, but I'm going to hold off on giving a rating for the book itself until I've read the other two stories. However, if I were to rate the book on this story alone, I'd probably give it a 9. :)

The last story in this book, *Dancers in the Dark* by Charlaine Harris, was probably the best in this anthology, but then again, I have loved all four of Charlaine's Southern Vampire books (the Sookie Stackhouse ones) so it's not surprising that I'd really enjoy her contribution to this anthology as well.

Anyway, *Dancers in the Dark*, while it would probably be considered a romance, had enough intrigue and danger in the story to make it far from the usual \*yawn\* boring romance. Though it has different characters, it takes place in the same world as the Sookie Vampire books. If you've read those books, you'll recognize the symmetry in the handling of vampires in this story. Of the three books in this anthology, this was the only one of the three that had anything to do with vampires, though that wasn't probably the primary reason I liked it best. I believe it was more because I have really come to like Charlaine Harris' writing.

The mystery is compounded by the fact that Charlaine doesn't give everything away right up front. For instance, she starts by only hinting at some of the horrors in Layla's past instead of spelling things out in the first chapter, which tends to pique the reader's interest. Same goes for Sean, the lead Vampire. Of course, you know things are going to work out in the end, for they nearly always do in anthology stories, but I certainly couldn't have predicted everything that happened in the story.

I should probably mention something about the second story, *Someone Else's Shadow* by Barbara Hambly, too, since that was also fairly good. Not as good as numbers 1 and 3, but interesting enough, probably a 6. This was the first story I've read by Barbara Hambly, and using this story as a basis, I'd say that I'd definitely read something else by her in the future. This story was also a romance, but contained the supernatural element of ghosts like the *Her Best Enemy*, the first story. It was a bit more predictable than the others, though the story was interesting enough to keep me reading. :)

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## **Bark says**

Maggie Shayne used to be my favorite paranormal romance author way back when she was writing for Silhouette Shadows but she lost me when she started writing the books with the witchy heroines who annoyed the heck out of me. Her story here is a haunted house tale but the hot dog swilling heroine (Kiley, is it?) is a bit abrasive. Who blows smoke in a guy's face when he was nice enough to hand over a light for her cig? What's up with that? Though I did enjoy this haunted house bits of the story it took quite a while before the irritating heroine chilled a bit and grew on me. The plot was just creepy enough to hold my attention and have me anxiously turning the pages but, alas, the romance was a bit of a flop for me. The pair went from complete dislike, to overwhelming lust, to deep forever love in a blink. I can't see them shacking up together for any longer than a month before boredom sets in, tempers begin to flare and Kylie storms out in a huff. Hmm, this all sounds mighty negative but, really, I did enjoy the story and never found myself bored so there's that . . .

The Barbara Hambly story was rough going. There was far too much navel gazing going on and the story

just didn't seem to move. Maddie has way too much internal dialogue going on and over analyzes everything and everyone near to her. One night Maddie goes out in search of her roomie Tessa, who spends long nights alone practicing ballet in a creepy studio. While searching for Tessa a smelly man lurking in the shadows whispers something along the lines of "little sluts are alike" before disappearing. Maddie is justifiably creeped out and when Tessa introduces her to Phil, a temporarily homeless man living at the studio, she fears he was the one whispering those not-so-sweet-nothings in her ear. But she's confused because Phil isn't stinky and the erotic dreams she has about Phil after the fact have her hoping he isn't the foul-mouthed, foul-smelling psychopath hanging out in the shadows.

She goes over and over (and over) all of this in her head, does a tarot reading filled with danger signs that adds fuel to the fire, then worries some more about her roomie, her past, her mother and well you can see the pattern here. If I wanted to hear a worry wart yammer on I could any number of people. I'm just not patient enough for a character like this.

This story was unfocused and meandering and though it got a little better it just wasn't my thing. All in all this was an okay ghost story and a so/so romance but not a story I'd ever read again.

The Charlaine Harris story turned out to be the best of the three. Rue is a dancer, haunted by a tragic past that is only revealed in bits and pieces. She needs money and agrees to sign on with a copy of dubious origins called "Blue Moon" where she is paired up with a sexily accented, very secretive centuries old vampire named Sean. The pair hit it off as only two kindred and very damaged souls can but trouble surfaces when a nut from Rue's past comes back to haunt her. This story was tender and suspenseful and never made me think "awww, stop feeling sorry for yourselves and get over it already" as so many angst-filled vampire tales have a tendency to do. I liked both of these characters and their chemistry was a very powerful thing.

Two stories get 2 stars, the other a 4.

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### **Mollie \*scoutrmom\* says**

I was only interested in the story by Charlaine Harris. It turned out to be a suspense story loosely related to the world of Sookie Stackhouse, but not containing her. Well done, but not my cup of tea.

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### **Carolyn F. says**

#### **Anthology 3.5 average stars**

1. Dancers in the Dark by Charlaine Harris. This is the story about the dancers that you see periodically in the Sookie books. How they met, what happened to them. It's a good story. 4 stars.
2. Her Best Enemy by Maggie Shayne. For a short story, this sure felt long. It's just average. I guessed what was happening early on and figured out who the bad guy was. 3 stars.
3. Someone Else's Shadow by Barbara Hambly. A little dragging in parts, but the ending was good. I stayed up late to finish it. 3-1/2 stars

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**? Briansgirl (Book Sale Queen)? says**

I have only read "Dancers in the Dark" so far, which I dearly loved. It's Sookie-verse, that is, it takes place in the world of the Sookie Stackhouse series by Charlaine Harris, but the character Sookie doesn't appear in this story. Sean and Layla, from this story, later appear briefly in All Together Dead with Sookie.

I only gave it 4 out of a possible 5 stars, because I havn't read the other two stories yet.

Merged review:

I have only read "Dancers in the Dark" so far, but I absolutely dearly loved it. It's Sookie-verse, that is, it's from the world of Sookie Stackhouse stories from Charlaine Harris, but Sookie doesn't actually appear in this story. Sean and Layla from this story, appear briefly in All Together Dead, with Sookie.

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**Jane(Janelba) says**

I have only read the Charlaine Harris Short story so far. It was was very good. This is from the Sookie Stackhouse series and is #4.2. A short story telling the story of Layla LaRue LeMay.

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