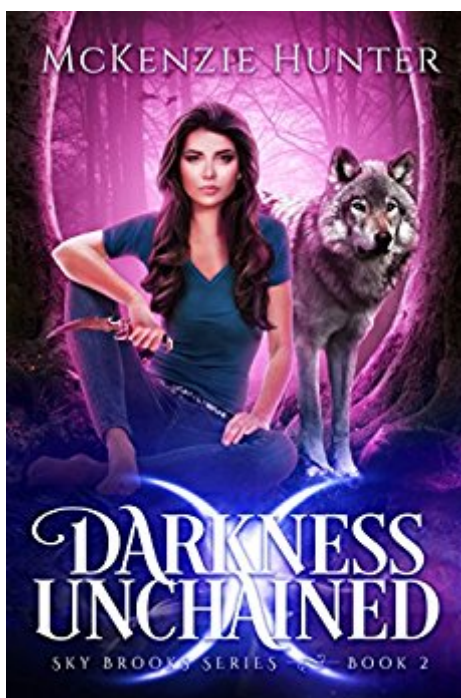




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Darkness Unchained (Sky Brooks Series Book 2)



Synopsis

What happens when your only allies are your enemies? Just survive. That's been Sky's goal since uncovering a dangerous secret: she had died at birth and became host to a very powerful spirit shade. Now Skylar has the rare ability to manipulate magic—an ability some would kill for. Needing to lie low, she declines membership in the Midwest Pack, the most powerful pack in the country. Sky thinks she can return to a normal life. She's wrong. When a pack member is brutally assaulted, Sky saves her. The Midwest Pack and their rivals, the Northern Seethe, are under attack, and the pack wants Sky to help find the person responsible. Drawn reluctantly back into the otherworld, Sky must work with the Seethe hunter, Chris, to finish the job. Chris should be a welcome asset with her connections and extensive knowledge of the otherworld, but her turbulent history with the Seethe and Midwest Pack only causes more conflict between the enemies-turned-allies. Once again, Sky must negotiate the lies, secrets, and strange politics that govern the otherworld while struggling not to draw attention to her abilities. Now she wonders if she will be able to find the killer and get out alive. *Darkness Unchained* (Sky Brooks Series, Book 2) is written from Sky's point of view (first person) and Chris's point of view (third person). *Midnight Falls* (Sky Brooks Series, Book 3) is written from only Sky's perspective.

Book Information

File Size: 6692 KB

Print Length: 368 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Sky Publishing LLC; 3 edition (January 6, 2015)

Publication Date: January 6, 2015

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00RWFR5TA

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #5,142 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #45

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Customer Reviews

McKenzie Hunter has a way of inventing quirky characters that are interesting and not your ordinary run of the mill people. I actually found that I liked the villains --Chris and Demetrius--a lot. Too much goodness (Joan) is boring. It's unusual and refreshing to read an urban fantasy book where the vampires aren't the good guys and there aren't pages and pages of sex scenes. Don't get me wrong--I like the sexual tension between characters but I get tired of reading volumes of gratuitous sex scenes--if I want porn I can probably find it easily enough. The writing has improved from the first book--I am looking forward to reading the next one.

Only 2 things could make this better: More Skylar and more pages! The characters have developed more in this book and I feel as if I am really beginning to understand the key players (though just as many questions have been raised). Skylar doesn't play as strong of a role in this book but I did not mind too much because you can tell the author is very carefully moving everyone into place to come to a resolution. It is worth the read!

Spoiler Alert- if you haven't first read "Moon

Tortured," be aware that "Darkness Unchained" is the SECOND in the Sky Brooks Series. Now, with "Darkness

Unchained," welcome Skylar Brooks [character] & McKenzie Hunter [author] to the world of the sequel. As most fiction fans know sequels can be hazardous waters for successful

authors and characters, and with "Darkness Unchained" readers

can ask both "can Hunter deliver a second performance as strong as her

first?" and "can Sky Brooks as a character keep us as invested the second time around as she did the first?" The answer to both questions is

resoundingly yes! In "Darkness Unchained" Sky Brooks emerges

not as the naïve victim & novice to the paranormal world of her true birth that she was in

"Moon Tortured," but now as a genuine heroine. Refreshingly, Sky

does not appear as a bad-ass heroine slaying vampires with ease; instead, Hunter develops her character much more realistically, couching her heroic emergence as one of ethical courage as Sky repeatedly navigates choices to hide behind others more physically trained and powerful than herself or to take the morally easy road and give in to her animalistic or victimized impulses. In *Darkness Unchained*, the Sky Brooks who emerges throughout *Darkness Unchained* is a young woman of resolute integrity, increasingly confident not just in her slowly growing physical survival skills but more importantly in her ethics and decisiveness amidst the chaos of crisis & combat. In a genre flooded with the stereotypes of indecisive or weak & easily dominated female protagonists, Hunter gives her readers a true heroine in *Darkness Unchained* as Sky Brooks grows crisis by crisis into a werewolf willing to make hard split-second choices that, regardless of consequences, solidify her integrity and affirm her ethical humanity despite her developing position in an inhumanly weird world. Yet in *Darkness Unchained*, Hunter doesn't stop at her successful development of Sky Brooks. Rising with great talent to the challenge of the sequel, Hunter provides a diverse cast of characters that rounds out the palette for readers of any taste. In Ethan, Josh, Steve & Sebastian she provides male characters of multiple types whose powers and positions are as complicated as their personalities & interactions with Sky- none are love interests, none are one-dimensionally safe, but all are resolute and become familial despite clashes with Sky's ethics. In Winter, Joan & Chris (the sole human to occupy center stage in the unfolding story) Hunter provides a trio of powerful female characters each of whom easily eclipses Sky as a fighter, and each of whom comes into the story with dramatically different (and reader-challenging) origins & outcomes. She also injects a surprising degree of complexity to the vampires, portraying them as undesirable allies of convenience against a common enemy without denuding them of their cold-blooded capacity for murderous and perverse tastes. This is evident in the ethically challenging but intimate bond between Quell & Sky, or Demetrius & Michaela's complicated polyamorous political dynamics within the seethe. Finally, the expanded dynamics for witches, the fae, and elves offer readers hints at exciting new complexities for the series. As a result of these rare successes in both character & plot development, while retaining her now trademark gritty realism in a world of vivid paranormal surrealism that leaves readers irresistibly invested in the future of Sky Brooks and her shadowy world of dangerously enticing characters (including Chris, the human woman straddling two worlds with a success Sky can only envy), McKenzie Hunter *Darkness Unchained* earns another solid 4 out of 5 stars and a call for more of this series!

I simply can't understand why this series has gotten good reviews. I truly tried to enjoy this series but alas I had to give up. My list of grievances:1. Difficult to determine who the main characters are.2. The author is all over the place, doesn't seem to know what direction she wants her characters to go.3. Duo POV was a terrible idea, as the author made us dislike Chris in the first book and now she seems like the main character in this second book.4.I have not connected with Skylar as she is frustrating and doesn't really stick up for herself and demand answers. She's a werewolf she should at least have some backbone and predator instincts even though she represses them.5. The editing is atrocious. Author needs to find an editor that will take the time to edit.6. These books are way too drawn out. Each books tries to relay what the previous book was about with too much detail. I've already read the previous books just give a small snippet of what happened.7. The first book was okay and I was a little intrigued with how Skylar & Ethan's budding romance will end up however this book killed my intrigue.I recommend authors; K.F. Breene, Ilona Andrews, Dannika Dark and Jane Washington. These authors are amazing and you will love their series.

I enjoyed this second book, but every time the point of view went from Skylar to Chris the hunter, it was like walking along smoothly and suddenly stumbling, making you jerk! Since most of the book went back and forth like this, it made me wonder why Chris didn't just have her own point-of-view story instead, so this book would flow more smoothly? I am hoping the next book goes back to only Skylar's story!

I was not expecting Darkness Unchained to focus less on Sky as much as it did but Ms. Hunter did an excellent job explaining the different creatures and showing the importance of alliances among them. I love to hate the humane views that Sky hold on to so dearly that make her do things that leave you wondering, "what in the world was going through her head." With Sky trying to find the good in everyone and being so eager to find out more info, I come to really like the vampire who goes by Quell. Quell and Sky's bond is so unusual I can't wait to see where it goes or if it has any affect to who their alliance is to. Chris (not my favorite character) was a major focal point in this book. Ms. Hunter had Chris go through so much, yet I never once felt any empathy for her. I actually found myself wondering how Chris would respond to the series of events that she had encountered since she was not one to let things go unpunished. This book kept my interest so much that I started the 3rd book immediately after.

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