



# Sisters Red

Books Reviewed:

[Sisters Red](#) [1]

Issue:

[184](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Geoff Fox](#) [3]

Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

Red Riding Hood appears and reappears all over the world as everything from innocent muppet to teasing TV Commercial for Chanel No.5. Here, her personality is split between the March sisters, Scarlett and Rosie, united in their hatred of the Fenris, werewolves who slaughter young women in their neck of the woods in Deep South Georgia. They saw their grandmother killed by a travelling salesman werewolf who knocked at their cottage door when they were small. Scarlett slew that Fenris, at the cost of an eye and lurid scars on her face. From that time on, her life is dedicated to killing Fenris; she is deadly with a hatchet. Her beautiful younger sister's weapons of choice are a pair of hunting knives, but her role is also to serve as delectable bait for the werewolves. She is less single-minded than Scarlett. When their friend Silas, whose own hunting skills derive from his woodsman father, returns from a yearlong trip to San Francisco, there's room in the hearts of Rosie and Silas for each other.

The difference between the sisters, whose hearts once beat as one, is emphasised by the perspectives offered by chapters in which the girls alternate as narrators. There are numerous bloody encounters with werewolves, especially when the three hunters move to Atlanta to intensify their efforts ? things are getting urgent, since the wolf pack is searching for the Potential, a human who, when the moon is in the right phase, can be transformed by a single bite into a rapacious monster. The problem here, though, may be that one fatal punch-up with a werewolf reads much like another, and despite the gory subject matter and a narration which adopts the fashionable breathlessly dramatic present, the tension slackens. The identity of the Potential, given a cast of only three main characters, is not hard to guess and the reader's interest shifts to the relationships between the three protagonists.

It's a truism that vampires and werewolves are rampant in children's books; and publishers will mine any successful vein to exhaustion. This novel is so explicit that little space is left for the unspoken fantasies and fears which have charged the LRRH myth for over 300 years; here, the seductive threats of rape and violence are ever present. The novel may well develop a substantial following; a look at the **Twilight** saga will demonstrate that poor writing and plotting are no constraint to sales figures.

If you like the notion of a (literally) all-singing, all-dancing author ? or think your young readers will ? then it's worth checking out Jackson Pearce's home page and You Tube clips. It seems she's giving **Hansel and Gretel** the treatment next.

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