



## Ruffskin

*Megan Derr*

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An ordinary rainy day at the Bremen is interrupted when a strange courier shows up with a package for Peyton Blue, the Bremen's much-loved owner and bartender. When the package turns out to be a piece of Peyton's past and brings that past violently into the present, it is up to Johnnie to resolve a years old problem and put the past where it belongs once and for all.

## Ruffskin Details

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Author : Megan Derr

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## From Reader Review Ruffskin for online ebook

### Ami says

#### 3.5 stars

This sidestory to Dance in the Dark (Dance with the Devil, #2) is a short case related to the mysterious package sent to Peyton Blue, Bremen's bartender.

It's really good to read Johnnie and Grimm again -- and to read how Johnnie can still be grumpy (the story is opened with Johnnie being totally jealous of Grimm's ex \*grin), while Grimm is patiently loving him. I love these two!! Unfortunately, it is not quite long enough story related to Peyton himself (related to his past, to the man he loved). I would love to read more (a spin off?) solely about Peyton.

However, as a side story, this one is quite lovely.

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### Arthur says

#### Full 5 stars

Johnnie and Grimm is my favorite couple, so I'm happy to read this. While the story is about Peyton, the wolf who was a bartender in Johnnie's bar, the story follows The couple's actions. There was a mutiny in Peyton's former pack, and his former lover, Hudson, was involved. A very dire crime was committed. It's up to Johnnie and Grimm to solve it.

A beautifully done story. Very dark topic that is seldom found in m/m stories. Yet, the banters and closeness between Johnnie and Grimm are still there and make the story lighter. I love it when they quote Shakespeare!

Kudos to Ms. Derr!

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### Mandy\*reads obsessively\* says

Johnnie and Grimm are great, and I was happy to see them again.

This story was theirs even if Peyton and Ruff were reunited again, they just didn't have any real on page time.

Ms Derr dealt with a horrible issue very carefully and with sensitivity.

Definitely recommended for fans of Dance in the Dark.

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### Achim says

#### 3.5

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### **Amanda says**

A strange figure comes into Bremen looking for the bartender, Peyton. Now Johnnie is tracking the stranger to solve a mystery that goes back to Peyton's old pack.

This short story is the perfect little quick read and follows Dance in the Dark nicely.

\*You need to read Dance in the Dark before reading Ruffskin

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### **Erin \*Proud Book Hoarder\* says**

A fun short story since I'm still not ready to let go of the points of view of Johnnie and Grimm. Prince Charming was a well done and brief short story as well, but it was mainly an erotic scene tossed in. With Ruffskin there is the story as well with Peyton and pack Blue, we get The Dracula a few times (would love a full length with him, especially if it involved Phil.) The backstory behind the pack struggles is quite dark and not usually plot device used. It was fun to see stuffy Johnny and Grimm again, especially in the bar setting. If only there could be one more novel with them as the focus at least. \*sighs\*

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### **L-D says**

This was a cute little short from the Dance with the Devil series by Megan Derr. Specifically, it is an offshoot of Dance in the Dark where we met Johnnie, the adopted son of the Dracula, and Grimm, his reaper boyfriend. In this short, Peyton Blue, the werewolf bartender of Johnnie's bar, Bremen, is given a Rolex from a mysterious stranger. Johnnie must solve the mystery of the Rolex and find its owner.

This was a good story, although short. I enjoyed it as a medium for giving me more of the characters I loved in Dance in the Dark.

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• \* ° \*•**Gwendolyn•°\*\*\*★°\*\*\*★ says**

4 Stars~

### **I Don't think I'll ever get enough of Johnnie and Grimm~**

So why only 4 stars, when I love Johnnie and Grimm and can never get enough~

Ruffskin....The book, well I did not feel fulfilled" Ruffskin" and Peyton's story some of their pages seem missing~

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## Teeny says

If you want to read a story about Peyton's love life this ain't it. This is the story of the mystery about Peyton's old lover reappearance and completion of an old promise than anything else.

Don't get me wrong Peyton and Ruff end up together but it fades to black with no details given. It's more a continuation of Johnnie and Bergrin's story than Peyton's, pity 'cos I liked Peyton and I'd have loved to read a short story for his HEA.

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## Janette says

### Short but sweet

A short read but a good one. Truly enjoyable to know more about peyton. I highly recommend this book to others who have enjoyed the previous books in this series

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## Cole Riann says

Review posted at Brief Encounters Reviews.

The Dance with the Devil series has several books that are only loosely related to one another by worldbuilding, so *Ruffskin* follows immediately after *Dance in the Dark* and deals with the same characters. It is important to read that novel first, because this short story does not stand on its own. All of the character building and relationships are forged in the novel, and I would have been lost if I had not read it first. I was still a bit lost, actually, when I started this. I love this series, but *Dance in the Dark* was one of my very favorites, and even then I had a hard time remembering which storyline and characters went with which when you compile all of the different plots and characters over the series. But once I was reacquainted, I was so happy to revisit Johnnie and Grim.

Though the blurb makes it seem as if Peyton is the MC in this story, that really isn't the case. As readers of the series will know, in *Dance in the Dark* each chapter is set up as a new case for Johnnie, orphaned and raised in an extremely powerful vampire family. In the novel, he was wooed by a secret lover in the dark (Grim) while striking away from his family to do what he really loved and what gave him purpose, solving mysteries in the paranormal world.

*Ruffskin* could easily have fit into the novel as one of those chapters, which are often separate and slowly tying into the overall plot. In the story, we once again see Johnnie and Grim bickering in the bar Johnnie owns, when a delivery man comes with a package for Peyton, the bartender. In the package is a Rolex with the inscription "*To Peyt, Love Ruff,*" sending Peyton into a worried frenzy over an old love and revealing the secrets behind his flee from Pack Blue and his current reason for being a lone wolf given sanctuary on vampire territory. Once again, Johnnie sets off to solve the case, with his "babysitter" Grim tagging along.

This is definitely a story for fans of this series, as you really can't just read this story and understand the characters without the backstory. But it works really well as it is. Johnnie is such a wonderful character. When he could come across as extremely prickly and haughty, having been raised a prince of an empire of vampires who definitely loves his status and all it brings him, he's also at heart empathetic and passionate about those he cares for. Grimm is a character that no one could hate. He's laid back even though one of the most powerful and rare creatures in the world. He's lovable and loyal uses every opportunity to ruffle Johnnie's feathers. They're a great couple and revisiting them here was a treat.

For such a short story, I felt the mystery worked well here. It's not a terribly difficult case for Johnnie to solve, and rightly so at only 9k words. So I wasn't expecting a huge new adventure, and the mystery worked well for me by serving as the reason for all of the old gang in the novel to come back together.

This is definitely a treat for fans of the series, and if you haven't read the series yet, I'd encourage you to. These books are some of my favorites by Megan Derr, though they're all rather different. Reading order will vary by who you talk to, but as long as you read *Dance with the Devil* and *Dance in the Dark* in that order, the rest doesn't matter as much. B+

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### **ttg says**

A fun short story sequel to Derr's *Dance in the Dark*. Here, we revisit with the Dracula's adopted, mystery-solving son Johnnie, his protective bodyguard/love interest Grim, and the rest of the Bremen bar crew as they face a mystery around a missing werewolf, one from lone wolf Peyton's past.

At around 9,000 words, it's a pretty quick read, but still very fun to visit again with these characters, especially Johnnie and Grim, who so much love to bicker with each other just as much as they love to make out when they have the chance. I could read a whole other novel with them--I love reading their back-and-forth and totally dig their exasperated chemistry.

I do recommend reading *Dance in the Dark* before this. It's a great paranormal romance novel, and you'll get way more out of this short story if you read that book first.

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### **Melanie says**

Rating: 5 stars

It is a typical night at The Bremmer, it's pouring outside and Johnny is arguing with Grimm inside over an alleged flirtation at a party they just left. A messenger interrupts them looking for Peyton Blue, the werewolf coowner and bartender of The Bremmer. The strange courier has a package to deliver, one that has an immediate effect on their beloved barkeep. When Grimm chases after the courier, he disappears under a magical spell.

The package is from Peyton's past, bringing with it bloody memories and a death sentence. It is up to Johnny and Grimm to find the messenger, and finish the conflict started years ago when Peyton still belonged in the Blue Pack.

Ruffskin is a short story that follows the characters of Dance in the Dark (Dance with the Devil #2), Johnny Goodnight and his boyfriend/guard Grimm, and their friend Peyton Blue, a werewolf. Without reading Dance in the Dark, you will miss the backstory on all the characters involved in the case here which would be a mistake and leave you confused as to the elements involved in Ruffskin. That said, this is a marvelous addition to that universe. Most of the denizens of The Bremmer, local bar and hangout, have interesting pasts and it's bartender and owner is no different.

Of course, it is a dark and stormy night that brings Peyton's past home to him, a past he has tried so very hard to forget and one that could cause his death. Johnny Goodnight is none other than John Derossiers, son of The Dracula Derossiers who rules the territory they live in. When the mystery and conflict from Peyton's past intrudes on the bar and his father's land, Johnny is called in to investigate and solve the problem. And what a problem it is. A dreadful dark secret that is at the heart of the chaos in the Blue werewolf pack. This is a very sensitive subject matter that Megan Derr gives a delicate and compassionate treatment, identifying the matter through the use of a poem instead of outright stating the nature of the abuse. Simply and elegantly done.

Ruffskin contains all the usual elements I have come to expect from Megan Derr. Great characterizations, smart dialog and a storyline that keeps the reader engaged right to the end. Ruffskin is listed as the fourth book in the Dance With The Devil series but the author states at the beginning that this story fits in right after the second book as I have noted above. While Midnight could almost be read as a stand alone (it figures into the books that follow it), the first three books should be read in the order I have indicated below:

Dance With The Devil (DWTD#1) – see my review at <http://scatteredthoughtsandroguewords...>

Dance In The Dark (DWTD#2) – see my review at the site above.

Ruffskin (DWTD#4)

Midnight (DWTD#3) – see my review at the site listed above.

Cover: Again another gorgeous cover by London Burden in keeping with the series and containing a simple graphic of a object center to the storyline.

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## **Sammy Goode says**

In the delightful short story, Ruffskin, Megan Derr once more gives us the delicious dup of Johnny (a near “norml” part time detective that was raised by Vampires) and Grim (yes—the Grim Reaper—collector of souls). I LOVE these two characters—both of which were introduced in their own spectacular book, Dance in the Dark.

When we left Johnny and Grim, they had become a happily established couple, who were deeply in love and quite possibly the feistiest duo around. I was so glad to see Johnny's penchant for hitting Grim when he got frustrated at him was once again in full force and, of course, Grim's sanguine response still intact as well! These two not only finished each other's obscure literary quotes and thoughts with ease—they are, simply put, the most delightful couple to grace the pages of an m/m paranormal romance story ever!

In this the fourth installment of the Dance with the Devil series, Johnny gives aide to his bartender, Peyton, a wolf of the infamous “blue” pack that was featured in one of the stories in the first novel of the series. We come to find out that Peyton was in love with the alpha’s son--that would be the same alpha that Peyton killed, and the reason that Peyton left the pack and sought out Johnny’s father, The Dracula, for shelter and safety.

Hudson, who had been living with his mother is also on the run and may have been the assassin that killed that same mother. Many heinous acts are alluded to in this short story and you must read the novella to understand them more fully. Suffice it to say the “acts” perpetrated by Hudson’s mother is the reason for his being on the run.

In a bizarre turn of events, Hudson’s pack actually wants him back so that he can now become the alpha—only Peyton stands in their way—for they have tracked Hudson’s last known whereabouts to Johnny’s bar after a disguised Hudson drops by to leave something for Peyton. Johnny and Grim take off to find Hudson before his pack.

Ruffskin is a whirlwind tale that really packed a punch! In true Megan Derr fashion, the twists and turns in this story led us from one place to another, continually surprising and delighting us as each new element was exposed! Be forewarned—this is not a standalone story. Unlike the others thus far, this story really hinges on the reading of the second installment in this series in order to make complete sense!

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### **Mandi says**

This was AWESOME. Loved seeing Johnnie and Grim again. :)

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