

## Baby Teeth

**Meg Grehan**

Little Island (May 31, 2022)

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In Meg Grehan's compelling novel in verse *Baby Teeth*, a vampire falls for a human and decides how far to take her desires for love and blood.

Immy is one of a trio of vampires. Unlike the vampires of legends, they live again and again, in new lives and bodies, keeping the secrets of their other lives. They try to live without drawing attention to themselves or drawing human blood directly from its source, but their desire for blood, and the echoes of the voices who once drank it, pulses through every moment. So it is that, when Immy first meets Claudia, who's working at a flower shop, her attraction is immediate. Still, Immy has to decide whether to act on her desires, as well as how much of herself and her history she can reveal.

The poetic narration is immediate, immersive, and comes sans punctuation; there are pauses for breath without the need of the latter. Often, words and phrases repeat to indicate an overwhelm of emotion on Immy's part; the effect is powerful.

The backstory of the vampires, and of how they achieve their new lives and bodies, is never fully explained, but the hints at explanations are tantalizing. Henry and Freddie, Immy's two companion vampires, once lived a life in which they loved each other; regardless of those lives, they always find and try to protect each other. This new version of vampirehood makes the creatures much more vulnerable, particularly as each of their lives is haunted by the vague memories of past mistakes that impact them in the present.

*Baby Teeth* is an unexpected LGBTQ+ novel in verse; it takes elements of horror and mixes them with romance, resulting in a changeling of a book that reimagines vampire myths for the twenty-first century.

CAMILLE-YVETTE WELSCH (May / June 2022)

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