

## Glitter and Mayhem

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*This exceptional collection takes readers on an illuminating road trip encompassing the scope of modern American pop culture.*

One thing that the new anthology, *Glitter and Mayhem*, will never stand accused of is subtlety. Not that that's necessarily a bad thing, mind you. But for everyone save the most pop culturally naive, all it should take is but one glance at its cover—emblazoned with the image of a rollerblading fembot and her entourage, all adorned in swaths of garish neon pastels and lime green spotlight flares—to instantly understand what this volume is dedicated to, at least on the surface, trashy, alt lifestyle, mash-up fun.

According to Amber Benson's introduction, that's exactly what it's all about: providing the reader insider access to “the roller derby-disco ball-sex, drugs, and glam rock ‘n’ roll-alien-debauched-glitter-party monster EXTRAVAGANZA of the ages.” And, yes, *Glitter and Mayhem* proves it's all that and more.

From the defiant opening salvo of “Sister Twelve: Confessions of a Party Monster,” in which Christopher Barzak introduces a princess who yearns to do nothing more than club her nights away in defiance of both tradition and rank, to Rachel Swirsky's radical, even transgressive, reimagining of the Cinderella myth, “All That Fairytale Crap,” which closes this exceptional collection, the reader is taken on an entertaining and illuminating fictional road trip that encompasses a fair amount of the modern pop and trash cultural landscape of these United States.

Courtesy of Maria Dahvana Headley and Tansy Rayner Roberts, respectively, there are stories essaying a young couple's courtship with their favorite cocktails and chronicling the events which reveal a Roller Skate Queen's truly epic life's purpose (“Such & Such Said to So & So” and “The Monitor Girls”). Tim Pratt's “Revels in the Land of Ice” details an ill-considered attempt to steal a bittersweet taste of immortality from the table of gods, while “Just Another Future Song,” by Daryl Gregory, presents the final, very strange afterlife of a Glam Rock God.

Each one of these tales, as well as the rest of this solid collection, effectively encapsulates and presents a unique and fascinating world peopled by characters who remain wholly relatable despite any real differences in attitude, lifestyle, sexual orientation, etc., they might have with the reader.

Still, while this collection will appeal to many, it does contain various scenes featuring adult content. Therefore, this is not a collection for those who prefer that their reading material remains free of profanity and sexually explicit scenes, however believable or appropriate their use may be.

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