FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Clarion Review

Romance

Just Jane: Wicked Wild West

P. T. Koi
Amazon Digital Services
eBook $0.99 (73pp)
978-1-940338-00-2
★★★★☆
(Nov 12, 2013)

A strong and independent woman in the Wild West inspires and entertains while supernatural forces stalk the frontier.

P. T. Koi crafts a quirky tale with a perky heroine in *Just Jane: Wicked Wild West*. In an entertaining mishmash of genres, the spirited protagonist fights werewolves, vampires, and average men in her Western frontier town as she pursues personal and financial independence.

Jane, novice bounty hunter, has an independent streak that not only sets her up as a fish out of water in Brimstone, but also manages to place her in various life-threatening situations. From tracking a dangerous werewolf to fighting off vampires, Jane shows a bravery and single-mindedness even the town sheriff lacks. When rival bounty hunter Jasper Dimes steals her captured prize and leaves her uncharacteristically helpless, Jane vows revenge. Unfortunately, vengeance will have to wait until she deals with an amorous new doctor in town and a group of murderous vampires.

Koi packs a respectable amount of action into this novella, and the tale flows smoothly and swiftly, following Jane as she struggles to gain and maintain her place in a man's world. Though her brief stint as one of the girls in the local bordello hasn't turned her away from enjoying recreational sex, she clearly has no desire to be someone else's entertainment; instead, she makes her own choices about who she becomes intimate with and how she handles the encounter. Although the time period is never firmly stated, it is apparent that Jane's predilection for trousers and bounty hunting is at odds with the gowns and expected choices for female employment. Many will find her liberated persona appealing.

The paranormal aspect is a bit disconcerting when paired with the Western genre, but

some may find the Wild West atmosphere and battle against supernatural beings to be a refreshing combination. The brevity of the story does not allow for a great deal of development of the enigmatic werewolves and vampires that plague the town, but this installment serves to intrigue and will likely draw readers into the next one. Though billed as a romance, the romantic elements take a backseat to the action and the progression of Jane's character.

Overall characterization is satisfactory, and Jane's personality is revealed effectively through the plot. Her ability to move past negative events and maintain her individuality as she works toward her goals makes it easy to root for this interesting character. Her nemesis, Jasper Dimes, also intrigues as hints of his past and a deeper, more honorable personality begin to emerge. The dialogue is effective, though some may find the western speech of the characters a bit too colloquial, such as "I ain't done nothin'," "it ain't right," and similar phrasing typical of Old West depictions.

While *Just Jane: Wicked Wild West* is an entertaining weekend read, the frank treatment of sexual encounters is intended for a more mature audience who will not be put off by Jane's matter-of-fact musings about sex and the intimate aspects of nude male bodies. Those who choose to tag along on Jane's adventure are sure to be well entertained and inspired to learn more in Koi's upcoming sequel.

Jeannine Chartier Hanscom