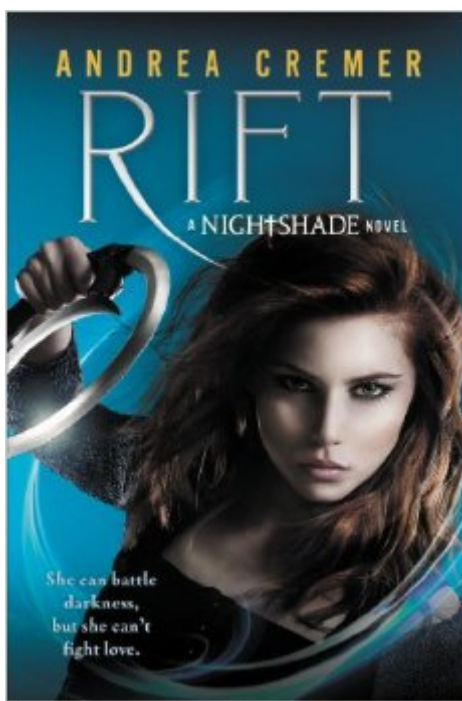


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Rift (Nightshade Prequels)



Synopsis

Chronicling the rise of the Keepers, this is the stunning prequel to Andrea Cremer's internationally bestselling Nightshade trilogy! Sixteen-year-old Ember Morrow is promised to a group called Conatus after one of their healers saves her mother's life. Once she arrives, Ember finds joy in wielding swords, learning magic, and fighting the encroaching darkness loose in the world. She also finds herself falling in love with her mentor, the dashing, brooding, and powerful Barrow Hess. When the knights realize Eira, one of their leaders, is dabbling in dark magic, Ember and Barrow must choose whether to follow Eira into the nether realm or to pledge their lives to destroying her and her kind. With action, adventure, magic, and tantalizing sensuality, this book is as fast-paced and breathtaking as the Nightshade novels."A great new book that will leave you breathless." •
â "Romantic Times

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Andrea Cremer is in a tricky position with RIFT. Those who read the original trilogy know exactly where things are going. But new readers, like protagonist Ember, are new to this world. Cremer must try to satisfy both sets of readers. Ember is a noblewoman pledged to Conatus since one of their healers saved her and her mother during a difficult birth. She's perfectly happy to join the monastic order, but her father would prefer to marry her off in order to forge an alliance. But Conatus is not any old order. The members secretly fight against witches whose dark magic imperils the entire world. And one of the highest ranked members, Eira, is being tempted by that magic. I

enjoyed that there wasn't a love triangle in RIFT. There are two guys in Ember's life, but one she's actively pursuing and the other doesn't understand the word no. I don't consider that a love triangle, although some might. It's a scarily realistic part of the book, relevant to issues today despite being set in medieval times. Alistair is the ultimate Nice Guy.* While there is nothing wrong with being nice, Nice Guys think that being a girl's friend entitles them to have sex with her. Since Ember tries to remain his friend after shooting him down, Alistair still thinks he has a chance and doesn't back off. It's classic creeper behavior and I wish it weren't so recognizable. But I do wish we got a little less of Ember learning to use her weapons and hanging out with Barrow and Alistair. Nightshade trilogy readers might already know about Eira and her twin Cian, but they're still the most interesting figures in the story. They're the people who go down in history. But despite having a few chapters through their points of view, they remain ciphers. Eira is motivated by power.

In *Rift: A Nightshade Novel*, the prequel to Andrea Cremer's Nightshade series, readers get a glimpse into the origins of the Keepers and the Witches War of the 15th century. The daughter of a noble, Ember Morrow must leave her family after her 16th birthday to serve the mysterious order of Conatus. Though most fear the knights, Ember readily embraces the life of battle and purpose the order provides. Once training begins, she finds not only her skills tested, but also her wit and her heart. Dark powers soon start to infiltrate the group, and Ember must decide where and with whom her allegiances lie. Though I had a rocky relationship with Cremer's other Nightshade books, I really enjoyed RIFT once I got past some slow parts in the beginning. Ember was an able and spirited protagonist with a strong sense of self. Though a bit reckless at times, she doesn't complain or expect others to rescue her. Action scenes were well-described and plentiful, and the author's prose painted beautiful images of the Scottish highlands cloaked in gray fog. The slow-building romance was another highlight with its swoon-worthy love interest who was both strong and masculine but also considerate and effusive. Even though it's a prequel, RIFT can also be read on its own as the satisfying start to a new series, and the story ends in a place where a reader can look forward to the next installment without being left on a terrible cliffhanger. As mentioned, RIFT was slow to start, however, and I felt bogged down during the first 100 pages by some character interactions and historical information that wasn't always clearly explained.

It's no big secret that I love Andrea Cremer's books - her debut, NIGHTSHADE, was my book obsession of 2010, and I enjoyed the whole series so I was very much looking forward to reading RIFT when I heard about it and knew it was a prequel series. The nice thing about RIFT, as a

prequel, is that you can read it without having read the NIGHTSHADE series books, but if you have read them, you'll see some of the connections being made hundreds of years in the past. I have to say that I think this was my favorite of Andrea Cremer's books and I thoroughly enjoyed reading it. I'm a sucker for strong female main characters, and Ember is a kick-butt heroine who is strong and determined (another trademark of Cremer's books). She's not willing to just go along with the status quo, she wants a better (and more interesting) life for herself. She does have vulnerability, too, in fact, the relationship she builds with her horse is really special. I'm not normally a horse person, but the way in which their horses were their own characters in this story, and so important to the people, added a dimension of relationships to this story that was unexpected. As per usual in Andrea Cremer's books, there is a cast of intriguing, entertaining, maddening, and interesting supporting characters as well. There is also action in this book with the training scenes and the fighting, but I was almost wishing there were more training scenes. I wanted more fighting with the awesome weapons that come up in this story and the way in which Ember was trained by Barrow was a great way to build tension and develop their relationship. Speaking of their relationship, one thing I was wondering was how old Barrow actually is.

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