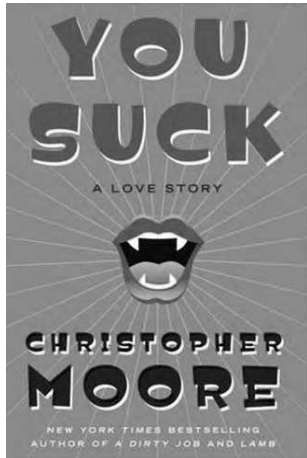


# Bloody Glorious

Moore's latest tale of the city plus more books with bite

**YOU SUCK: A Love Story**, fiction by Christopher Moore. William Morrow, 2007. Hardcover, \$21.95.

**T**he thing with Christopher Moore seems to be that he's damn funny, or, in this case, *damned* funny. *Lamb*, his combination empathetic and milk-shooting-out-the-nostrils hilarious 2002 novel subtitled *The Gospel According to Biff, Christ's Childhood Pal* (worth a chuckle right there), might have made him more famous even than his more recent holiday standard, 2004's *The Stupidest Angel*. Those of us who have had to sit through many readings of the four traditional gospels and those of us who grew up knowing any combination of *The Little Match Girl*, *The Littlest Angel* (a story during which my mother can only weep), *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and/or *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* understand Moore's tremendous appeal.



Jesus, Christmas, angels — what's next on the popularity list for Moore? Vampires, of course. His novels, reminiscent of Terry Pratchett's Discworld gems, shouldn't only be taken for their wild plots, hilarious one-liners, snappy dialogue and zany characters. They also dig into ethical matters related to life, death, sex, love and eternal, bronzed lust. *You Suck* follows the exploits of two characters introduced in *Bloodsucking Fiends*, something I wish I'd known for the amusement value before I started *You Suck*. Apparently, characters from 2006's *A Dirty Job* also appear, which adds one more to my To Be Read pile (luckily, the usual Moore novel takes a couple of hours to read). In *You Suck*, Moore fills in the backstory easily, so those of us without killer serial instincts won't miss much.

Tommy Flood, a 19-year-old fresh from a small town in Indiana, has fallen in love with one of San Francisco's many singularities: a gorgeous vampire named Jody. Although he used to hunt vampires with the help of his buddies who also work the nightshift at the Marina Safeway (which plays a prominent role, to the amusement of anyone who knows its reputation as a hookup site), he's now become a Lord of the Night himself. Will his former buddies sell him out now that they've spent all their hard-stolen vampire-hunting cash on a blue-skinned courtesan from Las Vegas? What will Tommy do with his 16-year-old minion Abby? Will Abby get her

wish to become a "vampyre," or will she find herself distracted by a super-hot normal dude? And what will Jody, whose system can't handle anything but blood, do without coffee? The dilemmas inherent to being undead and needing to feed provide a lively background for Moore's cast of endearing characters.

Speaking of books about the undead, let me mention a few that stalk the shelves of the library. For some reason best epitomized by Moore's characters Abby and her friend Jared, certain people become attracted to vampire lore. Of course, there's the mistress of vampirism, the one responsible for more bad fan fiction and terrible sex scenes than anyone but the people writing fan fiction about her characters: Anne Rice. I never got beyond *The Vampire Lestat*, the second book in her insanely popular oeuvre, but I'm clearly not in the majority. For adults who like their maps and archives spattered in gore, Elizabeth Kostova's

*The Historian*, which mixes Cold War history, tales of the Byzantine Empire and gruesome stories of Count Dracula, ran a bit too long but attained bestseller status nonetheless.

There's the über-romantic, torridly overwritten yet highly compelling to older teens series by Stephenie Meyer starting with the doorstop *Twilight* and continuing with *New Moon* (with two more books planned). These books chronicle an adventure in frustrated lust and star-crossed lovers drenched in the rain of the Olympic Peninsula (and drowning in self-indulgent schlock). For young readers who like their lords of the night books shorter, punchier and more action-oriented, Darren Shan's *Saga of Darren Shan* series provides 12 tasty plot-dominated treats. And Scott Westerfeld's smart *Peeps* casts vampires as saviors of the world. But the best of the bunch is M.T. Anderson's *Thirsty*. Anderson, who won a National Book Award this year for his riveting *Octavian Nothing* (reviewed 12/14), envisions a world where people don't know they're vampires until suddenly, one day, it all becomes clear. Family members and former peers start to shun and then want to murder those cursed with this difference. A powerful metaphor for painful self-discovery as well as an often hilarious, poignant romp, *Thirsty*'s a stand-alone standout. **EW**

Christopher Moore reads from *You Suck* at 7 pm Tuesday, Jan. 23 at Powell's in Beaverton.

**BOOK NOTES:** **margareta waterman** reads from *iteration*, her 30-year retrospective, 5:30 pm 1/20, Tsunami Books. **Vendela Vida** reads from *Let The Northern Lights Erase Your Name*, 7:30 pm 1/22, Powell's on Burnside, Portland. **William Fox** reads from *Making Time*, 7 pm 1/23, Knight Library, UO. **Christopher Moore** reads, 7 pm 1/23, Powell's, Beaverton. **Kevin Brockmeier** reads from *The Brief History of the Dead*, 7:30 pm 1/23, Powell's on Burnside, Portland. Oregon Book Awards Author Tour: **Andrew Bernstein** (*Modern Passings*), **Kristin Kaye** (*Iron Maidens*), **Geronimo Tagatac** (*The Weight of the Sun*) and **Matt Yurdana** (*Public Gestures*) read, 7 pm 1/25, Tsunami Books. **Norah Vincent** reads from *Self-Made Man*, 7:30 pm 1/25, Powell's on Burnside, Portland. Authors **Marx Vassallo**, **William Sullivan** and **Lizzie Grossman** appear at the Good Earth Home, Living and Garden Show 1/27-1/28 at the Lane County Fairgrounds. **Martha Gies** speaks on "Where Imagination Meets the World: The Role of Research in Fiction and Nonfiction," 6:30 pm 2/1, Baker Downtown Center. \$10; Willamette Writers members free.

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