



A Kiss of Venom

Hailey Edwards

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All's fair in love and murder...

Araneae Nation, Book 3.5

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When Nicolette is offered a contract she can't refuse, she returns to Erania with deadly intentions. Her secrets are safe behind the façade she created. Or they would be if Armand would stop chipping at the cracks in her veneer.

One kiss ignites an old flame, and suddenly their history is in danger of repeating. Armand falls for Nicolette's charade, but she can't let a second chance at happiness distract her from her mission. Someone in the Araneidae nest is marked for death, and Nicolette aims to deliver.

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A Kiss of Venom Details

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From Reader Review A Kiss of Venom for online ebook

Jen Davis says

I really enjoyed this novella. I probably liked it more than any Araneae Nation story I have read in awhile. The reason: it feels like the series went back to its roots. We're taking a break from the plague and the zombie infection thing and we're refocusing on Maven Loures' clan. Specifically, it's the second chance at love story for her brother Armand and the only woman he has ever cared about.

Nicollete once loved Armand with all of her heart, but when she was caught in his bed 10 years ago, her life changed forever. Armand's family told her she was unfit to be his wife. The heir to the throne needed to marry someone of better lineage. When she found out she was pregnant, things got even worse. She was tossed out of her clan and Armand was told she was dead.

Now, she makes ends meet however she can, including assassination work. Her latest target is Armand's sister, Pascale. But this is no simple mission. Armand is taking an interest in her and her real identity is at risk. Can she juggle her lies with her daughter's safety and the feelings she still has for the child's father?

Hailey Edwards does a great job getting me inside Nicollete's head. I understood exactly where she was coming from and why she felt the way she did. I was a little surprised at how quickly things progressed between her and Armand, but I did like reading their scenes together. There was good tension and believable emotions... plus just enough bedroom action to satisfy. My only complaint was (view spoiler)

I liked giving the larger series arc a break and getting back to the romance.

**ARC Provided by author for review*

Anna says

Armand & Nicolette's story was an excellent read. Their past history had me absolutely intrigued. With each page I was eager to find out more about them. His out right flirting and her unwanted jealous was just fun. A Kiss of Venom was exactly what I needed. I was in a bit of a reading slump and it certainly refreshed me. With the Araneae Nation Ms. Edwards has created vast and dangerous world. But is also shines with love and hope. This was a sweet story, I definitely recommend this one.

While this was a fun and fast read, I don't consider it a stand alone. I would suggest reading the previous books.

D.C. says

So I'll give this one credit. At least the got it on before the end this time but again nothing was fully resolved at the end. They agree to try but there's no real ending to me.

Khristine Stain says

How in the carnival of f*** does a woman so thoroughly wronged forgive them all so easily? The nest should have been burnt to cinders. The 'Hero' should have lived the rest of his life as a eunuch. There's my alternate ending.

Douglas Meeks says

I really did not expect very much from this novella since it was only around 100+ pages but the story was done well, no real details were left out, the reader is kept involved at almost all time.

The problem in trying to review this is there is nothing I can really add that is not in the synopsis already. This is a story of love, hate and revenge only none of those emotions seem to play out the way you would expect (and I loved it).

This is a story you can finish in one night but unless you have read the first 3 books you will be lost for most of the story so do not start with this novella, go back and grab A Hint of Frost (book 1) and enjoy this riveting series which is a series of fantasy romances with a common overarching story to back it up.

5 Stars for such a great story in so few pages. Reading order below:

A Hint of Frost, Book One
A Feast of Souls, Book Two
A Cast of Shadows, An Araneae Nation Novella
A Time of Dying, Book Three
A Kiss of Venom, An Araneae Nation Novella
A Breath of Winter, Book Four
A Veil of Secrets, Book Five - Coming Soon!

Netanella says

I didn't quite enjoy this book as much as I have the other books in the series so far, so I'm giving it a 'meh' 3 stars. It was nice to finally (I hope) put an end to the zombie-plague plot line that has been perambulating along for the past couple of books. It was nice to get back to Maven Lourdes and Rhys and the Araneidea that started it all. But damn it, it's been so long since I've read the first book that it was more difficult than I expected to get back into the swing of things. Once I remembered who did what, and where, and when, I enjoyed the book much more. Part of the appeal of Hailey's writing style, for me anyway, is a sense of otherness, as if a layer of gossamer spider silk has overlaid the entire narrative of her world-building and made the world shimmer in a slightly out-of-focus lens. That sensation came across strongly for me in this book, which may have been why I felt a little disjointed reading it. Either that, or I drank too much wine last night.

Deelylah Mullin says

4.5 stars. Review originally published 2/17/14 at twimom227.com. I received a copy of this title for an honest review.

It's no secret I'm a big fan of the world created by Hailey Edwards in her Araneae Nation series. When I was offered the opportunity to read this novella, I was quite excited to get back to the Araneidae people. I love Lourdes and Rhys, and even catching glimpses of them made my day. I also am quite fond of Henri, as he plays a major role in the fourth novel of the series (actually released before this novella).

Because of Anne Rice and *The Vampire Armand* (not to mention the contributions of Armand to *Interview with a Vampire*), I definitely have preconceived notions about every character I meet with that name. Seriously though? Ms. Edwards didn't disappoint! Appearing to be a playboy, he's used to having women clamoring to get in his bed. I picture Armand to be beautiful with lavender eyes – so beautiful, it hurts to gaze upon him for too long. How can someone resist his beauty? Nicolette certainly tried.

Nicolette certainly poured on the sexuality! Using her feminine wiles, she was definitely a powerful opponent throughout most of the story. With all the secrets ... Well, I think you'll need to read this tale to understand.

Arggh! The plot for this little novella certainly packed a punch. Everything is woven together intricately. The reader is strung along for the journey. The amazing way Ms. Edwards reveals truths. The character's inner conflict. The external conflict. Attraction, intrigue, deception. This title's got it all. Unfortunately, there's not a lot I can say about why I loved this novella without spoiling it for readers.

Whether you're new to the Araneidae people and the Araneae Nation series, or swore allegiance ages ago, this title could stand alone. But to achieve a greater appreciation, I recommend reading the titles in order. I see how this story fits in before the fourth novel, but reading it after the latest full-length story in the series didn't diminish my enjoyment whatsoever.

Rating: A -- Loved It

Jaclyn says

A Kiss of Venom is the latest installment in Hailey Edwards romantic fantasy series. The Araneae Nation series is one that has recently come to my attention and I've read most books in the series. With *A Kiss of Venom*, I highly recommend that you read the previous books in the series in order to get a full picture of the world that Edwards has created, without it you may feel lost.

A Kiss of Venom focuses on Lady Nicolette who has returned (in disguise) to her home. She's on a mission as an assassin and her mark is the sister of the man that she once loved. And while Nicolette does have reservations about her job, she is willing to do anything to protect the person most important to her: her daughter.

Overall, I thought this was a solid novella. I think you need to read the previous books to full appreciate A Kiss of Venom, as I think you would be confused as to how this society is set up as well as the characters that appear in here. The romance made sense, as the leads had a pre-existing relationship and I liked the fact that it proceeded at a relatively quick pace.

My one qualm with this story is the same one that has marred my enjoyment of the previous books in the series: no dual viewpoint. In a romance, I really feel that it's necessary to see both sides of the story because it can be very challenging to understand the feelings on both sides of the relationship. In each book, including *A Heart of Venom*, I continually find myself doubting the ultimate happily ever after between the hero and heroine. If I don't know what's going on in the hero's mind, how can I *not* doubt his affections? At the end of the day, this lack of dual point of view has made it hard for me to really love this series, but I do like it. There's a lot to like in the world that Edwards creates and I continually find it intriguing and at times repelling (especially with the clan that *eats* the dead of those they conquer).

If you've enjoyed the previous books, I do not doubt that you will love A Heart of Venom. If you're like me, and hoping to finally have a dual point of view, you will be disappointed. I would like to see what the author could do from the male perspective. She creates such fascinating heroes, and I would love to get inside their minds.

Marta Cox says

This is my second attempt at this series although admittedly the previous story I read about Lourdes was extremely short so I didn't really become totally enamoured. This book actually catches up with Maven Lourdes although now she is in charge of her clan following much upset and bloodshed. Her brother Armand once loved a girl who was considered unsuitable and sent away but unknown to all the girl is now a woman and she's back for revenge or is there more to Nicolette's mission?

So even though I wasn't expecting much I dove in and what a lovely surprise it was. Nicolette was an interesting character with both light and shade and it was very easy to understand her motivation. If honest I didn't particularly care for Armand but he certainly manned up towards the end. I do find these Araneae people to be a little difficult to imagine at times but certainly understood a lot more about their lives and how they live having read this book

Linda says

Nicolette is on a mission, coerced into trying to assassinate the Maven of Erania. Returning there brings her face to face with her past in a way she never thought would happen.

Armand, the Mavens brother, can't shake the feeling of recognition when Nicolette comes before the court. Why is she the one to awaken feelings he buried long ago?

A quick, great read. Novella in the Araneae world, with smutty fluff, action and suspense.

Juliet says

Not as good as the rest of the series thus far. Pretty decent story. Enjoying the world and world building so

far.

Quinesia Johnson says

I didn't care for this one much. I will admit, it read a little muddled to me during a good portion. It was like an overly excessive back and forth about Nicolette's reason for coming, and how she should proceed further with Lourdes, and the rest. This lasted like 20 or 30 pages. I feel like maybe a courtship, or imprisonment, or something needed to be added. In short, it was kind of boring.

E_bookpushers says

Review originally posted here: <http://thebookpushers.com/2014/02/07/...>

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How I got this book: ARC from the author

All's fair in love and murder...

Araneae Nation, Book 3.5

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Warning: This story contains one heroine bent on revenge and one hero determined to atone for his sins. Also included are venom kisses, poison hangovers, pointy objects and questionable taste in condiments. Expect fireworks, near-death experiences and one surprise ten years in the making. This blurb came from the author's website.

One day, a couple of years ago, I was browsing new releases as I tend to do when I spotted Edwards' A Hint of Frost and decided to give it a try. Since then, I have read and enjoyed every installment. As a result, when I was contacted to see if I was interested in reviewing this self-published novella I didn't think twice before accepting. I do recommend that you read the previous installments, at least the very first one because the set-

up depends on some of the events that occurred in A Hint of Frost. This installment was full of revenge, angst, twisted plots, double or triple crossing, regret, and how people change over time. Nicolette and Armand shared a complicated history. Armand lost the girl he loved, but retained his family. Nicolette lost the boy she loved, her home, and her family, but she gained strength, skill, and found a new family.

I loved watching the past and the present collide. Nicolette returned to her childhood home with a contract to assassinate the woman responsible for the death of another clan's heir. While there, she discovers extra motivation to accomplish the murder because her client knew the one person Nicolette valued and shared that information with other assassins who used that knowledge as incentive for Nicolette to complete her assignment. I can't say why that person is valued because that would be a spoiler. She also learned that her former lover, Armand, gained a reputation as "one for the ladies", but never settled down. Armand knew he had to marry eventually, but he never stopped regretting the one he lost. He felt an instant attraction to Nicolette, but she refused to meekly fall in line with his wishes for mutual physical enjoyment..

I enjoyed the attraction between Armand and Nicolette. I also thought Nicolette's mental struggle about what choices to make and how to handle the opportunity for a future were very well done. I do wish I had seen Armand's arguments as he tried to find an opportunity for the happiness he saw between his sister and her mate. The scenes when Armand and his sister found out about Nicolette's secrets were also incredible. The combination of understanding, regret, and pain about what happened, but not wallowing in the missteps of the past was very moving. I will admit at first I wanted to see more from Armand after the secret reveal, but thinking about the bargain he struck and the result if Nicolette changed her mind really said a lot.

A Kiss of Venom was an enjoyable novella. I thought Edwards was able to include a wide array of feelings and provide a different view of the Araneae nation. While some events occurred off-page that I wished I had seen, I still felt satisfied by everything Edwards included. The complexity of the assassination plot pointed towards a long-standing goal of beheading Armand's clan and hinted they have more worries to add to the overarching issues in the series so far. I am looking forward to the next installment, and also have my fingers crossed hoping a certain individual gets what I think should be coming to her.

I give A Kiss of Venom a B+

Maura says

Ten years earlier, Nicolette fell in love with the second heir of the Araneidae clan, Armand, and when they were caught together in bed, she was branded a harlot and exiled along with her parents, as his parents saw no future in their union. But Nicolette gave birth to a daughter and in order to survive she turned assassin. She comes to Erania to kill Armand's sister. But being faced with Armand again brings new conflict to Nicolette and she can't resist his appeal the second time around either. But the villains behind the assassination plot are threatening Nicolette's daughter if she doesn't get the job done, and she'll do anything for her daughter.

This is a second-chance romance that needed to be much further fleshed out. It started out great with some incredible angst and Nicolette hiding her secrets from Armand who has no idea who she is. Her pain at Armand's actions were really quite palpable and the point at which it's all revealed is pretty poignant too. But I wanted to know more of Armand's feelings and to see more of a grovel on his part. I mean, it seemed to me that if Nicolette had come back and Maisy had been any different than she was, then Armand never would have stayed with her. It seemed none of those responsible for exiling Nicolette felt any regret for their

actions - even Armand claimed he'd had no choice, but would have come for her if he'd known about Maisy. So there at the end, as they've thrown all this out there and I still feel like Nicolette needs a bit more grovel and Armand needs to regret his actions a bit more or to feel a whole lot more guilt, she just suddenly forgives him. After saying that she's not sure she can. And then they fall into bed and the story is over. This needed about 100 more pages of Armand and Nicolette learning to forgive and move on and him groveling before this story was over. This author has a tendency with abruptly ending novella-length stories and rather unsatisfactorily. Do yourself a favor and stick to her full-length stories.

Celestine says

Solid addition to the series

The stories stay interesting and the characters unique in Edwards' Araneae Nation series. This time the theme is a protective mother. Rhys, from book one, steals every scene he is in. Maisy was cute and had potential, but nothing felt as fleshed out as it should have. In particular, the ending was abrupt.

Book source: Kindle Unlimited.
