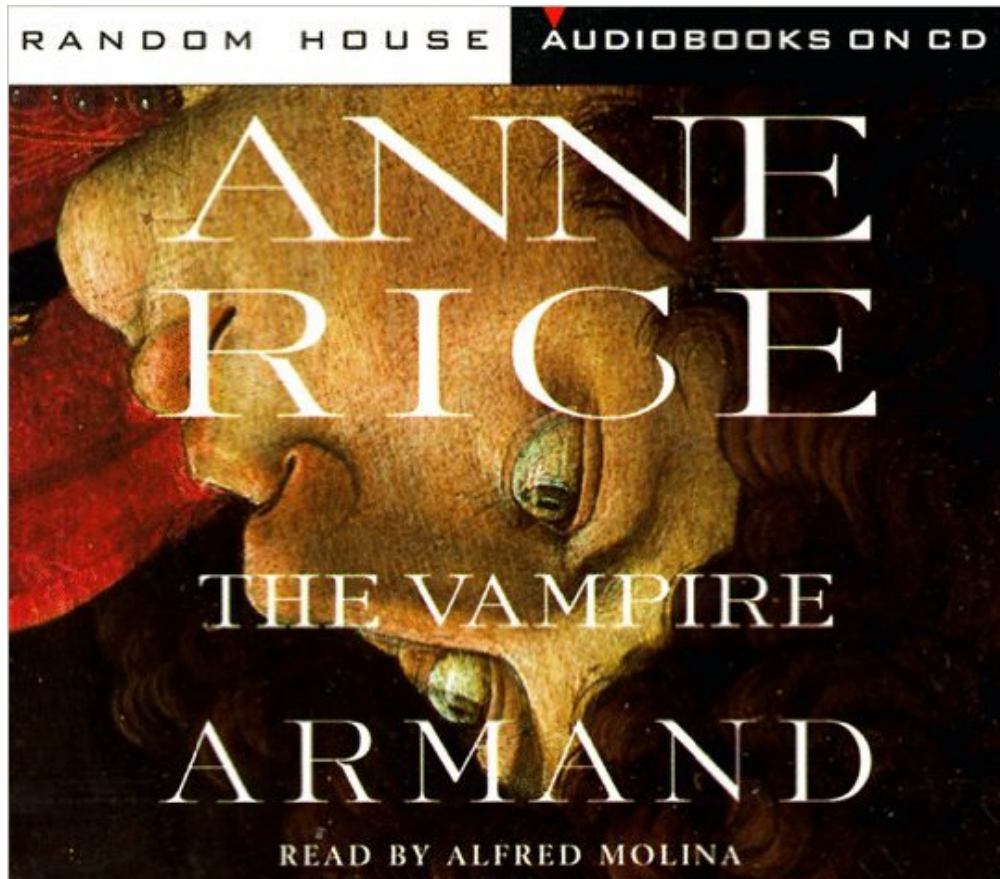


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The Vampire Armand (Rice, Anne, Vampire Chronicles (New York, N.Y.)



Synopsis

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In the latest installment of The Vampire Chronicles, Anne Rice summons up dazzling worlds to bring us the story of Armand - eternally young, with the face of a Botticelli angel. Armand, who first appeared in all his dark glory more than twenty years ago in the now-classic Interview with the Vampire, the first of The Vampire Chronicles, the novel that established its author worldwide as a magnificent storyteller and creator of magical realms. Now, we go with Armand across the centuries to the Kiev Rus of his boyhood - a ruined city under Mongol dominion - and to ancient Constantinople, where Tartar raiders sell him into slavery. And in a magnificent palazzo in the Venice of the Renaissance we see him emotionally and intellectually in thrall to the great vampire Marius, who masquerades among humankind as a mysterious, reclusive painter and who will bestow upon Armand the gift of vampiric blood. As the novel races to its climax, moving through scenes of luxury and elegance, of ambush, fire, and devil worship to nineteenth-century Paris and today's New Orleans, we see its eternally vulnerable and romantic hero forced to choose between his twilight immortality and the salvation of his immortal soul.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

[This review is by Bruce P. Grether, though my partner's name still appears on this account for some reason!]
It was Marius--when I recently re-read BLOOD AND GOLD--who ushered me back to revisit Armand. THE VAMPIRE ARMAND has always been among my favorites of Anne Rice's

Vampire Chronicles, only partly because of its strong homoerotic and bisexual themes. The historical periods and places come vividly alive, and the story deftly weaves strands into all of the other VC novels. As usual, those who may think Anne Rice ever repeated herself with this series are not paying attention. Each of the VCs creates a totally new experience. While sometimes they examine familiar portions of the web of narratives from very different viewpoints, each look yields truly unique aspects of events and characters. Armand manifests two strong and parallel tendencies of human nature, both as a mortal and as an immortal, which are the desire to belong to someone and depend on them, and the desire to have others belong to you. Neither of these--and of course they most often co-exist to some extent--is necessarily perverse in any way; however, such needs always amplify the bitter-sweetness of both human and vampire existence. The bitterness includes rejection, betrayal and terrible loss. The sweetness may seem to make existence worthwhile, yet it can also evaporate at any moment. Though I appreciate the performance of Antonio Banderas as Armand in the film INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE his appearance was not quite right for me. I prefer how Armand appears in the novels: an eternally beautiful teenager with flowing red curls. His angelic appearance belies the fact he can suddenly become the Angel of Death.

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