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Vendetta (Blood for Blood)

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Vendetta, Catherine Doyle's sultry debut novel, opens with a mystery. Who left the jar of honey, neatly tied with a thin black ribbon, in the diner where Sophie (short for Persephone) works and why does it upset her uncle so much? Could there be a connection with the family who've just moved into the neighbourhood's haunted mansion? Should Sophie stay away from them, particularly the boy with the dark eyes flecked with gold (just like the honey), even though his first words to her are 'Don't worry, you're safe'? Fans of supernatural romance will know they are in for a treat. But there's a twist: this is no girl-meets-vampire saga, but a tale of star-crossed lovers who happen to be from opposing sides in a mafia-style gangland war. Sophie and Nic, he of the honeyed eyes, fall in love despite their families' he knows exactly what his are up to, it takes her most of the novel to find out. As a romance it smoulders beautifully: Nic and Sophie are smart as well as gorgeous, the dialogue crackles, and their respective families' attempts to forbid them from seeing one another gives their love an added intensity. It impresses as a crime drama too. Nic's family are real career criminals, ruthless, brutal, single-minded; while Sophie's Uncle Jack who seems at first to be her one ally proves to be just as cruel and deceitful. It all concludes with a shoot-out in a warehouse so vividly described you can almost smell the gunpowder and blood. The author works hard to forgive Nic his sins: 'he had goodness in him, even if it was buried far beneath the codes he lived his life by' says Sophie in his defence, while he describes himself as: 'a good person, with good morals'. That left me feeling slightly uncomfortable, but perhaps he'll be made to see the truth in the sequel. Like many readers, I'll be looking forward to that.

Read our [Q&A interview](#) [4] with Catherine Doyle.

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vendetta