

May/June Features

[Thoughts on the Orgasm Gap](#)
Pondering Porn
with Ann Regentin

[The Kingmaker](#)
Get All Worked Up
with J.T. Benjamin

[Blog](#)
Ashley Lister Submits
by Ashley Lister

Book Reviews

[Standish](#)
Review by Lisabet Sarai

[Kink](#)
Review by Lisabet Sarai

[She's on Top](#)
Review by Ashley Lister

[He's on Top](#)
Review by Ashley Lister

[A for Amour / B for Bondage](#)
Review by Ashley Lister

[Flood](#)
Review by Angelika Devlyn

[Ménage](#)
Review by Angelika Devlyn

[I. Goldstein: My Screwed...](#)
Review by Rob Hardy

Game Review

[Animamundi: The Dark Alchemist](#)
Review by Madelyne Ellis

Movie Review

[Exterminating Angels](#)
Review by Robert Buckley

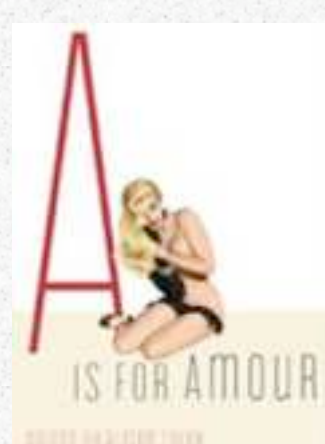
Archives

[Book Review Archive 2007](#)
Smutters Lounge Reviews in '07

[Book Review Archive 2006](#)
Smutters Lounge Reviews in '06

A is for Amour Edited by Alison Tyler & B is for Bondage Edited by Alison Tyler

Book Review by Ashley Lister



I really need to get my spectacles fixed. I thought the first of these titles was *A is for ARMOUR* and I got myself quite excited expecting to read about knights and armadillos and other erotic things that are protectively plated.

Not for the first time in my life, I was mistaken.

A is for Amour begins a series of alphabetically themed books from Cleis Press. Further titles in this series include *B is for Bondage*, *C is for Coed* and *D is for Dress-Up*. I haven't yet seen C or D. *B is for Bondage* starts off with a typically arousing tale from Shanna Germain as she shows how a man and a woman should properly enjoy a vegetable garden.

But I'm going off at a tangent here, aren't I? I was reading A is Amour. I suppose that's one of the problems in having both books at my disposal. I can flick from one to the other, dipping in and out as I fancy. Or, to be more exact, I can look at the book that hasn't been picked up by my wife as she spots the jaunty retro-style cover of each title and exclaims, "Ooh! That looks like fun. Let's have a read..."

Which is a fair point. Both of these titles look like fun. The volumes are smaller than the typical paperback (although they still contain full value for money) and they look resplendent with their stylish full-figured artwork that is so reminiscent of titillation from the frisky fifties. More importantly, inside each title, the stories live up to the promise of any title that comes from the heady combination of Cleis Press, Alison Tyler and a stupendous wealth of erotic literature's finest talent.

A is for Amour is a delightful book full of naughty pleasures that relate to the theme of love. And, while in some hands that could be an uninspiring collection, Alison Tyler has made sure this anthology contains something for every kink.

The collection begins with a wonderful tale from Saskia Walker that blends romance, a remote island in Scotland, and a couple with an inseparable passion. This is Saskia Walker at her most romantic, but still as ferociously hot as ever.

Tenille Brown introduces a tale of a woman who is most assuredly not in love. Tenille Brown's heroine is so determinedly not in love that you begin to suspect... But I'm going to spoil the story if I carry on down that route. Trust me. "Strings" is hot and shows why Tenille Brown is such a respected author of erotica.

Then there's Radclyffe's tale of a committed lesbian couple having a lunchtime fling. The romance is passionate, the sex is blistering and the story is scorching.

And, if you like things blistering and scorching, you won't be disappointed by Brooke Stern's "An Unexpected Love Story." Brooke Stern invariably builds three dimensional characters who are compelling and credible. More importantly, Brooke Stern spans heroines with a force that leaves an imprint on the page.

Not every love story has a happy ending, but that's what makes each one of these tales so tantalising. *A is for Amour* contains varieties of love to suit most tastes, and all from writers who know how to make romance rock.

B is for Bondage has all the same attributes as *A is for Amour* but (unsurprisingly) with a little less amour and a little more bondage. Again, this is a delightful collection, edgier than many I've read and including some bondage games that stretch the boundaries.



Charles Brasso's "The Consequences of Her Actions" is a hard-hitting tale of a fledgling power relationship. Cynthia Rayne's "Pearls of Wisdom" is a deliciously twisted tale of domination and submission. And P S Haven's "Westbound" is a wickedly entertaining excursion into the perils of travelling alone in the wrong dress.

There's a lot in *B is for Bondage*. Teresa Noelle Roberts excels (as usual) with Shinju – an exquisite exploration of public bondage and private satisfaction. And, in both these volumes, Alison Tyler's own fiction concludes the book with inimitable charm and erotic style.

This pair of titles shows a promising start to what will undoubtedly be a popular series. I can only say that, at this rate, I'm looking forward to Alison Tyler teaching me the rest of the alphabet.

Ashley Lister
May/June 2007

A is for Amour Edited by Alison Tyler
(Cleis Press; February 28, 2007; ISBN: 1573442631)
[Available at Amazon.com](#) / [Amazon UK](#)

B is for Bondage Edited by Alison Tyler
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