



# Darwin's Children

*Natasha Larry*

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## **Darwin's Children** Natasha Larry

Life can get pretty complicated for any seventeen-year-old girl, but for a home-schooled telepathic black girl trying to survive in a prestigious private school in small-town Jonesborough, Tennessee, it can be maddening; especially when her telepathic father keeps eavesdropping on her thoughts!

Jaycie Lerner's family isn't the usual mom-dad-kid setup. Jaycie's mom is MIA, but Allison, her personal live-in trainer, is more than a mom, with her own special abilities, like being able to lift cars and run incredibly fast. And Jaycie's godfather John is more than persuasive; he can literally convince anyone to do anything.

As far as the rest of the world's concerned, Jaycie's on the outside looking in. The townsfolk love Jaycie's paediatrician father, but she doesn't fit in with "normal" kids, and she doesn't really want to. Most of her free time is spent training to keep her telekinetic and telepathic powers under control. But there's one thing she can't control; and that's her feelings, especially when her best friend Matt is nearby. If only he knew what she was truly capable of...

Everything seems to be status quo for Jaycie until she receives a cryptic message from a stranger and meets a very unusual girl new to Jonesborough. Then all hell breaks loose!

## **Darwin's Children Details**

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Author : Natasha Larry

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# From Reader Review Darwin's Children for online ebook

## Andrea says

### My Thoughts

The synopsis for Darwin's Children was a real attention-getter for me. As you may expect from the title, the premise behind the abilities exhibited by Jaycie and her family is evolution. As humans evolve, they are able to access parts of the brain previously unused. According to Jaycie's father, Mason, "Evolution is nature's tool to ensure the survival of the species". All supernatural beings (vampires, slayers, werewolves) and those with supernatural abilities (telepaths, empaths, telekenesis) are the result of evolution. Their world is all about the balance of good and evil.

Darwin's Children has winsome characters that made me like them instantly. Jaycie was smart, brave and funny. She was also a little petulant and whiny, just like any good seventeen year old! She wants to have normal teenage experiences, but it's almost impossible as a telepath. She can barely control her mind or her body. Every time she and her best friend Matt try to take their relationship to the next level, she is likely to shatter a window with her "vibrations". Allison, Jaycie's nanny/trainer is a 90 year-old woman, with the body of a 20 year-old. Mason and John, Jaycie's father and godfather are the heads of their group. Mason is lovingly devoted to his daughter, but not above eavesdropping on her thoughts. John is a second father to Jaycie and spends his time devoted to finding and researching others like them. The character of Haylee was the wildcard for me. I just never could fully like her or trust her. Haylee is an outsider like Jaycie, with extra abilities of her own, but unwilling to open up to help from Jaycie. Haylee has some dark, dark secrets. I found her storyline really disturbing, hard to read.

Darwin's Children is a layered, smart and complicated story. I really enjoyed the intelligence that was undoubtedly at work writing this book. Darwin's Children was a book thoroughly unlike anything I've read before. Sure, I've read books about humans with super abilities, but none with so much thought, creativity and explanation behind the abilities. Although I have to admit, I got a bit lost in the explanations, especially at the end of the book. But I will definitely give the sequel a try.

\*I received Darwin's Children from the author, in exchange for an honest review. \*

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## Gmr says

Jaycie Lerner. How can one summarize this young lady? Studious for certain. Dedicated to everything and everyone. Oh yes...I almost forgot...a little spitfire just waiting to explode upon the world. Okay, perhaps she's not going to explode but she can certainly unleash the wrath when necessary despite her outward appearance. At school and in life, she flies under the radar...almost successfully except for the taunts of some fellow students who just don't know when to quit, which leaves her as an outsider. As with most of us that have ever been in her position, looking in doesn't feel all that good and it saddened me to see her want to fit in so desperately given all her talents. Sad as that is, it does reflect the real world. We're not always that accepting of change or those that are "different". It's a shame too because we miss out on some stellar opportunities because of it. Anywho...

Jaycie is the girl with all the talent but there are several other formidable friends in her extended family that have powers of their own. From persuasion to mind control, super speed to super strength, it's a mixed bag of power just waiting to burst at the seams...or go up in flames as we discover two new characters that have a unique way of lighting up the night. Alison is her trainer, surrogate mother (hers is MIA), and friend, there when she needs her through thick and thin...even when it comes time to talk about self control in regards to relationships and growing up. Thank goodness she's there because is left unchecked, the chemistry between Jaycie and one particular fellow is enough to rock all our worlds...literally, or at least break a few windows. Her father is in a league of his own and certainly an example of what not to do if you're a parent with the ability to read your child's mind. \*glares at character\* Yep...a teenage mind is dangerous enough without them poking around in there too. But seriously, his character goes through growing pains as well and it's nice to see that relationship development and change throughout the story.

On the newcomer side, we have Haylee...who is much more than she appears and has suffered more than could be imagined. She's a strong girl despite initial outward appearances...think shrinking violet...and it's wonderful to see how she comes into her own eventually. It may not be the most peaceful path but its one that she has to travel and comes to terms with thanks to her new found "family". Continuing in the newbie vein, we meet and greet a few members of the Dey-Vah Guard as well as the more common Guardians. Let's just say though their intentions are for balance and keeping the peace, seeing one is not always a sign of good things to come. The Gray family has a brief stint towards the later half of the story but I sincerely hope we get to learn more about their family as they seem fierce and fascinating themselves. Add to this mix a love interest for Jaycie and well...you've got a wide variety of personalities to sort through, but you're sure to find one you can identify with. Kudos to the author on that accomplishment! A crowded cast can be hard to manage but she pulls it off well.

Story wise it holds its own and then some. It breaks free of the "book-one-in-a-series" syndrome early on leaving no doubt that you're in for quite a ride. There's highs and lows. Scenes of total control and total chaos but in the end, it's a well scripted plot that's carried out evenly throughout the pages and leaves you waiting for more...or at least it left me waiting for the next installment.

There are two points though that did rub me the wrong way, which I'll touch on briefly here if you please. The first one actually occurs near book's end. One particular character is trying to recover from something or other and there is this dramatic build up of how badly they're doing and then POOF...they'll back in action. I had a small case of reader whiplash from that turnaround. It just seemed like an odd turn of events due to the speed at which it happened. Does it affect the ending? No...just raised my eyebrow for a page or two.

Second item to mention...that (at times) was maddening for me personally was the emphasis placed on a person's ethnicity. For me, it doesn't really play a role for the most part. I mean, my brain conjures the story into a movie of sorts and I can see all the characters based off the descriptions and such but their actual detailed features when brought front and center, would in fact be merely shadows...place holders if you will. Sure I can tell you who the blue eyed blond girl was or that the strapping young lad with the dark hair was following so-and-so, but at the base of it all is a love of the story. The journey, triumphs, tribulations, loves gained and lost....all of the actual elements are what I embrace as a reader and though I certainly understand why the emphasis was placed, it doesn't truly make a difference for me one way or the other. In fact, it almost gets in the way of my reading experience...almost.

All in all, an exciting start to a series I know will remain on my wish list until we reach the very end....though when or where that might be is any ones guess. There is a world of characters and challenges left to explore in this literary creation...here's hoping the author takes her time showing us each and every

one. I for one, can't wait! Recommended read for teens through adults as there are a few sensual situations, crimes of which shall not be named here scenes and retribution scenes that the kiddos could do without, but rest assured it's kept as clean as it can be considering what the one character lives through.

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## **Emma (BelleBooks) says**

The author, Natasha Larry very kindly send me a copy of Darwin's Children to review.

When I first read the blurb about the book, I thought it sounded awesome, and then I saw the cover for the book.

We all know the old saying "Don't judge a book by it's cover", but I'll admit it, I do judge a book by it's cover.

Especially since entering the book blogging world, covers seem to be one of the first things that draw me into a new book, series or author. So I'll admit I was a bit disappointed when I saw the cover for Darwin's Children, it didn't draw me in, captivate me, or really make me want to rush out and read it.

Let me just say, I was so very wrong about this book!

I completely fell in love with the storyline and the characters from page one!

The story follows seventeen year Jaycie, who on paper has a fairly average life.

She goes to a school that she hates and she doesn't really get along with any of her class mates, though she does have a very loving and devoted father, and her live in nanny who has become a mother figure to her over the years, Jaycie even gets a part time job in a book store. Throw in a little romance, and you have a typical high school girl, right?

But Jaycie is harbouring a massive secret, she has both telepathic and telekinetic powers, her father is the strongest telepath known in the world and her live in nanny has super strength and speed.

Trying to get through a normal day for Jaycie is almost ridiculous with her powers, she can hear all the thoughts in people's heads, which can make her completely lose control. So she needs to be extra careful at school.

When a guardian (thats sort of like an angel to you and me), tries to set Jaycie on a path to befriend a girl, she soon discovers that this girl may have powers too and doesn't know about it.

The rest of the book follows the two girls and how their relationship grows, there are a number of unexpected turns in the book which I was totally not expecting. One of them being vampires!

The book itself is well written, and although there are a few gritty issues thrown up in the book, they are dealt with in a mature and honest way, which I really liked. In some books these types of issues can make the book too dark, but I think Natasha found the perfect mix in Darwin's Child. There is also a science fiction element to the book as well, there are a few discussions about genetics and evolution. I am in no way a science girl, but the terms used were simple and easy to understand, which I really appreciated. I felt that I had more of an understanding of the background story through these little snippets of information.

The characters are very well developed, at times I actually wished these characters could be real and they would adopt me into their family. You can feel the love and devotion the family have for each other through the pages.

Overall, I loved this book! It captures so many different elements in it, family dynamics, love, romance, paranormal elements, science and genetic elements and learning to deal with your past and love who you are now!

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## **Claire Weller says**

Jaycie is a 17 year old girl with telepathic power and this is only part of what makes her a lovable character. She was so easy to like because she was so sarcastic and was always cracking a joke when possible, and as people know I love it when sarcasm is used in books. Jaycie's Father Mason and her Godfather John keep her grounded and I loved them both as well, if I'm honest I loved every character in this book even if they were bad because Natasha made me feel something for each individual. Jaycie also has a trainer named Allison who also acts as Jacie's Mum as her biological Mum left when she was eight, Allison was also amazing and she was probably my favourite out of the lot and I'm excited to see more of her in the second book. Now to introduce the love interest Matt Jacie's best friend, throughout the story you see her try to come to terms with her new feelings for him and although I haven't read a lot about him you can tell he is the protective type. This story revolves around mostly two characters one being Jaycie and the other being a girl named Haylee a quite girl who keeps to herself and is very mysterious, she was the most intriguing and all I wanted to do was find out more about her and her history which you eventually do. Jaycie's family are all so loving that I really wished every family could have the same affection for each other as this one does, However I can only wish.

At times this book was slow for me but all the time I was finding out new things and I was always surprised at what I found out, I think Natasha did well to explain everything like the powers and vampires. Before you think that the vampires she wrote about are the usual we drink blood and turn into a disco ball when it's sunny you can think again, they were totally unique in fact every aspect of this book was totally unique which is why I'm raving about it so much. There are so many questions your left with even at the end of the book, like where did the powers com from? and why? this is one of the may reasons I can't wait to start the next book.

Overall I could explain this book as being Buffy coming into the more modern age, seriously if you're a Buffy freak like me you might just wanna pick this book up and give it go. Even better it's in both Kindle edition and paperback! which gives you no excuse. This book will make you laugh and give you the shivers all in one go it's easy to read and I can't wait to see what happens in Unnatural Law.

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## **Jazmen says**

Review:

\*copy provided by author/publisher for an honest review\*

I was initially really excited to read this book. I was more than happy to see a YA novel that featured african american characters as main characters. There is a serious lack of YA that features any characters of color as main characters, but that's just me pointing out something I noticed.

Anyway...when I first began reading the book I was really into it. Things were happening quickly. Our main character Jaycie was relatable, her father was endearing, and the supporting characters were enjoyable and witty. Then about halfway or more so towards the end of the book it really started to lose me. Let me start by telling you the things I liked.

What I liked:

1. The plot. It was interesting to see an entire family that consisted of members with supernatural abilities. That side of it was intriguing and what got me into it in the first place.
2. Character Building This was pretty well done. You definitely get an idea of who each character is and what they're all about. You don't have to guess which I liked.
3. Setting Although it wasn't brought up fully. The southern setting was a nice background for the kind of story that was told, and I found it fitting.
4. Relatability It was fairly easy to relate to the characters despite their superhuman factor. They seemed like a real family.

Here's some of what I didn't like:

1. The Romance (or lack there of)\*THIS IS SOMEWHAT OF A SPOILER\* We are introduced to Matt and Jaycie as a couple and we see them in trickles but it gets lost. When we do see them however they're constantly bickering over juvenile things although that's probably what teenagers do. Their arguments didn't seem warranted and frankly it just kind of annoyed me.
2. I didn't like the changes that happened in Jaycie towards the end. I feel like they changed her whole character dynamic.
3. The dialogue between Jaycie's father and her grandfather \*SPOILER\* Why, oh why? Why did we have to introduce weed smoking. I did a face palm at this point. This is so unnecessary and just plain juvenile. It does nothing for the development of the story or the characters themselves. Oh how I wish that part wasn't in it.
4. The Vampires I just didn't get their contribution the story. I understood why they were there but I just didn't understand their place. It was kind of creepy actually. Sorry.

Overall this book is good. It has great potential and I think in the later books it will more likely than not get better. The sequels a lot of time do far better than the first.

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## **Lindsay Paige says**

Interest: Synopsis

Title Thoughts: It took me to read the ending to understand the title and it really fits.

Cover Thoughts: I like it and the colors surrounding her.

WARNINGS: None

I liked almost all of the characters. They really felt like a family and the love among them seemed to jump off the page. Jaycie was okay, but at times she annoyed me. She hardly ever acted her age, except for when she was the horny teenager with Matt. She was childish. I loved her humor; I just wish it could've been conveyed in a way that wasn't childish.

I very much loved the concept of the book and I commend Larry for thinking of something so elaborate as this. I'm impressed with how much thinking and detail had to go into this, especially for John's character and the Dey-Vah Guard. I also loved the vampires that were introduced for a short period of time. They were so brutal and savage, yet so elegant and they brought justice.

I couldn't decide if Jaycie's "relationship" with Matt should have been more present or not. Sometimes, he was just forgotten and it was hard to see how he could have been so close to Jay, but never around. At the

same time, I was pleased with how Larry did handle it towards the end to make it easier to me, as the reader, to not wonder why. (Don't want to say too much, so I'll leave it at that.)

Addict's Last Words: Darwin's Children is something that will surpass your initial expectations and will leave you satisfied, overall.

To Buy or To Borrow: This is a an either or for me.

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### **Krista (CubicleBlindness Reviews) says**

I really enjoyed the characters in this book. They are all very likeable and well developed and interesting. Jaycie is kind of a negative thinker and a loner, but I seemed to connect with her completely. Her thoughts and situation are very well described that you can see things from her point of view and agree with her. They are all very superhuman and all seem to have a calling in life.

The plot developed like cat plays with a ball of yarn. Sometimes unraveling at a slow steady pace and other times at high speed that makes your heart beat fast with anticipation. The first time we read about Jaycie and Allison's training session is when I knew that this story was going to be a good one. I didn't want to have to put it down to see what other powers Jaycie and Allison would portray throughout the story. When first going into the story I was expecting a girl and her family with special powers, but I was not expecting the introduction of other beings as well.

As the book ends with a hint to the reader of another book to come, as I started to write this review, I began to enjoy the story more. In a way it's the perfect book for the first in a series. It begins with an introduction to the world and the main characters, then gradually, it builds and develops more as you read. I have read some very popular first books in which the author keeps the same pace throughout the book until the end. But this book did a great job of continuing to build deeper and becoming more intriguing as the story continues.

I give this book 4 stars and hoping that I will get the opportunity to read more about Jaycie and watch her develop and use her powers to their full potential

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### **Nikki says**

I think as teenagers we all think our parents have some sort of mysterious mind-reading powers at some point, otherwise how can we explain how they knew when we were planning to sneak out, even though we were very quiet in making out plans. Thankfully, my mom's skills got rusty by the time I was 15, otherwise I would have been grounded a lot more often than I was. Yes, I was one of THOSE teenagers, the kind I



would never let Jake hang around with now that I'm a parent. While my mom may have occasionally been able to predict my moves, Jaycee's father in Darwin's Children can quite literally read her mind anytime he wants to. Her superhuman "nanny" can also eavesdrop from several rooms away, and her godfather can basically make anyone do anything with a single thought. Jaycee herself has quite a few tricks up her sleeve, and may very well be on her way to becoming one of the most powerful superhumans on Earth. Thank goodness they all use their powers for good!

In Darwin's Children, 17 year old Jaycee is struggling to learn how to control her ever-strengthening powers by training with her superhuman nanny, Allison. She's also learning how to deal with her new-found romantic feelings for her lifelong best friend, Matt, who doesn't know that she's a little different than other girls. On top of that, a mysterious Guardian drops in on her one day and urges her to get a job at a Christian book store and make friends with the girl that works there, Haylee. While Jaycee's had a pretty good life so far, Haylee's has been wrought with devastating trauma, and she definitely could use a break in her life. As the bond between the two grows stronger, Jaycee learns exactly what kind of trauma her new friend has been through, and just how far she'll go to protect her friend.

I really enjoyed this Darwin's Children. It was tightly written with authentic dialogue and loads of personality. The characters of Jaycee, Haylee, Mason (Jaycee's father), Allison, and John (Jaycee's godfather) were developed flawlessly so that I felt I understood each one pretty well by the end of the book. The relationship between Jaycee and Matt progressed logically, and didn't steal the focus from the true plot of the book- Jaycee's journey of self-discovery and friendship with Haylee. My only complaint is that the last part of the book, after the resolution of the major conflict, seemed to go a little fast. I understand the reasoning behind it, as it seems to be setting up what I hope will become a series, but I did feel it would have been a little better if parts of the ending were saved and fleshed out a bit for the next story. Other than that, I was completely pulled into the story and thought it was really well-written and intriguing, especially the mythology behind the different superpowers and supernatural creatures. I am really looking forward to the next book in the series (I am assuming there will be one based on the ending, if not, I hope the author will strongly consider it).

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## **Chioma says**

### **Black and Blue Ink**

You know a great book when you can easily be captivated by the characters and setting alone and fall in love with it before the plot even really kicks in, and Darwin's Children is definitely that book. Super powers and super humans done in an incredibly different way, Natasha Larry combines the best of all the paranormal and supernatural world coupling it with a characters whose stories will pull at your heart strings, Darwin's Children is a book that I know will be stuck on my mind for a very long time.

In my opinion, I know a series is going to keep on getting better and better when the first book in the series can easily stand great as a stand alone title. And Darwin's Children is definitely one of those books. Jaycie Leger was an interesting character from the start. I mean really, there are so many dishonorable and some might say sinister things a person could do if they had the power read and "alter" people's thoughts, but does Jaycie do any of these things, of course not. She has other intentions for her abilities, and I must say, though she may seem like she is holding back at times, she definitely knows how to bring it when the time is right.

### **Extended Version**

Not just Jaycie, but the whole Lerner family was so captivating to read about. The background of Jaycie's trainer/substitute mother and her superhuman abilities was so fascinating. As well as that of Jaycie's father and godfather, who couldn't be more annoyingly cryptic all the time.

The plot of this book hit me more emotionally than I anticipated it would. Jaycie and her friend Haylee go through a rough roller coaster throughout their friendship and at times the book became hard for me to read just because of the raw and horrific emotions that emanated from both Jaycie and Haylee at different times of the book. This part of the book in my opinion, though heart wrenching, was written beautifully.

Darwin's Children has many layers to it, and they all lead up to a huge turning point in Jaycie's life. All throughout the book there is a foreshadowing to something big happening to Jaycie. And along this cryptic ride so much is revealed about the "super human" world that Jaycie and her family are a part of. The different abilities of each character are each so unique and interesting to read when they finally play out. The story as a whole unfolds perfectly. Everything seems to be interwoven into a great plot that I can't wait to read more of!

I can already tell this series is going to be a favorite of mine. I'm ecstatic to know the journey of the Lerner family does not end here, and I am eager to read what direction the books will go hereafter.

Recommendations: Series lovers and stand-alone advocates alike will thoroughly enjoy this unique and, at times, heart wrenching supernatural novel!

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

This book has a serious wow factor. I love the vibe of it, like the X-Men movies, with some distinct and unique elements. Loved that the heroine and her father are black. I have had trouble reading on the Kindle right now, and this book made me want to brave the migraine just to finish it. This book series has its hooks in me! Highly recommended.

Reviewed for Bitten by Books. <http://bittenbybooks.com>.

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### **Bonnie Lamer says**

Jaycie Lerner is not your average teenager. To begin with, she has to constantly shield her mind from the onslaught of other's thoughts, which is not easy to do when surrounded by teenagers who practically scream their heightened emotional thoughts at her. The result is that Jaycie often reacts inappropriately to social situations and is considered an outcast and a freak by her classmates. Her home life, though, is what keeps her sane. Her telepathic father helps her learn to keep shields in place in her mind and Allison and John help her learn control over her other abilities. Even if sometimes their lessons are a bit on the extreme side, the bond between these people not related by blood is stronger than most families who are.

Eventually, it is Jaycie's turn to help another understand her superhuman abilities. A lost, broken girl, who Jaycie befriends at the request of a persuasive stranger, carries dark secrets inside of herself that are tearing her apart. With the help of Jaycie and her family, this girl learns that there is more to life than the memories of pure evil she holds inside of her. And sometimes, revenge is the only way to help along recovery.

The characters in Darwin's Children are not only powerful, they also come across as people you would love to meet at the next neighborhood barbecue. Natasha Larry has done an excellent job of making the characters stand out from those in other books with their down home style and southern manners. But as secrets unfold and revenge becomes not a wish but a must, the strength the characters show prove that they are made of stronger stuff than most people. Not to mention, their powers are most enviable – superhuman strength, mind reading, telekinesis, the power to persuade anyone of anything, and the power to make evil doers feel the pain of their actions towards others. With all of these traits rolled into one book, this is a novel that lovers of paranormal and supernatural will love.

There were a couple of things that held me back, though, from giving this book a 5 star rating instead of a 4. A lot of information was thrown out over the course of the book and sometimes this distracted me from the main story line and made some of the passages move along slower than I would have liked. Not all of the information may have been necessary to the story line, such as Jaycie's father and John going after a fire-starter in another state. The pace of the novel seemed to waver because of these extra details from fast-paced to meandering and as much as I enjoyed it, I couldn't help but feel that some areas of the book could have moved along a little faster towards the final showdown. The other thing that held me back was the last few chapters of the book. Although they were well written and interesting, they were a little anticlimactic after the story had already reached a stunning climax. These chapters may have been better served as the beginning of the next book in the series.

Overall, I truly enjoyed Darwin's Children and I am grateful that the author gave me a copy to review. It definitely makes my must read book list and if there is a sequel, I'll be reading it! I give this book a strong four stars.

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### **Kat (Kindred Dreamheart) says**

The pretense of a telepathic African American female lead character drew me in. The more was increased with the introduction of her telepathic father, who crosses privacy barriers and results to snooping via the mind. I love Jaycie's sassy personality. I also enjoy her way of dealing with the dynamics of living in an all-Caucasian city, being the only minority at her private school, and having a power that makes her even more of an isolated freak.

At last I'll have to come back to this one. After Haley aimed a bullet at Jayce's head and by the next chapter it was water under the bridge, I lost a bit of interest. I'm going to come back to this one at a later date.

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### **Barbara Watkins says**

“Combine – Paranormal, Romance, Thrills – You get “Darwin's Children”

'Darwin's Children', by author, Natasha Larry, has all the elements needed for a thrillingly paranormal good time. The author takes the safety and security of one's life and links potential dangers with the supernatural world – with a mixture of suspense and fear. I devoured this read in one afternoon.

Imagine being a young teenage girl home schooled for the most part of your young life, and then finding out that you are now going to attend an Ivy League school – sound exciting? Now imagine that this young teenage girl is unique in that she has telekinetic and telepathic powers – powers that she is desperately fighting to manage. She finds life even more demanding in that her father has the same gift, and at any given time can read her thoughts – a horror indeed! Jaycie Lerner does not fit in with the so-called 'normal' kids, nor does she want to. She finds her unusual gifts a blessing when it comes to manipulating her teachers by reading their thoughts, and sometimes overpowering their authority. However, having such supernatural powers does not come without its disadvantages. Besides having to keep a step ahead of her telepathic father, she yearns for a close relationship with her best friend, Matthew Carter, only to shy away from telling him her true feelings – frightened he will see her as a freak of nature.

Visiting a local jewelry shop, Jaycie has an encounter with a stranger that startles her to her core. "Buy this bracelet," the woman tells her, "Then meet me outside." The stranger tells her that the Christian bookstore is hiring for a part-time position and suggests that she should apply. She informs Jaycie that she will meet and befriend a young girl that works there, and in doing so their relationship will restore balance to the world – then mysteriously she disappears. Next, the reader is introduced to a character by the name of, Haylee Mitchell – a character the reader shall soon not forget. Haylee is plagued with her own demons. Forced to take care of her alcoholic mother, Haylee has relentless nightmares – or are they horrible visions of what is to come?

Vampires, fairy blood, guardian angels, magic, and the powers within the supernatural world – "Darwin's Children" has all of these strange and mystical properties. The characters in this book are well written and the storyline flows effortlessly. I only mentioned a handful of the characters as they are many, and all play a vital part in this paranormal thriller.

Read, "Darwin's Children," and I believe you will agree, author, Natasha Larry, has found her forte in story telling, and it's in the genre of paranormal suspense.

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## **carole says**

Natasha Larry is a funny and witty writer who knows exactly how to make her readers laugh out loud and also knows how to make a story so suspenseful that you're biting your nails as the pages turn. This book has the perfect balance of comedy and drama. We all know I love books with as many surprise and expected elements as possible, and Darwin's Children is one of those books! It's an amazing story filled with super powers, supernatural beings, humor, love, family, and plenty of drama.

I love books with a strong central cast of characters like the Delos family in *Starcrossed* or the Hayward family in *Eternal Eden*; Darwin's Children has a close family unit like those I love. It's a novel filled with fun dialogue and relationships that some of us can only dream of. Jaycie's family is a strange one. Yet, even with her mother out of the picture her life is not lacking in the parental department. In the story we meet Allison, her car-lifting trainer/nanny, Johnny, her "uncle" an amazing guy with powers of his own, and her doctor father Mason who has her telepathic abilities only much stronger. Together these four take on a lot in

order to help others. Darwin's Children is a book much like the X-Men comics and films. It's a story about people who are born with powerful abilities and what they do with them.

Jaycie is a seventeen year old girl in a prep school in Tennessee, who on the outside might look like any other high school girl, but inside is harboring loads of secrets including being telekinetic (moving things with her mind) and psychokinetic (reading minds and transferring her thoughts into minds). Her story takes a dramatic and suspenseful turn when she begins working at a Christian Book Store. There she meets a sad girl, Haylee, who needs her help. From there this amazing story just builds and builds.

I will say my least favorite part of the book comes in the form of Matt, Jaycie's best friend from childhood. He's like any normal teenage boy, hormone driven and not very understanding. Jaycie keeps a lot of secrets from him, for obvious reasons, but he kind of just gives up on her and I wasn't and probably will never be part of team Matt. See for yourself.

It is a dark and incredibly sad book at some points. I will say that it deals with some very adult issues towards the late middle and end of the book that makes the book more for an older teen audience. I would not recommend it to those under 14 or 15. The struggles and obstacles that the characters overcome is immense, Haylee and Jaycie especially the readers see so much growth in. I loved it and can't wait to check out book 2, Unnatural Law, available now

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## **Jennifer says**

Jaycie's got problems like any teenage girl. The school's full of mean girls, and she just might be in love with her best friend, Matt. Oh, and she's also a mind reader, an empath, and telekinetic enough to throw you across a room. She's got family issues - her dad's a whiz at mind control, her nanny/trainer Allison has super speed and strength, and her godfather John can make you believe anything he want. On top of that, she's due for a power surge any day now. Into this comes Haylee, a broken girl who's a lot stronger than she knows. It's up to Jaycie to give Haylee the confidence she needs to accept her powers, and if some old-fashioned vengeance is called for, she's up for that, too.

This is a great book. It hooks you at the beginning and keeps reeling you in to the end. The author has a great voice for teens; they're smart and funny, but also annoying and whiny. The situations may be supernatural, but the characters could be people you know. I particularly enjoyed the kids' reactions on learning about new worlds; denial, denial, denial.

There's some original twists on mythologies here. It's all about evolution; powers adapt to fit the person as well as the problems. Vampires are highly ethical, and have developed a taste for emotions with a blood chaser. It's refreshing to see a story where the vamps don't view humans as an endless supply of Capri Suns. The fairies look like fairies - really, really big fairies you wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley.

This is the first of a series, so a lot of foundation is being laid. Some small subplots, like the pyromaniac boy, while interesting, don't particularly add to the narrative. I can only assume that they'll come into play further down the line, like the mystery of "The Core", an extra sensory link that seems to multiply powers exponentially. Matt, especially, seems to be heading for a major role; the human linchpin of an increasingly inhuman group.

There's an overarching sense of love that runs through the story. It's about a family, really, one that comes

together out of need and stays together by choice. Don't pass this one up. It's full of twists and discoveries, and new friends that seem like old ones.

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