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Tiana Dalichov

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After being abandoned by her parents when she was only eight years old, Dessa Ambrose struggles to stay in control of her life and escape her inner demons. Her senior year of high school marks the end of an era, and the day she meets Christopher Calder, a young man who holds the key to her future and the key to her heart, Dessa realizes her life will never be the same.

Not only does Christopher seem to know more about Dessa than she does, but he also doesn't seem to be quite as human as Dessa was led to believe. His eyes emit an unearthly glow when he is near her, and he possesses strength and power beyond any mortal being. He's not human. That much is clear. Here's the catch, though: Dessa isn't human, either.

When the ghosts of her tainted past return with a thirst for vengeance, Dessa must decide what is really worth fighting for. She must choose between saving herself and saving those she cares about. But when the enemy you are fighting is yourself, how are you supposed to win?

Poison Details

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From Reader Review Poison for online ebook

Soumi says

High school drum major Dessa would have been normal girl with dreams of her own if she had not met Chris. Chris has some ancient secrets to keep and convince Dessa that she is keeper of light who has the power to bend and manipulate it. But she isn't the only one. There are others like Dessa who can control elements of nature like earth, fire, water and air. But where there is light, there is darkness too. Now with help from others Dessa must fight the darkness before it took them over.

This novel was surprisingly good debut from a teen author and I must applaud for her brilliant attempt. The imagination was very creative and characterization was good too. The story moves around five characters coming to their newly discovered powers as keepers of five elements but also goes along with being teenagers. Lead heroine Dessa was girl next door type whom you can easily be attached with. She definitely cares for others and can go far to save those she loves.

I like Chris, the love interest who actually hold keys to their past. He is such a sweet heart and compassionate. It was fabulous getting to know better as the story progress. One character I really didn't like was Pa, she was so irritating and confused about her own relationship with Dessa's brother Ricky and her fiancé Skylar.

This book contains some original and great theory about reincarnation. Each of the characters has some dark past in their previous lives and their reincarnated past selves are now free from curse and wanted to put an end to keepers

The book was told from Dessa's point of view so many things remain unclear meant to be found out in next installment. Poison was broken into several glimpses of their past lives that revealed slowly during as the story progressed and in a good way only the first climax came too soon where I personally wanted the suspense to last a little long.

Going through all the dramas and suspense, I was hooked into pages. As first installment of **Keepers of Light** series, it was a great start to keep you interested. I'm really confused in 3 to 4 stars so I will give it a 3.5

Nick Turner says

Captivating and moving first-person story. Narrator Dessa is a Drum Major in her final year of college. Dessa is apprehensive about leaving the comforts of her Pennsylvania home. She has few close relationships but she is fiercely loyal and has an intense bond with her elder brother Ricky and her grown-up best friend Paola. One feature which marks Dessa out from other teenage girls is her extraordinary golden eyes.

When Dessa bumps into a strange man with disturbing eyes in a cafe she soon forgets him. But when an exciting new guy shows up at the band room - Chris is a drum major too - Dessa has the strange feeling that she already knows him.

The writing is natural. Breathless and elliptic in the style of a peppy college senior. There is a reasonable amount of angst (when strange things happen anxiety is plausible) without overpowering the narrative. It's not easy to cope with *hot and cold* feelings towards someone who you've only just met with equanimity.

In the acknowledgements the author discloses that some of the fictional characters are adapted from people she knows - writers commonly adapt elements of the familiar in fiction. I appreciate the bold honesty of the acknowledgements and hope the author has no subsequent cause for regret. Perhaps there is a little of *Meet my magic friends!* (view spoiler) about the story - an appealing trope for fans of paranormal romance. There are a few imperfections in the writing, but it's easy to be engrossed by strong characterisation and a dramatic plot.

Some siblings fight spitefully in private but put on a civil face for outsiders. Others are warm like twins. Readers who feel uncomfortable with the intensity of the Dessa-Ricky brother-sister bond depicted may be reassured by the author's disclosure that the person who fictional character Ricky is based on is her non-biological elder brother.

For me, the characters are young and Dessa is about to go away to university - you can't get those times together back. When there isn't a parent available all the time, and a younger sibling admires an elder, it's natural for a guardianship relationship to develop. The needs of a confident self-sufficient young woman may not appear great but under the surface Dessa is anxious and full of doubts - Ricky is someone she can trust *to always be there for her.*

The author requested reviews in an online forum. I e-mailed a request for a review copy to the author and soon received a PDF e-book.

Sara says

This book was good that it held my attention until the end. As I read it, a few things seemed to be confusing or rushed. Chris seemed to act weird throughout the whole book, and quite a few things that he did bothered me. I was glad that Dessa was a strong female lead for the most part. Kind of weird how quick they were to accept the paranormal aspect of the book. And how old were they exactly because all of a sudden she is pregnant, and then a wedding??? I give it 3 1/2 stars, and will be looking for a second book. Quite an accomplishment for a 19 year old writer.

A?? says

They say to never judge a book by its cover, but Poison is one of the rare few that is **B-E-A-U-T-I-F-U-L** inside and out. Yes - that good. Deserving for the word to be spelled out in bold-print.

The mythology and theory of reincarnation?
Have you utterly captivated.
The Final Battle?
Two words. Gut-Wrenching.
Dessa and Chris?
Had me doing that goofy heart-warming sigh.

Speaking of Chris..
Let's just skip to the one person I've been wanting to write about since picking up the book.. Chris.
blushes I'm in love my friends. No matter how much Skylar could press my buttons - I could not let her

come between me and one of my many '*Character-Love-Affairs*'.

Kudos to you Dejana for starting off with a bang! Keep them coming cause I'll definitely be coming back. ;)

OpenBookSociety.com says

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Dawn

It's difficult to write a review for *Poison* without giving away the plot. Have you ever heard the song "This Is How A Heartbreaks" by Rob Thomas. In the song he's having a conversation with himself. In the video, he is being chased around a city. Who is the nameless/faceless person chasing him?

Dessa is an interesting lead character; she is an old soul. She has such wisdom and she's incredibly self-possessed and self-aware. I grew with her as she learned who she is and what she must do.

The character development is essential because a lot is going on with each character. By the time I was well into the plot, I felt I knew each one of them. Pa, Chris, Ricky, Skylar etc... There were some clues that all was not well but each crumb dropped made me more eager to unravel the story. I needed to know where they came from and why they were here.

There are keepers of fire, wind, light, earth, water, darkness, secrets etc.....Darkness was the most interesting because of the destruction it could cause. In darkness many things can grow –greed, lust, anger, bitterness and if you're not careful, those things can take over and drive your motives. Darkness can feed on your soul. She has hunters that protect her. All of them were frozen but have been reborn. What will they do this time around?

The plot is intense and I love the visual Dejana Vuleti? created with each character and mirrors. Dessa reaches deep within herself to face her personal demons. She vowed to protect her loved ones and was willing to do whatever it takes. She learned to embrace her faults, to accept and love all of herself. That's a powerful message!

I'm trying to be vague on the details but I want to stress that you should read the book. I loved it; It's a great read. I've added Dejana Vuleti? to my "authors I keep track of" list. I MUST read the next installment and you should too!

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/po...>

Kari says

3.5 Stars

I was provided a copy of this book from the author for an honest review.

MY OVERVIEW: Ok, I had a hard time deciding what to rate this book. I really enjoyed the concept of it, and most of the story, but I did have some issues with it. In the end I decided on 3 stars just because of some of the issues i had. (UPDATED to 3.5 stars - see reason below)

PROS: I really liked the background story and the concept. I love how the author took the elements and brought them to life in people. (view spoiler) The characters were all really great and well written. I loved Dessa and Pa the best.

CONS: Ok, so I know that all of them have "lived" for a long long time, but I have some issues with things that happened. (view spoiler) There were also a few times where the story didn't flow that well, mainly when Dessa and Chris first met. I think one of the biggest problems I had was the kinda graphic rape scene. I don't think it was necessary to the story, and seemed really out of place. (SEE UPDATE)

MY FINAL THOUGHTS: A refreshingly original story. I truly enjoyed the story and I really look forward to the next in the series.

UPDATE: So I just received a message from the author in regards to the rape scene and it was explained further to me. Now, I completely understand why it is in there and it is actually really important to the story. I don't know why I didn't see that when I first read it. But now that it has been pointed out, I see it and completely understand. I even went back and re-read that portion of the book and now see that it is a very important scene that helps Dessa become who she is later in the book. Thank you Dejana for your explanation.

Iris says

https://youtu.be/DsEricNqq_Y

Maybe you're just mad you couldn't get traditionally published, because this is just bad. It reads like it's written by a middle schooler.

The characters are paper-thin, the setting is clunky, the romance is borderline creepy.

So maybe don't blame the "Leftist" YA readers and try to write something that isn't terrible.

Jina says

Trash book and a TRASH author.

Lorraine Beaumont says

Unexpected! This book was not what I expected in the least. Vuletic' weaves a tale that will take you on an often times, hair-raising, adventure that is sure to make you gasp, gape and yell, more than once. I found myself pulled along in a twisting - turning plot that kept me guessing around every turn. The heroine is likeable enough, although Chris and Ricky are my favorites, Skylar even made a comeback towards the end, at least for me. I would totally recommended this book to anyone who is looking for an exciting read into a world that has yet to be delved into. Looking forward to the next installment ;)

Helen says

Poison was a refreshing idea. A lot of YA keeps it safe, sticking to the tried-and-tested tropes. Poison creates a whole new mythology. Success will depend on your personal preferences, but it's a bold move that should be applauded - and practiced more in YA and paranormal in general.

But the writing.

I'm not sure how to describe it. It's not merely unpolished. It's like...your first novel. Not the first one you managed to publish. Not the draft you finally managed to make presentable for the agent after slaving over it. The one you scribbled in your super secret notebook sometime in middle to high school.

One of worst examples is a (view spoiler) rape scene. It's necessity is debatable; it's necessary to trigger a change in a character, however it happens shortly after an event which should have triggered the change but hasn't. We haven't seen any consequences for character not being changed when she should have been; there is no reason why, in the long run, the character shouldn't have been changed there and then. Except for a minor twist to rise stakes for a few seconds. And the plot is plagued with many similar "twists" that get instantly resolved. But, like I said, writing is what makes the scene problematic. "Feeling the soft texture of my skin" is not the phrase you want to use in a rape scene. Furthermore, due to the blow-by-blow writing style, the scene ended up being detailed and drawn-out - consequently, (unintentionally) graphic. In contrast, usual sex scenes are tasteful and non-explicit, heavy on imagery but poetic rather than purple. I really liked the balance between sensual and romantic there.

Insta-love is taken to another level - you don't even have to add water, just look in the general direction of nearest sink and there it is. That said, boyfriend was a genuinely sweet guy, any stalker-like tendencies vanished once he got the girl, and he's not prone to sudden outbursts of possessiveness and jealousy.

Sadly, for all that our cast of characters is made of mostly nice people, they are far from the brightest. Particularly frustrating is when our heroine makes a damn good point - (view spoiler) - but it's treated like she's wrong. It's a damn good idea for a character flaw, but it's not a flaw when the character is in the right. And there are many, many more stupid decisions preceded and followed with emotional outbursts a star of telenovellas would find excessive.

All in all, if you are after some light YA reading, looking for something paranormal that is not vampires/werewolves/angels, sick of "bad boys", and are not very particular about writing, this is a book for you.

I received a copy of this book via Goodreads First Reads.

Anastasia Nichole says

“Dessa Ambrose – the normal girl-next-door who yearns for her life to attain meaning – meets the strangely alluring Christopher Calder, who holds the secrets of the past and the keys to all the doors Dessa wishes to open. As she spends more time with Chris, Dessa begins to realize that he isn’t human – or at least not a normal one. His mysterious powers leave Dessa questioning the very foundation of the world she grew up in, and when Chris finally opens the door to Dessa’s future, she finds herself reluctant to walk through it.

As a newly Awakened Keeper – a God in the form of a human with the power to control one of the elements of nature—Dessa learns of her affinity for Light, but as she and her friends try to remember everything from their dark pasts, the evil they knew then has followed them to the present. But unfortunately for them, none of them can remember who that evil might be.

With that evil destroying the bonds that hold them so close to one another, wreaking destruction upon the world, and attempting to claim Dessa’s life at every available turn, Dessa realizes that her true destiny can no longer be avoided.

When it all comes down to it, Dessa must either forfeit herself, her power, and her will to live, or she must give up the lives of the entire world – of those she sought to protect. Can she make the ultimate sacrifice? Or is she just as spineless as the enemy believes her to be?”

You have to admit: the premise for this book is pretty intriguing. I mean, the idea of Keepers was pretty genuine compared to what I’ve seen in this genre. Immediately, I was hooked.

The whole idea of this book and the plot was very refreshing. However, I still found a few problems: the slight insta-love, “mysterious, unexplainable attraction,” the fact that we never see Dessa’s parents, only hear about them. Also, I didn’t connect with Dessa as well as I would have liked to. And that cliffhanger! Just when everything was coming to a happy ending, life has to take another unexpected turn for these poor characters!

But the humor did make me laugh out loud a few times, and I stayed up late to finish it. In that way, this book fully deserved its stars.

Many thanks to the author, who granted me a copy in exchange for an honest review. I enjoyed it!

Sarah Bohy says

The past few days of my life have seriously revolved around this book. Dejana may just be starting out, but “Poison” is the real deal. No paranormal-type book has ever gripped me like this one. Dessa is such an entertaining lead. She feels everything so deeply and makes it impossible not to relate with her. There were a few points during the book when I felt like she was speaking to me personally.

For me, so much of reading is about emotion; What the characters are feeling and doing and, subsequently,

what kind of emotion this evokes from the reader. It can be difficult for an author to capture a real, emotional response from an audience, and Dejana has achieved this on so many levels. Ricky cracks me up, Skylar pisses me off unlike any other character I've ever read about, Darkness scares the absolute crap out of me, but then Pa and her adorable mannerisms counter her and put me back at ease, and I'm pretty much just in love with Chris. With as much emotion as these pages hold, it's impossible not to get caught up.

Overall, this is a gripping, emotional, incredible read, and I haven't been this excited for a sequel in a long time.

Lauren says

This story is extremely intense and passionate. I was swept away from the beginning. The character development is crucial to the story. Dessa is an interesting heroine, her emotions captivate every aspect of her life and everything she does revolves around them. Everything that happens to her and everything that goes on strives to move the story along

There were a few parts where the story did not seem to flow as well. There were some graphic parts but they were essential to the path of the characters and the story. Although, overall the story as a whole was extremely emotional and engaging. I am looking very forward to reading the second book in the series.

Note: I won this book from the author.

Also on <http://lrljohnson13.blogspot.com/2012/...>

Michelle Carrell says

Very well written. It is seriously a romance novel, thriller, y/a, supernatural, adventure all wrapped into one book. I love the characters (except for Sky) and cannot wait for the next book!

Jennifer says

Disclaimer: I was given this book for free by the author in exchange for an honest review. My opinion is in no way swayed by the free book.

I'll jump right in and offer my opinion of the pros and cons of *Poison*.

CONS

This story feels like a first draft. The writing is very green and would benefit from a good edit to clip away the extraneous sections and extra/not needed dialogue and to amp up the overall writing.

While I do sometimes enjoy a good "we-fell-in-love-instantly" story, I find the relationship between the main characters happens way too quickly, is way too wonderful, and suffers from too much perfection. Teenage loves are not always so easy, no one is beautiful all the time, and sometimes people have bad days, therefore, disappointing relationship days. Without giving away the story, two of the main characters

experience life-changing, *huge* adult situations, and they act like it's cool, but no big deal. Even adults think these situations are *a big deal*, and it's okay for teenagers to freak out sometimes, too.

Like many YA novels, the parents are absentee characters. This is a plot device. I get it. I've used it. It's okay with me as long as there is a viable reason why there are no parents. This story offers no reason except to haphazardly toss in (maybe three times) that the parents are working. However, the parents never call, never buy groceries, never offer allowances, never leave notes, etc. I find this unacceptable. Even workaholic parents would call a cell phone or text once in awhile. This does allow for the siblings to have a very close bond, which—I feel—is almost creepy. They fall asleep together, sometimes laid on top of each other. They say they love each other a lot. Dessa is exceedingly happy when her brother enters a room, she talks about his beautiful smile, etc. I'm all for loving siblings, but there's a limit, too. The limit can be passed, and I found a lot of the sibling interaction to be very odd. I wasn't creeped out, but it was borderline. I have two brothers. I love them very much. We don't act the way these siblings did, certainly not as 18 year olds or college-age siblings.

There were inconsistencies in the characters. One moment a character might be crying, the next she was a tough girl who wouldn't take crap from anyone. One male character was egotistical and overly confident, then the next moment, he's crying in the bathroom wanting his girl to love him. Not normal.

The overall acceptance of past lives, powers, violence, adult-themed situations were way too *accepting*. Again, it's okay to have teenagers sufficiently worried by situations that would startle, frighten, totally holy-cow-freak-out anyone. A certain amount of anxiety and fear are normal in supernatural or paranormal circumstances. We're only human, after all.

PROS

The story really does center on a great, creative idea. It's imaginative. I think the characters have the potential to be great, especially when they're polished up, made a bit more real-life, and checked for overflowing, unnatural dialogue.

I like the use of the elements, and their powers are cool.

This is a story with a lot of potential.

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There is obviously a sequel in the works because the story ends (not abruptly), but the ending does leave the story with unresolved problems. The pace was a bit too fast for relationships and a bit stilted on sections where I felt the characters needed to actually do something other than sleep, eat, or take baths when they should be more freaked out. Most of the action was good and quick enough to keep the story moving. *Poison* has the potential to be a great story with an interesting, creative plot.

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