



# Perdita

*Faith Gardner*

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## **Perdita** Faith Gardner

Granted, Arielle has a vast, excitable imagination. But she's not imagining how strange and out of control her life becomes after the death by drowning of her older sister's best friend, Perdita. Not only does this death echo the death of Arielle's own older brother, ten years before, it leads to dreams and visions in which Perdita seems to be reaching out to Arielle, asking for her help. The only other explanation—that Arielle's high-strung emotions have finally caused her to break with reality—is even more terrifying. A story that builds to greater and greater heights of suspicion and fear, *Perdita* is also a multi-layered literary achievement that leaves no emotion untouched.

## **Perdita Details**

Date : Published August 1st 2015 by Simon Pulse (first published July 3rd 2015)

ISBN : 9781440588112

Author : Faith Gardner

Format : Hardcover 224 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Horror, Realistic Fiction, Fantasy, Paranormal, Mystery, Fiction

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## **From Reader Review Perdita for online ebook**

### **Kelsy B says**

I really enjoyed this book. I liked the characters and how the book started with a bang. Although, I feel as if the ending was too rushed. Other than that the book was great.

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### **Kristen Duvall says**

Is it ghosts? Or has young Arielle lost her mind? It's a question that haunts Arielle every day.

This book will draw you in from page one. The characters are realistic and if you're not currently in high school, you'll reminiscence about it simply by reading this book. Hopefully, however, your high school experience was nothing like Arielle's, but the truth is, most of us have experienced some of the same emotions, even if we don't personally experience losing someone we admire.

The problems Arielle face includes her bratty older sister going away to Harvard, her best friend choosing a boy over her, her parents downsizing from her childhood home to a tiny apartment, falling for the brother of a dead girl, and oh yeah... also trying to figure out who killed her sister's best friend, Perdita, because she's haunted by the ghost of the girl.

Gardner's first novel shows a lot of promise. Her dialogue is spot on, her characters are realistic, and the ending is one you will never expect. Perhaps you haven't heard of Faith Gardner until now, but trust me, her books will one day be sitting beside John Green's in the bookstore and the bestseller lists.

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### **phoebe says**

I borrowed this book from my local library over the summer for some light reading. I liked this book quite a lot. Arielle was a good main character. A basic YA main character. The story of Perdita was both haunting and intriguing, and I loved reading about it. The ending did seem a little bit rushed, but other than that, I enjoyed it a lot.

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### **PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says**

4.5 STARS

Perdita means lost in Spanish. After she drowns in a lake under mysterious circumstances, her best friend Casey's younger sister Arielle begins seeing what she assumes is Perdita's ghost. Arielle has seen ghost since her brother drowned ten years earlier. But is she seeing spirits or mentally ill a f hallucinating?

I loved Faith Gardner's THE SECOND LIFE OF AVA RIVERS and was excited to see her debut PERDITA on sale for Kindle for 99 cents. Gardner's writing is fresh and compulsively readable. Her word building is fantastic.

Arielle is such a sympathetic character, but keeps secrets and is afraid to be forthright with others. I loved her friendship/possible romance with Perdita's brother Tex and Arielle's complicated relationships her best friend Chloe and with Casey.

PERDITA would have been a five star review if not for the downplaying of Chloe's controlling, emotionally abusive relationship with her new boyfriend. Arielle alluded to it with Chloe, but never told her best friend her concerns. Arielle's mom is a psychiatrist or psychologist, yet she didn't ask her mom for advice. Chloe seemed to be dating him at the end of the book.

Other questions I had were:

-Why did Arielle's family move from a nice house in a good neighborhood to a run down apartment? Possibilities could have been a parent lost a job, to pay for Casey's college, gambling etc. I've not know middle-aged couples to downsize from a house to an apartment in a decent economy without a reason. Smaller home, townhouse or condo, sure, but not owning to renting at their age.

-Why didn't Arielle tell Tex she was the anonymous tipster? I thought he deserved to know.

I enjoyed PERDITA very much and look forward to more books from Gardener in the future.

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### **Rachel Kelley says**

The writing was very realistic which was kind of refreshing for a YA novel, but in some ways it could pull me out of the story. That is the only reason I dropped a star and gave it three instead of four. It wasn't bad, it just had me focusing on the language instead of the scene at certain points. Like I said though, it was very realistic for a teenage girl and I was impressed by that.

The story itself was captivating. I really enjoyed it. The ghost element was creepy and riveting. The relationships were real and complex. It dealt with losing family, friends, growing up, growing apart...and it did all of these things well. I enjoyed it and it was a quick read.

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### **Audrey Wilkerson says**

This mystery is off to a promising start. Part ghost story, it tells of the drowning of one of Arielle's sister's best friends. Arielle had just seen Perdita the day before at their house, talking to her sister and her sister's newer bff, Emily. Perdita hadn't been around much since Casey started to spend all of her time with Emily, and the raised voices, stomping and door slamming made Arielle think that she would be seeing even less of Perdita.

In the morning, a gruesome scene awaits. Perdita has drowned in the pond in the park across the street, and it is widely assumed that she has taken her own life. But is there more to the story?

Perdita's brother, Tex, has been at a private school, but is returning to the local high school. The year promises to be full of change, sadness, answers and twists and turns for everyone. Especially when Arielle starts communicating with the beyond. Was Perdita suicidal? Or was she murdered?

It's never a great idea - if you're trying to get some good sleep, that is - to start a good book at ten pm. Granted, you might not know this ahead of time, but I certainly was completely and utterly sucked into Arielle's world. She has many reasons to be able to see ghosts, from a vivid imagination to a dead brother, but it is still unnerving. And when Perdita dies and seems to be trying to communicate with Arielle, is she just supposed to brush it off? Is there another reason?

The murder mystery was well done, and having a ghostly "sidekick" made it all the more creepy. In addition, the cast of characters that might have done it is well-planned. My only negative? Without giving too much away, I must say that after reading the majority of the book, part of the story took a weird turn that was obviously supposed to be the big twist. To be honest, I felt let down.

The relationship between Tex, and Arielle and the changes that happen with Arielle's best friend, Chloe, are well-written and so real. All-in-all, a good, solid read.

***Perdita by Faith Gardner was published August 1, 2015 by Merit Press. A free copy of this book was given to Ink and Page in return for an honest review. Big thanks to the Publisher and the Author.***

Rating: 3.5

Genre: Young Adult Fiction Contemporary Mystery Romance

Ages: 13 and up

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## **Stephanie B says**

"Maybe change isn't always bad. Without change, there'd be no beginnings."

Arielle Delaney is your typical sixteen year old, spends all her time with her best friend, argues constantly with her older sister who's about to leave for Harvard, and encounters with what she believes are ghosts. Arielle's semi-normal life is upturned when a body is discovered in the lake by her house. The corpse is her sister's long-time best friend, Perdita, the girl Arielle wished her sister was like, with her platinum blonde hair and lackadaisical attitude toward life. Perdita's death is deemed a drowning, which immediately brings agonizing memories to Arielle's family—not ten years before her older brother drowned at camp. An investigation is opened into Perdita's death, and Arielle believes Perdita's spirit is trying to tell her what happened the night she died. Can Arielle solve the questions around Perdita's mysterious drowning, while managing personal relationships and changes throughout her own life?

Faith Gardner's debut, *Perdita*, was rapid, absorbing, and downright satisfying to read. Arielle's directness with the reader was refreshing and conversational in tone, while being completely relatable; coupled with a page-turning, tongue-in-cheek narrative made for a gripping and exhilarating novel. *Perdita* will make you check your periphery a little more frequently.

\*\*\*\* 4 Stars

Perdita

by Faith Gardner

224 Pages

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\*Disclaimer: Hardback copy received from Manhattan Book Review and Merit Press for an honest review. The review was originally published in the December 2015 issue of Manhattan Book Review, which can be read [here](#).

Gilt & Buckram . . . the framework that holds adventure.

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### **Sara says**

I really enjoyed this YA book. It felt so real. It's much more than a ghost story, it's a story of family, of grief, of friendships and the loss of friendships, of illness, of doing the right thing, of doing the wrong thing. Amid all the drama, there's also a mystery here surrounding the drowning of Perdita.

This gives me stuff to think about. I would have liked this when I was younger, I think.

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### **Jazmen says**

\* A special thanks to Merit Press for this advanced review copy!

To put this review simply, I'm bringing you a round of likes and dislikes.

Likes: The writing--it was easy going, sarcastic, and sort of witty. I think Gardner really brought the characters and this story to life with how she writes. Everything just flowed, and I really enjoyed the book for it.

The MC: Arielle. She was average, not overly pretty, not overly dramatic--she was pretty run of the mill, in a good way. She was never over the top about anything--in a way a lot of young MC's can be. She was pretty funny, and very normal. I dug that.

The romance--It was kind of feels-y. I kind of swooned. It slowly grew throughout the book, creating a nice build up, and I really liked the two characters together.

The mystery--initially. The mystery is so mysterious, you pretty much have no clue, what's going on, and why it's going on. But then something changes and I was no longer pleased.

Dislikes: The solving of the mystery: It couldn't have wrapped up any easier. It was way too easy, and it left me feeling disappointed, and unsatisfied.

The sister: It wasn't that she was a raging bee-yatch or anything. She was just strange. Up and down, mean and nice. It was unsettling because I always felt like I didn't know what I was getting with her. Eventually it all kind of gets figured out but, I still felt funny about her.

Conclusion: Because of the main character, because of her wit, the writing, and the romance I enjoyed this book. If I were judging it solely based on the mystery aspect, I wouldn't be too crazy about it. The author did leave us guessing but the resolution was lackluster.

I'm intrigued enough to read anything else by the author, she definitely has the chops for it.

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### **Sandy Eichelberger says**

Arielle is seeing things. Is it ghosts or is she just going insane? She lost her brother to drowning when she was young and now she is tormented by the recent remembrance of Perdita, her sister's best friend's body, being pulled from the lake near her home. Arielle wonders if the dead girl is haunting her or if she's just delusional. Perdita's brother Tex is also going through a tough time and he befriends Arielle, finding her a kindred soul. But there are questions about the girl's death: was it drugs, suicide or foul play? Gardner creates this eerie, mystery centering on a girl who is struggling with her life. She's missing the closeness she formerly had with her sister and is ignored by her best friend who's busy with a new boyfriend. Arielle has no one to turn to and is floundering with the visions that are complicating her hold on reality. The book is interesting and has some surprising revelations toward the end. However, the secondary characters offered opportunities that Gardner failed to capitalize on. Arielle's best friend's story falls by the wayside just as her sister's story lacks completion. These dropped storylines hurt, though Arielle's story does not suffer the same fate. For teens interested in books with paranormal visions, this should appeal.

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### **Alexandra Clyde says**

First, I was not expecting much from this book but man was I surprised. This book is amazing! I feel like this is an inadequate description but, the book was really real. Yes there are mentions of ghost for a fantasy element. Aside from that the reactions by the characters, the characters themselves, and the plot was super realistic. None of the characters were perfect. They screwed up sometimes and succeeded sometimes. The characters were believable in their flaws, dreams, and actions. They were like real teenagers facing real problems. Sorry, I just cannot believe how good the book captured what the struggles are for people in general and in the horrible situation of losing a sibling tragically. Not everything was perfectly resolved at the end but that just went with how the book was like real life and that not everything gets round up so perfectly and there will always be problems that remain. This book gave me a lot to think about. Though there was lots of mentions of ghosts there was so much to the book that made me think it could happen today the fantasy part took a backseat.

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## Michelle Wrona says

This review can also be found on [A Thousand Lives Lived](#), check it out for more!

**This book is life, honestly.** I seriously could not believe that I loved it so much! You know when your expectations blow you away and you discover that a book was just so freaking amazing when your initial reaction was down the toilet? Yeah, that is what happened with Faith Gardner's *Perdita*. It's mesmerizing, but not full of fantasy as I expected it to be. Sure, our main character, Arielle, sees ghosts, but it is not the main point or theme of the novel. In fact, it is just a small itsy-bitsy plot addition that made readers and myself want to continue reading. It was full of racing, heart-pounding moments where I, myself, wanted to solve the mystery and help the characters deal with the grief that they have been going through, in multiple layers—like a top-tiered cake.

**This was a story that had many layers, when you think about it.** No, seriously. There was romance (a gorgeous one, in fact), a paranormal mystery and loss. Everything that is the worst possible situation in your life was switched and crumbled into this beautiful story. I adore this cover, the water lily making the book seem so dark with a few rays of light making me feel better. This is a special book, no doubt about it.

"It's not easy having a shrink for a mom—she's rarely home, and when she is, she's got all sorts of theories about my behaviour. Most if not every one of those theories often leads back to what I "could do better" and ways I "could improve." Fun stuff. Anyway, I could definitely improve my being a teenage scaredy-cat, apparently." (20)

**Arielle was the absolute highlight of Faith Gardner's tale.** Her attitude was contrasting, different than every other protagonist's personality with a whip of her own thing going on. She was naïve, but in that interesting way that did not give the answer and solution of the issues in the book out to all readers from the fiftieth page or so. It is a quick, juicy read that made me tremble, need a blanket, and a cup of good ole hot chocolate to warm me up because MAN, that was overwhelmingly scary. I find that I am being shocked quite a bit lately with these new thrillers coming into my face. Egh.

*This mystery made absolute sense.* When Gardner flashed the answer to readers' eyes and when Arielle herself solved it like a good Nancy Drew, **I understood why.** I find that authors sometimes are not the best at keeping a secret for a long time, and hints are given out throughout the whole story. This? Nada, nothing. And I loved it. I was not here reading it so I could find the answer myself and then rant for the whole review, saying that it was given away. No sir-ee. The answers were put out, we discovered a little more insight on the side characters who seemed too suspicious for this story to go on without them, and the story moved on, sadly.

**I'm not looking for a sequel, but for more by Faith Gardner.** Her writing instantly flows with the mood



and themes of the book. The clip at the cover of the novel, "Is a dead girl trying to reach her?" has nothing to do with the story, and although that was a horrible mistake, it did shock me to see how much I actually enjoyed the story. The romance was there, I fell in love with the characters and the way the events progressed as I flipped through the pages. More contemporary novels should be like *Perdita*, it is a guideline, in fact, for enjoyment.

"I could go. I can imagine it. I could hop on the back of his motorcycle and we could ride to another state. Somewhere snowy in the winter, somewhere nestled in pine trees, some small town where no one knows who the Delaneys or the Dells are. We could get jobs, GEDs. We could start a life together. We could be so happy." (219)

**It is so realistic, as you could see from the quote above.** It is absolutely difficult to mix a contemporary with paranormal and hope for the best... but Faith did it. And I seriously recommend this book to all, wishing for everyone to give it a chance (GIVE IT LOVE) and adore it as much as I did. It was truly magical. Wooo!

*\*Thanks to the publisher for providing me with a finished copy to review!\**

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## zapkode says

{My Thoughts} – Arielle is an interesting teenager. She seems to have an overactive imagination that at times terrifies her. She has concluded that she has the ability to see ghosts, but she doesn't understand why those ghosts are wanting to hurt her.

The main plot of this book is about the death of Perdita, Arielle's sisters best friend. Arielle killed herself or was killed by someone's hand – she drowned in the lake not far from Arielle's house. Arielle sees her body being taken out of the lake, she sees that it is Perdita. She goes home and she tells her parents and her sister. The word drown brings back terrible memories for the family. Arielle's older brother had drowned at summer camp ten years before. Her family has never been able to move on from it, they have never been able to accept that they had nothing to do with his death, that there was no way it could have been prevented and that things do just happen.

In Perdita's case though there is so much information being released that results in the police ruling in foul play. However, they have no leads and no way to know who killed her. They have no idea why she was there at the lake and they have no way to figure things out either.

Arielle starts school shortly after she dies. She ends up in classes with Perdita's younger brother Tex. The two of them become close and yet push each other away at the same time. They end up having a sort of strange relationship that seems to have been built based on the death of his older sister.

Why was she at the lake that night? Why do the police think it was foul play? Who really knows what happened to her? What is going on with Arielle that she thinks she sees ghosts? Do the police ever find out what really happened the night that Perdita had died?

This book sets you up to want a lot of things answered in a short amount of time. However, once things start to unravel it becomes almost predictable where the story line is going. I think that is the only thing I didn't

like about the book, how predictable it became as I was reading it.

I think that anyone that has lost a close friend and is struggling with themselves will enjoy reading this book. It is nicely written, it just lacked the twist element that you'd expect in a mystery book.

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### **Sophia says**

I loved everything but the ending. Arielle is such a real character, not like some of the YA main characters nowadays that are just a little too overdramatic or too good to be true. The author focuses on her character development and makes her relatable and real. The plot is great- watching Arielle navigate the murder of Perdita and what happened, her sister leaving, school, Tex, her best friend Chloe drifting away, her brother's death from ten years ago that still haunts her family, her hallucinations/seizures- the author did a great job. Right around the end, after Arielle discovers who the murderer is and the aftermath, was the part I didn't like. I felt like that part was just kind of tacked on as an attempt at a plot twist. I didn't mind that Emily ended up being the murderer, but dragging Casey down with her just seemed like an attempt at connecting the murder to one of the central characters- and the whole thing with Arielle dropping out of school and almost running away with Tex- that also felt out of place. But besides that, it was a great book.

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### **Shazza Maddog says**

Arielle is a teenage girl living in a suburb a few doors down from the best friend of her sister, Casey. Perdita is someone Arielle, and her own best friend, Chloe, admire - she's friendly and pretty and dresses in her own style, wearing a leather jacket with an anatomically-correct heart patch and a matching necklace. Emily, Casey's other best friend, and Casey are going off to Harvard and Perdita's staying in town. But before Casey can leave, something happens.

Perdita's found in the nearby lake, drowned, and Arielle sees her body pulled from the lake. It brings back memories of summer camp and the terrible thing that happened there. What's strange is Casey doesn't seem to care. Worse, Arielle thinks she's being haunted by Perdita's ghost, who appears as a skeletal girl with a glowing red heart beating in her ribs. This doesn't stop school from happening and Chloe's encouraged Arielle to take a class in theater where they meet someone new-old - Perdita's younger brother, who's been attending private school. Not to mention, Arielle's family is getting ready to move and now Chloe has a boyfriend who's changing Chloe more than Arielle thinks is good.

But strange things are happening around Arielle and she's sure Perdita's ghost is to blame for it. Broken lamps, sore muscles after sleeping, wrecked bedroom. Her relationship with Tex is getting better but her friendship with Chloe is falling apart. And now that they've moved, the ghost has followed Arielle and she finds some weird things in Casey's moving boxes, not to mention in Perdita's own bedroom. What is she going to do with all these strange and unfamiliar sensations?

A quick read with an interesting premise. Arielle comes across as confused and sad and like someone you'd probably like. She's relatable and her family has problems most people can relate to. Perdita's ghost does have a big part to play, as well as another ghost haunting the family.

An enjoyable story.

