



## The Decaying Empire

*Laura Thalassa*

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## **The Decaying Empire** Laura Thalassa

When eighteen-year-old teleporter Ember Pierce wakes up in a Los Angeles hospital, she remembers only the basics: she's been trained by the government as a spy, she's sent on dangerous missions, and her last assignment—the one that landed her in the hospital—was a setup.

Caden Hawthorne has spent the past ten months of his life grieving Ember's death. So when she shows up in his room like an apparition, he can't believe his eyes. But this Ember is different. Her hair is longer, her skin is paler, her gaze is haunted. She tells him what he's already begun to suspect: someone he trusted betrayed her.

Now, uncertain who is friend and who is foe, Ember and Caden face the toughest mission of their lives—to stay together and survive, as they run from danger toward an unknown future.

## **The Decaying Empire Details**

Date : Published April 21st 2015 by Skyscape

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Author : Laura Thalassa

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## **From Reader Review The Decaying Empire for online ebook**

### **Carolyn says**

Very interesting second book!

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### **Ari Reavis says**

\*ARC copy received from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review\*

This is the second book I've read by this author that's made me cry. It was great. The action and adventure keeps you on the edge of your seat. With a dose of a great love story in there as well.

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### **Lauren says**

I finished it! It only took me one day to read and I loved every minute of this. In the second book to the amazing series, this book continues to be utter amazement. This book was filled with action and heart-wrenching romance. I loved the characters and the plot was never predictable. I NEED A THIRD BOOK AND I NEED IT NOW!

In this book SPOLIER\* Ember wakes up from her coma after ten months of being asleep. In her last mission she was shot and has been spliced. Dane wakes her up and sends her back to Caden after realizing that Caden needs her. They catch up and quickly make plans to escape, but something always stops them.

(I would say for 13+)

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### **Adele says**

FIRST NOTE: I was given a copy of this book from the publisher; Amazon Publishing via netgalley, in exchange for an honest review.

SECOND NOTE: The fact that I was given a copy will in no way depict how I feel about this book.

The first note I have to myself about The Decaying Empire is: "GUESS WHOSE BACK?!" YEP! Ember; she's back and friends, she is kicking ass!! I absolutely loved this book. There's just as much, if not more action in this book than in The Vanishing Girl. The fact that Ember is back is crazy, and awesome, and "What the Fuck?!" worthy, and if I can't handle it, how does Caden handle it?! Admittedly, not well at first.

"I maintained that he was still an asshat."

The Decaying Empire starts with a bang. I remember being awake all night, I had just finished The Vanishing Girl, so I had to read The Decaying Empire. But I had to be quiet, because it was early morning

in the warmer months, and my dad had just gotten off of work. I remember that so vividly because I was actually doing a combination of screaming and squeeling. There were also a lot of varying “What the Fuck”’s. I was also bouncing around in my seat at the dinning room table. What happens in this book is crazy, and I was literally, so exuberant. Everything was crazy town.

So something that I didn’t expect in The Decaying Empire is the two different points of views. Now, that doesn’t take away from the story at all. If anything, it enhances the story. Usually I don’t like two points of view, but I like the dual points of view that we have with Ember and Caden.

Caden’s point of view is helpful to read because we see parts of the establishment that we didn’t really get to see or get to know in The Vanishing Girl. With Caden’s view we really get to see how much he actually feels for Ember. In the last book, The Vanishing Girl, Caden didn’t really express a lot of emotion other than that he was happy. He had to make sure that everything seemed fine on the outside so no one would see what was underneath the surface. Caden is very much still his charming self, even if there’s some underlying major stress.

“He grieves what I’ve become.”

With Ember’s point of view, we see how much she is pissed off, and how vengeful she’s become. I mean, she is out for blood. In The Decaying Empire, Ember is pretty much go-go-go and trust absolutely no one. And if there are people who want to help you, you have to expect that they’re suspect to what happened in the last book. With everything that Ember goes through, she still manages to be the spunky, sarcastic, competitive girl that we knew in the beginning of the trilogy.

Caden and Ember together are just great. Like, they’re literally made for each other. They both counter each other’s bad habits. Ember brings out the emotions Caden’s been purposely not feeling. Caden strengthens Ember’s resolve. The two of them ban joke and be fun, and serious the next minute. They’re very in-tune with each other, and they’re there for each other for better or worse. They’re the type of couple that I truly envy.

The feels for this book are all over the place. There’s understanding, grief, anger, sadness, gratefulness. And there are friends in places that I didn’t think that Caden and Ember wouldn’t find. I’m so thankful that these two have such a close network of friends.

“He did not just name my breasts.”

Along with everything that happens, there’s obviously going to be challenges. I mean, when, in life, are there not challenges? The challenges that Ember have in this are seemingly endless. The challenges that Caden have, are few, but they’re huge challenges, of course Caden will take that on, and whatever else he could. The challenges the two have together as a couple are hard as well. These two have some serious challenges in this book.

The ending for The Decaying Empire though, holy shiiit. I didn’t expect that at all. Which makes me so freaking excited for the third book! The ending of The Decaying Empire really captures who Caden and Ember are as a couple, and who they are individually.

“Praise Jesus for muscles.”

All-in-all, I absolutely loved this book. I mean, it had me jumping up and out of my seat, the story had me not being able to sit still for a good majority of the book. Which leaves me with the thought of: “I have to get these first two books, immediately.” or, you know, when I have enough money to buy the books online. These books are the immediate-buy, immediate-faves.

Thank you so much for reading my review of The Decaying Empire by Laura Thalassa! If you like a fast paced, young/new adult book, featuring a protagonist who will stop at nothing to do what she knows is right.

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### **Linda says**

I received a free, advance copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for my unbiased review. I LOVED this book! It was a great follow up to The Vanishing Girl. Ember is bad ass, I love that so much. \*Sigh\* Caden is every girls dream! Hot, faithful, devoted and knows how to help protect his Angel! This book is so full of excitement I felt like I was right along for the ride. So well written! It didn't leave too much of a cliffhanger, just enough for me to bite my nails and wait for the next! Stop reading this review and READ THIS BOOK NOW!!!!

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### **Francesca says**

Alors oui on n'avance pas beaucoup dans l'intrigue, mais ça bouge bien, il y a plein d'action et de combats, et Caden est super intense dans l'expression de ses sentiments. Donc j'ai beaucoup aimé, et j'espère que le troisième tome sortira avant que mon intérêt retombe.

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### **Abbie says**

(I received a copy from Netgalley, In exchange for an honest review.)

Ember wasn't an awful character, but I didn't love her. She could be quite annoying at times. I couldn't get along with Caden at all. I found him extremely annoying! Needless to say, he was the reason I didn't like the romance side of the story.

Just like the first book, the first few chapters were okay, but after that it went downhill quickly. Before I had even got to the halfway mark, I wanted it to be over.

Overall, Not a read I enjoyed.  
I won't be reading book three.

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### **Emmeline (The Book Herald) says**

*Biggest thank you of my life to Amazon publishing for this ARC!*

**AND HERE I THOUGHT THIS SERIES COULDN'T GET ANY BETTER!! I STAND CORRECTED!**

Holy molly! WHAT JUST HAPPENED HERE!?

I'll tell YOU what just happened! This book is the motherload of amazingness (*i know that it makes no sense!!*)

Oh my goodness, this was...i have no words! I thought the first book was epic but this one...rendered me speechless.

I literally don't think i gave 5 stars to two following books in a series before. I'm super picky with my books but **THIS ONE DESERVED IT!**

I know what you're thinking:

The answer is **NO**

Okay let's get to the plot:

There is nothing worst than losing the person you love.

There is nothing worst than being betrayed.

There is nothing worst than realising, you're a pawn in everyone's game.

Resurrection. Redemption. Salvation

But no matter how wonderful these sound, Ember and Caden will never be safe.

Deceit. Trust no on.

Will freedom be worth the cost?

Read this book!

I obviously didn't go into details of what happened, because...it would 100% spoil every heart-wrenching moments to experience if i did that.

All i can say is that our characters went from being teenagers to being adults.

I love these characters so much.

**This second book will NOT disappoint you in the least!**

Honestly this book did things to my heart. The action. The love. the devotion. Oh my goodness. I find no flaw in here! How rare that is!!!

on the side- If you're reading this book, you'll have read the first and know that it's a New adult book, which means that there are adult themes and swearing. (i usually don't like that stuff, but everything else was so epic i just ignored those moments.)

Apart from that, it was amazing.

That ending...Man, that plot twist! I smelled the rat, i knew there was something sketchy, BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS THAT!!

This series...*sheesh* I have officially become a fan.

Now to wait for the third...

Have an awesome one kiddos, I'm still hyperventilating.

-The Book Herald.

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### **D. King says**

One word: A-freaking-mazing. Review to come upon release.

Okay, so now that this is out, I'll dish out my full review. If you loved The Vanishing Girl, and if you're like me, I wanted to throw a shoe at Ms. Thalassa for making us wait this long for the sequel. I think I spent a whole week brooding over this fact after finishing book #1. But no more brooding, because The Decaying Empire is HERE and it's AWESOME!

The sequel picks up right after that jaw-dropping cliffhanger from the first book, and what's really cool about this book is that we get more information as we get Caden's POV mixed in with Ember's. Hints from book one aren't necessarily revealed, but they are built upon, and I found myself having AH-HA! moments when something from book one came back into play. I love the slow burn of this sci-fi romantic thriller. Because that's what it is: sci-fi, romantic, thrilling.

Now the downside is, again, we have to wait for book #3. And Laura Thalassa doesn't end this one any better than she did the first. But thankfully, I have two feet, thus two shoes.

I will be waiting very impatiently for the next book to this fantabulous series!

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### **Jaime (Two Chicks on Books) says**

I absolutely adore Laura and her books! I can't get enough of her writing whether it be fantasy, sci-fi, YA or NA! This was no exception I loved it! Caden is so damned sexy! I need book 3 now!!!!

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## Jillian says

4.5 stars.

The Decaying Empire is book 2 in the Vanishing Girl series. This book picked up in the exact spot that book 1 ended. This book also ends on somewhat of a cliffhanger but more just the beginning of a new storyline for them. The immediate conflict from this book was mostly resolved by the end. Unfortunately book 3 is not yet out and the author seems to have continuously pushed it back so I'm not sure when it will actually be out. It looks like maybe by the end of 2018 but who knows.

I really liked The Decaying Empire quite a bit. I was completely enthralled in the story and couldn't put it down. I loved the characters and all of the excitement of the adventure and mystery.

I'm not giving this book 5 stars because there were some things that needed to be explained a bit more. It didn't impact the overall story but having things more clearly explained would have elevated the story.

The editing was pretty good with this book but I did notice that each time the author meant emphatic or emphatically, she actually used the words empathic / empathically so that was a big editing miss. Otherwise, it was pretty clean.

I can't wait for book 3 to come out so I can see how this series finishes. I need more of Ember and Caden!

I recommend this series. I have read some of the author's other books and really liked those as well. If she can get her organization and scheduling together, she will likely become one of my favorite authors. For now, I like her books a lot but I don't consider her an immediate one-click author because she writes books in series' but takes way too long to release subsequent books. I love The Bargainer series but have been waiting what feels like forever to get the final book. I read (and loved) Pestilence, book 1 of her new series, and am totally kicking myself for that. Fingers crossed these will come out more quickly.

**Audible:** I added the whispersync audible narration to this kindle book. The narrator did a good job with this one. I enjoyed listening to the parts I played.

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## Alicia Batista (Addicted Readers) says

### 4 STARS

Another epic success from Laura Thalassa!! She is an amazing writer with a creative imagination and a talent for sculpting the most wonderful worlds that I just adore! She has captured my heart with her thrilling, action-packed books, with layered character development, and a world-building that instantly allures and satisfies in so many levels.

Just like in book one, the characters were fierce, awesome determined, and so much fun. I did have a few minor issues with this sequel that actually surprised me. But nothing too serious to defer my love or overall

enjoyment for this book or series as a whole.

I loved, LOVED, LOVEDDDDD, the characters and all their strengths and weaknesses. Ember and Caden made the perfect couple for so many different reasons. As partners, teammates, allies, friends, lovers, and ultimately as soul mates. They challenged each other while also finding their equal within each other. They were able to make everything they did together fun and charismatic. I was never bored while reading this book or felt like it was going down hill. They could make any boring situation fun and complex. They just had this electrifying chemistry that made it so endearing and utterly fantastic to watch unfold.

I hate to admit it, but one of the issues I did have with this book was that there wasn't no where near enough sex as there was in the first book. Call me what you will, but after reading the first book and getting a taste of all that sexual fun Ember and Caden had, I kinda expected that same affection and interaction as book one. I don't know if Amazon told Laura Thalassa to pipe it down, or just that the author wanted the sex to take a back seat to the plot, but whatever the reasoning, I wanted more!! I loved Ember and Caden's chemistry and affection they had with each other, on an emotional and sexual level. I thought they had a chemistry that not too many authors can pull and make desirable and satisfying. And I was excited to think that I would find that same sexual and emotional relationship in this sequel. But nevertheless, there was still some sexual scenes and intimate relations that was fun and enthralling to read. But no where near as much or as good as it was in book one!

Another thing that bothered me was the lack of explanation of the teleportation aspect. Just like in book one, we didn't get a fleshed out version of how the teleportation works, and who was ultimately controlling some of Ember's side missions that she was directed too. But after that cliffhanger ending I think I know exactly who, but it still doesn't tell us that or why. And we're seriously left hanging with that cliffhanger. I was left still questioning how items materialized during teleportation, and how and why the teleporters wake up naked, or are able to change clothes before they arrive at their teleportation destination. And also how teleporters could be directed to certain places. I know the author gave a brief explanation, but nothing in depth to help me understand the actual process. It's just that after the second book I expected more answers than what we got.

Another small issue was that the complete book was centered around their escape. I would of liked more missions, an aspect that I loved in book one. But also as I mentioned earlier, more sex or sexual encounters. The authors writing a New Adult novel and could of definitely pushed the limits. Also more time plotting their taken down of the Project and less time spent on their escape. Though I do think book three will be fully centered around the Project's take down, but it still would of been nice to see some of that in this book too. It's like this book was so good to a fault, but also lacked a lot of something too. I was thinking about giving it a 3 star rating, but my love for the main characters and their relationship was too great that I just couldn't give it a low rating! I was disappointed but satisfied at the same time, if that at all makes any sense whatsoever???

## **THE PLOT**

Being betrayed by the same people that Ember Pierce has been forced to work for, she wakes up after 10 months from an induced coma to the horrifying reality that something is not right. She doesn't know what or how it all happened, but someone set her up and almost cost her her life, and she thinks she knows just who got her spliced. Now with fury and rage fueling her heart, she's on a rampage with an unsatisfied vendetta against the ones who have given her her life, but have also taken it away.

After her kidnapping that brought her to the government facility that made her, Ember was forced to endure

things an eighteen-year-old shouldn't. But to the Project they aren't kids, hell, they're not really even people to them. Just weapons for them to use to complete their ultimate goals. They're trained to become spies, thieves, seducers, infiltrators, and ultimately killer to achieve the corrupted government's wicked agenda. And there is nothing Ember Pierce can do about it, or is there...?

Ember was one of the few teleporters that was genetically modified to be different than other teleporters. She was created with a defiance gene that has her questioning authority and quick to become suspicious of people and their ulterior motives. And that's why Ember is able to see things more clearly than other teleporters who are content just going along with the Project's orders with no guilt or reservations. They are made to be the perfect soldiers, but Ember is not one of them. That's why she cannot sit by and let the Project slowly kill them off one by one, and use her and the other teleporters the way they do. So after her failed attempt to expose the Project for what they really are landed her spliced and in an induced coma for 10 months, she now knows she must be one step ahead of the Project if she wants to succeed. But with her boyfriend and love of her life Caden on her side, fighting every battle with her, and Adrian, a supposed ally working from the outside to further aid in their escape and exposure to the Project, how can she possibly fail??? Well she's about to find out just how quick things can go wrong.

THE DECAYING EMPIRE was a great sequel with its perks and its flaws, but still highly satisfying. I had issues with the lack of explanation on the teleportation aspect, and also the plot only really centering around escape and not evened out like its predecessor was in book one. But with only a few minor hiccups along the way, and noting too serious, I was able to fall madly in love with this series all over again.

*Overall, If you like fast-paced, action-packed, science-fiction novels, with fierce character development, and enough sexual interaction to fuel your imagination, in a dystopian-like setting, with conspiracies, spies, murder, and kick ass fighting to keep you entertained until the very end, then THE DECAYING EMPIRE is one sequel you won't wanna miss!!*

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### Sunniva Dee says

SWOOOON!!! I have so many highlights of awesomeness in Caden \*cough\* I mean in this novel!

**I adore this series.** So much. It is beautifully written, and the complexity of the characters, the world they live in, makes my heart beat faster. I'm not actually a book boyfriend sort of person. Until now, I've only ever picked up one, and that is SC Stephens' Kellan Kyle. But toward the end of this novel, I felt this enormous grin spread on my face, because Caden - CADEN is freaking up there!!!

I adore his sexy, bad-ass ways. How protective he is of Ember. His clever comebacks. How, no matter the absurdity of their lives and the temptations around them, Ember is the only one he'll ever love. Even when they're in the same room, he longs for her:

*Caden stared at me across the fire, the smoke and flames making his features sharper and more dangerous-*

*looking. He watched me like a man mesmerized. I had to stop myself from reaching up and self-consciously tucking a strand of hair behind my ear. (...) "He wants you to go over to him," Marissa said, leaning into me. "He looks like he's having separation anxiety." We both knew that wasn't the look he was giving me.*

This is suspense. It's dystopian. Science fiction. Bad-\*\*ss romance. Passion. And it is definitely, definitely New Adult. I love that this series is for grown-ups. Laura Thalassa doesn't moderate her characters' language, and even so it is far from over the top; it is just enough to make you feel like you're not reading a book created for 13-year-olds.

Now, I can't wait for book three. Ember and Caden's story continues, and the way *The Decaying Empire* ends made me squirm with delight. It is absolutely perfect!!! So let me finish my review with a small part from the end of the book. It will not ruin your fun and the suspense (which is brimming over throughout the entire book), but it might show you why I ended up with goosebumps.

**Oh yes. Yes. This was me:**

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*Caden winked at her, then he too played his part. He pressed into the group, clapping a man on the shoulder, shaking hands, being the chummy f\*cking charmer he always was. New enemies to add to the old? Bring'em. They'd been trained for violence. And in this field, the prodigies had surpassed their masters.*

**Mallory (toweroftomes) says**

Find this review and more fantastical things at The Leaning Tower of Tomes.

*Source:* I received this book from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for review consideration. This in no way affects my review; all opinions are my own. Thank you, Skyscape and Amazon Children's Publishing!

***The review:***

I have a bunch of books for review that I need to read ASAP. But when I got *The Decaying Empire* from NetGalley, I knew I'd end up reading it almost right away. To hell with the reading schedule I've been trying to keep -- when there's a book you're dying to read and you know you're going to love, *you have got to read it!* I was so pleasantly surprised by the first book in the series, *The Vanishing Girl*. It was my first foray into the New Adult genre, and one of the first books I got through NetGalley. After finishing it I was absolutely enraged that I couldn't keep reading the story. So when I saw the sequel I just had to snatch it up. Now that that's all off my chest... let me say that **I loved *The Decaying Empire*. I couldn't stop reading it.** I started it at 1:00AM and kept going until about 4:00AM (because what is sleep?). When I woke up in the late morning, I finished the last third of the book. Book 2 doesn't end on nearly as giant a cliffhanger book 1 did, but I'm still eagerly awaiting the third and final book.

Let's briefly recap. The series is about Ember, a girl with a teleportation gene who is being used by the U.S. government to conduct espionage. (She's a spy. And being a spy is not as cool as you'd think.) She meets

another teleporter, Caden, and the two work missions, discover secrets, cheat death, and fall in love. After the absolute craziness in book 1, book 2 picks up ten months later. Ember's woken from a coma and Caden finally learns that *she's not dead*. (Hallelujah!) But Ember's different, damaged. She's been betrayed, she's been hurt, and she's absolutely finished with working for the people who have been controlling her. **She's one fierce chick in *The Decaying Empire*, but still sympathetic and a flawed human being I was continually rooting for. Caden was also awesome.** I loved him so much in this book, and I loved him a lot in the first book, too. Losing Ember, the love of his life, took a toll on him as well, and when she comes back from the dead, he questions everything he's ever believed. He won't lose her again. He'll follow her to the ends of the earth just so they won't be separated. Even though his emotional armor seems unbreakable, Caden shows instances of fragility and fear. Where in the first book he was cocky, needy, and obedient toward his superiors, here he is much more serious and protective, and he doesn't give a damn about following orders if he doesn't like them. He and Ember both have their lovely banter, joking and flirting and being sarcastic teens, as well as their tragic and perfect romance. The two are running from danger for the entire book, and the only times they ever feel safe are when it's just them, alone.

***The Decaying Empire* doesn't move the series' overall plot along as much as the first book did.** It mostly deals with Ember and Caden's deepening relationship and their wild escapes, captures, and life on the run. **There's still a lot of mystery to the whole series that isn't really elaborated on,** but the book's ending definitely sets the third and final book up for the big conclusion when everything is finally revealed. I didn't mind the lack of overall plot progress because Ember and Caden's insanely dangerous and tense adventures were definitely enough to keep me occupied. It's just now that I'm thinking about everything that I'm realizing **this book was sort of the build-up to the final act.** I still loved it, though. I think I liked *The Decaying Empire* more than *The Vanishing Girl*. And, to go on a slight tangent, I was very scared that in this book there'd be a love triangle introduced. While it's obvious Guy #2 has feelings for Ember, it's obvious Ember's picked her man -- Caden -- and we need not worry. Guy #2 has nothing on Caden, so I'm not worrying at all.

To sum it up, I loved *The Decaying Empire*. **It was fast-paced and action-packed, full of danger and tension, and was a wicked emotional journey** for me and our two seemingly doomed protagonists. I am such a fan of Laura Thalassa and I want book 3 to come out ASAP. I highly recommend this series if you like heart-pounding romance (just know it's New Adult for a reason, guys) and blood-pumping thriller-like sequences. ♦

**So tell me...**

Have you read *The Decaying Empire* (or, more likely, *The Vanishing Girl*)? Have you read any of Laura Thalassa's other books? (I've got the first book in her Young adult series, *The Unearthly*, on my Kindle app to read one of these days.) Have you read any books about teleportation before? Comment below letting me know! And, as always, happy reading!

*Follow me @ toweroftomes on Twitter / Instagram / Goodreads / and Bloglovin'!*

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✿ Aimee✿ **Just one more page... says**

**3.5 STARS**

The pacing in this series continues to be fantastic. There is a lot of scenes in which the main characters are fighting for their life. The action scenes are well done. There is a lot of suspense throughout the book.

I enjoyed the escape planning and not knowing who to trust. The author did a good job writing how all these experience has changed Ember. In some books the character remains the same throughout difficult, life-changing experiences. I liked that Ember is changed by this and seems a bit older. Some of the changes are better like confidence and less hesitation. Some changes are worse - she's more jaded and has lost some of her aversion to violence.

I still have questions about how clothing and accessories are "created" by teleporters or by those that manipulate them.

Caden and Ember's relationship is still intense and a little over the top for me. The some of the "steamy" scenes in some ways felt obligatory to me in this one. They seemed to flow better in the previous book. Now that they have an established relationship, their banter is playful. Caden no longer comes across as a douchey playboy.

The author does a good job of making me really feel what Ember does. I felt the fear, fatigue, despair, fury, desperation, and determination when she did.

I'm actually looking forward to the next in the series.

***Thank you Netgalley and Amazon Publishing/Skyscape for a free digital copy in exchange for an honest review.***

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### **Nicola says**

OMG YES!! Aghh why isn't the 3rd book out yet ? I can't wait for the 3rd book. So happy to finally find a New Adult series like this ... it is about time.

I can't say much in this review without giving away.

This book follows on from the first book .. the Vanishing Girl. Ember wakes up after 10 months in a medically induce coma and that entire time cadan thinks shes dead as does everyone else except the big bosses who co-ordinated it. This books follows cadan and Ember coming to terms with betrayal from those they thought they could trust, trying to see who they could trust and just trying to break away from freedom. I love the Love between these 2 such a great series so far.

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### **Angela McPherson says**

Great follow up to The Vanishing Girl! Man, so much happens in this story. The Decaying Empire upped the ante with the suspense, near-death experiences, and heat factor! Yeah, Caden and Ember really flame up the pages, but sadly, their story ends way too soon. I MUST know what happens next, people! On the run while trying to figure out who to trust, man, yup, gotta know what happened to these two because the ending is another KILLER!

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### **Daisa says**

Sad to say that this book was a bit of a disappointment for me. The Decaying Empire follows Ember and Caden on their journey, trying to escape the Project which leads them all over the country and in countless dangerous situations. While all of that sounds pretty exciting, this story was just meh for me. In the first book I was 100% invested in what was going on and what was happening with the characters. I was at the edge of my seat, excited and anxious to know what was going to happen next. However with this installment, I found that I was really just reading to get to the end rather than out of any kind of enjoyment.

There were slight differences between Caden and Ember that made me enjoy their interactions less, which was one of the things I loved most about the first book. Caden spends all of his time calling Ember “Angel” or trying to ensure her that he is on her side is will do anything to protect her, which took away from his “bad boy with a smile” persona that I enjoyed so much and fell in love with. He was still sarcastic but the witty and quick with a comeback Caden is completely missing. Where’s the fun in that? One of the things I loved about EMBER, was her eff it attitude and the way she would assess a situation and take the least frustrating and BS route. For whatever reason, in The Decaying Empire, she does the complete opposite of that. She spent most of the book pointlessly keeping secrets from Caden which he eventually got out of her anyway and doubting whether or not she could really trust him when he was doing nothing but proving to her that she could. I went from loving her to being annoyed by every decision she made.

The concept of human teleportation with limits is still very unique and something I still enjoy in this story. There weren’t any missions in this story but the lack of action in the mission was more than made up for by the fact that every time Caden and Ember WEREN’T teleporting, they were being hunted, attacked and shot at. This made the story fast paced and action packed, but when an entire book is about escaping and nothing more, it gets old quickly which is why I think I was bored for the majority of it. I think I just wanted more than the running and randomly placed sex scenes that were presented.

Of course in this kind of book where there are secret government agencies and men in offices calling shots and controlling peoples lives, whenever you think a character has escaped and can finally be free, the exact opposite is usually true. Ember and Caden have escaped the frying pan only to jump directly into the fire. But what I love most about them is, they don’t let circumstances dictate their fate. They take a look at whatever situation they’re put in and do their best to put themselves in a better one.

I’m hoping that this is only middle book syndrome and the next book in this series will be much better. I still enjoy these characters despite their new found flaws and I definitely want to know what’s going to happen next and how they’re going to play the cards they’ve been dealt.

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### **Salwa says**

Whoa. My head started to hurt with all that suspense. But not in a bad way. I have to applaud Ms. Thalassa for this great sequel. I like this more than the first one mainly because it had more Caden and Ember moments. Also it was satisfying to see both of them somewhat mature.

It had more action scenes, more violence, more sweet moments, more revelations (just more everything,

really :D), which I totally liked. Suffice to say I'm satisfied with it but then again, let me just say that I NEED THE THIRD BOOK RIGHT NOW. Okay. Definitely worth the anticipation and excitement.

*I received an advanced digital copy of this book in exchange for an unbiased review.*

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### **Sara says**

Thank god there's a third book!!!

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