



Leya

Bonnie Ferrante

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In a world where eye color may determine your future, Leya is born with one green and one blue eye. Will this diminish her potential or provide the exceptional opportunity to become a Double Vision Mistress?

Even if she fulfills her gifts, Leya must learn to control her impulsiveness and quick temper or she will be stripped of her powers in a painful and crippling ritual. Unfortunately, Zendra, a devious Novice knows exactly how to raise Leya's anger. But the Mistresses, struggling with significant problems of their own, seem blind to Leya's dilemma. How much should she risk in pursuit of power, prestige, and wealth?

This book was formerly titled Desiccate and has gone through another editing.

Learn more about this book on the author's website

<http://bonnieferrante.ca/>

Leya Details

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From Reader Review Leya for online ebook

Karleigh.Reads says

You can find me @ KARLEIGH READS

I was given an ebook from the author in exchange for an honest review. And honest it shall be.

First off, I just want to say that I seriously hate giving bad reviews to books but this needs to be said. I had some strong feelings towards this book and not in a good way.

Might as well rip the band-aid off and get right into it.

This book is not YA, no matter what category the publishers or author claim it to be in. The subject matter is not YA. This should be listed as New Adult.

The main character in this book was very annoying and really hard to connect with. For someone who is seeking to please her family and have a better life, who is used to hard work because of her place in society. You would think that she wouldn't give up so easily. As soon as anything in the school was the least bit difficult she would run the other way. That didn't make any sense to me when in the first chapter she talked about how much she wanted to learn, how much she wanted to change, and how much she wanted to do for her family. I just found her very annoying, bratty, and just not someone I wanted to have as a main character in the book.

Now for the part that really made me angry. The fat-shaming in this book is DISGUSTING. Now I understand that they are part of a school, and girls are mean but this was terrible. Books for me are a place to take me away, live another life, and enjoy myself. But the fat-shaming got to a point where I was angry.

"Good thing," whispered Zendra as she passed the table. "As big as you are, I don't imagine you'll have many suitors"

"Where's Lumpy?" asked Zendra as she walked in front of us. "I can't believe she is going to be late for a meal."

Zendra snorted. "Great, so we'll all be as fat as Lumpy."

There are more instances in the book, but these were the ones I highlighted. I just think if younger girls are reading this (since it is listed as YA) that not only are they being told in the media, and at school that being fat is wrong but now their place to escape (their books) are telling them that as well. I was disgusted over the fat-shaming and it really turned me off the book. There was no need for it, it had no impact on the story, it would have been excellent without it.

I felt the story jumped around a lot and missed big chunks of things. One minute Leya was in school working on her studies and the next she was graduating. One minute she was getting married and the next she was a widow.

Sadly, there are only really two things I liked about this book, the world building was amazing, I loved the area that author created for us. I also really liked the idea behind the book and how your powers all depend on the colour of your eyes which ranged from Silver, to purple and pink, to blue and green. That was a pretty awesome idea, it could have gone a completely different way and made an amazing high fantasy novel.

I am giving this book a 2 out of 5 because in my opinion it doesn't deserve anything higher. Like I said above I hate down rating books but this is the first time I was so angry about the content in the book.

I still want to thank the author for letting me read it!

Sunshine Somerville says

4.5 stars.

I loved that this story felt exactly like you were in the head of the main character. For the first half or so, that meant being in the head of a fourteen-year-old girl as she interacted with other teenage girls, and all of the friendships, backstabbing, jealousies, rivalries, etc. felt completely real...from what I remember of adolescence. To me, the strongest element of this book is the characterization of these girls. They feel very, very real and believable, despite their supernatural/magical quirks.

There's a pleasant, creative depth going on here too. What exactly is the Sphere of Visions? The story jumps right in as if we know, and from Leya's excitement and through her eager eyes (*wink*) we piece together the necessary answers. The author seems to have thought through a wide world with many peoples, cultures, and lands, but we only see what we need to know about it, which again works well as we see from a fourteen-year-old girl's somewhat self-involved perspective. The very interesting uniqueness of this story is this: a "gifted" person's eye color determines what their gifts are. Blue can mean water. Brown wood. Green for growth. Red for fire...or maybe tomatoes? It's a very clever supernatural/magical setup and simple enough to follow without being too obviously predictable.

I enjoyed the internal struggles Leya experienced as she left her family, learned in this school, and beyond. The tension between using her gifts to serve vs. using her gifts to suit her own desires was present all the way through the book, from adolescence to adulthood. I always find it refreshing when a main character isn't perfect but can grow and learn instead. Leya IS a little frustrating from time to time, however, and I had moments where I kind of wanted to slap her. Beyond Leya, the other characters also fail and succeed in doing the right thing, and the varying shades between the "good guys" and "bad guys" made the labels complicated so that you really tried to understand where each character was coming from.

I won't give too much of the plot away, but Leya, Safia, Caari, Zendra, etc. spend the first portion of the book learning from the Mistresses, who have mastered their gifts and live kind of like nuns at a convent school. Then, the story jumps a few years into Leya's life, then a few more years. I thought this worked pretty well, but the middle portion seemed REALLY fast to me. Considering this is when some seriously troubling, emotional things happen, I felt like more time could have been spent here. But, when everything falls into place for the last portion, I was ready and kind of sensed what was coming, so it was good setup. The end felt natural, well done, and clearly sets the stage for more books to come.

All in all, the book is very well-written with imaginative descriptions. A great story for maturing young readers, this book certainly has a good message about controlling yourself for the benefit of others. The story, the characters, and the interesting supernatural/magical elements are unique enough that I'm curious to see where the story goes next.

Julie Powell says

I was lucky enough to be sent this book for an honest review and yes, I loved it!

It is original and unique in many ways - the idea of the visions and how they are manifest, the 'school', the divisions the...I don't give spoilers.

Leya is an interesting and complex character, with all the flaws of a real person, rather than some characters I've read in other books who are wooden and uninteresting. She has talents - hence the story.

I don't like to give away anything that could spoil it for others but will say that this story is filled with the unusual, magic of sorts, good versus evil, strengths and weakness, relationships and so much more. It was a little disconcerting how some parts jumped ahead so quickly, but that didn't deter from my complete enjoyment of the tale.

There is obviously more to come - and really I cannot wait. I loved the writing so much that I have since bought a copy of the start of another series by this author (Dawn's End) and look forward to more.

Highly recommended.

Scott Spotson says

There are consequences, and while they are usually not apparent in fantasy tales, they are detailed thoroughly in this fable. Got magic powers? It can be a curse as well as a gift. Desiccate explores these themes. At first, Leya is eager to leave her home and develop magical powers, but eventually comes to regret her decision.

Want to tease someone? There are consequences that reverberate years later, sometimes very decisively. Even a simple motive of saving a village of people from a natural calamity has unwanted, unintended consequences. Yes, they're everywhere.

As such, this is quite a grown-up fantasy tale. Usually, in fantasy tales, wizards, fairies, and elves conjure their magic, and go blithely on as if their mischief is preordained. Not so in this book!

The one thing I didn't like is the title. This title has no connection to the story itself. Also, it's a word that most of don't know how to spell properly, nor do we see it often. The title doesn't allow us to visualize at all what kind of story it is, or even that this is a fantasy tale. Perhaps a more fantasy-appropriate title would be better.

Heather Leigh says

Leya Truelong lives in a world unlike our own. At the age of fourteen, each child is tested to see if they possess a vision; a great power that they can one day learn to control.

Brought to the island that houses the Sphere of Vision, a sanctuary where experienced Mistresses teach the young novices to harvest their abilities, Leya begins to make friends and enemies alike.

I felt for a teenage Leya, leaving her large loving family behind to pursue her vision and bring fortune to her struggling village. Not only must she develop her powers, she must learn to deal with the difficult Zendra, another novice whose bullying tears apart the girls at the Sphere. Her continued struggles brought me both up and down with each unexpected turn in her life.

Bonnie Ferrante does a wonderful job in bringing modern problems that young girls face; insecurity, loneliness, family, balancing study with play, and puts them into the surreal setting of a world with supernatural powers that can do good as well as evil.

I found myself fascinated by the visions that the characters possessed, and kept reading to find out what those powers meant to each one. Especially Leya, our tormented heroine. Her immaturity slowly leaves her as tragic events unfold, turning her into a strong woman. Although, at times I did want to shake her for being so stubborn, but aren't all girls that way at times?

The Sphere of Vision series has started out wonderfully, and I am eager to see what's next for Leya and her friends. Perfect for young readers who love fantasy (think Lorien Legacies for girls) or older readers alike. I kept comparing it to George RR Martin's Game of Thrones books which I loved, only a less violent, more teen-friendly version.

I'm planning on passing on the name of this author to my 14 year old niece who will love this book.

Ailyn says

Once in a while something nice pops up my way, this nice book comes from Bonnie Ferrante. How it starts does not matter because how it ends blows your mind.

We have Leya Truelong, a girl with two different colored eyes, while this is rare, it does happen. When she turns 14, Leya has to be examined by a Mistress from the Sphere, someone who will choose girls depending on her power/ vision that he/ she has in her eyes.

The story emphasizes on moral choices and how one must consciously choose to be 'good' when it is easy to pick the easy way out and do harm to others. While Leya is conscious in her own actions, we can also see that sometimes we cannot predict what is going to happen next, where in lies the conflict of the story.

Character wise, I can relate pretty well with Leya, the annoying friend, the sneaky enemy, and the frenemy.. who does not have them? With strong characters to supplement the story, one cannot go wrong I think.

Samuel says

'Desiccate' takes place in a detailed and consistent, although rather generic, fantasy setting. I was impressed by the depth of characterisation throughout - the main character's contemporary concerns transplanted into a fantasy setting with skill. The pacing was a little off at times - the middle section in particular seemed to whiz by, and I found it a little jarring when taking the novel as a whole. The ending was well-handled and satisfying, although it was set-up for further instalments in a slightly heavy-handed manner. I am aware that this is not 'my' genre, but I thought 'Desiccate' was a well-executed example of the young adult fantasy genre, and I'm sure fans will enjoy reading it.

Jamie Maltman says

I definitely tend more toward adult fantasy, but have been on a bit of a YA kick, and enjoyed this one. I think a lot of YA readers would really enjoy it.

The title and cover may make you (or my wife in particular) incorrectly think it's some kind of gothic horror story, but instead you have an all-girls school for magic with a neat twist on magic, a splash of meditation, a far from perfect but very interesting main character, unexpected events, and a satisfying climax.

Leya's personality quirks never leave her far from conflict, and whenever she'd get things sorted out, life would throw something at her, and she had to explore her own power to get herself out.

I like books where people have to discover and understand their magic rather than just have the steps handed to them, and that component was definitely strong. Having meditation and focus as a part of it

I saw in another review a reference to magical Mean Girls, and would definitely agree.

Several plot turns in the middle kept me reading late into the night, which is what I look for in a book, and some of them hit me emotionally too.

The book had a definite ending, but with a door open that leaves me interested in continuing the series.

The one part I found a bit less believable was:
(view spoiler) But that didn't stop me from liking the book.

I received a copy of this book from the author in return for an honest review.

A.L. Goulden says

The writer takes you on a wonderful journey through a fantasy world of magic and mystery as a young woman learns to trust her instincts, abilities and dreams. It's a highly relatable premise wrapped in a unique environment. Leyla was at times frustrating in her self esteem struggles, but I agree with other readers that this truly is what it's like to be a teenager. She has to deal with bullies, peer pressure and developing a comfort with herself all while carrying the weight of responsibility not all teenagers can handle. Leyla is taken away from her family and village and wants to desperately provide for them both. She finds that she is stronger than she ever knew possible.

The descriptions of her surroundings were wonderful and captured her perception as it shifted with her maturity. I found that to be a nice touch. I thought of my own adolescence many times. There's a great scene where she is first taught to meditate that reminded me how hard it used to be to stay still. She has to learn to listen and harness her inner self. To observe the world around her. Even though she's in the world of magic it's clearly no different than our world. This makes for a great gripping read that fills your personal memories with the fantastic possibilities of another place. I know from the trends in young fantasy fiction these days that this book has the potential to reach many readers. It's a great book that I would recommend to readers young and old.

Rebecca Larsen says

4 Star

In a world with supernatural powers that can do good as well as evil. This story also brings normal problems that everyone faces at some point in life; insecurity, loneliness, family, and trying to balance study with play.

The characters are well developed with each character having a different distinct personality. As there is no build up of the villains, you do lose a lot of the anticipation you would expect to find in this story. Also, as the story is over a span of 12 years, I felt there was a lot of information that was skipped over. The story does have a good plot, although, there is not a lot of action. The story does move along at a good pace, so you don't get bored or lose interest at any point.

saad says

Thanks to Bonnie Ferrante I received this book for free in return for a review.

I loved reading this book. The author's writing style is beautiful and she knows how to tell a story. She holds your interest from the first page to the last.

What I loved the most about this book was Leya, the protagonist of the story. Very rarely have the emotions of a character felt more real. Desiccate is the story of all the trials and tribulations that Leya undergoes, as she grows from a fourteen year girl with dreams of a better future in her eyes, to a much wiser, stronger and, mature 26 year old young woman.

The supporting characters are also well developed with each character having a different personality.

The plot of the book is good. Though, there is not a lot of action, the story moves along at a decent pace, without making you feel bored at any point.

There is only one problem that I have with the book. The Plot spans a duration of almost 12 years, which I felt was too long to cover in a single book. As a result almost 9 out of the 12 years pass without anything important or exciting happening. Also, unlike most fantasy books, in Desiccate almost till the end we have no clear idea about the main villain of the series. As a result, the anticipation doesn't build as much as I would have liked it to, as we move towards the ending of the book.

There are a few spelling mistakes here and there but, they are negligible.

If you like Fantasy books you should definitely read Desiccate.

C.J. Anaya says

This fantasy book was a fun and intriguing read. Leya is a young girl accepted as a potential Mistress for the Sphere of Visions. Any young girl with the potential for Visions, which is a particular affinity for something such as water, earth, growth etc., gets to train and develop her talents for two years in the hopes that her Vision will fully develop into something that can be used to help others in the community. It is also advantageous socially and financially. Leya has the opportunity to train, and sets off in the hopes that she can make her life and the life of her families a bit easier.

I enjoyed Leya's character simply because she was wonderfully flawed. Her natural propensity for acting before thinking things through, her impulsive nature and her quick temper were somewhat refreshing to read about. I tend to run into main characters that may have obstacles to deal with, but rarely is the obstacle themselves. I don't think this gives a character any room for growth or development if they aren't flawed like the rest of humanity is. Through several costly mistakes she is able to learn the importance of responsibility in regards to her gift and the way she uses it. To seek out the comfort and security of others instead of using it to get even or teach someone a lesson is difficult for her to learn, but her challenges eventually become her strengths.

There is some romance in this, but I had a hard time at first understanding why the relationship between Ballard and Leya was basically glossed over. We didn't really experience the journey of their courtship or the connection they made to one another though it is clearly stated that they are in love and Ballard is easy to like and latch on to. In other words there were hardly any set ups or pay offs. The author's intent became clearer when it was made obvious that Ballard's character wasn't, for reasons I shall not specify here, going to continue on in the story. Tears were shed at this point, but you'll have to read it to find out why.

I enjoyed Leya's friends and the main villain in the book. Their interplay and dialogue made for some interesting reading.

The battle at the end between everyone's gifts added an element of tension and conflict which carries through to the second book. I loved the way the author described the battle. Descriptive eye candy is how I would label it. Though the book doesn't end with a huge cliff hanger it leaves unanswered questions for the next book in the series. This is a solid first installment in an interesting and thought provoking fantasy. I highly recommend it to all fantasy lovers.

Subiksha says

Between 2 and 2.5 stars

The author, Bonnie Ferrante, gave me a copy of this novel in exchange for my review.

First, the cover gave a gothic/ vampire feel to the book. I always love when a cover of a book shows us the integral part around which the story revolves and which you realize after reading the book. The cover shows us a girl born with one green and one blue eye but I felt that the cover could have been much better.

Now onto the story, It basically shows the growth of Leya's character from the age of 14 when she gets accepted as a potential mistress for the Sphere of Vision till her mid-twenties. I liked how each girl's power

was different from another and the eye color tells us what power the girl has. Then there is the usual bad girl and her followers. Leya also has a quick temper and she has a constant fear of her powers being ripped off. I hated that a conversation between two girls can start only after saying ““May you always see clearly” and ““May you always see clearly”. It pissed me off at one point where Leya had to say those words when she thought something was wrong with her eyes and had to get help another mistress.

The story also shows Leya at different ages and the story line of some were not sufficient enough. We get to see some romance between Leya and Ballard and the reason as to why the author didn't provide us more information about their relationship.

On the whole, I felt this book just wasn't for me. The story went at a fast pace in some parts of the book and it was draggy at some parts. This book did not make me want to finish it in one session. There were some parts in the middle and towards the end that was interesting and helped me finish the book.

I would like to thank the author for giving me the opportunity to review this book.

Once Upon a Twilight says

OUT's Review

You know, this was a great read. Being in the head of a fourteen-year-old girl has never felt more real. Bonnie captured all the teenage problems to a T. Everything from the nature of young friendships, the backstabbing/jealously/rivalries, insecurities, peer pressure, children/parent issues to balancing study with friends. We've all been there, well, I certainly have.

On top of the usual teenage drama, it's time for Leya to be tested. They need to see if she has the vision; a great power that one can possess. Power confirmed she is whisked away to sanctuary where she'll be taught all she needs to know by the experienced Mistresses. One problem: lack of control. Unluckily for her, she's found herself with a bully who knows just how to push all the right buttons. Leya knows she has to keep her temper at bay or she'll risk the wrath of being stripped of her ability, but in a world of betrayal and deceit, it's easier said than done.

I liked how Leya starts the story as a fourteen-year-old girl, but as the story progresses, the time frame jumps. A few years, then a few more, until she's twenty-six. It worked well with the story and was done at a pace where we didn't miss out on anything. The description developed as Leya did, which I thought was a really nice touch. The story grew with the character.

As an ending, this book is very well-written, an enchanting read with great description. A young adult book which can be enjoyed by anybody any age and I would recommend it.

Monica says

This is a coming of age journey for Leya as she learns to deal with her Vision/magical abilities and the consequences thereof.

There were a number of spacing issues and the page numbers (I think that's what these were) inserted themselves within the text, but this was probably due to the fact I was reading an Advanced Reading Copy.

The characters and plot are realistic for their environment, vivid and descriptively written. The story line flows well with a fair amount of action.

Definitely an enjoyable read!
