



Dare to Believe

Dana Marie Bell

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He'll fulfill her wildest fantasies- but only if she believes.

The Gray Court, Book 1

Leo Dunne has been searching his entire life for the one person born just for him. He finds her working in his own company, but the shy little Ruby Halloway constantly hides from him. He hatches a devilish plot with her best friend to bring her out of her shell, and the result proves her desire is more than a match for his own.

Ruby has had the hots for her boss for some time now, but she knows business and pleasure shouldn't mix. While that can't stop a girl from dreaming, she sticks by her guns and does her best never to be alone with the handsome CEO. Until the company masquerade party, where she discovers a passion with him that leaves a mark on her soul.

A family emergency calls Leo away, and rather than spend one night out of Ruby's arms, he convinces her to go with him. With his brother's life on the line, it's vital she learn how to deal with who, and what, her new lover really is--before it's too late.

Warning: This book contains explicit sex, graphic language, some violence, a bit of bondage, and a Sidhe Lord determined to claim and protect what is his.

Dare to Believe Details

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From Reader Review Dare to Believe for online ebook

Jill says

This book was a total winner for me. I love any story with a fae theme and this one was packed full of it, Lepracauns, vampires, seelie, unseelie, various courts (gray, white and black).

Mix all those in with a bit of erotica (yum) and you have a pretty enjoyable book.

I really like Leo and Ruby although I would of liked to have found out a bit more about Rubies background, especially why she thought she was so unworthy. Anyway the story was still good, alot was packed in there but not overmuch. This was only a short story so sometimes you get too much crammed together or not enough, this one was just right.

Can't wait for the next book with Duncan, Jaden and Moira.

Janie says

One of the things I love about PNR is the concept of mates. I love that there's someone out there that is a perfect match. This would have been a perfect read for me had Leo found his mate and claimed her as soon as he scented her instead of waiting and having sex with other women. He was celibate for a year though once he knew who she was so that saved it for me. It was still a good read but something was a little off for me. I will definitely read more of this series though.

jD says

Erotica aside, this book was awsome. Dana Bell is not shy with her erotica and I was unprepared for it so I will admit, I skimmed over most of it. But the story was solid -- well written, well edited, and well conceived. The concept is not new but the character's are so vivid that you forget you have done the fae thing one hundred times. There is humor so well done that I laughed out loud. Regretfully, most of that happended during the erotic scenes so no quoting for me. I am not that brave. If this is a series, I'm in.

Tracy says

For a good portion of his nearly century-long existence, Leo Dunne has been waiting and hoping to catch that one elusive scent that would bring love and joy to his life, the scent of the one person born just for him. When he caught scent of Ruby Halloway, saw her bent over a file cabinet in his company, he knew he wanted her desperately and thought she may be the one. Ruby, who has had a crush on Leo for ages, did what any shy girl would do when the object of her deepest desire focused on them...she ran away and hid.

For a year she's avoided him. For a year he's watched her and tried to get close. Finally, with the help of her best friend and all the charm he can muster, the alleged playboy gets Ruby right where he wants her, and when he tastes her lips for the first time he knows he was right. She's his. And there will be no more hiding or running.

Unfortunately, just finding his true mate isn't enough. He's still got to tell her he's fae, explain to her his Sidhe mother and leprechaun father. Gently introduce her into a world she couldn't possibly even dream about and explain the benefits and consequences. Before he can even get close to approaching that daunting task, however, his father calls with somber news. A rival family has kidnapped his brother and is holding him ransom. Leo doesn't need to ask what ransom they're asking for his brother's release. He already knows.

They want him.

Dana Marie Bell has kicked off this new series with a lot of potential and the backbone of an intriguing world and fun mythos, populating it with personable characters and a couple of neat plot twists. I've long been a fan of Bell and have read and enjoyed her Halle Pumas and Halle Shifters (looking for more of that one!) series, and am familiar with her writing style and characterizations. I particularly enjoy the humor that she injects and how adeptly she partners humor with stressful, sometimes threatening situations, to the benefit of the story as a whole.

She's done that here in **Dare to Believe: The Gray Court, Book 1**. I enjoyed Leo and was charmed by Ruby, who, despite her shyness and some issues with body image, was an appealingly silver-tongued quipster who was good for a cute, humorous line. Some of Bell's greatest strengths as an author lay in her abilities to write fun, bantering dialogue and provide appealing and individual character definition around a solid story concept or idea.

The depth and breadth of the plot suffers, though, by this book's shorter length. The narrative doesn't do much to flesh out the developing story and too much of it remains bare-boned to the point of emaciation. The pacing is disjointed, coming in forced fits and starts, not always clearly defined and suffering from several awkward transitions. Creating the world for the series, then stuffing a satisfying romance and a dangerous family threat together is a good idea in theory, but that's a lot of story and there just wasn't room to tell it all fully - to the detriment of the whole thing. Bell has the skill to tell a fully developed story that satisfies on all levels. She's done it before. Had she taken another 100 or so pages to fill out this story, she could have done so here.

Unfortunately, as it stands, the romantic couple comes together far too quickly for my personal tastes, Ruby accepts her new world and gets over a lifetime of insecurities far too quickly for my tastes, and the kidnapping plot thread starts, and ends, with far too little development and depth. What's most disappointing is that with the appeal of the characters, I wanted much more of them and was doubly disappointed for not getting it.

And then there's the sex.

I vacillated on how to classify the genre of this book. Technically, there's too much plot and story development for me to consider it erotica in the manner in which I normally make that determination. There are also, however, sex scenes far too graphic and unconventional to fit into a mainstream paranormal romance - or even an edgy paranormal romance. I don't mind that - I like erotica. The problem is, though, that in this book there is a sex scene that is so egregiously out of place and disparate from the tone of the romantic relationship, the character development, and the plot at the point it was introduced, that I found it jarring and distasteful when read in context.

~*~*~*~*~* **Warning! There be Spoilers Ahead!** ~*~*~*~*~*

Consider the following: Ruby is very, very shy and sexually inexperienced. Leo has convinced her to go with

him across the country because his brother has been kidnapped and he needs to be with his family. He's desperate for her as his mate but desperate to help his brother. He's nervous about telling Ruby he's not human and knows he still needs to do that. Ruby gets to his parent's house and not only is completely overwhelmed by the choices she made to get her to that point, but nearly has a fit when his parents put her in the same room with Leo. She's accosted by the family who kidnapped his brother and Leo bonds with her. The bonding knocks her out for two days and Leo is terrified for her. When she finally wakes up Leo is so relieved that he...grabs the small, sex toy-filled suitcase he brought with him (packing sex toys is, of course, the first thing I think about when I learn my brother has been kidnapped and know it's because of me), unpacks an alarming number of them, blindfolds and handcuffs Ruby to the bed, uses a feather duster, rabbit ear vibrator, and anal plug on her, then proceeds to introduce her to...enthusiastic anal sex in concert with the other toys.

Um...yeah...that didn't really work for me. On any level. At all.

Had it been a different couple, in a different scenario, at a different time, with a different story going on around them, it would have been a sexy good time had by all. Bell writes sizzling fun sex scenes. There were just way too many things that made that scene inappropriate for this book. When I combine that with the anemic plot development and disjointed pacing of the narrative, the potential of the book went unrealized and I ended up not caring for it. I liked the characters very much...but unfortunately it wasn't quite enough.

~*~*~*~

Reviewed for One Good Book Deserves Another.

Shannon C. says

2.5 stars - This book started a slow, but then about 30% the way through when Leo's brother is kidnapped, and Leo and Ruby go to his family's home...that's when the story picked up and also started to introduce the Fae. The world building around the Fae was interesting. I liked the 'white court', 'gray court', 'black court' organization, as well as the original explanations how vampires came about. The leprechaun earth magic was very cool. Also, the true bonding process was original and well developed. The Fae that owed their mom a favor was a big surprise. With the exception of the overly graphic and distracting sex scenes, this was a pretty good read.

In the sex scenes after their bonding, Leo kept pulling out sex toys. I didn't think that fit with his character at all and it distracted from the storyline. He's supposed to be this powerful Fae. It would have been better to do something sexy that introduced her to his powers and how great lovemaking would be now that she married a Fae, rather than relying on human sex toys. The scenes didn't flow well with the story and I ended up skimming over them.

Dianna Hardy says

Downloaded on a whim because it was free. I have to say this was a totally crazy, wacky read - I LOVED it! I can see how the craziness might turn some people off, but I've always liked a bit of crazy ;)

Leprechauns, Fairies, Vampires, half-breeds, hot sex, tongue-in-cheek sex, and sparkling lights of lust... If

you want a read to cheer you up, and are happy to go with the flow and not take it all too seriously, this one's worth it :)

Kaori says

Warning! This book contains *very* explicit and graphic sex scenes with some bondage and some things not meant for those of faint heart. Having said this, I'll let you know what I thought about the book.

This book is about fairies, elves, leprechauns, hobs, vampires and more. Leo Dunne is the CEO of his company, he's more than 6", totally gorgeous and he's a Fae. Ruby Holloway is a barely 5" of curvaceous beauty who doesn't think that the hottest guy and the one who gets her blood racing can ever notice her, and she's human. And from here starts our story.

Leo Dunne decides that Ruby is the mate of his existence, and he'll do anything and everything to get her. The problem is that Ruby is scared to death of him, always finding ways to avoid him and just plain run away from the guy. Leo then hatches a plan to snag her with her best friend in a masquerade party, where he won't take **no** for an answer. Like all Fae (and horny one at that) they take what they want, spin their magic and manipulate everything to get the desired results. If you want your life mate, you do whatever it takes. There are 3 steps to make her his mate and unknowingly, she gives into the first two (yes, true. There were no warnings whatsoever).

I sometimes found the book a tad confusing, because it kind of skips and you could be finishing a whole chapter before you get the point that you're reading about another set of characters set in another place all together. I felt that the continuity of the story-telling was a bit lacking, making it to be sometimes rushed, lacking in details or just leaves you with a *WTH happened* moment.

Now regarding the more than steamy sex scenes. When I said that they were **explicit and very very graphic**, I so was not kidding. There are books that weave these scenes seamlessly into the story that you don't really cringe at reading it (hey, fan of a well written steamy scene like the next girl, but even I have limits), but there moments when I felt I was reading a pornographic script or something. I mean, if Leo was this stud-muffin of a guy, who's really drop-dead-gorgeous, why is it that he need soo many "toys"?! I mean that's where experience comes in right?? I don't mind the use of toys, but for it to be practically the way for the scene to be steamy... I don't know... It just doesn't mix well.

I think the story was a bit short and rushed. I would have cut some of the sex scenes to give way to more character building or hammering out details.

All in all, I give it a 2 1/2 stars.

Barbara? says

Reread of a favorite.

Sissy's Romance Book Review says

Dare to Believe by Dana Marie Bell is the first in "The Gray Court" series.

This is the story of Leo Dunne and Ruby Halloway.

3.5 stars

Ruby has always had body issue and thinks she is unattractive. So when she see Leo Dunne the owner of the company she works at she quickly takes to hiding whenever he comes around. Ruby has a crush on Leo but she knows that he only dates blond model type women.

Leo has been looking for his mate for years and years. When he starts going down the halls of his new company he finds a women's smell that attracts him and he knows she must be the one. But Leo has been looking for her at work for a few years until one day he spots her. Leo finds that she seems to hide whenever he gets near her. So Leo goes for help from Ruby's friend at work and set up a meeting at their office party.

This was a nice book that I enjoyed reading and now am looking for the next story about Leo's sister.

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Zeek says

Mediocre paranormal romance but erotic, so gals who love their sex fairly graphic might dig it. This series is all about the fae and magic and Dare To Believe wasnt bad, it just didnt have the chemistry between the h/h to make it interesting enough for me. The next book in the series is a menage, but it's the hero's kid brother's story I'm more interested in.

Angela says

DARE TO BELIEVE (The Gray Court) by Dana Marie Bell. This is the ultimate in brain candy for me. The plot is like a warm bath. I've read these a thousand times with slight variations. Yes, they can become monotonous but sometime they really just hit the spot.

Here is the plot break down: Super hot supernatural (Fae Lord) is biding his time before he lets this woman whom he has never talk to before, that she is his mate. (Think love at first sight except permanent.) The woman, plain Jane/nothing special who lusts over this blindingly hot guy who suddenly sweeps her off her feet.

He makes his move, sparks fly, they get naked and then she is shocked to find out he has magic powers and pointy ears. She then is abducted by a supernatural bad guy and in a feat of bravery he rescues his lady.

Happily ever after.

Of course, I am over simplifying but if you read paranormal romances then you understand what I'm talking about.

The story isn't complex, the characters are fun and it has a happy ending.

?Tonya? says

**** 3.5 double dog dare stars ****

???

Great PRN story.

I have found that I enjoy a shifter/PNR story. I had never given them much of a chance until lately. I love that mate for life and no other woman will do once they find their mate business. This had a great story and likeable characters.

The writing was confusing at times because there was no separation between scenes. Once I figured out that the author would jump from character to character, I was able to follow along a bit better.

No epilogue, perhaps it's because it's the first in a series. Not sure I will continue with the series so I'm disappointed that I won't know what the future holds for this couple.

Also, the cover of the actual book I was delivered was hideous. If the picture was supposed to be of the hero, he wasn't what was described in the story. More like a zombie!

Brooke says

DNF

I was expecting plot, after literally the first 5 pages I knew none would be coming anytime soon. But I held out until 20%. Maybe the writing got better and the plot started. The sex was good but if you do insta-love-mate, at least put effort into it, as opposed to "wow I need to bang RIGHT NOW".

Leo, how I hate you.

He's a pig, Mr. let me grab my employee's ass before I ever talk to her. Mr.want-to-be-grabby-hands I have no respect for men who are objectifying pricks. This is a PNR but even in paranormal romances I expect people to act somewhat true to reality. Now sometimes if the world building and background are good enough you can get away with abnormal behaviors, but as I said before there is no plot in the first 20% and certainly no world building yet. Leo and ~~whatever the heck her name is~~ Ruby, are both just really weird and unnatural. Ruby's self deprivation and insecurity is SO UNATTRACTIVE. Honestly I dislike when a character is full of self pity/loathing/ect. If you hate yourself so much why would I like you? Clearly Dare to Believe just did not work for me. If you just want straight up erotica maybe this will be a better read (I can't really speak for the rest of the book). But for me I like to know (and like) my characters before they instantly cant live without each other and hop into bed.

Debra says

I really really liked this book!! This is my first book that I've read by Dana Marie Bell. The story is about a Sidhe Lord finding his mate. The characters in the story are so easy to fall in love with. Can't wait to purchase the next book so that I can devour it just like I did with the first one!!
And thanks to Jenn for telling me about this book!

Alba M. says

Ha sido una historia bonita y entretenida, aunque un poco rápida en acontecimientos. Me he llevado una sorpresa enorme al encontrarme con una historia sobrenatural cuando la sinopsis no da indicios de nada!
Jajaja

SheReadsALot says

THREE & A HALF STARS Nice intro into what I have a feeling will be a great series. I like Ruby and Leo. Leo's very possessive and kinky, BTW which led to some hot scenes. The weird transition into scenes threw me off at times but the story definitely came across. I am so anxious to see what's happening in the next book since it left at the cliffhanger-ish note for Moira's story.

I love the Hob (just from the little that we see of him in this book). Happy to see he'll be getting his book soon.

There wasn't much depth to Leo or Ruby but in the end I believed their love.

figuranta♥️?addicted♥️?to♥️?books♥️? says

4 sexy stars

Dare to believe is the first book in **The Gray Court Series** by Dana Marie Bell and i really enjoyed it. I am new to this author, this is actually my first read but i will def read more.

The blurb

He'll fulfill her wildest fantasies... but only if she believes.

The Gray Court, Book 1

Leo Dunne has been searching his entire life for the one person born just for him. He finds her working in his own company, but the shy little Ruby Halloway constantly hides from him. He hatches a devilish plot with her best friend to bring her out of her shell, and the result proves her desire is more than a match for his own.

Ruby has had the hots for her boss for some time now, but she knows business and pleasure shouldn't mix. While that can't stop a girl from dreaming, she sticks by her guns and does her best never to be alone with the handsome CEO. Until the company masquerade party, where she discovers a passion with him that leaves a mark on her soul.

A family emergency calls Leo away, and rather than spend one night out of Ruby's arms, he convinces her to go with him. With his brother's life on the line, it's vital she learn how to deal with who, and what, her new lover really is...before it's too late.

The world that the author is really amazing. It's def something from the PNR world that i never read before and i got pulled in from the first page and i couldn't put down my tablet till i finish it.

When i write a review i am not the type to give away wot's happening in the book and this one won't be an exception but the only detail i will give away and i was very impressed is the BDSM elements in the book. For a long time i am able to read a book who has them and find it sexy and for this reason i love this author more than anything. All the scenes who had BDSM were damn sexy, dominant and i didn't get enough of them. It was just about pleasure not humiliation or waiting. They were just right up my street but not many of them.

Highly recommend it to all lovers of PNR and BDSM books.

Emily says

Leo Dunne has waited patiently hoping that oone day he would find his bondmate, a rarity but if found a lifetime of love is guaranteed. Leo had not realized his mate was right under his nose the whole time, but now that he has caught her scent he has tried valiantly to ge her attention but to no avail.

Ruby Holloway has had a crush on her boss since the first moment she saw him, but her insecurities from her past have her running in opposite directions whenever he is near. When Leo approaches her at an empolyee party, Ruby has no idea that she has just sealed her fate and Leo has all sorts of plans to keep her in his arms, that is until a family emergency has them both heading to Nebraska and Ruby's world is about to get shaken.

I had not realized this was a fantasy book when I picked it out. It is pretty good, there are a couple of things that I thought huh but overall had some funny moments and good chemistry between Leo and Ruby.

*** reread, liked it better the second time.

Hollie says

This made for a pretty lame read

I loved the idea with this story, but the characters just didn't work for me. The heroine came across as so weak, and not only because she was shy. I tired of the juvenile terminology. "I double dog dare you" I mean, really???

I found the plot to be incredibly cliché and overly predictable. The insta-love didn't help matters.

Also once the sex started it was beyond unrealistic. I love Bells ability to write smoking hot sex, but it just didn't work for me. Perhaps because I never really connected to the hero/heroine? The characters in this book just felt so one dimensional. While this book was just an "ok" read for me I still may give another book in this series a try.

Kami says

I immediately deleted this book from my Nook when I finished it.

It was too much for me and I hated the over possessiveness of Leo. I love reading about guys who are protective and possessive to a point but, for me, this was too much. I didn't find it attractive at all. I felt like Ruby didn't have a choice or a voice. Her character's only attribute was a moderate sense of humor but otherwise, she was a weak character who couldn't think for herself. Ruby just went along with whatever never really questioning anything.

Any tense, awkward or violent scene was followed by painfully detailed sex scenes (I mean pages worth) which became boring and too drawn out. And, yes, the sex in this book is very kinky with all kinds of toys and bondage. I had to speed read past some of it because it was so misplaced in the story or because I really couldn't fathom why Ruby would allow Leo to do such things to her after only a week.

The plot was sketchy at best. There really is no real reason for what's happening other than a spoiled rich bitch didn't get her way so she had to resort to any and all deplorable and evil methods to get what she wanted. SHOCKER: It didn't work and she was disposed of.

The epilogue was a whirlwind of "where the hell did that come from and why did the author put it there," it just didn't fit.

All in All, this was a waste of time and money. Should have gone with my first instinct and passed this one over...
