



The Telling

Leah Giarratano

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A psychopath... an empath... a genius.

Three siblings who will save the world – or destroy it.
They know nothing of each other. They know nothing of the Telling.
But they'll need to learn fast if they're going to survive...

A gripping new series about a collision of worlds, the power of destiny, and the darkness in us all...

The Telling Details

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Author : Leah Giarratano

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From Reader Review *The Telling* for online ebook

Emma says

Review also posted on The Book Barbies.

thanks to the publishers for the free copy of this ebook (via Netgalley)

I absolutely LOVE this whole idea of the psychopath, empath and genius. It's completely and utterly fascinating, and I just really, really, want more.

For the first chapter, we're introduced to this concept of *The Telling* and how it came about to happening in this parallel universe. It's a little bit strange and quirky, but it's something I haven't read about in a long time. Siblings with powers that are connected somehow...

Meet Samantha and Luke. They don't actually know each other. Samantha resides in some gypsy town in Romania, telling fortunes for a living. You know straight away that she's the empath. It's just the simple way that Leah Giarrantano describes the emotions that Samantha grasps and how it feels completely tangible to her. It's beautiful, really.

Luke however, was a bit of a confusing one for me. I really liked reading about him. He's a mere adolescent who's actually in a juvenile detention centre somewhere in Australia. And he gets into fights a lot, which isn't surprising really. Now figuring out whether he's the psychopath or the genius.. now that took me a while. I couldn't decide if he was a smart or heartless, and I didn't figure it out until the very end, but it's hard to see the psychopathic characteristics of him... I wish I'd seen more of him not understanding emotions and being the polar opposite to Samantha.

So basically all is going well in both lives until they, randomly and completely out of the blue, start getting chased. It's exhilarating and exciting, and I seriously could not put my iPad down! It's utterly amazing when Samantha begins to learn to harness her powers.

I absolutely adored each and every character. Even the 'evil' ones. They were all well written and again, the development in both protagonists is touching. I am so looking forward to the sequel. Agggh, the ending just about killed me! I really can't wait to see what else Leah Giarrantano has in store for us!

Brodie says

With a synopsis like the above, *Disharmony* had me frothing at the mouth in anticipation. I admit, *psychopath* was immediately my trigger word.... it offers so much deliciously creepy potential! Unfortunately, *Disharmony* didn't entirely live up to my initial excitement. But don't despair: it's still an engaging start to what can grow into a compelling new series.

We're offered a few different POV's throughout the book, but the primary narrations are from siblings, Samantha and Luke. Twins, in fact. They just don't know it. Abandoned at birth, they were raised in two very different environments, oceans separate from one another. Sam was taken in by Roma gypsies who taught her their ways in fortune-telling, charms and schemes. I particularly liked the air of magic and sense of

community, of *home*, that existed at the heart of her camp. A camp which housed an eclectic group of characters, including a horse-whispering boy who's long caught Sam's attention. She's also beginning to recognise that there's something much more special about her than just telling people their future... she just doesn't fully understand it yet. She's growing into her powers, which prove to be both scary and exhilarating for her.

Luke, on the other hand, was placed through the foster care system in Australia. He's gone from home to home, until eventually finding himself in a juvenile detention centre. And it's here where his story begins... with a fist in his face. He hasn't exactly had it easy. But when one of the newer boys at the centre, Zac, takes an interest in Luke, his life is about to reach new levels of crazy... especially when Zac - a year younger than him and skinny as a rake - shows he can fight like a god. Luke and Zac develop an amusing sort of friendship, their banter providing some of the more funnier moments. A few times, Luke hinted he could be a mix of two roles in the prophecy. Although his label is soon made clear, I liked that he wasn't exactly stereotyped into the one role of either genius or psychopath, yet at the same time I wasn't always satisfied with how his lack of emotions came across.

A mysterious user known only as "Intellicide" begins the story, introducing us to the prophecy, sharing history on the siblings origins and the secret world that exists beyond human knowledge. While this helped give the reader a greater understanding of what's going on, since Sam and Luke aren't yet privy to this information, the problem is that the rest of the novel then feels like more of a set up. It's important to understand the lives Sam and Luke have lived and how they come together, but I was hoping this would only last for around half of the novel and then have us venture into new territory outside of what we already know. I still enjoyed their journey, I was just expecting something of a more epic proportion.

While they may be living on separate continents, one thing rings true for both siblings.... they're in danger. Facing persistent threats that are hell bent on taking them in, no matter the body count, will Samantha and Luke survive long enough to find each other? And where.... *who*, is the third sibling The Telling speaks of? Prophecies, danger and a hint of the otherworldly, Disharmony has enough appeal to cater to all YA readers; not dark enough to shun younger teens, but still enough edge to pull in the older audience. While it lacked a little to completely wow me, it still kept me turning the pages and has me intrigued enough to come back for the next installment.

Shelley says

Great concept, interesting prologue, great ending but mediocre middle.

Novels On The Run says

MARISSA'S REVIEW: 3.5 STARS

A changeover from crime fiction novels, Leah Giarratano has delved in to the YA world of paranormal and fantasy.

Leah has given us Disharmony - book 1 in The Telling Series. A series based around three siblings born to save the world. Only they don't know who they are or that the others exist.

First they have to "believe" what others are telling them is their destiny... and to do that they have to believe that which should only be written in fairy tales.

Luke Black is a hacker extraordinaire remanded at Dwight Juvenile Correction Centre, Sydney Australia. Oddly enough there is no "chip on his shoulder" about being detained. He's just on a mission to get out of there. When Zac Nguyen, the new detainee, steps in to help out Luke during one of his disciplinary sessions - a partnership of sorts is formed to help each other get out of Dwight and on the road to freedom.

Samantha White has lived her life with a caravan of Roma witches. shunned by other Roma's for not being blood and shunned by the Gaje for being a witch - it has been long and bumpy life for Sam. A hard life - but the only one she has ever known. She now finds her self on the verge of connecting with her life time crush Tamas.....whilst learning she is a powerful witch and being hunted by the Roma King and the Japanese Mafia - what has she done to attract such attention?

The blurb hinted at a new series that would have me gripping the book with anticipation and throwing myself head first into a fast paced story....and though it was great in parts - it was also lacking in others.

Disharmony is written in most as two parts - alternating chapters between Luke Black and Samantha White...powerful twins living on opposite sides of the world who don't know that the other exists. Alternating chapters with these two characters works in the sense that they are twins (the psychopath and the empath) and as with a lot of twins, "things" happen simultaneously to them no matter where they are. In saying that it wasn't till 3/4 through the book that this style of writing worked for me. I would have much rather read all about Luke or Samantha in more continual detail than stop/starting.

Sporadically there is a page from Intellicide whose purpose as a narrator of sorts may show worth in the next book. These pages seem fairly disposable in the whole scheme of the book.

The thrill and the excitement picked up during the last 1/4 of the book and as such I would definitely be looking for Book 2 when it is released. It has intrigued me enough now to want to know more!!

Lisa says

Rating - 3.5

The Short Story? - A novel that will satisfy both male and female readers of all ages! Giarratano has brought back YA fiction without the heavy romance tag-a-long. A very appealing plot and a solid ending, I thoroughly enjoyed this "out of the ordinary" debut! Told from alternative perspectives, the novel gives a brilliant insight into two very different lifestyles and craftily intertwines the lives of two very different teenagers. If you're looking for a supernatural read with unique approach Disharmony will please!

The Long Story? - I went into the novel not knowing what to expect and I finished the novel feeling really satisfied with what I've read. Giarratano's YA debut is definitely something different and unique. The plot is quite complex and really weaves the supernatural with the ordinary. The whole story revolves around these three siblings the Psychopath, the Empath and the Genius. These siblings have the power to change the world for the better and the worse. The novel was quite slow moving, a little too much world-building and character-building I think. It's good that Giarratano's put so much effort into settling readers comfortably into this world of fiction she's created but the pace was just slightly too slow. There wasn't much action for the

majority but it finished really strong. I loved the ending and especially the cliff hanger it kind of finished upon. Definitely one I can recommend to both male and female readers because romance is far from the storyline. I enjoyed it, there was room for improvement but overall a solid debut!

The characterisation was very well done. Maybe a little too well done with the slow pace but nevertheless the novel offered plenty of opportunities to connect with the characters. Disharmony is told from alternating perspectives of the Psychopath - Luke and the Empath - Samantha who are twins that were separated from birth. The twins knew nothing of each other until 3/4 of the way through the book and they lived very different lifestyles. I loved how Giarratano has built up this wonderful gypsy world for Sam to grow up in and this harsh, brutal Juvenile Detention centre upbringing for Luke. It really fits their whole Psychopath and Empath take. Luke doesn't seem like a Psychopath to me, he has high tolerance of bullying and pain but to me he seems like a slightly disturbed nice kid. I'm keen to see where Giarratano takes him in the sequel. Sam is lovely, very compassionate and she holds her family and friends close. We didn't meet the Genius until the very end and he still remains a mystery but from what I can see, Giarratano will undoubtedly develop his characters very well as well!

All in all, it was a very strong debut. There were aspects such as the pace that I didn't like but the majority of the novel was fantastic. I loved the world-building, I loved the unique plot and I love the characters. Giarratano has debuted into the YA market with a remarkable novel that's both original and compelling. Even slow pace I found it very hard to put the novel down! One to put on your radar - Disharmony will appeal to readers of all ages and sexes.

Bree T says

A psychopath. An empath. A genius.

They are supposed to be the ones who can save the world – the thousands of years of wars, tragedies and disasters. Who can restore the natural balance and peace, the way things used to be. Before.

They are siblings. Two of them are twins. They know nothing of their destiny – they don't even know the others exist. They know nothing about the mysterious thing known as The Telling, which their destinies are tied up within. They are fast approaching a time where they will be hunted. They are useful to more people than they could ever imagine and they are about to learn all about who they are, and about each other.

Because saving the world isn't the only possible outcome. They could also destroy it.

Disharmony is the first young adult novel from acclaimed Australian adult crime author, Leah Giarratano. Already well known for the Detective Jill Jackson series, Giarratano has tried her hand at something very, very different for her YA debut and the result is incredibly interesting. This is the first in the series and it's fabulous at setting up the story, introducing the reader to several of the very important characters but also creating a shroud of mystery around some others. It's one of those books where I'm going to be annoying and say 'I don't want to spoil it' because I think that to write my usual detailed review would seriously detract from the experience that is reading this book knowing very little about it. All I knew was the blurb when I picked it up, which is brief to say the least. It had been talked about a little at a Penguin YA event I attended last year but mostly, the plot of this book has been a well kept secret.

The story switches between a juvenile detention centre near Windsor in Sydney's north-west and a Roma

gypsy camp near Bucharest, Romania. Luke Black is a teenager who was abandoned by his mother as a baby and bounced from one foster home to the next. He has a rap sheet a mile long and is currently serving time in the centre, targeted by one of the employees, a Mr Holt and the little band of inmates that are Holt's personal favourites and perform all his dirty work, including beating 'lesser' inmates. He finds himself befriended by Zac Nguyen, a freakishly fast young kid. Together they realise it's in their best interests to no longer be in the detention centre. I really enjoyed the sections that revolved around Luke, I found both him and his background fascinating and I was always wanting to know more about his previous foster homes and the sort of things he'd done that had landed him in the juvenile facility. His friendship with Zac was awkward and often strange, with Luke not really having much of an idea just why Zac had befriended him to possibly his own detriment and the two of them go from tentative reluctant alliance to two people on an important quest.

By contrast, Samantha White may not have known her real parents, but she has always known love. Raised by a group of Roma, with one in particular raising her as if Samantha was her own daughter. She spends her days telling fortunes to the non-Roma population and shyly crushing on Tamas, a gypsy boy in the same camp who works with the horses. I think I enjoyed the scenes set in Romania even more than the ones in Australia. The gypsy culture was so well portrayed and I could picture their campsite, the horses, their celebrations and their caravans. There's a carnival that takes place during the book and I think it might've been one of my favourite scenes. It was like so many carnivals I've been to as a teen, overpriced rides and sideshow stalls but with a colour and atmosphere that still hooks you in, no matter how many times you've been before.

Disharmony is such an exciting and unique concept – it's like nothing I've read and that itself makes it so interesting to me. The whole idea of these three different but connected characters, the psychopath, the empath and the genius who are so utterly unaware of their importance and their connection to each other, just going about their individual lives in different parts of the world....until they all get a serious shock. People trying to kill them, or capture them. They have to find each other and they have to learn all they can about the mysterious thing known as The Telling. I have no idea when the next installment will be out (2013 I'm guessing?) but I already want to know more. The last section of this book was action packed and contained such development and then it ended on not a cliffhanger exactly, but at a spot that left me wanting more about the third point in the triangle. Plus there's that curious narrator that kept popping up....

One of those enjoyable, appealing reads that had me seriously thinking, trying to figure out bits that we haven't been told yet.

Nina {????s ??? ?????} says

3.5 stars actually!

Overall, this story was very ordinary. There's plenty of action to keep you engaged, but it wasn't as interesting as it could be. I wasn't as emotionally invested as I should. However, the premise of this book is *very* interesting, and it gets props for it.

Pros

-- **Interesting Premise** - I love the whole 'Psychopath', 'Empath', and 'Genius' idea. It's brilliant and different, and definitely caught my eye!

-- **Diversity!** - YES the supporting main character for Luke is a guy called 'Zac Nguyen' and one of the main

antagonists is Japanese (if her name is anything to go by and the fact that she's with the Yakuza). Do you know how much I love this? I love that asian characters are playing such crucial roles. And while sure there are books out there that do have non-caucasian main characters, it's still a growing trait in ya fiction! So yes, I love the diversity!

-- **Australian** - yeah I know, boring pro, but this is also one of my favourite parts of the book. I love that it's in Australia.

--**Luke** - Okay. Yes, I will agree that Luke is a pro. A pro as in, he's the kind of main character who is thrown into a whole new world with everyone around him knowing more about him and his story than he does. I like what happens to him throughout the book, and his friendship and interactions with Zac and others.

-- **Samantha** - She gets most of the exciting parts.

Cons -- There are cons, and truly, these are the things that brought my rating down, even though I did actually end up enjoying **The Telling** to some degree.

--**Luke** - he lacked a lot of emotions, and the writing for his character was very plain. So he was a little boring to read. BUT not overly boring. Mildly interesting and not unbearable.

--**Samantha** - is overly emotive, which makes sense when the main plot is revealed. But still, it's a bit annoying. And I find her crushing on Tamas annoying too, but not so annoying that I couldn't keep reading. She gets all the fun action, but it kind of dims her personality out.

--**Speaking of personality** - There was a lack of this throughout the whole book. The way it's written leaves little space for really feeling the personalities and voices of each of the main characters. This is what I felt when I read this. I wanted to appreciate each character, but I couldn't. Not as much. After all, the way this book is written is alternating between Sam and Luke. And eventually a third character...all of a sudden at the end of the book.

--**It's slow** - A lot of things happen in this book, but it begins *real* slow. So slow...it's agonising.

--**Too Much** - a lot of things happen in this book and it's kind of hard to keep up with and I sometimes felt that it wasn't all believable.. And also, have I mentioned that whenever things like Yakuza or FBI pop up in a YA novel, it's not always convincing? In this book, it wasn't very convincing at all...it might develop in the second book, but for this book, it was just a nasty pain to read over. The other thing that was too much for this book was having a witch/supernatural aspect. It felt like it had been squashed in there. There's a brief explanation about the witchy side of things, but not really much detail more about it.

BUT OVERALL

I did enjoy this book. Not my favourite book. But it was alright in the end. Quick easy read, pretty light at the moment. I'd be interested in reading the sequels. Though, if you don't like books that start slowly, then this might not be the one to read!

Lisa says

Originally posted at Read Me Bookmark Me Love Me

Disharmony was a book that sounded explosive and unique in theory, but underwhelmed me when things came down to business. I expected so much more from this mysterious Telling but was forced to wait for the sequel to see it in action. This first book very much felt like an introduction to the characters before their true problems would be revealed later on. Although I expected and wanted a lot more plot, I did enjoy meeting some of the characters who will be very important to this prophecy coming true.

The Telling is described as a prophecy which foretells three siblings stopping the disharmony in the world, the toxic emotions which have controlled our society for thousands of years. These children will have to be taught about their Calling, as their powers can be used for evil without correct guidance, but their mother died during childbirth, leaving them separated and oblivious to the others' existences. Disharmony follows the teens' personal lives as they slowly begin to find each other. The book's concept truly had me bouncing off walls but, as I said before, Giarratano doesn't delve too deeply into the specifics just yet. She begins to lay the groundworks for what should be an exciting sequel and I have my fingers crossed that things will get more interesting! I want to know how they'll eliminate disharmony, who wants to stop them and why! I want to know more about their powers! Oh, I have so many questions...

The first character we meet in Disharmony is Luke Black, a boy who's in juvenile detention in Sydney. He's constantly harassed by the warden and his army of bullies for their entertainment, but one day makes an unlikely friend and ally in Zac, an athletic boy who's a skilled fighter and holds many secrets... I enjoyed the scenes which focused on them the most in this book, as Luke was an intriguing character and I was very curious about who Zac really was. The environment they were in also added to the suspense and anxiety I felt, as they weren't able to act freely, without the fear of being caught and punished. Introduce a random assassin from out of nowhere and things get...interesting.

Luke is the psychopath of the trio and doesn't feel any emotion - he had to learn how to fake it. His twin sister, Samantha, on the other hand, is an empath who lives in a Romanian gypsy camp and works as a tarot card reader. Her exceptional abilities at manipulating emotions and seeing the truth in people, not in the cards, make her a valuable asset to the team and sparks the interest of a gypsy king who has mysterious but obviously sinister motives. Sam definitely has the more confusing storyline of the two, and is more involved in the action. She's chased by ninja assassins and is also wanted by the gypsy king. I'm curious to see what comes out of this, given the information and clues that were left in this book. At the moment, they're all loose threads with no meaning! It was harder to keep interested in Sam's story, mainly because her character was not as developed as Luke's. She's surrounded by many other characters and problems, which took Giarratano's focus away from providing the "bonding time" with her that we were able to have with her brother.

So far, we've only properly met two of the three siblings. I'm looking forward to getting to know the other brother, the genius, as we get glimpses of him as the book comes to an end. That and the twists caught my interest and made me wonder what would happen next, but I'll have to wait for other opinions before I pick up the sequel to make sure that it's as good as I want it to be! I hope it is because the last few chapters of Disharmony put me in an "OMG" loop. Disharmony isn't a bad book. It just lacked the energy and excitement I craved from a storyline like this, as well as characters I genuinely cared about. I had some initial problems with the unnatural dialogue and repetitive "he said she said", but things eventually improved! All in all, this was an enjoyable and comfortable read.

Celine says

Review originally posted in: <http://forget8me8not.blogspot.com.au/...>

Cover:

I love the dark feeling of the cover and the black background. The way we can only see the girl's hair gives off this eerie and anonymous feeling.

Story:

A psychopath. An empath. A genius.

Disharmony is an engaging and gripping read. The book is written from alternating POVs between Luke, Samantha, and an anonymous narrator. When I first heard of the book, I was really interested with the concept of Disharmony. It was a unique and different concept compared to all the YA books I've read out there.

The idea of a witch creating 3 children with different abilities was very interesting. I really enjoyed reading how each of the children discovered that they are not just an average person but have the ability that makes them different from others. The story was quite well-written although it took me about ¾ of the book to finally get hooked into the story. The book started out with a chapter written by the anonymous narrator which I really liked but then the story progressed slowly until closer to the end of the book where it was filled with actions and exciting scenes. The ending made me excited to read the next book!

Characters:

The characters in this book are so enjoyable to read about! I love their personalities and their abilities. I don't really want to spoil the characters' ability but let's just say Luke Black is unable to feel pain and Samantha is the opposite of him. I enjoyed reading about how they discover that they have special abilities and how they have siblings that are similar to them, born from the same mother. When they finally met, the plot became very interesting. I also really like Kirra, the Asian girl and antagonist in this book. She absolutely rocks! She works for the Yakuza so you can imagine how kick-ass she is!

As I read the book, I noticed that there were 3 'gifted' children but only 2 were introduced in this book. What does this mean? And my curiosity was answered by the end of the book so I'm excited to read the next book in the series!

Overall:

Leah Giarratano's Disharmony is a new riveting novel with a unique concept. What will happen when a psychopath, an empath and a genius unite? Will they bring good to the world or destroy the world with evil? Even though the story didn't quite hook me, it was overall an enjoyable read and I'm excited for the next book in the series!

Thank you Penguin Australia for the review copy!

Marissa Novels On The Run says

3.5 STARS

A changeover from crime fiction novels, Leah Giarratano has delved in to the YA world of paranormal and fantasy.

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First they have to "believe" what others are telling them is their destiny... and to do that they have to believe that which should only be written in fairy tales.

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Disharmony is written in most as two parts - alternating chapters between Luke Black and Samantha White...powerful twins living on opposite sides of the world who don't know that the other exists. Alternating chapters with these two characters works in the sense that they are twins (the psychopath and the empath) and as with a lot of twins, "things" happen simultaneously to them no matter where they are. In saying that it wasn't till 3/4 through the book that this style of writing worked for me. I would have much rather read all about Luke or Samantha in more continual detail than stop/starting.

Sporadically there is a page from Intellicide whose purpose as a narrator of sorts may show worth in the next book. These pages seem fairly disposable in the whole scheme of the book.

The thrill and the excitement picked up during the last 1/4 of the book and as such I would definitely be looking for Book 2 when it is released. It has intrigued me enough now to want to know more!!

Kai says

Review posted at Amaterasu Reads

Although not all of the book's elements worked for me, and I've had my reservations before finally reading it, there was so much promise the summary offers and I just couldn't help myself that I read on.

I never thought that mixing technology and magic, folklore and legends, and supernatural beings will work in a modern setting. This can be tricky and confusing, but Leah Giarrantano somehow made it work. I liked how one moment you see everything from the eyes of a juvenile, Luke, and then through an outside girl taken in by the gypsies, Samantha, and all of a sudden you read about daemons, elves, faeries and something

about *The Telling*. It's a delicate work to be able to shift focus and disconnect one world from another and then merge them again but the author still somehow managed to make them coalesce, despite some confusing moments.

What will test the patience of the readers in this book, however, is how draggy some parts seem. It took a while for Luke and Samantha's stories to look like they were related and it happened way beyond 100 pages. Some readers might not care for what will happen at that point, but it gets better halfway through. It was a bit hard to connect with Luke and Sam, as their personalities took time to develop as well. It took me a while to be convinced that magic is an integral part of the story, and there were quite a lot of side characters introduced that took away some focus on the main characters. I had to re-read a few pages back just so I can remember who Seraphina is.

On the other hand, what I liked in this book is that I kept on guessing who the psychopath and the empath is, and the genius as well. Leah Giarrantano dropped quite a few hints that I was challenged to figure out, even who and what Intellicide's role is, which I still don't know. The numerous chase scenes, some violent, some heart racing, gave the story a sense of urgency. The author's knowledge in psychology helped a great deal in creating a believable empath and psychopath, given the deep background of Luke and Samantha's lives. I just wished they gave time for the third character, the genius, to be introduced properly as well.

Despite the setbacks I encountered, my overall feeling for the novel is good. There were moments of struggle to get through some scenes, but there were a lot of times where I felt like the pace was good, and that the story was sorting itself out. I definitely am still curious to know a lot more about Morgan Moreau and the secret she holds and her plans for *The Telling*. The story incorporates a lot of relatable themes, like the hardships Luke dealt as a child who grew up in the system: being bullied, unloved and passed around by people who never should have had kids. Sam experienced a lot of prejudice and cruelty growing up in a Gypsy community, and being stuck in between two worlds, neither a Gaje nor a Roma.

Reading *Disharmony* is like waiting for a car to get warmed up and when it did, it will zoom past in a blink of an eye. From an idle, leisurely pace, *Disharmony* gave way to a very promising, exhilarating ending. Will I read the sequel? Yes! Do I think this book is worth the time I've spent reading? Still a yes! It's different, but the good kind of different.

Kat Kennedy says

There are some things I saw done very well in Giarrantano's new novel, *Disharmony*. Her first mark comes for characterization as she successfully builds and maintains several very authentic, interesting voices. Each with a story that is a little like a crocheted doily in how the pattern touches at the right time in the right places. The second comes from the settings which are engaging and rich. It was like a breath of fresh air and I enjoyed the exposure to her take on the Roma families and the juvenile detention center - both of which were a very welcome break from the now very familiar middle American setting that many books take place in.

I should mention that the format that I read it in was different to how I receive most ARCs, making reading difficult and frustrating. It probably interfered somewhat with my ability to relate and engage with the story and contributed to me giving up and being unable to finish reading the novel.

Where the story fell apart for me was its painstakingly slow start. The story seems to feel no rush and

rambles on, sometimes seemingly aimlessly. You can kind of excuse Bronte for taking more than three chapters to get to the point. The setup felt worth it for the creepy atmosphere. The waffling and slow beginning seemed to fit. But often, while reading Disharmony, I wondered what the actual point of several of the first chapters were. Certainly we were introduced to the characters and settings and early story - but the important parts seemed steeped in superfluous scenes that bogged down the story. Understandably, this could all be explained later and be a brilliant setup to a most amazing story - but if the audience stops caring and reading, is it worth it? I guess I'll never know.

Natasha says

"The psychopath. The empath. The genius."

Luke Black is a punching bag in juvenile detention. It seems everything he does is considered wrong, and he hates people and feelings. Having been bumped from different foster homes around Sydney, a few computer crimes (plus some other stuff he doesn't want to get into) have left him there for eight months.

Samantha White is considered a witch princess. Abandoned at birth and raised by the Roma, she can sense feelings and is very good at reading tarot cards. She's lived a carefree life in Romania, the highlights being the midsummer carnival, and getting her crush, Tamas, to notice her.

Luke and Sam are pretty much complete polar opposites. In fact, a prophecy calls them The Psychopath and The Empath: one who is not able to care about anyone's feelings but themselves and has no understanding of them; and one who is able to tell what a person is feeling from a mile away, and is able to influence them with her own feelings. So, naturally, they're twins.

I really liked the premise of the story; completely different siblings, raised in different conditions to grow the qualities need to fulfil the prophecy. The genius, Jake, who is a year younger than the twins, is only mentioned briefly in the book. It seems I'm reading a lot of "Separated at Birth" books recently, so I had to add a shelf.

The reason what made this book so hard to get through, even if I read it in a few hours (I had a long doctor's wait), was that the pacing was so slow. You actually have no idea why the plot is going the way it is, as there's really no explanation. Their meeting is brief, and they talk about it, but not in detail. I know there's another book that will probably explain this, but with this book being the only one out, it wasn't satisfying. You were also introduced to so many characters that are disregarded as the twins move that it gets confusing.

My only justification for this is that we're supposed to be just as in the dark as Luke and Sam are, but it does get downright frustrating at times. There's nothing to really work on.

I'm still rather interested in what's going to happen next, but I'm not waiting for the next book with bated breath. But if I see it, I'm more than likely going to pick it up. Zac Nguyen, (view spoiler) is one of my favourite characters and I can't wait to see him again.

Tien says

The Reason

I've read Leah Giarratano's Jill Jackson series which is an adult crime novels and I loved Jill Jackson. I cannot stress it enough that she absolutely Kicks some serious Ass! I was hoping for some kick ass characters in Disharmony too.

I notice the first line of the book's description was "A psychopath... an empath... a genius." What a terrific choice to characters and seeing that Giarratano's experience as clinical psychologist, she could not choose better characters than these!

So... I was absolutely curious on whether Giarratano would excel in this different genre aimed at a younger audience.

The Verdict

I would love to be able to rave and rant about this book but... I can't. I still gave it 4 stars because it still held my attention and the last 50-60 pages (where the action is) were explosive and I could not put it down.

I loved Samantha White and the backdrop she's placed in. Being a part of the gypsies in Bucharest, Romania was just such a romantic notion to me (my completely bias opinion). She is wild. She is loyal. She has no clue who she really is...

Luke Black also had no idea who he is but he certainly knew what he has done to have been placed in a Juvenile Detention Centre. Luke was a little bit hard to love but he was strong and intelligent. He also wasn't planning to stay down for long...

And then, we have the narrator... who is the narrator? It's not revealed here but conjectures may be made and I'm not about to share mine :p

Let's not forget the gorgeous gypsy guy, the gun totting retiree, the star throwing ninjas, and many other interesting characters. I'd have to say the gun totting retiree is my favourite minor character to date, LOL.

The book felt like it was setting up for something, whatever that is. Something BIG. Yet... even when the action was explosive for the last part of the book, that wasn't it. There's something more. Something bigger. Therefore, whilst I was a little disappointed that the book just felt like a 'background' story, a 'setting up' for the next book (or even the book after!), I will definitely read the next instalment. I've got to know!

ALPHAreader says

We live in a world of chaos, but it has not always been this way. Wars, murder, poverty... they all started five thousand years ago. And when the chaos started, a prophecy foretold of three children who would one day bring an end to it. A psychopath. An empathy. A genius.

One, a child with no capacity to feel emotional pain and no ability to understand the emotions of others.

Another, the opposite, a child of such pure emotional connection that she would have known where and why you had an itch before you even knew that a mosquito bit you.

And the third, a laser beam of concentrated brilliance – pure, personified intelligence.

And there you have it. The Psychopath, the Empath and the Genius.

Together, they can create harmony. You know, heal the world. Peace, love and hummus, baby.

But the big problem was, according to the Telling, they could also be used as a weapon if the wrong person got a hold of them, schooled them up the wrong way. You see, they have to be taught about their Calling. They have to be instructed from their earliest years in how to use their powers, in how to fulfil their destiny, in how to save the rest of us. They need guidance, the right parents. They need love.

Those children were born to the witch, Morgan Moreau, who died birthing the genius. Then the children were separated – and that’s where the story really begins.

‘Disharmony’ is the first book in a new Australian YA series by Leah Giarratano.

Samantha White is a stolen Gaje-princess, living with her adoptive gypsy family in Pantelimon, Romania. She is sixteen-years-old, and loves her family dearly, even if she knows she isn’t really one of them. Lala is the closest thing to a mother that Sam has ever had, and she teaches her how to trick foolish Gaje (non-Romony) out of their money during fortune-teller sessions. Only, sometimes Sam’s gypsy witchery is real – sometimes she can tell when a person’s heart is breaking, or they’re too blind to see their own ignorance. Sam loves walking through the forest at night, hanging out with her best friend Mirela or meeting up with her pickpocket friend, Birthday Jones, in the streets of Bucharest. Sam also loves being near Tamas – a fellow gypsy boy who tends to the camp’s horses, and has held Sam’s heart since she was just a girl.

But the winds of change are coming; Sam can feel them chilling her skin. The gypsy king – an overweight ex-mobster – has his sights set on Sam and her ability to read people’s fortunes with such pin-point accuracy, beyond just a gypsy show. Sam and her friends find themselves running through the city streets, being chased by gypsy mobsters, female ninjas and other villains who belong in comic books, not real life;

The girl seemed clad in a black rubber membrane. Toe to throat, she wore a single skin-like sheath that slicked across lean limbs and muscles. She wore a high, shiny-black ponytail, a filigreed-blossom tattoo on her neck, and a smile like nuclear waste. Samantha’s first thought was to wonder whether they might be the same age; her second was to decide that she had never seen a more beautiful girl. Her third thought tore at her heart: who or what had created a creature so completely devoid of human feeling?

Meanwhile, across the seas in the Dwight Juvenile Justice Detention Centre, Sydney, Australia resides Luke Black. A childhood spent in foster care has taught Luke a thing or two – about never trusting anyone and always looking out for yourself. So he’s a little surprised when new inmate, Zac Nguyen, defends him during a scuffle with a fellow kid. And why Zac keeps saving his butt when a weird new inmate attacks him for seemingly no reason, after mistakenly calling him ‘Lucifer’.

‘Disharmony’ switches between Luke’s story and Samantha’s, as they both battle with mysterious foes and begin learning the secrets of their orphaned past ... all the while we, the reader, are seemingly being led down the plotted path by ‘User: Intellicide’ – a mysterious narrator logged-in who needs us to know of The Telling, to understand what is coming.

If it sounds like a lot is going on in Giarratano’s debut YA book, you’d be right. She throws us into the deep end and then writes at a break-neck pace – sliding between Romania and Sydney, dropping hints of ‘The Telling’ and unwinding the complicated histories (and even more complicated destiny’s) of our two protagonists ...

What makes ‘Disharmony’ even more complex is that as readers, we know more about Sam and Luke than they do. Our protagonist’s are living in ignorance of their true selves, and while readers are made privy to the history and mystery surrounding ‘The Telling’ and the murderous mother witch, Morgan Moreau, Luke and

Sam only start to play catch-up when assassins and ninjas start coming out of the woodwork and conspiring to let them in on the secret of their lives. Heck, even readers know that Sam and Luke are twins – different sides to the same coin, an empath and a psychopath, two pieces to the prophetic puzzle. So ‘Disharmony’ feels like a lot of push and pull, between readers piecing the puzzle together and then reading how Luke and Sam are slowly coming to see the truth. . . it doesn’t always work, this disparity between the reader knowing more than the protagonists, but it is an interesting plot twist. What’s even more interesting is how we are all waiting, with bated breath, to know more of ‘the genius’ – the third child of the prophecy who is conspicuously missing from ‘Disharmony’s’ narration.

One thing I really loved in the book was Samantha’s story, set in a Romanian gypsy camp. I’m going to reveal a guilty pleasure and say I’m a big fan of the TV show ‘Big Fat Gypsy Weddings’ – and I was really impressed at how Giarratano wrote such a true and fascinating gypsy home for Samantha. Everything from their Gaje-cons, to the lovely family community and male-dominated households was very honest and compelling. I also loved the people in Sam’s life – like Birthday Jones (his quirky real name, courtesy of a smart-aleck night nurse) a pick-pocket living on the streets. Then there’s Tamas – Sam’s crush and a veritable horse-whisperer with killer smile and allergy to t-shirts. Giarratano wrote a really vibrant community around Sam, and I look forward to how that community will hold up in the wake of Sam’s revelations. . .

Luke’s story is much bleaker – set in a juvenile detention centre and revealing the hard-knock life he has had. Leah Giarratano is a psychologist, and I think it showed in Luke’s story, with regards to the bullying inside the government facility (from staff, as well as fellow boys), really interesting if a little disheartening. The bright spot in Luke’s story is his developing friendship with Zac – a new inmate whose rake-like vegan physique belies his whip-quick fighting skills. Luke and Zac have some fantastic moments in ‘Disharmony’, and are a great buddy-pairing. I do wish though, that the character of Luke had revealed a bit more of his psychopathic-tendencies. I don’t mean I wanted to read about him killing kittens or anything, and I’m not even sure if Giarratano intended for readers to be guessing if Luke was the genius or psychopath (once it became obvious that Sam was the empath) – I just needed a little more evidence of Luke’s nature. It might also be because ‘Disharmony’ is told in third-person, omniscient narration that we don’t get inside Luke’s head to know how unfeeling he really is, but by the time it was revealed that he was the psychopath – I wasn’t entirely convinced.

Overall, I really enjoyed ‘Disharmony’. Giarratano has written a dark and twisted new series that’s wholly unique and has the potential for great longevity. She left enough tantalizing breadcrumbs in ‘Disharmony’ to have me eager for the second instalment, to continue Luke, Sam and their mysterious sibling’s journey to prophecy. . . and the big question remains; will their coming together bring about peace, or destruction? I don’t know, but I’m going to enjoy finding out!
