



A Christmas Kerril

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In this modern take on a holiday classic, high school junior, Kerril, faces her past, present, and future to be reminded of the good in others, and in herself.

Haunted by the memory of the worst of her divorced parents' public Christmas blowouts, Kerril, will do almost anything to avoid the upcoming tinsel-filled season. Unfortunately, a teacher with a grudge casts Kerril as the lead in the school's holiday production. To add to the misery, she will star alongside ultra-awkward Adam as her love interest.

Wanting to ditch the play, Adam, her parents, and Christmas altogether, Kerril accepts an invitation to take off to a cabin with her ultimate dream crush, Perry – only Perry may not be the guy she hoped he was, and it's not until she's left Adam behind to fend for himself onstage that she realizes he might just be the guy of her dreams.

A Christmas Kerril Details

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From Reader Review *A Christmas Kerril* for online ebook

Gina says

I absolutely love that Ms. Jaden wrote this Dickens tribute from the perspective of a teenage girl with all the angst and drama that comes along with it. This is the first book I've read by this author but I'm hoping it won't be the last

Katie says

This is highly engaging and I would recommend this for a teenager or young adult. I'm already enthused about the possibilities. There is a love triangle, warring parents, a teacher that lives across the street and the only person I don't like is Kerril, our leading lady. She seems dense and I already feel sorry for Adam. My overall impression on finishing this is I feel like it was handing me information. Baking was important to Kerril but in the book it is only mentioned a few times and bears no real significance on it. The two boys, Perry and Adam, felt used mechanically in the way she went after one boy, ended that and then focused on the continued development with the other boy. Same issue with the parents and the overblown narrative and back story that really had no impact. Kerril hasn't changed throughout this. There are obstacles, they are moved on from and that's that. I like to feel like a character has actually changed after reading a book. And I feel for Kerril there was only one instance of that happening. It is almost like this was a checklist of YA fiction clichés that were being ticked off one at a time.

Despite that I like this, the style of writing, the pace, the sheer readability, the reworking of *The Christmas Carol* through her dreams, the relationship with Perry -I felt her lust and frustration and doubt and dilemma. Maybe it's me but I like a complex love triangle and that, for me, was the best part of this. The interaction between Perry and Kerril, is he an @sshole or a genuinely nice guy and is she going to do the right thing and stay clear of him?

The scene in the nursery with the children and Perry is a fantastic light relief part. I like that I didn't know which boy she was going to end up with. I still don't feel invested in Kerril by the end of this, she seems just like a vehicle to navigate the chapters. This has many ideas, not all fully explored, that there is more than enough loose threads and characters for a sequel.

Shash says

A Christmas Kerril is a great, young adult book inspired by the original story by Charles Dickens. Kerril hates Christmas! Bad memories of her parent's fights at Christmas have brought her to the point where she doesn't celebrate it at all. Then she walks into her creative writing class, and finds out that the winning play, the one they will put on before Christmas, is called *A Christmas Kerril*. And she is cast as the lead. She will be acting opposite Adam, the author of the play, who stutters. It feels like a punishment. Now she is forced into something that deals with Christmas.

The characters in the book are written so well. Kerril is a real teenager. She struggles with friends, with parents, with guys, with trying to figure out who she really is. She makes mistakes and feels the pain of knowing she's done wrong. She comes to know what really matters. I admired Kerril. She has a good, kind

spirit, and wants to help others, even if she doesn't always act that way. Like I said, she's a real teenager. Adam appears shy, but has so much courage and strength within him. I was really rooting for him! I would love to learn more about the side characters and their lives. Sequel?? I would welcome one!

This is a great book! You will want to shake some sense into Kerril sometimes, but you will love watching her find herself.

There is some swearing in the book, mostly in the first half.

I received a copy of the book in exchange for an honest review.

Gmr says

A little bit "It's a Wonderful Life" with "A Christmas Carol" and a healthy dose of modern teen drama...that's the interesting concoction you get in this wintry snow globe of a book.

Our leading lady Kerril has an unusual gift (curse?). She has lucid dreams. Curious what that is? According to Google and Wikipedia, it is defined as "any dream in which one is aware that one is dreaming". In Kerril's case, it means she can also manipulate them to her whim and explore things her subconscious picked up while her conscious mind was wandering away. Pretty cool, right? Umm, I'll take a pass on them if it's all the same to you. Where this "talent" comes into play here is not exactly a pleasant experience, for it seems to lock our girl into reliving her families less-than-finer-moments, i.e. Christmas time three years ago. The tragedy and upset left Kerril despising the season and stepping right into the role of a modern teen Scroogette. In our modern times, we have the right to express ourselves our love or lack thereof of the holidays how we see fit...she would rather they pass and leave her alone. Or does she? So much is happening and she's about to be put centerstage to it all...literally, and whether she likes it or not.

Kerril, Kerril, our little Christmas Kerril. You and I had a love/hate relationship throughout the story. Your Scrooge-y side was in full swing about halfway through, so much so that I almost smacked you upside the head through the pages. I appreciated your candor when it was allowed breathing room (page 151, the quote about Christmas in retail...DEAD ON!), but your wishy-washy decision making skills need a rest. It's your choice, your LIFE, and you have to live with whatever consequences you set into motion. After all was said and done though, I'd still call you friend. Now Adam I found truly mesmerizing. He's not a character that usually gets the spotlight as more than a sidekick or passing fancy. Here, he gets a pretty big starring role both in the story and the play. I loved the way he was depicted, the challenges he faced and how it was handled. His stutter wasn't danced around, but faced head on....for better and worse. Were kids mean to him? You bet. Were the parents less than helpful in building his confidence? Definitely....and as harsh and evil as that all sounds, it felt real. Again, a sad point for sure....we should be beyond things like that in today's world, but not everyone is and the way Kerril (and friends) interacted with him, helping, and guiding, was refreshing.

In conclusion, Kerril is definitely no George Bailey, especially with her face plant in the snow, but she comes through like a true Christmas angel who just scored her wings (*rings bell*). The road was tough, littered with wrong choices, regrets, and worries, but with a little help from past, present, and future (and a pretty cute dream-guy), she just might see the beauty of the season and wish YOU a merry holiday. Recommended read for teens through adults.

review copy received in exchange for my honest review, full post can be seen on my site

Nanette says

3.5* Good YA Christmas story. I enjoy reading responsible teenage books where all the teens aren't always mean bullies, and those who are can be brought down a peg or to by the teens willing to rise above.

Kristina Applegate says

Kerril is your typical teenage girl, living with her mom and attending the very prestigious and private school: Westerly Academy. She's also your classic Christmas Scrooge, if it has to do with Christmas she wants nothing to do with it. Kerril struggles with the Christmas holiday since that dreaded day her dad and her mom decided to have an all-out fight at a Christmas party destroying any joy that Kerril had for the holiday. To add to her dismay, Kerril has now been bullied into playing the star lead in a new take of the Christmas Carol by her over domineering teacher. Alongside her is the very shy Adam who suffers from a speech impediment, and a misfit student who hates everybody. While Kerril is trying to find time to learn a new play, go to school, get schoolwork done, and work, she also is juggling her ever present dreams that are hard to decipher between what is reality and what is dreaming. These dreams focus around her past, the present, and the future. Is she going to be able to learn from her dreams to help her make better decisions in her present life? Her biggest decision in her life right now is trying to decide between the two boys in her life: Adam and Perry. The draw back? Perry is already taken.

I don't often get books that I dislike. However, when I get them I'm extremely honest and don't hold back. Unfortunately, A Christmas Kerril, falls under this topic. I was very optimistic about this book; usually it can be fun to read a fun loving Christmas story during the holidays. However, this book fell very short of my expectations and left bitter feelings of disgust. The fact that Perry is taken doesn't seem to affect Kerril, she has the feelings of guilt when she starts to pursue Perry, but that doesn't stop her from the multiple times she make outs with him. Kerril also doesn't stop secretly meeting him when she discovers that his girlfriend may be suffering from a terminal disease. I don't have any respect for people who cheat, and I don't have a desire to read anything about it. This is not a story that I would recommend, especially during this holiday.

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review

Janet says

First of all, I LOVE the cover almost as much as the book!!! Put this on your reading list!

A clever retelling, Denise Jaden has crafted a new Christmas classic with fresh characters and an updated storyline. Emotional and gripping, this Christmas Kerril explores redemption and self-discovery but at the heart, it's a page turning well-paced good read.

Fay Roberts says

I was pleasantly surprised by *A Christmas Kerril*. I was expecting twee characters and rosy Christmas tree scenes, the usual ghosts and perhaps a good dose of Clarence the Angel to really hammer home how important Kerril was in the lives of others. Instead I got a well written YA novel that contained the same kind of complex characters and darker teen issues as a John Green novel.

Kerril refuses to celebrate Christmas ever since her parents' marriage spectacularly came to a head at an office Christmas party with the whole town bearing witness. She lives with her mother who she has a complicated relationship with. Despite her conflicting emotions about her Kerril is fiercely loyal to her to the point of cutting her father almost completely from her life. In fact Kerril and her mother struck a deal - despite her mother's love of the holiday season she will no longer celebrate and acknowledge it if Kerril uses her father's drinking against him in the custody battle which takes place three years before this story starts.

Despite her lack of enthusiasm her father valiantly tries to remain in contact with her and make some kind of relationship with her, but Kerril is blinded by his faults and takes his efforts for granted, shunning him at every turn.

Her school life is no less complicated. Her BFF Brooke has become friends with Aysha and tires continually to force the two of them to become friends as well. But Kerril just can't bring herself to befriend Aysha, especially as soon after starting at their small private school she snagged Perry, Kerril's ultimate crush. When Perry and Kerril start to become close despite his relationship status she has to decide if she is the kind of person who will steal another girl's boyfriend, especially when she finds out Aysha has a secret.

To make life worse, her neighbor and creative writing teacher has decided that Kerril will play the lead in play written by her classmate, Adam, who will co-star alongside her. Kerril believes this is all some kind of nasty plot by Adam who has entitled his play "*A Christmas Kerril*," after she made fun of his speech impediment when he joined the school. And how on earth can someone star in a play when they can't even string a sentence together?

As Kerril spends time working with Adam they develop a friendship but her real life Adam starts to become blurred with a dream Adam who is taking over her nights. Having always had lucid dreams Kerril is determined that she will make the ones featuring Adam have meaning on her life and she will discover any meaning they have for her waking life.

Can Kerril become a better person and gain insight into the people around her? Which relationships are worth having and which should you just let go? Is Christmas a holiday to be avoided?

I really enjoyed this book and Denise Jaden's writing style. Complex, steamy and insightful I can't wait to try something else by her. I would love to see her get picked up a big publishing house and see what could happen with a crack team of editors working with such a rich host of characters and interesting plot.

Beverly Laude says

This was a great new way to present the classic story of Scrooge and his visits from the Christmas spirits.

Kerril is a typical teenaged girl, going through all of the trials and tribulations of high school and young love. She absolutely hates everything about Christmas after her parent's bitter divorce. She refuses to celebrate in any way and everybody knows about this.

Her classmate, Adam, is ridiculed for his stuttering. So, when his creative writing project is chosen to be the Christmas play and he is chosen to play the male lead, it is just a disaster waiting to happen.

Kerril must face her "ghosts" and decide what she really wants to do and who she wants to become. I think that everybody can relate to her in some way since we have all had to make major decisions without really knowing what is the "right" thing to do.

Ms. Preisinger's narration really adds to this book. She definitely has the teenaged angst/whining down and it really comes across in this book.

I was given the opportunity to listen to this book by the publisher/narrator/author and chose to review it.

D.M. says

I absolutely loved this book and would recommend it to anyone who's struggling with a gift for a teenager for Christmas... Or a gift to yourself to get you in the Christmas spirit.

It is very loosely based on a Christmas carol but if you think you've read this book before you start you will be sadly mistaken.

I don't want to give any spoilers therefore I will not be giving any comments on the plot however the main characters are easy to like and would get rid of any Christmas blues.

I'm really hoping there will be a sequel to this book as I'd like to know more from Adams point of view and also I feel there could be more after the book. I'm not saying the books too short because I can honestly say the ending was perfect. Yes I have the warm and fuzzys for this book.

An advanced copy of this book was given to me in exchange for an honest review

Alisa says

I really enjoyed this book. Kerril goes to the only private school in town. While her work-aholic mother has a lot of money and pays for the tuition, she has to work a job on the weekends to pay for everything else. She also has to save her money to pay her own way through college because her mother refuses to pay for her to go to a culinary school. And Kerril's biggest dream is owning her own bakery one day.

Kerril hates Christmas. Thanks to her divorced parents who have ruined more than one Christmas for her. The only thing that can make Christmas worse for her is to be cast by the teacher who hates her as the lead in their school play "The Christmas Kerril." Her co-stars are Adam, who has a stuttering problem, and Mara, who is angry and completely uninterested in the play. Add in a best friend Brooke who is friends with Aysha - who seems completely disinterested in being Kerril's friend and who also happens to be dating Perry, the boy Kerril has been crushing on forever -- and this is sure to be Kerril's worst Christmas ever!

Kerril makes a lot of mistakes, but along the way she learns that all of her classmates have problems, too -

even if you can't tell from the perfect image they are portraying. She also learns that she can do things differently to allow more good in her life.

Overall, a really good story. I did feel like the ending was a little abrupt and would have liked a little more at the end - maybe there will be a sequel? I would read more by this author.

Content: Clean, swearing

Source: Review copy (opinion is 100% my own)

Meghan says

As the blurb said this is a take on the classic Christmas Carol...and it is so fun! Through the use of a school play, dreams and flashbacks Kerril faces her past, present and future in an eye-opening approach that left me enjoying the characters and appreciating a bit of self-reflection. I love Christmas stories so I was excited to get the chance to review this book. I knew that part of the book was obviously going to be about choices and "ghosts" (which using dreams for ghosts...genius), but I was surprised at how some parts were very predictable and some parts I did not see coming at all.

By the end of the book I loved a few characters...hello Adam..liked, but not loved Kerril and her friends, and really really really did not like Perry. The fact that I was so set in my thoughts on these characters thrilled me! DJ's writing style was fantastic for this YA story and kept me intrigued from cover to cover. Speaking of covers..I adore this cover. It is very simplistic, but for some reason it has stuck with me even after finishing this story!

I received this book in exchange for an honest review. For a more detailed review please check out my blog at www.meghanvarner.blogspot.com

Kathy says

I received a free copy for an honest review. Kerril hates Christmas. Three years ago, her parents embarrassed themselves and her by getting into a huge fight, leading to a nasty divorce at the company Christmas Party. Since then, Christmas is her least favorite time of year. In her high school creative writing class, each student was asked to write a play based on Dicken's Christmas Carol. The class was then asked to perform the winning play. Adam Dominy is a very shy young man with a severe stuttering problem. As the winning play write, he casts himself as Abe, the love interest. Kerril is cast as the leading lady. Perry is dating another girl but Kerril has had a crush on him for many years. When Perry asks Kerril to go away with him to a remote cabin over the Christmas holidays, she sees this as a golden opportunity to skip Christmas all together, get out of being in the class play, and get to spend some time getting to know Perry. But to do it, she has to let Adam down in a huge way. This book is very well written. The characters are well developed and the plot is fast paced and intriguing. The only thing I didn't like about the book was the swearing it contained.

Shelly Hammond says

This is a terrific story. It's not at all what I was expecting and while the story held on to a bit of the good ol'

Christmas Carol, it was most certainly A Christmas Kerril!

This is a wonderfully unique tale of a young girl who has a bit of an issue with the holidays. She starts out as a bit of a... well, perhaps a misguided youth and while she holds on to and retains that which reminds you, the reader, that she is indeed a teenager straight up until the end, she also goes through a growing up process. I don't want to give anything away about the story itself because you really should read it for yourself, so I'll leave it there.

The author has a nice way of writing where the story flows nicely and the characters are all fully developed with their own very distinct personalities. If you are meant to dislike them, you truly dislike them! The lead characters take turns being loveable and I-want-to-reach-into-the-book-and-shake-some-sense-into-you...able. You can easily picture the book in your mind as it's happening and it doesn't take very long to read at all.

I would recommend this book to just about anyone. I enjoyed it and am so ready for the holidays now!

Mary Jung says

A CHRISTMAS KERRIL by Denise Jaden

This story, written for young readers, is a take-off on "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens.

It is written in an easy to read style about a young girl who has every right to "hate" Christmas. Like many people, she has some bad memories of things that happened over the years on Christmas that made it not a very memorable time for her. She and her Mom no longer even celebrate the holiday. Her Mom is so involved in her work that she often forgets about Kerril. Her parents are no longer together, and Kerril has some very hard feelings towards her father.

At school, Kerril has been given a lead part in a Christmas play written by one of her classmates. A boy who has problems of his own that he needs to overcome. Adam and Kerril were cast as leads in this play by their teacher. It is an assignment that Adam took very seriously and poured his heart and soul into writing his play. Adam stutters and the story tells us how he overcomes his "problem" with the help of Kerril. She is being forced to acknowledge Christmas and she is not at all happy with that having happened.

It's a warm hearted story of a dealing with likes and dislikes and a friend who needs help and understanding and having a friend, as both Kerril and Adam do.

The story has the usual ups and downs as most stories do but ends with two people becoming friends and understanding each other just a little more.

I was given this book in exchange for an honest review. I'd easily give this book a 4 ½ as an overall mark. It is well written, easy to read and has just the right amount of ups and downs to hold my interest. I look forward to reading other books by this author.

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