



Cold Burn of Magic

Jennifer Estep

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Cold Burn of Magic

Jennifer Estep

Cold Burn of Magic Jennifer Estep
There Be Monsters Here. . .

It's not as great as you'd think, living in a tourist town that's known as "the most magical place in America." Same boring high school, just twice as many monsters under the bridges and rival Families killing each other for power.

I try to keep out of it. I've got my mom's bloodiron sword and my slightly illegal home in the basement of the municipal library. And a couple of Talents I try to keep quiet, including very light fingers and a way with a lock pick.

But then some nasty characters bring their Family feud into my friend's pawn shop, and I have to make a call--get involved, or watch a cute guy die because I didn't. I guess I made the wrong choice, because now I'm stuck putting everything on the line for Devon Sinclair. My mom was murdered because of the Families, and it looks like I'm going to end up just like her. . .

Cold Burn of Magic Details

Date : Published April 28th 2015 by Kensington

ISBN : 9781617738241

Author : Jennifer Estep

Format : Paperback 323 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Urban Fantasy, Young Adult, Magic, Paranormal, Romance

 [Download Cold Burn of Magic ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Cold Burn of Magic ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Cold Burn of Magic Jennifer Estep

From Reader Review Cold Burn of Magic for online ebook

AH says

About a 2.5-3 star read for me. As I started reading **Cold Burn of Magic**, it kind of felt like the author's *Elemental Assassins* series lite for me. First, there is the constant mention of eye color (which is a trademark for this author) and second, each meal or food item is detailed almost like a recipe. By the way, the main character Lila loves her bacon.

The heroine reminded me a lot of a younger Gin Blanco with Mo as a Fletcher character. Lila is a likable character: she is street smart, resourceful, and a pretty scrappy fighter. Lila has lived on her own since the death of her mother. She is a successful thief and is able to scale buildings very much like Gin.

The world is also similar. In *Elemental Assassins*, the town of Ashland is led by corrupt mafia-like groups. The same for this series, except that the mafia-like groups are families.

This series should appeal to young adult readers.

Thank you to NetGalley and Kensington Teen for a review copy of this book.

Jo ★The Book Sloth★ says

3 It's Not You, It's Me Stars

This book wasn't bad but it really had many things working against it at the time. The first one is that it is YA and it shows. It is a rare YA book that will keep my attention these days and if it wasn't for the accidental request I wouldn't have picked it up in the first place. The second is that due to lack of free time when I got the ARC, it took me a while to finish it and I tend to lose interest in a book if I have to read it with a lot of breaks.

Still, even I can admit that this was a good recipe for a book even if I managed to burn it.

The book has a decent heroine first and foremost. Lila is an intriguing character with many aspects. In the beginning I thought she would be the badass, selfish, slightly bitter type of heroine but she grows through the book and we can see her more kind and selfless side. Would I have preferred it if she had proven herself a bitch? Probably, but I like character growth.

I also thought that what with this being YA and the insta-connection moment, less than 15% in the book, we would end up with an angst filled romance story but luckily JE kept it well in hand and gave the romance room to develop in the next books.

Now, tbh I have a bit of lukewarm feelings about Devon. I honestly don't find him interesting enough to have a more elaborate opinion on him. He is troubled and he is a nice guy and we have seen this particular show a thousand times.

My favorite part were by far the secondary characters(which were awesome and hilarious). The whole

Mafia-style Families didn't hurt either.

So, the book is good. It just wasn't me. I probably won't read the rest but you never know... What I do know is that I should retry JE's adult series. I've only read 4 books and I remember liking it.

Apparently, I have an ARC for this that I can't even remember requesting. (Possibly my niece's work because having a 2-year-old with you while browsing on NetGalley is probably a bad idea.) But whatevs... I've wanted to read her other series for a while so...

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

Final review, first posted on Fantasy Literature:

In Jennifer Estep's *Cold Burn of Magic*, a 2015 young adult fantasy novel and the first book in her BLACK BLADE urban fantasy series, the world is divided into mortals and magicks, humans who have some type of magical power. The southern U.S. town of Cloudburst Falls, a hotbed of magical power, caters to tourists who want to see magical people and creatures. It's reminiscent of Harry Potter World, except that it contains real magic, including pixies who are household servants and monsters like the aptly named lochnesses, who lurk under bridges and require a toll of jewelry or money from all who pass over their bridges. Cloudburst Falls is controlled by mafia-like families with powerful magical abilities, particularly the Draconi and Sinclair Families.

Lila, a seventeen year old orphan, exists on the edges of society as a thief and pickpocket, secretly living in a hidden lair in the local public library. Lila is reasonably content with her life on the fringes, hiding her powerful martial skills and magical abilities from everyone:

All I had to do was stare into someone's eyes, and I knew exactly what they were feeling at that moment, whether it was love, hate, anger, or something else. Not only that, but I could actually feel the emotion in my own heart, just like the person who was experiencing it. Soulsight, it was called. A major Talent and one that I could have done without.

Lila has one additional magical Talent that she is even more anxious to keep hidden. But one day, while visiting her fence's pawn shop, Lila impulsively helps three other teenagers who are being attacked by a group of men armed with swords. Soon afterwards Lila finds herself unexpectedly and involuntarily pulled into their world, obligated to use her sword-fighting and magical abilities as a bodyguard to Devon, the son and heir of the Sinclair family. Her living standards immediately take a huge leap upwards, as she relocates to the Sinclair family mansion, but her risk of being killed takes an equal upward swing. Someone is trying to kidnap or kill Devon, and now Lila is in their way. It doesn't help that she and Devon are attracted to each other. Lila wants to take care of herself and avoid emotional entanglements, and getting attached to a guy who's a major player in the town's power structure isn't part of her plans.

Cold Burn of Magic is an easy to read, engaging young adult fantasy. Unfortunately, there's not much new ground being broken here in this genre. The reader will find many of the typical tropes and plot devices of this genre, including a teenage kickass female main character with extraordinary magical powers, alone and angry at the world, sniping at everyone she comes in contact with (even when letting her smart mouth run loose is a stupid thing to do). There's also a fairly standard character in Damon, the hot guy from a powerful magical family who's out of her league, but who wants her regardless. Finally, we have a secret enemy who

is out to get Lila and Devon, whose identity I guessed almost from the first time I met that character.

However, the story moves along quickly and is enjoyable overall. Devon is an admirable young man with his own set of burdens and pain, but he remains determined to act with strength and honor. Although there's a lot of romantic tension between Lila and Devon, the relationship is left to develop over time and in future volumes in this series. Lila's assigned servant, a rude 6-inch tall, cowboy-boot-wearing and honeybeer-swilling pixie named Oscar, adds a nice touch of humor to the story. And there are some creative and interesting aspects to the magical system in this world, including the toll-demanding lochness monster under the bridge and the bloodiron weapons that can suck magical talent out of one person and release it to another.

I recommend *Cold Burn of Magic* primarily for younger readers who will love a strong and snarky teenage protagonist with magical powers and aren't weary of the typical plotlines in this genre.

Initial thoughts:Lila is a teenage orphan in a magical version of our world. In a tourist town that caters to magic-seeking tourists (kind of like a Harry Potter World city, but with real magic. And monsters.), Lila lives on the edges of society as a thief and pickpocket, until she decides to help three other teenagers who are being attacked by a group of men. Suddenly Lila finds herself being involuntarily pulled into their world, obligated to use her sword-fighting and magical abilities as a bodyguard to Devon, the son of one of the two most powerful magical families in the city. Her living standards immediately take a huge leap upwards, but so do the risks of being killed.

This is a fairly good YA fantasy. My biggest problem with it is that it uses so many of the typical tropes and plot devices of this genre: teenage kickass female main character with special snowflake magical powers, orphaned and mad at the world, sassing everyone she comes in contact with even when it's a stupid thing to do, and attracted to hot guy from powerful magical family who's out of her league. I also guessed the hidden enemy seeking to kill Lila and Devon, almost from the first time I met this character.

On the plus side: no love triangle. The hot guy is not a jerk. There are some creative and interesting aspects to the magic system in this world. I especially liked the monsters under the bridges that demand a toll.

I was interested enough to finish the book in one sitting.

I think this YA-lite novel will appeal mostly to the younger teenage crowd. I wouldn't recommend it very strongly for older readers, even if you like YA fantasies as a rule. But young readers who like magical fantasy won't be disappointed.

This is the first book in a series; it doesn't end on a cliffhanger but does leave some major plotlines unresolved. The romance is early-stages (I don't recall any actual kisses, though there was an almost-kiss or two).

Content advisory: Fighting and death, but not overly graphic. No other offensive content.

I received a free copy of this ebook from NetGalley in return for an honest review. Thanks!

Tina ♥ Bookaholic says

<https://martinabookaholic.wordpress.c...>

Meine Gedanken zum Buch:

Ich muss wohl nicht lange sagen, dass ich ein Fan von Estep bin und sie fast alles schreiben kann und ich folge ihr blind wie in kleiner Lemming. :D Auch hier hatte ich hohe Erwartungen an sie, die ich zu Beginn schon beinahe bröckeln gesehen habe. Aber dann, dann hat sie das Ruder herumgerissen und ich bin wieder vollkommen in Esteps erschaffenen Welt versunken, wollte nicht mehr aus ihr auftauchen und noch lange darin bleiben... aber dann war es auch schon wieder aus. *hach*

Der Anfang ist wirklich, wirklich SEHR ähnlich zu Esteps anderen Reihen. So viel muss man klar sagen und braucht man auch nicht beschönigen. Vielleicht braucht Estep diese Verbindung zu ihren anderen Reihen einfach, um in die Gänge zu kommen? – keine Ahnung. Es war eine Mischung aus der Stimmung / Atmosphäre aus der Elemental Assassin Reihe, gepaart mit der Hauptfigur und der spitzen, frechen Zunge von Gwen aus der Mythos Reihe... nun gut, auch ein wenig Gin ist in Lila enthalten, nur, dass sie eben jünger und erst 17 Jahre alt ist. Aber genauso wie Gwen hat sie ihre Mutter unter tragischen Umständen verloren und wie bei Gin, weiß Lila wer der Mörder war und es ist wieder einmal – Überraschung: die skrupelloseste, mächtigste Figur in der ganzen Stadt. Auch die Beschreibung ihrer Wohngegend ist ähnlich zu Gin und ich dachte schon: oje, das wird jetzt nichts mehr.

Aber ehrlich: mir ist es lieber eine Autorin bedient sich zu Beginn an ihren eigenen Ideen, um sich irgendwo anzulehnen (als Sicherheit oder so), als eine Autorin nimmt Ideen und Anfänge von anderen Autoren und kupfert diese leicht verändert ab wie es eine gewisse J. L. A....es manchmal gerne tut. ^^ aber das ist nur meine Meinung, das muss jeder für sich entscheiden und daher hat es mich hier auch nicht gestört bei Estep. Denn trotz Ähnlichkeiten, sind diese hauptsächlich zu Beginn auffallend, dann verändert sich alles zu einem neuen, dramatischen, spannenden Verlauf, bei dem ich von Seite zur Seite mitgefiebert habe.

Lila ist mir direkt sympathisch gewesen mit ihrem Sarkasmus und trockenen Galgenhumor. Auch wenn sie manchmal etwas zu sehr auf die Tränendüse gedrückt hat, aber klar, das muss auch sein, um Mitleid mit der Figur zu erzeugen, und das hat Estep auch geschafft. (Obwohl etwas weniger davon auch gereicht hätte^^). Lila ist einfach so ein typischer Gut-Mensch, der selbst nicht viel hat, alles für andere gibt. Und das, obwohl sie versucht, niemanden an sich heranzulassen, gewürzt mit einer scharfen Zunge, um ihren Schmerz zu verbergen. Eigentlich ein Wunder-Charakter, den jeder lieben muss und die vor allem auch ALLES – wirklich ALLES – kann und immer jedes Hindernis aus dem Weg räumt. Hier fehlten mir auch ein paar negative Eigenschaften, etwas mehr Ecken und Kanten. Sie selbst sieht sich zwar als Diebin, der man nicht vertrauen kann, aber das ist auch nur so eine Beschreibung mit halben Herzen gewesen. Dennoch mag ich Lila und ich denke, so wird es vielen gehen.

Auch weiß ich, dass viele dem männlichen Hauptprotagonisten verfallen werden – ich für meinen Teil bin es und ich sage nur DEVON! <3 Hier haben wir einen Typen, der leidet, der in sich verschlossen ist, aber der einfach nur gut ist – Zucker! Ein Mensch, den man knuddeln, helfen und wieder die schönen Seiten des Lebens zeigen möchte. Einfach ein Kerl, der einem das Herz höher schlagen lässt und dabei weiß man noch gar nicht, wie heiß er auch aussieht mit seinen schokoladenbraunen Haaren und blitzgrünen Augen *schmacht* Okay, ich bin ihm verfallen und ich bin stinksauer auf Estep, dass sie es im ersten Teil nicht mal zu einem kleinen, winzigen Kuss zwischen den beiden hat kommen lassen. Das ist die reine Folter... immer nur die Stimmung anheizen und dann – Nichts. *heul* Aber gut, dafür haben wir ja noch die weiteren Teile, die ich bestimmt auch alle lesen oder ähm, verschlingen werde. :)

Das Ende hat mir ebenso gut gefallen wie der Rest der Handlung, die eine Mischung ist aus: Fantasy mit verschiedensten Monstern und Wesen, Mittelalter-Feeling mit Schwertern und Klingens, sowie Magie mit einigen tollen Fähigkeiten. Es hat einfach so viel in sich und durch die Aufklärung der Mordversuche an Devon, bei dem Lila mit an seiner Seite ist, konnte man so richtig schön mitraten, wer denn der Schurke ist und selbst seine Schlüsse ziehen.

Auch wenn der erste Teil ein wenig wie eine lange Vorgeschichte gewirkt hat, um diese Welt und alle

Figuren darin erst einmal vorzustellen und die Handlung so weit voran zu treiben, um im nächsten Teil wirklich mit der Story beginnen zu können, fand ich es einfach klasse und freue mich schon jetzt auf den nächsten Teil.

(Mehr dazu auf meinem Blog)

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

DNF at 71%... I tried really hard to get through this.

1.5 stars

Though I consider myself a critical reviewer, I rarely give books less than two stars. In this case, I DREADED picking the book back up, dreaded continuing with the story, so I think my less than two stars stands.

In all honesty, I think I should accept a little responsibility for my extreme dislike of this book. I really, REALLY didn't like this author's other YA offering (Touch of Frost), but so many of my friends love Jennifer Estep that I thought that it was surely a case of "just that book."

I was convinced I would love this author's stuff if I tried a different series... I was wrong.

This book started out promising. Lila was (note I'm saying *was*) an interesting heroine: A pick-pocketing, thieving bad-ass of a girl who cares only about survival and watching out for herself. I expected an anti-hero, someone who is difficult to get behind but wins you over in the end. I was expecting someone a little like a YA version of Chess from Unholy Ghosts. I was READY for an atypical heroine.

However, the appeal of Lila faded fast. **She quickly became a self-sacrificing person (which felt directly in contrast to her persona from before) and the type of heroine that I hate- The *special snowflake*.** Lila is special. She has rare gifts and, it seems, a multitude of them. My least favorite was the "soul sight" (borrowing from Harry Dresden much??), which felt like a cop out. But it wasn't just the annoying reinforcement of how "unique" she was that I hated, but also her insta-lovey connection with Devon. She right away saw the sadness in his eyes (literally, in the soul sight), and he became the sort of boring, predictable hero that I dislike.

In terms of plot, I liked the idea (very much!) of magical mob-type families. I hadn't read a book with that premise before, and I was really looking forward to seeing where the author would take it. Unfortunately, she took it right to high school. What started off as bad-ass quickly became lame with some stereotypical bully-type characters and secrets that weren't very difficult to guess.

Also, I'm not sure if this author's writing style works for me. It is very simple, very stripped down, and I found the bluntness mixed with a lackluster plot to be an off-putting combination.

I think my favorite part of this book was the drunken, country music-listening pixie. He at least had some spunk. The rest of the book was so boring, so "I've read this type of girl 100 times before" that I was forcing myself to pick it up and read a few pages each day. FORCING. I finally quit at just over 70%, which I think was a valiant effort.

I really didn't enjoy this one, but keep in mind that this author hasn't worked for me in the past. I'm hoping

her fan base will connect with this more than me.

Copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review

Rashika (is tired) says

***This review has also been posted on *The Social Potato*

Last year, one of my favorite series--Mythos Academy-- came to an end. I, like many other fans was left feeling lost because I had fallen in love with the characters and wasn't ready to let go (but when are you ever ready?). So when I found out the author had a new series coming out (why I didn't find out about it right away is beyond me), I was over the moon. I was doing the monkey and prancing around, ready to dive into a new world. I, not for a second, doubted how much this book would please me and I am so glad I wasn't let down.

If you're a fan of the Mythos Academy series, it's already a given that you gotta read this series, but for the rest of you, who make excuses and put the series off, or have never heard of it, I shall do my best to capture the geniusness of Jennifer Estep in my review.

For starters, her main characters are ALWAYS awesome. **Lila is the very definition of badass but she also happens to be super clever and can take care of herself.** She has issues because of her past and what she has had to live through, and is perhaps not the most open person, but given her circumstances it's hard to blame her. Besides, she thinks things through and it's hard not to cheer for her. I just love and admire her so much because her character is so interesting and complex. She has been living on her own too long to just succumb to the temptations of comfort so while some of her thinking process will frustrate you, it's also kind of nice knowing she isn't ready to forget everything and throw caution to the air. It's what I love about Lila.

Like all Estep books (including her adult series), **this one comes with a fantastic entourage of secondary characters.** From Claudia to Deah, they are all interesting and make you want to know more about them. They may seem very flat at first but when you learn more about them, you start to realize there is more to them than their face value. They are more complex and intricate than that. Unsurprisingly, I have a favorite and it happens to be Mo. I just really like Mo, okay? He has his faults but his greed for money and his awesome haggling skills just sold him as a character. Felix may be a highlight for others though with his adorable cockiness and horrifying flirting skills.

One of my other favorites, unsurprisingly, was the love interest-- Devon. He is such a sweetheart. Devon may have his own problems to deal with but he never lets them affect how he deals with the people around him and I adore that about him. I have to say, I am not as sold on him as I was on Logan (from Mythos Academy) but interesting things have happened and it's suffice to say, I am DEFINITELY looking forward to being reunited with him in *Dark Heart of Magic*.

I will say for those wondering about the romance, hold your horses, it's much too early for us to expect much and do much besides ship the freaking heck out of the two.

Estep's books, whatever faults they may have, will never leave you feeling bored (although maybe they will... I hope they won't?). They are always so fast paced and get things moving. Estep just knows what she is doing. **It's an oh-so-sweet building of tension to the moment of climax where SHIT GOES DOWN.**

And given that it's Estep, there will be action, mystery and intrigue. I will say that the mystery will never be unpredictable, but who cares if it is fantastically executed.

Suffice to say, I am 100% sold on this series and LOVE the new world that Estep has built. It is definitely set aside from the world of Mythos Academy in many ways (even if there are a couple similarities). We get mafia families, magical talents and monstrous creatures, all brought to life in an interesting way.

I am ready to dive into the sequel and can it just be October already? **MY BODY IS READY FOR MORE.** So while I suffer, you may or may not want to check out this awesomeness and devour it the same way I did.

Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says

Cold Burn of Magic is the first book in a new series by Jennifer Estep, author of Mythos Academy and the Elemental Assassin series. It brings us the exciting story of Lila Merriweather, a young orphaned girl with a very special kind of magic. Lila lives in a city where magic is part of everyday life, but only the privileged have it, rich families organized like the mafia.

Lila starts out as a thief, and a very skilled one at that, but soon she's blackmailed into making a career change. Charged to protect a young man with special magic of his own, Lila has to turn everything upside down and make peace with the fact that her life expectancy isn't what it used to be. To make matters worse, she actually likes the boy she has to protect, which makes maintaining emotional distance next to impossible.

I've seen someone call this Elemental Assassin lite and I wholeheartedly agree. But it's only lite because it's young adult, everything else is pretty much the same. Gin, Gwen and Lila are too similar for comfort, and they share more than a few personality traits, as well as abilities. It needs to be said, however, that Estep recipe works. It's been tried many times and each time it produced a light, entertaining, albeit mostly forgettable book.

There's very little romance in this book, which I feel very ambivalent about. On the one hand, it's very refreshing to have a YA novel that's focused on the plot and character development and doesn't try to distract us with romance. In this case, however, there's very little actual character development to speak of and the book would have benefited from at least some distraction, something to make us want to read the next one just a little bit faster. There is a hint of romantic interest likely to develop in the future, but for me, it just wasn't enough.

Dark Heart of Magic will be released in October and I'm already excited to continue this journey with Lila and Devon. Even if it ends up being a bit repetitive, Estep's books are, at the very least, reliably entertaining.

Mlpmom (Book Reviewer) says

After reading this book, my first thought was this, "Is there anything Estep can't write, and write well?"

Because truly, I do wonder that. She has yet to let me down, nor ceased to amaze me with the intricate, fun,

and action packed worlds that she creates, whether in the YA or adult genres.

I loved this series! It was just so much fun to read and I loved the new world that Estep created, where anyone could be magical and monsters lurked anywhere and sometimes, those monsters, weren't always the obvious ones.

Estep's famous for her heroines, they are always tough, fierce, snarky, and downright lovable and Lila was an amazing blend of all these traits, in fact this whole world was an amazing blend of her Elemental Assassin series and her Mythos Academy series, and while one is adult and one is YA, they both have that wonderful blend of action, fantasy, romance, kickbutt-ness, and a whole lot of fun that makes them hard to put down and always leaving you wanting more.

I so can not wait for more. I can quickly see this series, once again, becoming a favorite and one that I am always on the edge of my seat waiting for the next one to come out.

Marga says

This review was also posted on DEADLY DARLINGS.

I'd tell you guys that this book was nice but I'd be lying.

No. This book wasn't just nice. **It was freaking fantastic!** This book's going to be popular, I'm telling you guys. It already won my heart.

Characters and Relationships:

The heroine Lila reminds me of Celaena from Throne Of Glass, maybe even better than her. She was amazing guys! I can't help but admire her tenacity, her sarcasm, her bravery! She acts all tough but really, she's a vulnerable person. I can't help but see myself in her (excluding all the killing, of course) and somehow, I think that's what made me love this book a little bit more.

I liked that Lila is realistic and practical. She knows what she can and can't do. She's pretty smart and she has priorities! (So many YA heroines don't have, unfortunately) So okay, I totally want to be her friend in she was real.

I loved everyone actually, even the secondary characters! I loved Devon, Oscar, Mo, Felix and just about all the people. No one was a freaking doormat. All these characters are complex and have a personality of their own.

The Romance:

I thought there's going to be a love triangle but there's none. N-O-N-E. Oh My God. The romance was not the main focus here and I think it was great! I wouldn't find this book super amazing if the plot's being overshadowed by relationship dramas. But there's a love interest, I hope to God he was. I SHIP IT. God, my shipper heart just doesn't stop.

The Plot:

The plot has similarities with the author's adult series: Elemental Assassin. They have strong female leads and they both have soft sides whose been hurt but never broken. The similarities end there, though. Mob families fighting for each other for power? Monsters lurking all over the place? It was all pretty cool and fascinating. Ahhhh. Somebody help calm me down right now!

I found that I enjoyed this book more than the Elemental Assassin series, though, mainly maybe because I could totally relate with Lila and this book was just riveting and captivating as chocolates. *I am still munching it, enjoying its delicious taste yet I crave for more.* I admit that this wasn't the most original book out there but you can't just stop falling for a book when you loved almost everything about it, you know?

The only complain I have is that there are so many unnecessary descriptions that the book could've done without. Oh, and also, I guessed a major plot twist (I mean, dude, that was really predictable!) Anyway, that was so inconsequential compared to all the mini heart attacks I had. *God, this book is somehow made for me.*

I can't help but think that this review is all over the place because I am majorly fangirling but honestly, you have to add this on your ever growing tbr-list. *Basically, this book is just plain good stuff.* The thing about reading a book early is that you get to wait for the next installment even longer than usual. Ahhhhh I want the next book now!

FINAL RATING: 3.5/5 stars

***Review copy received from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

Carmel (Rabid Reads) says

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads.

COLD BURN OF MAGIC's heroine is a younger, more reckless, less tested version of Gin Blanco, so right away I felt at home in Jennifer Estep's BLACK BLADE series. Lila Merriweather has two Talents, one of which she keeps on the DL and she has sworn to avenge her mom's murder—ring any bells? That mostly sums up the correlations between this world, and ELEMENTAL ASSASSIN; as a body guard the protagonist protects rather than kills, although sometimes the latter happens as a result of the former, her back story is an open book, and the antagonist is immediately apparent. This novel blended the top elements from this author's Young Adult & Urban Fantasy titles into a smashing debut.

As much as I love meeting new characters, and immersing myself in an original plot, world-building still trumps all. First installments are usually where the bulk of a series' foundation is located, and this book was no different. Estep left me giddy with delight as I wormed my way through her symbology, magicks, and monsters. Getting a feel for the Families, especially the Draconis & the Sinclairs was a close second with the romance trailing as a distant third, but that wasn't unexpected, and quite frankly I prefer it that way.

In Urban Fantasy, whether we're talking adult or YA, it's pivotal that the lead be easy to connect with, and Lila filled that requirement well. A lot of info gets thrown readers' way with regards to her past, current motivations, and future goals, but as important as all that info is, she was also incredibly likeable which ensured that she was fleshed out in all of the right places. Her POV had a degree of maturity to it that Estep's MYTHOS ACADEMY novels lacked to a certain extent, so it only took me a split second to decide that BLACK BLADE was going on my keeper shelf.

In addition to an inviting universe, and an agreeable heroine, this author's food fetish was ever-present, as was her knack for creating standout secondary characters. Mo reminded me of Fletcher, but with his own unique personality twists, and Devon didn't exactly cause me to insta-drool, although he's off to a pretty good start as far as love interests go. I need more deets before I can pass judgment on Felix as BFF material, and Claudia could go either way at this point. The clear winner was Oscar: the honeybeer guzzling, redneck, cowboy, pixie. Hehe! Need I say more?

Jennifer Estep knows what her readers want, and delivers it with COLD BURN OF MAGIC. Brilliant!

Melliane says

Mon avis en Français

My English review

I'm a little late compared to most people, but now, I made it, I finally did read this new novel by Jennifer Estep. I was impatient to get into this new story because besides the beautiful reviews that I had discovered everywhere, Jennifer Estep never disappoints for now. Her Mythos Academy series was very nice and even though I have not finished (yes I only did read the first volume) her urban fantasy series, I enjoyed everything. So it is with great hope that I started this new series and I can tell you that I was also very charmed by the novel and I am now very curious to read more.

I enjoyed the world that the author has created here, families that evolve while hating each other, sharing gifts and privileges that others do not have. In itself this kind of universe is not really original because it is a theme that can be easily found in some books, but Jennifer Estep manages to draw us and interest us about the events and all the details that her world contains. So yes, even if at the first glance we could already find something like that, the author manages to perfectly bring a touch of originality. But of course this is not all because we also have the characters, and they are a delight to explore and see evolve.

Lila didn't have an easy life, she doesn't know her father and mother died trying to save the child of one of the families. Since then, our heroine tries to live without attracting any attention, away from families and anyone but the old friend of her mother. But this anonymity is about to end when Lila is faced with a terrible choice: to save the trio who is interesting her friend's store or to stay back and wait for everything to be over. Alas, even if it is not the best for her, our beloved thief finds herself embarked on a whole new life. Indeed, this act will force her to become the new Devon's bodyguard, heir to one of the most powerful families, but also the boy that her mother died for a few years earlier. More than that, it would appear that someone is desperate to kill the boy and Lila remains the last bulwark to keep him alive.

I loved to follow our two heroes. They hide both some big secrets and it's true that it's very easy to attach to them and to understand them. Even if she doesn't think she has a place there, Lila will focus on her new clients, or rather on her new client more than what she should. It was quite nice to see a link forge them even if we understand the mistrust of our heroine. It's funny because for once it is rather the boy's side that is innocent and naive but also why it is interesting to see him evolving and realizing that he can not always be kind to everyone.

It was a very good story that I loved to follow with many surprises throughout the chapters. As I said I can not wait to read more now.

Carole (Carole's Random Life in Books) says

This review can also be found at Carole's Random Life.

4 Stars!

I loved this book! I thought it was a lot of fun to read. I read simply because I want to be entertained and this book grabbed my attention right away and never let go. I am not sure why I tend to enjoy so many YA titles but it may have something to do with the fact that I spend more time with my 14 year old daughter and her friends than I do anyone else. I love discussing books with my daughter and her friends and I can't tell you how happy it makes me just knowing how much they love to read.

I was thrilled that this book didn't fall into the love triangle trap that seems to be a required element in this genre. This book was almost completely romance free but a little bit found its way into the book. To be more precise, a little bit of mutual attraction was part of the story and I fully expect that it will be explored further in future installments in this series. I really wish that the story had been kept romance free.

I was excited to jump into a new series. I liked the world building in this book and think that the world can be built upon as the series progresses. The magic along with the mob like family power hierarchy was interesting and unique. I have seen a lot of the elements that were used in this story but they were put together in a very interesting manner. I loved that monsters and superstitions were incorporated into the framework of the story.

Lila is an awesome character. She is tough, smart, and knows how to take care of herself. While she has survived by stealing, her behavior proves that she is really a good person. She isn't innocent and she is willing to do what needs to be done in order to stay alive even if that means she takes a life. Lila isn't easily pushed around and isn't intimidated by the people in the Family who hold the power. When she finds herself serving as Devon's bodyguard, she does the job well even though it was not a job that she wanted.

I liked the other characters in the story quite a bit. Devon was dreamy. Seriously, I might have a little bit of a crush on him. I really wish that he wasn't quite so perfect to be honest. He really was a genuinely nice guy in this story who doesn't take things for granted. Mo was interesting because I never knew who's best interest he was really looking out for. What can I say about Oscar except that I love him. I love a world that includes a redneck pixie that will do your chores.

The pacing of this book was perfect. There was a lot of action at various points in the book. I am really impressed by the world building in this story. I never felt like information was being dumped on me which often happens in the first book in a new series. The world building simply happened as the story progressed. There were a lot of characters in this story now that I think about it but they were introduced in a manner that kept the story interesting while defining their role in the overall story.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who likes YA urban fantasy. I have read and enjoyed other books by Jennifer Estep. I cannot wait to get my hands on this next book in this new series.

I received a copy of this book from Kensington - Teen via NetGalley for the purpose of providing an honest review.

Susana says

Arc provided by Kensington Teen through Netgalley

Release date: April 28 th

DNF at 13%

I give up.

Lila has just looked into... what's his name eyes... and she was struck dumb by insta love/attraction/lust/silliness.

Who cares if her behaviour _up until NOW _ was trying to portray a tough young girl? Someone who has been living all by herself since her mother died. Someone who knows what she has to do in order to survive?

—
Who cares, right?

It's love.

Also, the girl has this super **uber** power that allows her to KNOW what a person is thinking and feeling...and OMG, DEVON _ whose name she finds ridiculous fascinating _ is the MAN.
who cares if she just looked into his face a freaking minute ago?

-- I just... can't deal with this. *headesk*

He's so amazing, that by the amount of adjectives she uses to describe his "amazingness", I wouldn't be surprised if she would write an ode to his awesomeness later on.

Sorry, but no can do.

Life is too short to keep reading this and my grey cells are threatening with a strike if I keep this up.

I knew in an instant that he was the sort of guy who was exceedingly loyal to his friends. Who felt responsible for others. Who tried to help people as much as he could even if they didn't deserve it, and he ended up being the one who got hurt instead. The sort of guy that others saw as a leader and naturally flocked to. The sort of guy who was just so disgustingly fascinating that you couldn't help wanting to know more about him.

Ye, Gods.

Terri ♥ (aka Mrs. Christian Grey) says

Quick review:

Cover: Works

Rating: 3

Overall: Disappointed

Characters: Okay

Plot: Girl trying to make it on her own

Page Turner: Maybe
Series Cont.? Probably
Recommend: Not Sure
Book Boyfriend: Devon

SUMMARY (50 words or less)

I've read most everything by this author and I was disappointed. I didn't mind that it had the feel of Gin Blanco. I just didn't really care for Lila that much. She was selfish and while I understood, her choices contradicted each other a lot. And yeah, she's a teen.

For a full review and yummy pic, see my blog post at:

[My Book Boyfriend Review](#)

[Audio Review](#)

Brittany Pressley does a great job at narration. She nails the spirit of all the characters.

Annika says

Despite the promising sounding blurb, I was wary going into this book since two of my GR friends complained about a terrible case of insta-love in their reviews, and I just don't do insta-love. Fortunately, I decided to read it anyway, or I would have missed a really good story. (As for the insta-love: it really isn't nearly as bad as Lila and Devon's first encounter suggests. In fact, after Lila's initial reaction to him, their relationship is very slow-moving, especially after she finds out who he is.)

At the age of 17, Lila's been on her own for almost four years after her mother's murder, her only ally being dodgy pawnshop owner Mo. Being a thief and basically homeless, she's taught herself how to fight, how to pick locks and how to deceive. When she finds herself in a situation she really shouldn't be part of, she's faced with the choice of saving an innocent's life or leave him to his fate so she can carry on with her life under the radar. Either way, she knows that her decision will upend her life completely.

I really enjoyed Lila's character; her independence and resourcefulness, and of course, her kickassness. I loved that the gender roles were reversed in this book - Lila acting as the protector while Devon was the "damsel in distress", though he certainly wasn't useless or a coward. Felix and Mo made for two amusing sidekicks, too, and I'm a little in love with Oscar, the moody little cowboy pixie. All in all, the characters were fairly well-developed and likeable, so no complaints here.

I liked the plot, too. It was fast-paced and well thought through, and even though I was able to make out the villain pretty early on, it didn't take away from the excitement or the mystery.

I did have an issue with the world building, though. So the story is set in the modern days, in a West Virginia town called Cloudburst Falls. For some reason, Cloudburst Falls seems to be the only place in the US to offer magic, meaning being home to monsters and magicks, which serves as one hell of a tourist magnet. Cloudburst Falls is not ruled by a council but by a bunch of powerful families who feud with each other... just like Mafia families, only without the crime (except among themselves). There are no fire arms allowed in Cloudburst Falls (because they wouldn't work against the magicks anyway) so everybody walks around with swords, daggers and ninja stars beneath their clothes. There's no real law enforcement, only privately

hired guards keeping the families and human tourists safe.

I just couldn't wrap my head around the concept. While Cloudburst Falls is this strange, autonom, medieval-like town where everyone owns a cell phone and a car, the rest of the world is supposed to be the way we know it? Magic free? Everybody knows that those supernatural beings exist and all they do is take pictures of them? I'm sorry, but I didn't buy any of it. Even in a paranormal read, I need some sort of logic. The premise needs to make sense to me, and it just didn't in this book. The fact that I never quite got a feeling for the setting, with that strange mix between medieval and present times, didn't help either.

I'm hoping this is just a matter of getting used to, being able to immerse myself into the world Jennifer Estep has created. But since I'll definitely be continuing on with this series, I guess I'll find out soon enough.
