



# Spellcaster

*Claudia Gray*

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## Spellcaster Claudia Gray

When Nadia's family moves to Captive's Sound, she instantly realizes there's more to the place than meets the eye. Descended from witches, Nadia can sense that a spell has been cast over the tiny Rhode Island town—a sickness infecting everyone and everything in it. The magic at work is darker and more powerful than anything she's come across and has sunk its claws most deeply into Mateo . . . her rescuer, her friend, and the guy she yearns to get closer to even as he pushes her away.

Mateo has lived in Captive's Sound his entire life, shadowed by small-town gossip and his family's tormented past. Every generation, the local legends say, one member of the family goes mad, claiming to know the future before descending into insanity. When the strange dreams Mateo has been having of rescuing a beautiful girl from a car accident actually come true, he knows he's doomed.

Despite the forces pulling them apart, Nadia and Mateo must work together to break the chains of his terrible family curse, and to prevent a coming disaster that even now threatens the entire town, including Nadia's family, her newfound friends, and her own life. Shimmering with magic and mystery, New York Times bestselling author Claudia Gray's new novel depicts a dark and unforgettable world of witches, curses, buried secrets, and star-crossed romance.

## Spellcaster Details

Date : Published March 5th 2013 by HarperTeen (first published March 1st 2013)

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Author : Claudia Gray

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# From Reader Review Spellcaster for online ebook

## Lina Lovegood says

Fand es nicht so gut geschrieben, hatte einige Längen, es ist auch nicht furchtbar viel passiert. Bin eher enttäuscht.

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## Olivia (The Candid Cover) says

A magical adventure that is complete with a villain and rich in diversity. Spellcaster by Claudia Gray is an amazing fantasy novel that will satisfy its readers, yet leave them hungry for more.

One of my favourite things about Spellcaster is the villain, Elizabeth. Normally, readers don't read about villains described so well that they develop a strong hatred towards that character. Claudia Gray does just this in her gripping young adult fantasy. Gray does such a phenomenal job of creating such wicked plans for Elizabeth, the book's villain, to torture the main characters with and plans for those characters to stop her. I personally love a good villain in a book, so I fell in love with Spellcaster.

Adding to a long list of things that I adored about Spellcaster, it is also diverse! One of the main characters, Mateo, is Mexican, which we don't see a lot of in YA. He even works at his dad's Mexican restaurant, which is a popular place in the book for the students to hang out. There is even another character, Verlaine who has two dads, another topic that is rarely explored in young adult literature. This book also takes a stand against racism, when one of the characters is planning to dress up as a "sexy geisha girl" for Halloween, complete with mocking eye makeup. Mateo then tells her that treating someone else's race as a costume isn't right. I love diversity in books, so this was right up my alley.

Another great thing about Spellcaster is the genre. It is filled with magic and witchcraft which is different from other books I've recently read. Spellcaster, however, is a cross between a contemporary and a fantasy. I really enjoyed how this book is set in a high school, yet contains lots of magic and supernatural powers. Spellcaster was a refreshing surprise!

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## Noel says

**find another version of this review on my blog post:**

**<http://thewordsthatbindus.wordpress.com/2014/06/19/spellcaster-by-claudia-gray/>**

**\*\*SPOILERS SPOILERS SPOILERS\*\***

My first book by this author... not too promising? This book is rated anywhere between **1.5 to 2.5** stars, depending on what exactly we're talking about.

The sad thing is, I was pretty disappointed by this book. Even sadder is that I'm not that surprised either. Maybe it's because it seemed like one of those typical YA storylines: girl moves to new town after family issues, meets some hot bad-boy, he has a secret, she has a secret, they are brought together due to weird

supernatural...things, and crappy romance and bad plot ensue.

Still, it had a few redeeming qualities I guess.

### **Pros**

1. *The Overall Storyline*: While slightly cliched in some aspects, it was interesting enough to keep me reading and finishing, despite the early urges to just abandon it as another one of "those books". The idea of the curse and telling the future passing down through the family was refreshing enough, and the relationship it created with Mateo and Elizabeth was a good plot twist. Good on the author for avoiding that slutty, fake, big-boobed blond airhead stereotype that most female antagonists carry.
2. *The Relationship between Nadia and her family*: It was, I think, one of the main reasons why I didn't write this book off as a total disappointment. The struggle that she faces between being a mother figure to her younger brothers and also being a daughter for her father was real and quite bittersweet. I liked the dynamic of this recovering family, and the characterization of the brothers as well. Very brother-like, but also vulnerable from their mother's abandonment
3. *Verlaine*: Granted, I didn't like her that much in the beginning. But let me tell you, she is quite possibly the only redeeming character in the book. She doesn't give a shit about anything, much less the people who bully her constantly throughout the day. She's got a kickass vintage fashion sense, AND gay parents. Come on, what's better than that? To top it all off, she's an open minded individual who easily accepts her discovery of Nadia's witchcraft habits, and she's not a self-pitier. Chill, laid back, and very cool. I love this girl.

uh oh. Is it sad that I can only think of those?

### **Cons**

1. *Mateo*: Yeah. What can I say? He's the bad boy, the mysterious, the tall dark and handsome, the dreaded **love interest** of YA lore. Cursed like all his blood relatives to see the future and pass it on to Elizabeth (the creepy, ages-backwards witch), he is a flat character with really no depth, besides the occasional "inner pain" of being bullied and his mom going insane. Oh, and apparently he's really hot... but wait, **he's still bullied**....what? He has dreams of Nadia, thinks she's gorgeous so *obviously* he falls in love with her but wait. He has to stay away from her. Right, he's "dangerous" to her wellbeing blahdy blah blah. And of course this doesn't work (clearly his morals aren't strong enough). And POOF. Insta love. Don't we love that? I'm sure you're just swooning. Okay now I'm just on a tangent. Here's the bottom line. He's quite a flat character. No defining characteristics that set him apart from any other male love interest in any other book. Falls instantly in love with Nadia, there is no romantic development, no exploration of his character outside of Nadia...nope. He's the love interest. In this book, that's all he is. The love interest. That alone should tell you what type of character he is.
2. *The Romantic Relationship*: Boring. No development. Just this:

**Nadia**: OMG HERE'S A HOT GUY THAT SAVED ME FROM A CAR CRASH HE'S SO BEAUTIFUL LIKE AN ANGEL. INSTANT ATTRACTION.

**Mateo**: OMQ THE GIRL FROM MY DREAMS SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL THAT I LOVE HER SO MUCH BUT IF I'M WITH HER SHE'LL GET KILLED

...

SCREW IT. THIS IS HAPPENING. ALSO, I FORGOT TO MENTION THAT I'M HER STEADFAST. WHICH MEANS WE'RE BOUND TOGETHER IN POWER. OH AND NOW I'M IN LOVE WITH HER.

**Nadia**: Omigod he's so hot.

...and there you have it! Lovely right? WRONG. It's the type of romance that you thought would be those lovely slow burns, and you turn the page and then... BOOM THEY'RE PROFESSING THEIR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER. What the ....  
moving on.

3. *The Writing*: Maybe it was just me? I felt like there was some phrasing in the book that sounded seriously awkward... awkward to the point where I felt like I was reading teen fanfiction. Other than that, the writing was nothing special, it didn't grab me nor was it beautiful or memorable. It was just... boring.

4. *The Ending*: Okay. Can someone tell me exactly *what happened?* One minute she was losing the battle against Elizabeth, then she's winning. Then she almost died? Wait, now she's okay? And then there's Elizabeth herself. First, we think she wants to destroy Captive's Sound. Then there's this guy named Asa? What's up with him? Why does he take some other dude's body? And wait, Elizabeth is on a suicide mission?

**WHATARFLKJEN IDYW4TRKJGN VIQUWJRHSTNKJE**

Confusing as f\*\*\*

5. *The Epilogue*: ...Just. Was there ever any point in that?

6. *The Cliches*: Let's see here...

Parent(s) is/are gone from the MC's life? **check**

New to town/school? **check**

MC happens to be really attractive? **check**

There's a really hot guy too? **check**

Said hot guy seems to be hiding his own secret? **check**

Said hot guy is also "dangerous" and should not be with MC? **check**

Insta Love/Attraction? **check**

Pitiful/unattractive/not date-able female friend to MC? **check**

somehow, MC must "save" the hot guy, or vice versa? **check**

The romance plays a WAY bigger role than the cool, could-be-better-developed plot? **check**

Romance becomes central focus **check**

plot, characters, and storyline seems like many others you have read? **check**

You know what my problem is? I don't hate this book. Usually when I rate a book this low, my review turns into a sarcasm filled hate rant about how horrible it is. But I don't hate this book. I sort of... *pity* it. And I don't even know why.

as always, this is my personal opinion. This is not an attack on the author or whatever, just stating my feelings.

Thanks for reading :)

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## Marieke says

Dit boek was een buddyread met Maartje en Tatiana van Books Ever After. De volledige recensie staat op mijn blog

Leuk boek, totdat de slechterik naar voren kwam. De slechterik denkt in ouderwets-Nederlands, wat er voor zorgde dat de vaart van het verhaal volledig verdween. Dit was ontzettend jammer. Ik heb er zelfs over na

gedacht om haar stukjes te skimmen, maar ik was bang dat ik dan belangrijke informatie zou gaan missen, dus heb het niet gedaan.

Mateo, Verlaine en Cole vond ik wel hele leuke personages. Jammer genoeg vond ik ze niet heel erg uitgebreid beschreven en daardoor leerde ik ze ook niet zo kennen.

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## **Andrea says**

Witches, Curses and the One Beneath

Spellcaster

Rating: 4/5

Summary: Nadia is a witch in training; however, her training has stopped since the divorce of her parents. She moves to the small town of Captive's Sound with her father and brother who know nothing of her powers. When she arrives, she realizes the whole town is under magical influence and it seems evil. Mateo Cabot is plagued by a curse that leads to insanity. Though Mateo tries to avoid Nadia and save her from his dreams, the two are inexplicably drawn to each other and must work together if they are going to save Captive's Sound from possible destruction.

I really enjoyed this book. The action started immediately and I was captivated by the book and almost couldn't put it down. If it hadn't been so late I would've finished it last night! The mysteries in this book were fascinating and while I guessed a couple, there were still a few that I didn't see coming and some that I can't wait to see solved in the next book!

I loved Nadia. Her character was very dynamic and while she wasn't confident 100% of the time, she still was strong and sassy when needed. Like damn, the girl shot down Mateo's grandmother when the time came for that and I was living for it. I thought Nadia's character was very believable and I connected with her. My other favorite character was Verlaine! She was very fascinating and turned out to be more important than I guessed in the beginning. Verlaine is very eccentric and smart. She is the brains and organizer of their operation whereas Nadia is the magic expert.

The relationship between Mateo and Nadia built slowly. But once things started, it got going fast and felt a tad like insta-love. I really liked their chemistry and I thought they were adorable! Can't wait to see more of them in Steadfast. I really liked that their relationship wasn't all gooey eyes and happy thoughts. They had a few misunderstandings, but managed to sort this out as rational human beings and good communication.

All in all, I really enjoyed this, but it wasn't quite amazing/favorite series worthy yet. However, I really hope I can get to the sequel soon!

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## **Crystal says**

This was a very pleasant surprise. I have seen a few reviews go up that weren't that encouraging but after about 100 pages in I was hooked. I won't say that this was the greatest book ever written or that it tops

Gray's Evernight series, but Spellcaster did hold my attention and honestly a reader can't ask for more than that..

Spellcaster was very different than what I was expecting. Nadia was definitely an interesting character and Gray's take on magic is one that I haven't seen before. I am used to the witches needing certain ingredients to perform spells, but it seemed that Nadia only needed to touch her bracelet most of the time, say a few sentences, and then think of something that would make her feel certain emotions. It took me awhile to grasp this concept but by the end of the story I understood it somewhat. I would have liked a better explanation, but I am happy that it finally clicked in my brain. Like I was saying Nadia was a unique character and her story was just as unique. She is a witch and after her mom decides to leave her family, Nadia her dad and brother all move to a tiny town to try and start over. Nadia has no one to teach her anymore about her Craft and when she feels something sinister in her Chemistry class she doesn't know who to turn to. She finds friends in a strange way and ends up having to fight for not only her family but for the whole town with her new friends. There is a romance for those out there that like having one in their stories, but it isn't a huge one. Mateo and Nadia were very sweet together, but the storyline curtailed more on the curses on the town and certain people which I appreciated. I did like the whole steadfast aspect of the story. I haven't ever heard of this before but it was new and unique twist at least to me and it was interesting.

Honestly I am still a little confused as to why the villain (I don't want to give the name away) needed to destroy the town. In the end we kinda get a reason, but it felt a little late in my opinion. The whole story I kept saying "why" and we do get certain clues but it isn't until the last chapter that we finally get to see the whys of everything. I would have liked to have seen a tighter plot and known more about the villain's plot, I think if I had known more my heart would have been beating faster and I would have had that OH NO moment. As is though I didn't have any real strong emotions towards the whole thing and I kinda wanted the villain to succeed so the plot would be uncovered. Also after everything happens I was a little shocked that we don't get to see what happened with the Chemistry lab. It played such a huge role in the overall storyline that it felt wrong not to have it be even mentioned at the end. We know from the villain's conversation that something happened, but I would have thought Nadia would have gone there first to see if what she felt was still there. Unfortunately we are left completely hanging. And what the hell is up with the mother??!! I can't believe we are left with no answers on her end. I hope that if we are given a new installment that part of the story is answered because after reading 370 pages I really expected to have that side story answered. I won't say much more since it will spoil a part of the story but just know I am seriously ticked about that part. Even with all this though I actually enjoyed the story. It was creepy at times and I felt spellbound by the villain which I am not sure is a good thing but they caught my attention and I am dying to know more about them.

The story ends on a cliffhanger and I haven't looked yet to see if this will be a series, but I am hoping it will be since I want more of this certain person. There are a lot of questions still unanswered and I hope we get to see a new installment. If you are looking for something witchy with a twist then this is the book for you. It, in my opinion, is different enough to keep the reader entertained and it has a dark meanie in it that you don't want to pass up meeting.

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### **Colleen Houck says**

Love the hero in this story and the whole idea of a steadfast. The villain was really nasty too which I enjoy a lot. Really like exploring the different powers a witch can have. So curious about the mom and why she left.

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## Jeanne says

Dead mom, special girl, and insta love. Now none of these this are necessarily bad, even when put together. But they kind of left me feeling meh about what seems to be a pretty color-by-numbers magical white girl story. Its just not holding my interest.

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## kari says

[ IF Mateo can see magic

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## Sara (sarawithoutanH) says

So if I hadn't listened to this on audio I definitely would have DNF'd. It wasn't the worst thing ever, but it wasn't very good. The writing style was very simple and over explained everything. It really overdid the inner monologues for each of the characters. The romance was flat and the plot was very predictable. Pretty sure I won't continue with the series.

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## -?? c a i s e e ??- says

*"You scare me, and I'm from Hell"*

Spellcaster is a book about a young, inexperienced witch called, Nadia. After her mother ditches her, her brother and their father; Nadia and her family are distraught and move to Captives Sound to "start fresh." As they arrive at Captives Sound, a magical barrier reacts to Nadia's own Book of Shadows and causes their car to crash into a lake. Enter Mateo. The hunk with sad eyes who saves Nadia from drowning in the lake.

Instant love and attraction. \*eye roll.\*

Mateo is cursed. He sees the future in his dreams, which will eventually make him go crazy. And Nadia is possibly the only one who can save the poor boy. He and Nadia also have to save their little town from the Sickness plaguing it's lands and the evil magic that lurks in the shadows. There are a few things in this book which I don't understand-like something was mentioned, and then just not brought up again. But the story didn't capture me enough to worry about it now. Anyhow, this book is told from the different perspectives of four main characters and it's really sad to say that I enjoyed the two short POV's of Nadia's father and character called Asa, more than the main POV's. (???)?

\*Sigh\* I'm not big on giving half stars, but this is a 2.5 star book. I would've loved it in year nine, but now that I'm older, i didn't enjoy this much at all. The insta-love was hard to get through, like **really** hard to get through. And by the end I was skipping pages at a time, just to finish this book. Don't get me wrong, this is a good story... if you enjoy instant love/ attraction, inappropriate swooning and witches.

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## Lisanne Eveleens says



OMG wat een goed boek..

Vanaf het begin had het me in zijn greep en kon ik m niet neerleggen.

Dit is 1 van de mooiste en best geschreven boeken die ik dit jaar gelezen heb ?

Echt een aanrader als je van hekserij houdt.

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### ♥♥Mari♥♥ says

The cover of this book mesmerized me the minute I first saw it. That blue flame poised on the girl's hand, the way she's totally focusing on it....I immediately wanted to find out more!

The story started me off on the edge of my seat. Nadia Caldani, the protagonist, is a young woman traveling from Chicago with her father and little brother. They are headed to the fictional town of Captive's Sound, which, from the descriptions in the novel, appears to be located somewhere in the northeastern part of the country. As they get closer to the town, Nadia begins to sense the presence of a very strong, yet invisible, magic barrier, which her family is entirely unaware of.

Nadia is able to sense this barrier because she's a witch. Her father and brother are unable to because, in this novel, only females can be witches and perform magic. It's a hereditary thing, passed down from mother to daughter. Men are completely non-magical (although there's one notable exception in the story).

Suddenly, Nadia and her family are involved in an accident, as their car slams into the invisible barrier, nearly sinking into the nearby river. Thankfully, they are rescued by a young man who appears out of nowhere....

As the story progresses, the reader is introduced to a fascinatingly complex series of events and cast of characters. Captive's Sound is heavily steeped in evil magic, and Nadia knows she has to do something to counteract the horrible spells that have engulfed the town in a depressing, oppressive fog.

The problem is, Nadia is not a fully-trained witch. Her mother abruptly abandoned the family one fine day, leaving her daughter's training incomplete. She also left three devastated people behind, which is why Nadia's father decided a fresh start would be the best thing for himself and his three children.

This novel has gotten some mixed reviews, but I sure don't know why. It grabbed me from the very beginning, and I simply couldn't let go! All of the ingredients that make for exciting, page-turning reading are present in this story -- compelling, fully fleshed-out characters, unexpected twists and turns, and lots of fascinating, even mind-boggling magic!

I especially enjoyed the characters.

Nadia received a major emotional blow with her mother's desertion, but yet, she strives to remain a pillar of strength for her father and brother. She is totally committed to protecting her family, as well as the entire town, from the insidious evil perpetrated by the villain of the story. She is courageous, loving, persistent, resourceful, and yet, vulnerable in an endearing way. I like her immensely!

Mateo Perez is the young man who rescues Nadia's family. Interestingly, he, too, has lost his mother. In his case, it's because of a strange curse that passes from generation to generation, on his mother's side of the family, giving him the ability to have prophetic dreams. He is just as courageous and resourceful, as Nadia,

and is a total sweetheart. Need I mention that he's drop-dead gorgeous? I totally adore him!

Mateo and Nadia are inexorably drawn to each other from the moment they meet, although their relationship develops gradually. Claudia Gray has woven their blooming romance into this fascinating tale with deceptive ease. There is no "insta-love" here. They are unexpectedly pulled together through a magical bond, and their friendship slowly deepens into love.

What I really like about their relationship is that they work together as equals, even though each possesses skills that the other doesn't. At no time does Mateo treat Nadia in a condescending manner. In fact, they totally respect each other, as well as displaying tenderness and understanding. This was a very mellow, beautiful thing to read.

Another very compelling character is Verlaine, a girl from the local high school. Considered an outcast, she is either bullied or ignored by nearly all their classmates. I really felt for her, especially, since, as I got to know her better, I saw that she was a great person -- compassionate, loyal, and tender-hearted. Mateo and Nadia befriend her, and together they all attempt to fight against the powerful evil that seems to be more than they could possibly handle.

And the villain....oh, the villain! I won't identify that person here, but this character is very well drawn, being appropriately sinister, while seeming innocent and inoffensive on the outside. This villain is a totally evil person, with no scruples whatsoever, no concern for the welfare of the people of the town. Furthermore, this person is in the service of "The One Beneath", which is an obvious reference to Satan himself, although that dreaded name is never once mentioned in the narrative.

The setting of the novel, as well as the events that took place, gave me a feeling of oppression, of doom and gloom. The descriptions of the houses, the countryside, everything contributed to the overall feeling that something very sinister was behind all the unsettling events taking place in the town. However, there was always a ray of hope, as the three main characters bravely sought solutions to each obstacle thrown in their path.

Contributing to the creepy thrills is all the great magic conjured by Gray's imagination -- spells of liberation, one of which helped Nadia escape from magical spiders at one point in the story (and how I hate those nasty little creatures...), spells of forgetting, of controlling the elements, even of changing a person's appearance so completely, they would be mistaken for someone else, spells of levitation, such as the one used to lift a car out of a sinkhole.... This is truly the stuff of fairy tales! As I read, I felt as if I had fallen into a fairy tale, albeit in the modern world.

The spells are very interestingly concocted, as well. Instead of the stereotyped weird ingredients, or magical potions and elixirs, each spell's "ingredients" consist of memories, each of which has a specific theme. All of them are then combined to create the spell. I've never come across anything like this before! This is not only beautiful and very creative, but also quite moving.

The climax of the story is open-ended, but that's because the sequel, *Steadfast*, is slated for publication next year. (In fact, I featured it in last week's "Waiting On Wednesday" post.) I already have it on my wish list, and will be eagerly buying and devouring it as soon as it's released!

I heartily recommend this novel to all paranormal romance and urban fantasy fans! Believe me, you will absolutely enjoy this story! You will cheer for the three heroes as they battle their formidable opponent, and will stay up into the wee hours, telling yourself in vain that you'll only read one more page....until you

discover that's it's 3 AM, and you've devoured four chapters without even being aware of it!

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### **Wendy Darling says**

Unlike many of my friends, I quite liked this author's Evernight series, which was filled with surprises and interesting relationships (and not just romantic ones). It's disappointing to find this novel, about a young witch named Nadia, to be so very predictable, lacking in excitement, and fairly cookie cutter in its PNR plot. **DNF at 210 pages.**

Worst of all, though--*four* third person (non-omniscient) POVs, with at least one bonus page from a bird's perspective. :-/ Bleh.

Still like this author, though--will definitely keep trying her other books.

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### **Alexa says**

Just straight up awful. 10/10 would NOT recommend.

Let me break this down for you:

#### **THE PLOT:**

The plot moved along only when characters had sudden "realizations." There were no real solving of the problems, no looking into various leads. As a result, the plot just fell extremely flat and felt like a bit of a joke.

#### **THE CHARACTERS :**

So, so, so, so awful. All of them were extremely flat and felt extremely forced. There was no real characterization of them, just feelings that they had. Mateo and Nadia had the worst case of insta-love that I've ever seen, and Verlaine felt like a third wheel the whole book. Not to mention that Elizabeth was not a good villain. And how hard it was to believe that Nadia could actually defeat her after constantly being like: "my mom left me and I'm not completely trained, I could never win!" And then she does. By having one of her stupid "revelations."

#### **THE WRITING:**

UGH. SO BAD. The local "mean girl" used the word "fag" to make fun of a girl. WHO DOES THAT?! AND THE AUTHOR PLAYS IT OFF LIKE IT'S OKAY. LITERALLY NOBODY SAYS ANYTHING. IF ANYTHING THEY LAUGH WITH THE MEAN GIRL.

Not to mention that it was very chunky and the main character casually used the word 'demented.' It's not even like this book was published that long ago. It was published in 2013! I didn't know anybody who spoke like that in 2013!

I really hope her Firebird series isn't like this. It looks so promising. ;-;

