



The Heart of Betrayal

Mary E. Pearson

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Held captive in the barbarian kingdom of Venda, Lia and Rafe have little chance of escape. Desperate to save Lia's life, her erstwhile assassin, Kaden, has told the Vendan Komizar that she has the gift, and the Komizar's interest in Lia is greater than anyone could have foreseen.

Meanwhile, nothing is straightforward: There's Rafe, who lied to Lia but has sacrificed his freedom to protect her; Kaden, who meant to assassinate her but has now saved her life; and the Vendans, whom Lia always believed to be savages. Now that she lives among them, however, she realizes that may be far from the truth. Wrestling with her upbringing, her gift, and her sense of self, Lia must make powerful choices that will affect her country... and her own destiny.

The Heart of Betrayal Details

Date : Published July 7th 2015 by Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)

ISBN : 9780805099249

Author : Mary E. Pearson

Format : Hardcover 470 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Romance

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From Reader Review The Heart of Betrayal for online ebook

Samantha says

This book far surpassed the first one, and the first one was one of my favorites of 2014. I do not know what to do with myself while I wait for the last book. This series takes so many unexpected twists, and tips out my heart at every turn. I cannot wait for what I'm sure will be a breathtaking finale.

Emily (Books with Emily Fox) says

Well now I need book 3!

Elena says

Are you f*cking kidding me? You can't end a book like that and expect me to wait a whole year! I won't survive this.

Jen (The Starry-Eyed Revue) says

So, this is only my second book by Mary E. Pearson, but I must say, my experience both times left me like this:

And I have every intention of picking up the **Jenna Fox Chronicles** after such an awesome time with this series, but you know how it is...

Anyway, this book picks up right where we left off in *The Kiss of Deception*. There's some of this:

And some of this, as our girl puts two and two together:

Can't say I blame her really, after all she's been through. And how much trouble could have been avoided had everyone just been honest in the first place. But then we wouldn't have gotten to meet the Komizar...

Okay, so maybe that wasn't the best experience. He's a rather terrifying individual. Like a Damon Salvatore on steroids, only you just know that even love can't save him...or you.

In more ways than one.

Lia's still her fierce self, not particularly skilled at anything but cunning as all get out. She does, however, pull off an impressive feat with cards, thanks to her brothers.

There were moments when I wasn't sure if she was toying with someone, playing a game...or if she was really sincere. Reading to find out how her strategizing and manipulating fared left me on the edge of my seat for much of the book.

Just when things finally seemed to be going her way -- if that's ever really possible when you're a hostage in a foreign land -- *someone* gets a crazy idea in his head that just might seal her fate.

As I read on, I started getting inklings of another truth yet to be uncovered, especially from two particular points of view. (You remember how there were so many perspectives in the first book. Samesies in this one.) It all started to come together, the pieces fitting together just right, and I couldn't believe I hadn't guessed the truth of it before...or at least parts of it.

<

As far as the romance goes, I still maintain that it's not a love triangle, even though there are now three, yes *three*, men vying for Lia's affections...sort of. I can't say any more without worry of spoilers. But to *me*, it's clear with whom Lia's heart lies. It was the same for me in the first book, too, though.

There's loads more kissing than I expected, not that I'm complaining.

Some that made me do this:

And some that made me sad...

And some that just made me plain mad.

Then I started getting really angry as what was happening in Venda began to have repercussions outside of the kingdom walls.

But don't think that Lia is going to sit idly by and watch as things unfold. She's a woman of action, as we've already seen. And she may not have an entourage, but she has help.

The entire book was extremely intense, but that last quarter had me turning those pages so damn fast!

I didn't want it to be over yet. :(But that end...that end, yo!

I will do my best to write a full, coherent review closer to the book's release date, but that's the beauty of these posts. I can get those feelings out now, in hopes of doing just that.

The fact of the matter remains: this book was an

And one hell of a thrill ride. I am already dying for the next book!

April (Aprilus Maximus) says

the middle got a lil boring but those last hundred pages tho!!!!

Vesselina says

08/09/2014

Hailey (HaileyinBookland) says

A solid sequel!!

Alyssa says

*****Win a copy of *The Heart of Betrayal*!*****

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog

The Heart of Betrayal by Mary E. Pearson

Book Two of the Remnant Chronicles

Publisher: Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)

Publication Date: July 7, 2015

Rating: 4 stars

Source: ARC sent by the publisher

Summary (from Goodreads):

Intrigue abounds in this hotly anticipated sequel to *The Kiss of Deception*!

Held captive in the barbarian kingdom of Venda, Lia and Rafe have little chance of escape. Desperate to save her life, Lia's erstwhile assassin, Kaden, has told the Vendan Komizar that she has the gift, and the Komizar's interest in Lia is greater than anyone could have foreseen.

Meanwhile, nothing is straightforward: there's Rafe, who lied to Lia, but has sacrificed his freedom to protect her; Kaden, who meant to assassinate her but has now saved her life; and the Vendans, whom Lia always believed to be barbarians. Now that she lives amongst them, however, she realizes that may be far from the truth. Wrestling with her upbringing, her gift, and her sense of self, Lia must make powerful choices that will affect her country... and her own destiny.

What I Liked:

I'm half-tempted to just leave this review saying, "GO READ THIS SERIES NOW". Seriously, the struggle of writing a review for a book you really, really enjoyed. This book is super close to five stars - *The Kiss of Deception* was a five-star read for me - but it came just a wee bit short. Still, I LOVED this book. I cannot wait to read book three.

In this novel, Lia and Rafe are taken to Venda to live at the mercy of the Komizar. Lia has no allies in Venda, though she starts to build small alliances with unexpected citizens. There is something about Venda that is unlike anything Lia has experienced. Her gift changes and starts taken shape. Lia begins to see things in Venda that she has n seen before. All the while, Lia has drawn the Komizar's interest, and not a good interest. Rafe lies his way into staying alive, with everyone believing that he is the Royal Emissary of the Dalbreck crown prince. With each passing day, it is clear that there are no rules to survival, and both must do what they can to have a chance at escaping.

I had a bad feeling about this book, initially. We're on Kaden's home turf, which led me to believe that the love triangle would grow more strong, fueling Kaden's feelings for Lia, and possibly having Lia develop deep for Kaden. Sorry, Kaden fans. The romance isn't straight and clear-cut, but it's no longer a love triangle. Lia uses Kaden to survive, and while she feels guilty, she doesn't feel love. There are no rules to survival.

Continuing on the vein of the romance. It seems like EVERYONE is in love (or in lust) with Lia. The Komizar is around Lia, Kaden, and Rafe's age, and he becomes interested in her too. But his interest is more in power - the Vendan people begin to see Lia as a divine sign of some sort (because of her gift), and Lia works hard to build a good reputation and relationship with the people. So we have the Komizar, Kaden, and Rafe all vying for Lia's hand.

Of course, the Komizar has zero shot (he's the villain - or one of them). In my opinion, Kaden NEVER had a shot (not even in *The Kiss of Deception*), but that's just my opinion. In this book, it becomes very, very clear who Lia has feelings for, who Lia cares about, etc. It's stated in her thoughts, how she loves one and how she cares for one. Two totally different emotions going on, and Kaden is not on the receiving end of the emotion he wants. I believe Kaden truly loves her, but it seems like a blind love. Honestly, Kaden's feelings for Lia seem more like obsession or fascination. And Lia... she cares about him, but not like that.

Rafe. Oh, Rafe. I loved Rafe in *The Kiss of Deception* (I think I was one of the few that knew prince from assassin), and I love him even more in this book. Both he and Lia do terrible things to survive, to fight for each other, to keep each other alive - especially Lia. Rafe has a good heart, but he is also fierce and clever, calculating and, well, a bit impulsive. He and Lia both don't have patience. Rafe could chop up Kaden in a heartbeat, but he never does. He's smart like that.

I don't really feel much for Kaden, if you didn't notice. We get a lot of backstory in this book for Kaden (and the Komizar, too), but I don't really care all that much about Kaden (or the Komizar). I'd love to push Kaden towards Calantha, or Pauline.

So, in my opinion, the love triangle (or potential love triangle, however you saw it in *The Kiss of Deception*) is pretty much resolved in this book. The emotional romance is pretty clear-cut in this book. There are some things that made my heart ache for Lia, but once you read the book, you'll get it. I respect her for all of her decisions.

The romance between Rafe and Lia heats up in this book. Lia is still angry at Rafe for deceiving, and Rafe is angry for the same reason, and there is plenty of tension between them. But at the same time, they both care about each other, and fell in love with each other, and fall in love with each other all over again. Imprisoned, forced to play roles and deceive everyone and act like they hate each other - and yet, they still fall deeper for each other. It's sweet! And sizzling. Wink.

On to the story, sans romance! I feel like not much occurred in this book, in terms of the war and such. Venda has been massacring enemy camps and soldiers, killing many and taking supplies. It's awful, and in my opinion, hard to feel sorry for Venda. I do, but I don't. It's obvious that Pearson wants readers to fall in love with Venda - she spent so much page time describing Venda, having Lia convinced that it's not all bad, etc. I wasn't really buying it, but then, I don't really care for Venda or Kaden. I'm more curious about Dalbreck.

Venda is like a bubble, and Lia and Rafe don't really know what is happening outside of Venda. Short snippets of news might pass around, but the war and policies and declarations aren't made known often. So, in my opinion, the SERIES plot was slow. The book's plot mostly focused on Lia and her relationships with the Vendan people, the Komizar, Kaden, and Rafe. A lot with Rafe.

I like the mysterious "gift" part of the series plot though. A lot of it revolves around Venda, curiously. And yet, I feel more lost, in terms of Lia's gift, and its connection to Venda. Hopefully all will be explained in book three.

Book three! I need it! The ending of this one wasn't TOO cliffhanger-like, but it makes me anxious. Not for Lia and Rafe, but for the kingdoms. I actually like the ending (I think), though the fact that there are so many perspectives (since The Kiss of Deception though) makes me wonder if the author is going to pull a Veronica Roth...

What I Did Not Like:

I wish things Lia had to do didn't have to happen. It's not like in A Court of Thorns and Roses, between Rhysand and Feyre (sexual assault, rape, anyone? How in the world is anyone finding Rhysand sexy?!), so no worries about that. But I wish things were different! Of course, there are no rules to survival.

Would I Recommend It:

Anyway. YES. I would totally recommend this series in general. This sequel novel is great! I loved The Kiss of Deception, and I really enjoyed this book. Now, as long as the love triangle is officially dead and Rafe and Lia can ride off into the sunset from start to finish of book three (that might be an exaggeration)... I'll be happy. Maybe. Perhaps I want Venda to burn a little too. And maybe Morrighan too.

Rating:

4.5 stars -> rounded down to 4 stars (for a reason I can't say without spoiling things!). Overall, I'm really pleased with this book, especially with the romance. I definitely want to see more from the series plot (and not just the romance - stop pushing the triangle, Pearson!), so hopefully there will be an epic showdown in book three! I have a feeling that Pearson will take us to Dalbreck - finally!

Bentley ★ Bookbastion.net says

See this review and more on: www.bookbastion.net

This one might win the award for toughest review of 2017.

You might remember my earlier review for the first book in the series: The Kiss of Deception, which I loved and showered praise on. While I was really excited to crack into this one, and still really enjoyed it, I felt a little let down.

One of the biggest disappointments to me in this book revolved around the situation Lia found herself in. "But Bentley," you say, "isn't that the point of conflict?" Well, yes, but in a way I feel like this book undoes a lot of what I really enjoyed most about the first. Take for example, that **dreaded love triangle** from book one that just won't quit.

Lia had essentially made her choice at the end of book 1, and although I knew she would be in close proximity to her potential second love interest, I had hoped she'd moved past him. However, because of the danger of her situation this time around, it actually turns out to be safer for her to pretend to still be interested in this guy, which of course leads to sort of feelings on both ends.

So, in a way Lia loses that powerful agency she had in the first book in favor of prolonging the inevitable. She's still extremely intelligent and driven as a character, which I love, but she's no longer making decisions for herself and for her own future. Instead, she feels trapped under the thumb of not one, not two, but three different men in this book, who all want to get into her pants.

During the earliest pages of this book, when I knew we were about to meet the Komizar I was literally sending up prayers that he would turn out to be either old or ugly, or a combination of both. Of course when he's introduced he's young, hungry and just as handsome as the other two men in Lia's life. You can pretty much guess where that storyline goes from page one. **A lot of my friends who read this book seemed to love the Komizar. I mostly hated him.** I felt like Lia was really hampered by her connection to him and cringed every time I realized he was going to be in a scene.

It just felt a little bit tired to me. I wanted more exploration of Venda and more politicking between the kingdoms, but instead this sort of sophomore slumped for me into a romantic story set in a fantasy world.

I will give Mary Pearson the same commendation I awarded her for the first book. **Her writing skills are top notch. She has a masterful command of prose and dialogue.** I feel like she's sort of unfairly categorized in Young Adult to be honest, when her prose seems a bit stronger than the typical books you'd find in the genre. I think she'd do quite well writing fantasy novels for adults at some point in her career.

I don't mean to sound like I hated this book - on the contrary, it was still quite engaging. I did enjoy learning more about Venda, and exploring all its hidden secrets alongside Lia. I also took a shine to a few of the ancillary characters that Lia bumped into from time to time. There is a lot here still to love, and I am sure that this book was building up to some major events that are going to take place during the final installment.

I just hope book 3 moves past all the love triangle drama and really engages in the story I'm most interested in: Lia continuing her journey of self discovery both of her gift, and of her strengths as a woman who doesn't need to chain herself to a man in order to survive.

★★★★☆ = 4 out 5 stars

Giselle (Book Nerd Canada) says

An Advanced Reader Copy was provided by the publisher for review.

This sequel ripped me apart and put me back together again. I was constantly wondering what other twist and turn was going to happen, which person should they trust. And what exactly was going on between the political parties between the kingdoms. I loved that this was set in Venda for we get to see another kingdom that doesn't rely on its resources but on its leader. Even if that leader happens to be the Komizar. Chapters are short so don't worry about this being an extended read. It looks like a massive read, but it's really not. I practically flew through the pages and savoured it until the end. I didn't want it to end. There isn't a whole lot of focus on romance and I was glad to see more of a political back-story than anything. Being part of the enemy camp can't be easy but Lia manages to stay and even accept the people.

As for the characters, Lia has definitely grown a bit more. Maybe seeing more of the world can do that to a

princess. Being more open to another culture even if it's known to be a barbaric one. I liked that she saw more of the people and observed their daily lives. They live in a harsh climate and their resources are more limited than other kingdoms so to see her finally accept them shows so much growth for her character. There's a point in the book where I thought the Komizar could be something he wasn't.. But as I read on, I was sadly mistaken. What I did want to see was more of a certain Prince and he was there but I didn't really get to feel too much about what he was feeling. It was more of him being the hero and trying to save her every single time. *rolls eyes*

Then there's the ending which abruptly killed me and I haven't been able to recover since. I just know things aren't going down that path but for Mary E. Pearson to put us through that torture ahhhhh... Such a crazy ending that's for sure. I was waiting for it to be climatic!

A strong sequel, *The Heart of Betrayal* will have you wanting more of Lia's world as she navigates a savage country. Will she lose herself or will she find a way to escape? Just read it and you'll find out.

RATING 5/5

QUOTES

"I came for you, Lia, no matter who or what you are, and I don't care what mistakes I made or what mistakes you made. I'd make every single one again, if that was the only way to be with you." (28)

"Sometimes winning is not only a matter of knowing the rules, but of making your opponent think he knows them better." (202)

"Stop telling me what to do or say! Um tired of everyone trying to control every word out of my mouth."
(280)

"Betrayal by ones own kind is a wound that never heals." (323)

"I don't play games. I wage wars. Don't make me safe one on you." (357)

"We've had a terrible start—it doesn't mean we can't have a better ending." (439)

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

Well, first off this love triangle thing needs to stop because it's getting on my nerves but I'm hoping it has fizzled out for the last book.

The next thing. That ending =(I mean there was one good part that probably will be one of those, we were kidding moments, but there was a really sad part and I don't like it.

[illegible]

Lia and Rafe are prisoners in Venda. Kaden is trying to keep Lia safe from the Komizar < --- big jerk.

And we get to find out all kinds of little secrets about Lia. I'm really hoping the author is going somewhere cool with this!

And some new characters I fell in love with, mostly Aster, she was a precious little girl. I still love Eden because of things and just so many others.

I really hope things end up being okay with everyone in the last book. I just don't know. I'm going to tiptoe my way into the next book.....

MY BLOG: Melissa Martin's Reading List

Anne says

If you weren't a fan of the first book (*and some of my friends were not*), then I don't think anything about this book is going to change your mind. Sorry.

Buuuut...

If you've been chomping at the bit (*because maybe you're a horse?*) to find out what happened to Lia, Raffie, & Kaden once they got inside the walls of Venda? Then I think you'll be pretty happy with Pearson's book. Secrets, magic, prophesies, and (*as the title suggests*) betrayal! Good stuff.

Best part of the book for me?

The Heart of Betrayal is exactly what I hoped it would be, in that the non-love-triangle-*triangle* didn't morph into a real **Triangle**. Sure, Kaden is still in love with Lia, but she doesn't return anything but friendship. There's none of that wishy-washy Who-Do-I-Really-Love shit happening here.

It's Raffie. Boom! End of discussion.

Kaden can just keep on pining...

And why *should* she have feelings for Kaden? I mean, Raffie is putting his ass on the line to save her, and, meanwhile, Kaden has turned her over to his evil boss! Sure, he's hoping he can protect her, but I'm not sure why he thinks that would make him her *go-to* guy for romance.

Pssst. Men.

However! After finding out more of his backstory, I'm definitely hoping he gets a HEA. Poor guy. That sob story got me right in the feels, and I can see why the fella might have a few issues.

Alrighty, I do have one complaint...

Pearson didn't do the *bestest* job recapping what happened in the last book. Some authors are better than

others when it comes to this, and I'm afraid that Pearson isn't one of the good ones.

Now, I know a lot of you out there probably reread the previous books *before* you crack open the brand new ones. But I read a shitload of books each year, and simply *don't have the time* to do that. And while I may remember the general theme of most books, after a year or so, I just can't remember the details. I tend to rely on the authors to give my mind a ~~hard shove~~ gentle nudge when I'm reading books that are part of a series. And, honestly, that wasn't very well done here. I was still trying to play catch-up right till the end.

I said that to say *this*: if you don't have a stellar memory for details, then you may want to go ahead and do a reread before picking this one up.

Oh, and watch out for that CLIFFHANGER at the end!

Dear God, Pearson! Are you trying to give me a heart attack, woman?!

Jodi Meadows says

I'm not saying Mary Pearson wrote this book just to hurt me, but there's no proof that she *didn't*.

Oh my gosh, I love it.

Oh my gosh, the wait for the next book might be the death of me.

Jeff says

When you scroll down the review list of this book, and everybody has this rated as a five star.....

Alright, peoples.

Friends.

You may leave now if you loved this book.

FOR THOSE OF YOU STILL HERE:

Welcome to Jeff's ranting of horrible books.

This was nothing compared to the first one.

There was just no action at all. AT ALL.

I swear, the WHOLE FREAKING BOOK was spent on Lia debating which guy had nicer muscles.

Like, I don't mind that!

Muscles are important in my opinion.

Nice arms are top priority, I understand. ;)

But this book literally screams: SCREW PLOT, SCREW ACTION, SCREW EVERYTHING!

...just look at my amazing muscles...

SECOND OF ALL.

Did any of you like the guys?

I mean.....FALL HEAD OVER FREAKING TOES TO LOVE THIS ONE AMAZING GUY WITH AMAZING MUSCLES?

SWEET BABY JESUS, I WAS ROOTING FOR KADEN ALL THE WAY.

Oh, but he just had to become this overprotecting pig. -_-

AND DEAR GOD, RAFE WAS JUST ALL LOVEY DOVEY WITH LIA...~~sorry, but I'd rather not be gagging through the whole story~~

This whole book just ruined the series for me.

I'm done.

There was no action.

Horrible romance.

Oh but wait! THERE WAS CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT :D

As in: THEY ALL GOT EVEN MORE ANNOYING.

This whole book wasn't focused on anything besides...."oh, I love Rafe?"

"no no no....I LOVE KADEN..."

"Wait hold on.....I don't know...I think it's Rafe.."

TEARS OUT HAIR

Let's get it together Pearson.

Simona Bartolotta says

“Because with my last dying breath, I would make him regret the day he ever laid eyes on me.”

•I'm still unsure **whether I should consider this series as guilty pleasure or not**; I still haven't been able to peg it. It's as if it lives in this sort of limbo, where you have this astonishingly **intelligent writing and world-building** on one hand, and **tons of ya tropes** on the other, love triangle included. And the more I think about it, the more I realize I actually like the in-between sort of story that came out of it. It's precisely the kind of book I would look for if I simply wanted to relax and think of nothing for a few days, without ending up banging my head against a wall in an attempt to forget the horror I just read. In this sense, the Remnant Chronicles are the perfect series.

•I like **Lia** more and more with each page I read. She's **fierce, steadfast**; in my language, there's an idiom we use for stubborn and determined people who would do just anything to get what they want, who are said "not to look anybody in the face". So here, in my head Lia is the perfect example of someone who never looks anybody in the face. She knows where she needs to get and what she needs to do, and she complies without complaints or self-pity. I think her attitude in this book is **worthy of admiration**, and I was honestly happy with her as a character, in general. However, I still don't see why everyone should love her on the spot; I get that the people of Venda revere her because of the prophecy, but that makes the character look only like the umpteenth **clean and tidy, all-too-good, perfect and shiny chosen one**. That was really irritating, considering that the one actual thing that Lia does for this people is recite some poetry and prayers. If that's where the story's going, I would like to see her actually *act* in the next book.

•**The love triangle** is, surprisingly, not as heavy as one may think, even though it's undeniably there and at times it really is felt. For what it's worth, I think it's well handled. Besides, both Rafe and Kaden are way too likeable ~~and not~~ not to fall for them. I think Rafe could be explored with more depth, while Kaden satisfied me more in this respect.

•**The Komizar** proved to be far more interesting than I'd have thought, **ruthless, insidious, cunning** and utterly **cold-blooded**; maybe I would have liked him to be a bit more unpredictable -two or three chapters with him are more than enough to figure his character out perfectly. I do hope he'll return in the final instalment and show more sides of himself.

•**I was never bored**, not for one second, but I should probably mention that **the whole plot revolves around mind games and politics**, therefore you'd better brace yourself if you're more of an adrenaline junkie. Moreover, even though I didn't perceive it as a flaw while I was reading it, objectively the book does suffer from a mild form of middle book syndrome -the major events are very few because the whole story takes place at the Vendan court.

► *The Heart of Betrayal* undoubtedly is **a worthy sequel** to *The Kiss of Deception*, and its strengths certainly exceed its weaknesses. With a few focused improvements, the next book will mathematically make for a great conclusion.
