



Charmfall

Chloe Neill

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High school can be a battlefield, but for Lily Parker, surviving at St. Sophia's School for Girls is a matter of life and death...

Protecting Chicago from the dark side can be an exhausting job, especially when you're a junior. So when the girls of St. Sophia's start gearing up for Sneak, their fall formal, Lily decides to join in on some good, old-fashioned party prep—even if it means not giving demons, vampires and the twisted magic users known as Reapers her undivided attention.

But when a Reaper infiltrates the school, Lily doesn't forget what she's sworn to protect. She reaches deep into herself to draw out her magic—and finds that it's gone. And it turns out she's not alone. A magical blackout has slammed through paranormal Chicago, and no one knows what—or who—caused it. But Lily knows getting back her magic is worth the risk of going behind enemy lines...

Charmfall Details

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From Reader Review Charmfall for online ebook

?Misericordia? ~ The Serendipity Aegis ~ ?????? ✨*♥♥? says

Q:

“You ever wonder what it’s like to be them?”

Lesley looked back at me. “You mean instead of having magic?”

Lesley was one of the few people without magic who was allowed to know about Adepts and Reapers. I wasn’t sure if she knew the entire story, but there was an advantage to not knowing too much—having all the details about the world of underground magic apparently put a Reaper target on your back. Lesley might have been a little odd, but she’d been a friend to us when we needed it, so I certainly didn’t wish that on her. “I mean to be popular, and for how you look to be the most important thing on your mind.”

Lesley painted lines of glue onto the raven’s feathers. “I play the cello,” she said. “Sometimes I help you and Scout. I speak four languages, I’m super good at physics, and I will probably get into whatever college I want.” She looked up at me, and it was clear she wasn’t bragging. She was just giving me the facts. “So why would I want to spend my time worrying about whether everyone else thinks my shirt is cool enough?”

Like they were following a script, raised voices carried from the brat pack corner of the room.

“I’m trying to do it right,” Lisbeth said. She was attempting to carve a piece of foam into the shape of . . .

Well, I’m not really sure what it was supposed to be. A gargoyle, maybe?

Veronica, who’d made her way over to the group, wasn’t buying it. “It certainly doesn’t look like it. You’ve been working on that thing for, like, an hour now.”

“Seriously,” M.K. said. “It looks like an angry terrier, and that’s really off-theme.”

I doubted M.K. cared whether the decoration was right or not. She probably just liked having someone to terrorize. And Lisbeth definitely looked terrorized. She burst into tears and ran from the room, leaving the brat pack rolling their eyes behind her.

“She is so moody,” M.K. complained. “I was just being constructive.”

Lesley and I exchanged a glance.

“See what I mean?” she asked.

I definitely did.

(c)

Amy (Turn the Page) says

A while back I was sent Firespell and Charmfall for review, books one and three of a series. I wasn’t overly impressed by Firespell and unfortunately, the same points I flagged in that review are still present in Charmfall.

The pacing is still slow. The majority of the story actually consists of Lily giving the reader inconsequential and pointless information. There’s a running commentary on the brat pack’s movements, their clothing, the decorations Lily’s putting together for a school dance etc. It’s just not information we need, nor really care, to know.

The Adepts are supposedly at war with Reapers, but there never seems to be any sort of, well... fighting going on. As with the first book, there is a distinct lack of danger or action and despite words like ‘battlefield’, ‘life and death’ and ‘protecting Chicago’ thrown around in the synopsis, nobody really does anything.

As far as I can tell, mostly the Adepts sneak down into the underground tunnels most nights and have meetings in their secret room, which turns out to be pretty much round the corner from the Reaper's underground base. Perhaps I missed all the major movements in book two, but considering nothing seems to have changed or moved on plot-wise from the end of the first book, that seems unlikely.

Someone is behind a magical blackout, forcing the Adepts and Reapers to work together to gain their magic back. This could have been a potential interesting plot line, but it ends up being mostly a lot of talking, some faffing around, a convenient (and poorly written) fairy tale that provides the answers and the whole thing is fairly easily resolved with little trouble by the end of the book. There's seemingly nothing to stop the culprit from working the same mojo again, but somehow that question never comes up.

In fact, there are quite a few unresolved questions popping up throughout this series. Do Lily's parents really know about magic? What are they hiding? Is Adept HQ as trustworthy as first believed? (Probably not) Are Reapers truly as evil as they've been told? (Probably not) Can Lily trust Sebastian? (Who cares — he's a lot more interesting than Jason.)

It's just all a bit flat. Charmfall has a lot of unnecessary filler and no character or plot progression. A shame, as I saw some potential in book one, but I'm not inclined to continue with these books. They are shaping up to be a long, lightweight, inoffensive and rambling paranormal series. Not bad for the casual reader but why bother when there are much more satisfying books out there?

*Edit: Just read that there are no further plans to continue this series. I guess the publishers, or possibly the author, aren't feeling this one either.

Originally reviewed at Mostly Reading YA

Mae says

Okay, so this was horrible.

First off, the writing was all wrong. It sounded like a 7th grader was narrating, mixed in with such great revelations at all the wrong times it was almost sounded funny. Okay, so people don't think like that, it takes them a while to find out what they're missing, and when they do, it's not all written in their head already. It was so fake, and Lily irritated me, not for any reason, just because she was there.

And then Jason. His relationship with Lily didn't seem real, and all those pesky little things about him and his family? We never know what's going to happen. It was like it was too hard to think up his world, so you know what? Just don't include it! Ugh. And then the way he was described as a werewolf, to me, he was a skinny little dog that stood up on his hind legs and walked like a man. The description was that bad. Adding on that, I had no idea what any of them looked like, just that Lily's eyes were lined with black. It was ridiculous.

One thing I like was Sebastian, but he was really downplayed in the book. He keeps helping out Lily, but we never know why. His role is implied as a love interest, but nothing ever happens. He was a source of information, that's all. That was horrendous.

And the last thing I hated was the ending. So many things were just left off, and nothing was ever

accomplished. Reapers were still bad, Sebastian was still a Reaper, Adepts were still good, and Lily was still an Adept. Uh huh, nothing happened, just a bunch of little sidetracks. It was boring, but I managed to finish it. Though I may regret that a little now.

Cathy says

This series always makes me feel old, it definitely captures teenagers better than most. Which is a good thing, it makes it feel fresh. But this installment suffered even more than the last one from a serious lack of action. Most of the book was about the girls walking down to the tunnels, then back to their rooms, then back to the meeting room in the tunnels again. I like that Lily and Scout are staring to question the shades of grey in the world of the Adepts and the Reapers, but little other than hints about the workings behind the scenes was revealed. And nothing at all about the mystery about her parents and why Lily was sent to the school was even brought up. So overall it was one of those treading-in-place installments in a series.

Alex says

It didn't take me long to read this book. Three hours if we're really keeping track. And. . . I liked it but . . . I didn't at the same time. I was disappointed. In Hexbound I was totally enthralled by Sebastian, I truly thought that despite what side he played for he wasn't all bad. Even now I don't think he is. But seeing as I don't know if there will be a fourth book no one will ever really know.

In the first book Jason Shepard is THE guy. The one that seems ideally right for Lily. But in Hexbound, you see that spark at the end between Lily and Sebastian that might mean something. But in Charmfall, Jason throws a tantrum which I guess is normal for his characterized alpha-male persona. All because Lily took a risk trying to get information by talking to Sebastian. And in the end when it comes time to make up, Lily just forgives him. As if him doubting her was okay when not three paragraphs before she referred to him as her ex-boyfriend. I thought given the kind of person she was she would have stuck up for herself. I'm not saying I wanted them to be over--my Sebastian fantasies aside--it would have been nice to see how different Lily presented herself between the two gentlemen. Yes, Sebastian is older than her and she isn't even 16 yet but he deserved a shot if you asked me. A fair shot.

Then you have the issue with her parents. You go through the first two books and know that something isn't right with Lily's parents--that they're hiding big secrets from Lily and why she ended up in Chicago. Throughout this whole book the parental issue was never even pursued. Of course she could have just been taking Foley's advice and leaving the matter alone until she can truly ask them face-to-face.

The book was awesome. It's not a lie. I felt it was unsatisfying, but it still made me laugh continuously with the heavy sarcasm between Lily and Scout. I haven't seen any evidence that there will be another book but the way the book ended it seemed to be that sort of "the door is closed but not locked." if that made any sense, I applaud you because I totally just made that up.

Kt says

Review originally posted on my blog: A Book Obsession..

Even though Lily has only been "fighting the good fight" for a few months now, she's about had it up to here with all of it. So, in an effort to do something completely normal, she signs up to help with the party prep for the school's fall formal, Sneak. Of course she can't give up her protection detail completely, so when a Reaper is spotted on the school grounds, Lily steps up to ward him off, only to find that her magic is gone, as well as every other adept's in the city. She will have to use every resource possible to get to the bottom of things, regardless of what her friends think of her methods, as they are all sitting ducks.

I was very happy to see Lily start to really think for herself in Charmfall. Prior to this point she has been blindly following the Adepts, and their creed that all Reapers are evil, soul sucking beings, making everything black and white. However, her reaper "frenemy," Sebastian has been trying to open her eyes to all the shades of gray there are in between. Of course she realizes that he probably has an ulterior motive, but that doesn't stop her from accepting his help with certain things. Unfortunately, the rest of the Adepts don't quite seem eye to eye with her on this, which causes a whole lot of tension. Yet, she didn't back down, and stood behind her beliefs in finding the truth, rather than blindly believing what anyone has told her in the past. This may be a little bit of a stretch, but I have a feeling that in time, Lily will do a whole lot of moving and shaking, and could potentially be the one to change the whole system. I guess only time will tell.

If you have read my reviews of the first two installments in this series, you'll know that I enjoyed the books, but not without a good bit of frustration. My biggest problems were a lack of forward momentum and an unclear plot. After finishing Charmfall, I actually breathed a sigh of relief because things are really starting to head in the right direction. It didn't take long at all for the action to pick up, and it was clear from almost the very start what the big issue would be, making for a much more engrossing read than the previous installments. However, I do have to admit there was one factor that disappointed me. I had been expecting to find out more about those "rat" things from Hexbound, as nothing was really revealed about them other than they were made by the Reapers. Also, we still do not have any new information about Lily's parents, and I am still incredibly curious about that situation. I'm hoping that the next installment comes with a good bit of information to help assuage my curiosity, but then again they did say that's what killed the cat.

Despite my frustrations in the past, I feel like Charmfall has erased all of those problems and given the series a fresh, new start. It was a perfect blend of action, romance, mystery, and character development, to make for a very entertaining read, and I'm very excited to see where things lead next. If you are a fan of Lily's adventures, then you won't want to miss this action packed installment.

Leah Joyce says

I really got into this book series, I loved all the mysteries that was involved, Lily's parents and who was Sebastian? These are however the only things that kept me gripped to the book! And they still are unexplained!

I love the concept of mysteries in books, how there's that one thing you will find out when the book/trilogy ends, that keeps you reading till you find out what it is. In this case its the parents and the dark but hot reaper Sebastian!

But with out these mysteries the book would be boring, everything was quite predictable! And we already knew so much about The Dark Elite (reapers) and the adepts!

However I was really irritated to find out that the puzzle wasn't solved! It made me feel like Chloe Neill gave

up on them!

On her website she suggests that she is not going to write any more books to this series, and there are still so many un-answered questions!

I was however totally gripped to Firespell and Hexbound, they were both so amazing! But it's just this book. I think I would have enjoyed it more knowing that Chloe is writing another book for it!

As a fourteen year old girl I however did fall in love with the characters in this book, like so many other books I read I have gotten quite an attachment to the characters, especially Sebastian and Jason! I'm currently debating whether to write a fan-fiction to this, trying to solve the complicated puzzle!

It may not be the real thing, but it may put mine and maybe many others mind's at rest! I would appreciate it if you could contact me; telling me whether you would like me to attempt to finish it? Please contact me on Wattpad... Please ignore a few of my stories however, as they were written about a year ago, I have improved since them!

www.wattpad.com/TimelordsFTW

Kim says

THE LAST BOOK IN THE DARK ELITE SERIES, YES LET'S GET SOME CLOSURE AND PLOT LINES FINISHED!

Yeah, no. Not going to happen.

I was so disappointed in this last book. I was actually going to give it a 3 because I assumed we'd get some things explained BUT THE ENDING SUCKED.

Now... I would have been okay if this wasn't the last book in the series... but it so happens that it is.

WHAT THE BEEP? LIKE NOTHING WAS EXPLAINED! There is literally a million questions I would like answered that never even got touched upon!

(1) Why does Lilly have fire spell, does it run in her family?

AUTHOR ANSWER: Who knows, is that really a question that needs answering? The past is in the past. Lets live in the present. Where Lilly has fire spell and can do cool things. I like this better.

(2) What secret stuff are Lilly's parents doing overseas, obviously it's involved with the Dark Elite?

AUTHOR ANSWER: You know... you're really annoying. The book is about LILLY not her parents... geez.

(3) What sort of issues is Jason dealing with and why aren't we hearing about them?

AUTHOR ANSWER: OMG Jason is a sub character that I put in there for sexy times with Lilly. No one actually cares about what he does. Only that he looks cool and is pretty.

(4) Why haven't we heard anything else about the research centre that Lilly broke into in Chicago?

AUTHOR ANSWER: I got bored with that storyline, can we move on please?

(5) OK... THEN PLEASE ANSWER WHY SEBASTIAN BORN IS HELPING LILLY WHEN HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE THE ENEMY??

AUTHOR ANSWER: Because he's hot. She's hot. They're hot together. I needed a love triangle. Plus I don't really know... I didn't think about it...

(6) *PULLS OUT HAIR* SEBASTIAN SAYS THE REAPERS ARE HELPING PEOPLE IN PRIVATE... SO LIKE... GOING TO EXPLAIN THAT SHIT?

AUTHOR ANSWER: Urghhh just because I lightly mentioned it doesn't mean I have to go fully into it. Believe what you want.

(7) So the reapers may not be actually bad?

AUTHOR ANSWER: Look, I have other books to write. I'm leaving now, BYE!

ME: #headdesk #dead #fail #WHATTHESHIT????

This short fictional interview will sum up the book for you. Good luck.

Lucy Tearling says

SIGH

I'm so in love with this series.

Kale says

Charm Falls Flat

Chicago's having a crisis of epic power proportions. There seems to be an epidemic of blackouts within the

city limits. Unfortunately the shortages aren't of the electrical variety. Chi-Town's Dark Elite, Reapers and Adepts alike are amidst a magical misfortune, losing their abilities like a flip of a switch. Lilly and her crew are going to have to make some unlikely alliances to solve the mystery of missing magic and get their powers back.

Third time is not a charm for Neill's current installment in her Dark Elite series. While the story line was good, it just didn't have that WOW factor. Charmfall is yet another lost opportunity to really develop this series and the wonderful ideas presented in it. Neill's solid story line was smothered by the surrounding filler and useless banter that kept the main characters meandering about slowly, focusing more on dance decorations, verbal bestie bonding, and the detailed travels of subterranean Chicago. Much of which has been adequately covered in the past two books. The new larger format paperback didn't help matters either. It seems more of a waste for a book barely 240 pages deep and ridiculously includes the first two chapters of book one, Firespell, for the only reason I can decipher, to bulk up the book.

I would have preferred the extra possible capacity be used toward a little more action or development of the secondary story lines. Increasingly I am finding that the supporting characters are more interesting as well, and think an alternate perspective could breathe some much needed depth to the books. Sebastian Born for example is an under utilized character. He has differing ideas about magic not inline with either faction and I think his POV could be riveting. I really liked what was happening with Nicu's thread, which was touched upon when convenient, but barely explored. I was also hoping for the real complication of Jason's background to come about, maybe a betrothed to spice things up, but he's just stressed out by the family problems vaguely mentioned. Even the author's weak attempt at painting Parker as a different thinking Adept just didn't hold. Plus she didn't touch on Parker's parents and past threads involving them at all. Neill also is becoming the timid love triangle queen. Much like her Chicagoland Vamp books, any possible angst between Jason, Lilly, and Sebastian seem null at this point, regardless of the groundwork that's there.

What this book is really lacking is that OMG factor that leaves you pining for the next installment. Charmfall is a watered down version of what the series could be, with good ideas, characters, and story lines that are never really explored. Neill's YA books feel like an afterthought and are clearly becoming a backseat series to her adult work. I really wish she would put as much effort and passion into the series as she does when describing her hometown eats. If not maybe she should forego fiction and focus on an epicurious guide to chi-town's great culinary offerings.

Aly says

I read this series a while ago and I liked this author as well.

All Things Urban Fantasy says

CHARMFALL was my first taste of the *Dark Elite* world, and though the book itself only rated three bats, this is a series that I know I am going to keep an eye on in the future. Neill's mythology is unique in the "magical prep-school" niche and her characters were both interesting and age appropriate. While Neill employs the familiar hook of a young protagonist developing magical powers, she takes things a very interesting step further by giving those abilities an expiration date. Not only does this make it more plausible that teenagers are on the front lines of a magical conflict, but it also gives the Reapers an enticing depth that

is so much more intriguing than just being “bad”.

Though I had missed much of the backstory, there were some relationships I had no problems picking up. Lily’s new relationship with Jason was sweet, and I loved that dating doesn’t make Lily blind (or him perfect). This was my first introduction to the Dark Elite’s werewolf culture, and I found Jason’s family situation to be an interesting and realistic allegory for a teen coming from a traditional and conservative family. Though Sebastian isn’t held up as too obvious of a third wheel in this particular book, I enjoyed how Neill subtly kept possibilities in the air.

Despite getting excited about the series, **CHARMFALL** itself didn’t accomplish much by way of character growth or plot movement. Jason and Sebastian both revealed a little bit about what makes them tick, but Lily didn’t seem to change much at all. Also, though the conflict between Lily and the brat pack may have been important in books past, all of the page time it received in **CHARMFALL** seemed petty and one-sided on Lily’s part. It is obvious throughout the story that Neill is laying the foundation for some big changes in future books, but all of those hints dwarfed the mystery in **CHARMFALL** for a rather anticlimactic finish. Still, I’ll keep my eyes peeled for the *Dark Elite* book where all those hints finally come out to play.

Sexual Content: References to sex, kissing.

Aileen says

.....seriously????? THAT was the END???? I...thought it would be better. I thought that it would be like the first or even the second book. This book just LACKED something. And it feels unfinished. I also didn't like how it seemed like she was trying to start a love triangle with Lily, Jason, and Sebastian. I mean I LOVE Sebastian, even though he's a reaper, Jason's alright, but I feel like he's more suited for Lily than Sebastian ever would be, I just like his character. But sadly...I was really excited for this book and it disappointed me greatly. I thought it would have a better ending...or even just an ending. Not...that. It just feels too unfinished. I loved the first book, the second was alriahhhh but this book just...did not do anything for me. Lacked action, adventure, romance...just a lot. Not one of my favorites that's for sure. This may sound harsh but there was just so much build up in the previous two books that this was such a major letdown that I'm a bit shocked is all.

Naomi says

Unfortunately, the action in these books are quickly decreasing, and the summaries of these books are very misleading. I really thought Lily would actually be in Reaper territory, for those who were wondering, not really.

Once again, I have no feelings for Jason other than he's somewhat very emotional. He was barely in it, other than to throw a little fit when he found out that Lily had been talking to Sebastian. Frankly, the only things I got from him in this book is that he keeps a ton of secrets from Lily (view spoiler), he can be very emotional (view spoiler), and the author will try to push him on you as your fav character (view spoiler). Honestly, just give us some information about this guy and I may start to semi-like him.

Sebastian. I like Sebastian a lot more than Jason. He's at least honest with Lily (view spoiler). The facts are,

she's starting to know more about Sebastian than she knows about Jason. Also, I'm getting to know Sebastian more than Jason, and that's wrong if Jason is supposedly the main love interest. And I also just like the connection they share, their firespell.

Veronica and Nicu? What the heck? If the author took out these parts, then maybe we could have a little bit more action. I just wish she would cancel out this whole "brat pack" drama and just go with the actual action in the book. And it's sad to say, but I seem to know more about Veronica and Nicu's relationship than I do about Lily and Jason's. Please focus on the main storyline, instead of this lame side story. It honestly could have been left out.

Honestly, the author said there was going to be three book on her website. Well, this book definitely ended off where it would need a fourth book. Are we going to get 10 or more books out of this series like the Chicagoland Vampires. (I would never pick up that series.)

Sadly though, these books have so much more potential. The author could really sell this idea if she'd focus just a little bit less on school drama. You know, there are some teenage girls that just avoid it completely. They also don't join the Sneak committee to cause more drama. They just avoid the drama queens and do their own things.

We still aren't getting any answers, let's focus on getting answers rather than creating more distractions (Veronica/Nicu drama, Brat Pack drama, Sneak decoration committees, and boyfriend/girlfriend drama). Give us some answers, build up your side characters more. We have this group of Adepts that didn't expand any more than the previous book, I think they have personalities too?

In all, I would not recommend this series. There's a lack of action and answers, not to mention too much drama. Unfortunately, I want to keep reading. I think the book covers are tricking me, but they're pretty cool. I loved the color scheme and I want that outfit! (Especially the arm warmers and black skeleton key necklace. I actually have a black skeleton key, but I just have simple chain.) I think the cover is also misleading, I thought it was Lily in disguise to join the Reapers, I was wrong....For now, these will remain my guilty pleasure.

Chloe Neil's Wesite Quote: "There are three books in the Dark Elite series, and no current plans for a fourth book." Really? You kind of left it off to where it required a 4th book...At least if there is no 4th, I can create my own ending in my mind. Though with so many unanswered questions, it'd be very difficult...

Arooj says

I like this series. It's one of the few "boarding school" type of YA paranormal novels, all snarky and teenager-y, that I like to read. I was really looking forward to Charmfall because I had a feeling it'd be better than the previous book, but I was a bit dissapointed.

The Good

- I like the concept, it's very unique. I mostly liked how the author made us question what's good or bad, how not everything is black and white. The Adepts and Reapers stuff is really cool and interesting and I liked this new developement.

The Bad

- Even less action than the previous book. As I said in my review for Hexbound, the action in this series seems to be decreasing, which is sad, because that's one of the reasons why I liked this series. There was just too much talking, and I liked the new information and jokes, but I got bored. I REALLY hope the action gets kicked up a notch.
- I didn't like the Nicu/Veronica's parts. I'm not fond of Veronica and couldn't care less if she was being courted by a bloodsucking evil Vamp. Their part in the story was a little unnecessary.
- The romance was a bit...meh. Not that much of it. Like I said, I didn't care about Nicu and Veronica, and Lily and Jason's relationship was starting to get a bit boring. Honestly, I wish Lily would be with Sebastian already. They make more sense. But the couple that I was the most interested was Scout and Micheal, and even their relationship didn't progress. *sigh* COME ON Scout! Ugh.
- The climax wasn't as big as it could've been. It was over in, like, a couple pages. Not really exciting.

The Characters

- I loved how Lily stands up for herself and makes her own decisions. I do think she should've come clean about her interactions with Sebastian earlier, but for the most part, she was as awesome as ever.
- I freakin' love Scout. I don't see her as a secondary best-friend character, to me she's the main along with Lily. Scout just kicks major ass and I totally wish I had her as a best friend. Her and Lily make an awesome team together.
- I am seriously dissapointed in Jason. He isn't the strong, confident guy from before anymore. He didn't have that big of a role in this book. His character is starting to feel a bit useless.
- I need more of Sebastian! Like, some actual development! Especially with Lily. Please?
- Same thing with Micheal, he needs to be more active. And I hope Scout realizes what she's missing out on soon.

Recommended?

If you loved the first two books, than I say you should continue on to Charmfall. However, don't expect a lot of action. Though you might enjoy the plot.

I haven't heard of any news of a fourth book, so here's hoping there is one and better than Charmfall!
