



Wildefire

Karsten Knight

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Every flame begins with a spark.

Blackwood Academy was supposed to be a fresh start for Ashline Wilde. A secluded boarding school deep in the heart of California's redwood forests, three thousand miles from her old life - it sounded like the new beginning she needed after an act of unspeakable violence left a girl in her hometown dead.

But Blackwood is far from the peaceful haven Ashline was searching for.

Because terrifying, supernatural beasts roam the forests around campus.

Because the murderer from Ashline's hometown - her own sister - has followed her across the country.

Because a group of reincarnated gods and goddesses has been mysteriously summoned to Blackwood...

...and Ashline's one of them.

Wildefire Details

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Author : Karsten Knight

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From Reader Review Wildefire for online ebook

Steph Sinclair says

Sigh

Do you know how you are really excited about a book and you have this feeling you are going to LOVE it. But soon as you start reading it you start to wonder if you have received the same copy as others who fell head over heels in love with it? Well, that is exactly what *Wildefire* was for me. I have a confession. I totally fell for the hype with this one. I really wanted to love this. Even when I felt like giving up halfway through, I continued on in hopes that it would get better. But, alas, for me, it did not. Did I hate it? No, that wouldn't be fair. Saying I hated it would put it on the same pathetic shelf along *City of Fallen Angels* and *Marked* and *Wildefire* wasn't *that* bad. But, was I disappointed? Immensely.

I gave this book 2 stars because while I didn't really like it, there were a few things I did like. So, I'll start at the good.

One of *Wildefire*'s best qualities was the diversity of ethnicities. In the beginning, I'll admit I had trouble keeping up with who was who. The plus side to this is that it caused me to Google images of people from different cultures to get a better visual picture in my mind.

Ashline and her sister Eve are both Polynesian

Ade is Haitian

Rolfe is Scandinavian

Lily is Japanese

Raja is Egyptian

Ok, so don't laugh. *snicker, snicker* But as I was reading this book it kind gave me flash backs to Captain Planet.

[image error]

GIFSoup

We're the Planeteers! You can be one too! 'Cause saving our planet is the thing to do!

Other than the diverse cultures, I found the banter between the characters funny and entertaining at times. But, it was hard to determine who was speaking unless Knight told me who it was. Every character was snarky and it seemed like their personalities often times just blended together.

And that is pretty much where my warm fuzzies for this book ends. Ready for the bad? NOTE: This part may

contain spoilers.

Our story begins with Ashline Wilde in a confrontation with a classmate over a boy. At first, I really liked her. I thought she was spunky and a strong MC. However, that image of her quickly died as the novel wore on. But before we even get to her, let's start off with asking why the Principle was just standing around in the first scene of the book with a student sprawled out on the ground unconscious? Hmm? He might as well have stayed in his office for all the good he did. I don't care that he was scared of Eve, can we at least help the poor girl up?! If you are wondering if this book has more of these irritations, the answer would be, "Yes, yes it does."

Let us continue our discussion of Ash. I spent most of the novel asking questions that Ash should have been asking herself. It was quite frustrating. For example, it seems she just accepted her sister's weird powers in the beginning before she even knew what she herself was. I didn't find that very realistic. She didn't even question it.

Another example would have to be the love interest, Colt. First off, any book that proposes insta-love with me already gets on my bad side. I don't have an issue if there is a mystery or reason clearly behind it and the MC actually *questions* it (that's the key point here). But, it was like, they meet in a bar one night and he is completely captivated with her. Ok-tay, fine. I can get with that. But then he shows up randomly at her tennis practice (major stalker vibes). To give her credit, a day or so later she does ask him why he is so interested, but he gives her the most creepy, stalker answer ever. He borderline tells her, she has given his life new meaning and she just accepts it and decides to go out on a date with him.

As for the other characters in the book, I didn't really connect with them. I would have liked to see what happened to make Eve the way she was. What was the catalyst to her wild behavior? The rest had relatively small parts. I thought we would see more of them considering their whole mission to save the world and all. But there was no saving. Not even a small attempt. The book compromised of classes, shopping, visits from psycho big sis, a date and school dance. Oh and what the hell! Let's throw in a fight scene at the end.

OK my biggest beef with this book: (huge spoiler) (view spoiler)

The cliffhanger was OK. I kinda figured it was headed in that direction. I will check out the next book in the series because I'm curious to where Knight is planning on going with all this. This series has a lot of potential. It would be wrong to give up so soon.

ARC was received through Simon and Schuster's galleygrab program.

More reviews and more at [Cuddlebuggery Book Blog](#).

Cait says

No no no no no just a million times no, Karsten Knight. I don't really even know why I rated this book two stars; it deserves a one but I feel like being nice today so it gets two stars for.....I guess for even being published. Because either Knight is the smoothest negotiator in history, his publishers have never read a good book in their lives, or they all are idiots. Maybe even a mix of all three, but I'm guessing more of the

latter. A *lot* more of the latter.

First of all, I *really* hated Ashline. And mostly not in the same way I hated other TSTL heroines like Luce, Bella, or Bethany. Those girls were mostly retarded idiots. Ashline is literally crazy. And to top it all off, she's dumber and duller than a freaking fruit fly. In order to demonstrate some of her total idiocy is with her powers. For well over half of the book, she declares over and over and *over* again that she's not special at all, even with all of the glaring signs. The plot of the first half of the story pretty much goes like this:
Ashline is able to throw a girl about 20 or more feet in the air and her sister is able to call down lightning to fry a girl

Ashline (or A hole, as I will now call her): I'm not special!

Me: okayy.....

*A-hole is able to push a brand-new, two ton truck so fast and so hard that she's *running* and is able to vault into the bed of the truck in one leap*

Me: *does a double take*

A-hole: I'm not special!

Me: whaaaa-

A-hole and four other kids are able to hear the screams of a Siren inside of their heads while no one else can, and they do a little telepathic pow-wow and everyone is told that they are gods

A-hole: I'm not special! I'm just mortal! It must all be a fluke!

Me: *blood pressure begins to spike*

she wakes up to her bed freaking lit on fire

A-hole: I don't know what's causing this because I don't have any powers! (her sister at this point even comments on how idiotic she is that she doesn't know what's causing it. Hint, hint, it's *you*, A-hole!)

Me: GAAAAAAHHH! *has a heart attack*

* A-hole finally realizes after only burning her palm on her hubby's chest that maybe she is.....wait for it....after only 270 or so pages..... special! *

A-hole: maybe I am special. Huh. * walks away then barely ever uses her powers again and just bumbles around the rest of the book*

Me: *slaps forehead*

This was probably one of the most off-putting things about the whole book. She so consistently denied what she could do with all of the glaring signs that she was special; hell they were practically screaming at the girl, that I just got tired of the book as a whole.

Now I get to the crazy part. There is a scene in the beginning of the book (view spoiler) and instead of running away she goes and has a casual conversation with her ~~demented~~ sister like nothing just happened. I'm not even joking. It was a totally normal conversation; she completely forgot that the body was even there. There wasn't even any inner dialogue where she was trying to distract her sister by talking; it was like she had a very, very *severe* case of ADHD.

A-hole: "oh wow, a body. So, what are you doing this weekend?"

And while I was still trying to recover from the severe fuckery of the first thirty pages there is a scene where her boyfriend of two months, Bobby, wants to get past second base, and she denies him because she doesn't want to rush. Now that's alright, but she becomes so enraged that they're breaking up (even though she's the one that ends it) that *she throws a clock with such force that it shatters into a million pieces*. That's not even the worst part. After shattering the clock her boyfriend calls her crazy, and while in her head she is raging that she's definitely not crazy; in sheer ~~crazy~~ anger, she rips a lamp out of the wall with such force that she makes a hole where the lamp was plugged in, and oh, did I mention she's screaming unintelligibly the whole time? Bleh. Then, a little while later while pushing a two ton truck (which is totally normal *sigh*) she imagines Bobby bound and gagged with his face in the dirt, screaming, while she steadily comes closer and closer with the truck, ready to crush him. Now I don't know about you, but if a guy of two months (who I haven't even had sex with) breaks up with me, I'm not going to feel like I need to kill him. Maybe slap him, but not crush him to death under a truck! I think the problem was that Knight just tried *so hard* for his character not to be a Bella swan and instead went overboard on whole "being the feminist" angle that is just became almost nauseating for me to read. Sigh.

Geez I'm sighing half to death over this book.

Oh, and do you guys want to know the ~~extremely horrible~~ triumph scene for our A-hole? She beats her sister *in a match of tennis*. A freaking, Match. Of tennis.

.....balls.

I'm speechless. Well, almost. Is that really the best that Knight could come up with? Whatever happened to the part where they were supposed to save the world? And unless they change it on Goodreads, there is apparently only one book. Bleh. There were just sooo many things that happened in this book that Knight just dropped off is and never talked about again. The whole saving the world debacle is only one example. There's the whole case of, "where are my true parents" that she agonizes for over half the book was fixed within a page. Then, the whole reason why Eve really fought with A-hole towards the end of the book: (view spoiler) That's one really big reason why they freaking fight in the first place, so to just have it end, and kind of cruelly, too, with the asshole first abandoning, then totally forgetting her (view spoiler) and just letting her be hunted and killing people. I mean, I guess I could understand if she's really that savage, but she should have at least agonized over her own flesh and blood turning out that way. It makes her seem very cold-hearted.

Oh, and did anyone else find it even slightly creepy/ weird that A-hole's love interest is a freshman in college, and she's only a sophomore in high school? For one, that's at least a three to four year difference (that makes him 19 or 20 while she's 16) and he randomly becomes totally smitten with her after a mere glance at the local bar. If that's not a case insta-love, I don't know what is.

Oh and the flow is some of the most horrendous stuff I've ever read. He jumps from place to place and time to time, with minimal to no segue between them. I have to go back and re-read the parts to somehow make a bridge between the jumps and pretty much understand what the fuck just happened. Here's an example:

" She rolled the dowels back together, set the scroll down beside the rocking chair, and fixed her gaze on the lawn. It took her a moment to realize that she was staring at the spot in the grass where Lizzie Jacobs had landed, dead, when she'd rolled off the roof. But anywhere was better than looking at the instructions Jack had left for Rolfe. Ashline's scroll consisted of three words. Rolfe's scroll consisted of only two.

PROTECT PELE

(the upcoming quote is the next paragraph. Not even a new chapter which would kind of make sense; it's the next. Freaking. Paragraph)

The wind in her hair. Her leather jacket billowing behind her. The tingle of the sun against her face. "

AHHHH! *rips our hair* This is just one of the many awkward shifts that make no sense, and they royally pissed me off. I wanted to read about the emotion that goes through a person's mind when they realize someone *died* for them. Even denial about it all, anger, anything, but he just goes straight to her riding a motorcycle. And just in case my uppercase lettering isn't enough, here's a picture:

Pain. Complete, total, and utter *pain*

And I found none of the supporting cast of characters that Knight created likable at all. They never really connected with me or made me feel something for them. They all were either douchebags, turn friends into 45 year old women, or total ice-queens. Oh, or they were alcoholics and every time you met them they were totally hammered.

Friends. If they're not growing ivy claws, aging years in seconds, playing with people's minds, turning them into psychopaths, ignoring you, insulting you to your face, or trying to kill you, they're drinking! Don't they sound just *fantastic*?! *rolls eyes sarcastically*

And I feel slightly ashamed, but I never actually finished it. I got to about ten pages before the book ends, and the damn paragraph break that I showed earlier just made me put it down. The only way that the ending- since I'm pretty sure was totally stupid- could have pulled me into the book again was if Jesus had came riding out of the book on page 390 on the back of a unicorn who farted glitter; haloed by a bunch of tiny, singing fairies, and told me that if I read the last ten pages, the fountain of youth would spring forth, and underneath the bubbling fountain, was the Ark of the Covenant with the holy grail sitting atop it. Oh, and the end to world hunger. Oh, and another special, smaller, fountain that granted me any sort of superpower I wished.

Yeaahhhh not gonna happen.

Krystle says

Update: I found out WHICH Polynesian Goddess he based it off of. And ding ding ding, it's MINE (Hawaiian).

<http://enchanteditkpot.livejournal.co...>

I'm so annoyed. Yeah, yeah, every volcano brings about birth and destruction. Whatever. That's SUCH a scientific/exoticized view of things. If he really wanted to invoke our mythology well he should've actually paid attention to our origin stories.

It's not like it's really hard to find.

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/hm/hm...>

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/pac/hm/hm...>

Yeah, I'm done.

Edit: Another thing that occurred to me. Why is the main character's name "Ashline"? Sure she may live in modern times but if she's *Hawaiian* and with a healthy dose of our blood, why wouldn't she have a Hawaiian name? I mean, a lot of Hawaiians are very proud of their blood (me as well) and most of them have Hawaiian names somewhere despite the influence of Westernized names.

I mean, I don't have a lot of blood and it's very little and I even look all Asian, but my middle name **is** Hawaiian.

It really bothers me that he describes his book as being "exotic". I'm sorry, we're not "exotic". That's a disgusting way the white people have seen and used our culture and people for exploitation and profit because we're "exotic".

Original thoughts:

Okay, so I'm not going to really review the book (you can read my status updates for my thoughts and feelings about it) but if Ashline being a Polynesian goddess is used as justification for how violent she is, I'm going to flip.

Pele (Hawaiian Goddess of Volcanoes and Fire) is tempestuous and does get very angry if you offend her but she's not an out of control violent freak. She doesn't use violence in the sense of breaking all your bones and killing people. Hello! She'd burn your most beloved garden, steal your boyfriend, curse you so you have some shit bad luck but she's not a violent person.

Pele is ALSO the goddess of dance and lightning! What the hell! She wasn't some angry bitch and I'm pissed that only her vengeful side is showcased and exploited. And don't give me that shit that there's tons of Polynesian goddesses. Well, it's not really explained from which culture she actually from, so it could technically therefore be mine. Gah. Whatever.

I'm just thinking that Ashline is said as being a reincarnated Polynesian goddess only so we can hit the OOOH, HOW EXOTIC! factor. *scoffs* Give me a break.

Michelle, the Bookshelf Stalker Queen of the Undead says

I read up to page 118 and that was enough for me. I could not stand the main character- Ash.

From the very beginning, she grated my nerves- her dialogue and her actions were nasty and violent. I don't mind violence in a book at all. In fact, I've been known to read some pretty violent books but this was just stupid violence for the sake of what, I don't know? And don't get me started on Ash beating up a girl, hurting her boyfriend and then suddenly, she decides to be forgiving when the girls come to her house to spray graffiti all over the house? It's not even a spoiler since well, there is no real purpose in it. Stupid.

Once she gets to the Redwoods, her actions don't get any better. The author tries to make Ash sound witty or sarcastic but she sounds like nothing but a bitch.

Furthermore, If you actually say the dialogue out loud in this book, it sounds nothing like what a teen would say. I'm guessing this book gets much better later but frankly, I didn't want to read anymore.

Donita Luz says

Picked this book up on a book sale. Should've known better.

Jillian -always aspiring- says

(Actual Rating: 3.5 stars)

Wildefire by Karsten Knight is a strange beast of a novel. Nearly 400 pages, it's a bit of an intimidating novel – especially if you had been reading many iffy opinions about it as I had. *Too much senseless violence. Unsympathetic heroine. Creepy love interest.* So many one-star reviews had been coming into my Goodreads feed that, after a while, I had simply deleted the book from my shelves despite my having had the book listed to-read since August 2010.

But something happened a few days ago. I had one of those panic-stricken moments when I wanted to read a book *but nothing was sticking with me.* Then my eyes turned to my neglected e-galley of *Wildefire* that I had yet to delete off my e-reader. Curiosity, however morbid, eventually won out – and I started reading.

I'm not going to deny it: all of those negative elements listed above are present and accounted for in this novel. But you know what? Strangely, by book's end, *all of those things somehow make sense in the scheme of this story* (and that's a lot more than I can usually say for paranormal YA).

Wildefire is a mad mix of *X-Men* and Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*. The story revolves around gods and goddesses, all from different cultures (meaning that there's not just a focus on Greek myth deities or Norse myth deities, but a mixture – very fun), being reincarnated into mortal forms over and over again. But for what purpose are they being reincarnated? And why are five of them suddenly being drawn together in a school in the middle of nowhere? There are answers, but they definitely don't come easily. . .

I'll be honest: knowing that the heroine and her sister were reincarnated goddesses, I didn't have as much trouble swallowing the initial violence as I thought I would. Sure, the reasons for it – Ashline basically "taking revenge" on the girl who "stole" Ash's boyfriend – are rather irksome (especially since it would have been more ironic and even a bit funny if Ash had been wailing on the *boy* with her fists instead), but I get why Knight chose to write it that way. How many times in Greek mythology did Hera go all "hell hath no fury against a woman scorned" on the mortal women who had caught Zeus's eye? In all those cases, Hera should have been taking her anger and divine retribution out on Zeus, her husband, but did she? Uh, no. She went after the women. ALL. THE. TIME.

Anyway. . .the violence didn't bug me because I knew beforehand that I was dealing with goddesses who didn't have mortal-sized tempers. However, I can't say that any of the violence helped to warm me to Ashline as a heroine. Yes, she has a sister, Eve, who is somehow even more likely to embrace her psychotic side than Ash is – but is that in and of itself enough to make me sympathize with a girl who beat up another teenage girl just for sucking face with a boy the heroine didn't even care much about in the first place? Not really.

One of the flaws that never quite resolves itself is that Ashline doesn't become a sympathetic heroine in this first installment. Personally, I came to look at her as the means through which this potentially awesome and epic story of gods and goddesses warring against each other could take place. The story just as easily could have been told from another viewpoint (fellow deity Raja or Ade in particular might have been intriguing) and I would have been satisfied just the same. Is that a flaw that I might have enjoyed the story even more from a different viewpoint? I don't know.

Characterization as a whole is a bit of an issue in this book. Though all the god characters have their own specific backgrounds and stories, we never truly get a *feel* for them. It doesn't help that Knight's particularly snarky style of dialogue somehow leaks into *all* of the characters. Not every person has a witty or snarky one-liner for everything! The similar voices made it a bit difficult to latch onto any of the characters, so I was a bit disappointed that I did not come away loving any of them.

The more I read of this novel, the more I had to wonder: *why wasn't this written for the adult urban fantasy market?* I easily could have seen the characters aged a few years and living in a large city – and the story would have fit well in UF since I'm sure it would have had a smoother reception than it has had/will likely have in the YA market. The high-school age characters were already acting like adults, so why not just move them up a few years and be out on their own when the 'god calling' strikes? There could have been potentially even more awesomeness and epicness down the route of UF.

However, whatever the flaws of this novel, I must say this: this book should be required reading for anyone who intends to write a mythology-influenced novel. *This is how gods and goddesses should be written.* A book about deities with supernatural powers to shift the earth or cause storms or what have you *needs* to take advantage of the "epicness" that walks hand in hand with mythology. Why do you think the myths were first created? Just to tell a story about some truth or explain away some aspect of nature? Yes, there was that component – but the ancients were also trying to *entertain* themselves with these stories. (That should be obvious enough with the number of "funny" myths to be found – such as the Norse myth where the thunder god Thor dresses up as the beautiful goddess Freya at the trickster god Loki's insistence.) And, undoubtedly, *Wildefire* entertains (and offers quite a few plot twists and turns along the way to keep you guessing).

For me, the good outweighed the bad with *Wildefire*, but I know that it won't be everyone's cup of tea. However, I will say that anyone who's even a little bit intrigued should read the first few pages and see if it works for you. You may just end up reading the whole thing and enjoying it just as I did.

Crystal says

I cannot finish this one. I have really tried to like it, but I am going to give up. This was one of my most anticipated reads of the summer and I feel so let down. I have been told that it gets better but I am having trouble getting past the characters attitudes. Ash was so violent that I don't know if there is any way for her to redeem herself. I was also shocked at how X-Menish this book was. I wasn't prepared for that and it felt way to cliche. So I am going to let this book go and grab something else that will hopefully grab me back.

Sharon says

I created a new shelf just for Wildefire called Pure Torture. Seriously I think you have to be a sociopath to truly enjoy this book. Nothing but senseless violence from a main character who think her sh*t don't stink. The book literally starts with a fight all over a stupid boy.

Fight after fight all in the town of Scarsdale, New York. This part cracked me up because I live in the same county and let me tell you, if this happened here the school vp wouldn't just stand by why some girl got her teeth knocked out. The idiot just stands there all scared and pansy like. It just wasn't realistic. Especially with all the school bullying in the local news around here lately. IRL Ash would have been expelled and sent to jv hall in a heartbeat.

I only made it to page 33 because I just COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE! My new shelf pretty much sums up my feelings...pure torture! Unlikable characters and senseless violence was all Wildefire had to offer.

P.S. I will be adding Hush, Hush to that new shelf as well. ;)

Kaye says

No. Just no.

So I logged onto PulseIt for the first time in weeks to find this book was already up for free, and was like, "Why not?" I love mythology, particularly those types of books that try to put it in perspective with the present - such as Rick Riordan, the amazing guy that he is - and the multicultural aspects that people kept raving about sounded appealing.

All I can say is, I have no idea why I went through with finishing the story.

First of all, a guy writing from a girl's POV (honestly, I didn't know he was a guy until the end) = trouble. No matter how many sisters you have, how close you were with your mom as a kid, you do not know what goes through my mind as a teenage girl, bub. Don't even try to.

Ashline is just a horrible protagonist as it is. So, we start out with her beating up the girl her boyfriend cheated on her with, and leaving the guy practically untouched. She can try to kill the girl for herself, but when her sister goes ahead and finishes the job for her, it's a major issue. Oh, sorry, did you want the blood on your hands for yourself?

I could not connect with any of the teenagers in this book. It was like one major party of underage hookups, freaky blow-ups and...well, I can't think of any ups. Let's just say it was bad.

Yeah. I don't think the author's going to like me after this.

Nafiza says

This is going to be a very long review – I probably shouldn't even say review. More of a discussion, really, of what I thought about this book and why I was not impressed by it.

The last book that produced such a visceral reaction in me was the latest one in the Strange Angels series. That one, I didn't complete because well, I disliked it that much. This one I felt compelled to complete because people whose reviews I follow assured me that this book gets better. After completing it, I have come to the conclusion that our tastes differ. A lot.

Anyway, let's move on to the book. I need to collect my thoughts just a little bit because as I said, there are many things I had issues with.

Let me preface this review by saying that I have read books where the main character is a girl who is written by a guy. A lovely example of one such book where the male author correctly and accurately portrays a female main character is the Bloody Jack series by L. A. Meyer. I understand that this is Mr. Knight's first novel and with subsequent novels, he will surely hone his craft and improve. That said, I feel that while creating Ashline, Mr. Knight utilized the popular stereotypes that exist about what teenage girls are like instead of creating an original character with whom a reader can empathize. It felt as though Ashline was a caricature of a teenage girl rather than a girl. When you are writing, you need to become the character and this gets really difficult if your character is...so foreign to you. Hey, teenage girls may as well be aliens for all the sense they make sometimes.

The Violence

The book begins with something so stupid that I immediately felt like whacking someone on the head. The scene opens with Ashline engaged in a smackdown with a girl called Lizzie Jacobs who, according to Ashline, "stole her boyfriend."

Let's take a moment here, okay?

...

Honey, you can't *steal* something that is freely given. Why blame the girl for taking what is offered? THIS is exactly the kind of thing that gets me feminist side roaring. Why doesn't Ashline confront the cheating boyfriend first before engaging into gratuitous violence with Lizzie? Oh okay, you hit her hard enough that she loses a tooth and then your sister comes in to bang her up some more. And even after ALL THAT, Lizzie comes to your house to get revenge? With two black eyes?

Um. I don't know about you but realistically? The only place she'd be going is to the doctor to probably spend the next few weeks in the hospital. Why aren't the police involved? That is assault, you know? And the sister who shows up out of nowhere and then kills Lizzie. Right.

But this is not the only violence there is in the book.

The “gods/goddesses” (more on that later) kill a lot mercenaries who are trying to capture them without showing the least bit of remorse. There’s no sense of horror that they actually took a life – what, these beings don’t feel remorse? Don’t have a conscience?

Let’s talk about Lily and Rolfe. So, from the beginning we are told that Lily is in love with Rolfe who likes toying with her but does not want to commit to her.

Nice, huh? But then **SOMEHOW** Lily becomes the bad guy. Rolfe chooses the much hotter Raja (whose name always gives me pause because in Hindi Raja means King and I’m always thinking it’s a guy but in this instance, the name refers to a girl) and ditches Lily. After sleeping with her, leading her on and we’re supposed to feel bad for Rolfe because Lily attempts to “rape” him. Honestly, this could have been an interesting twist if I wasn’t too busy hating on Rolfe for his assholery.

The Characters

Ashline was unpleasant. She had no depth, no substance to her. Nothing in her that I could relate to or empathize with. She beats up a girl and then starts to judge her sister for doing the same thing. She wasn’t developed at all. Her thoughts, her actions, her justification for her actions... they were all unbelievable. The thing is... she doesn’t act much like a girl. A teenage girl, I mean. I was one. I know many. I know what I’m talking about. But we’ll get to that when we talk about language.

All other characters were pretty much cardboard cutouts. Ah wait, I felt that the strongest part of the book was when Ade’s “moments” in Haiti were being described. If only the main character of this novel had been a guy... think about how much better it might have been. And the headmistress? There’s a certain distance that a person in authority needs to maintain – the lack of discipline in the school was laughable. The parents were not of much use and in fact, they were shoved to a different coast for most of the story so...

The Language

The dialogue does not sound like exchanges between teenagers – like the way teenagers talk. Especially Ashline’s exchanges with the love interests. I think this book could have done with a better editor who could have pointed out all the things that were unnecessary or sounded artificial.

Ashline’s habit of calling Colt by his last name seems like an affectation and her incessant snarkiness leads the reader to be less forgiving of her. Her moments of remorse or introspection are not convincing because they seem less sincere and more like the lines an actor would speak at a cued moment. Because she is expected to.

But what irritated me most? What annoyed me enough that I wanted to throw the book out and scrub my eyes? I don’t know if it’s just me and my feminism (I refuse to apologise for my feminism, I like it) was how twice (or maybe more) in this book, the word “pussy” was used when a person wanted to say “I’m scared/weak/not good.”

I’m sorry but girls don’t speak like that. One moment.

ARGH.

Okay. Let's continue. What's wrong with using "chicken?" Girls, at least the ones I know and I know many, don't use the word like that. It's a derogatory term. PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW THIS. It's not cool, it's not witty, it's not entertaining and my opinion of the book sank right down to the gutter and perhaps below ground level after I read this. I can't fathom any woman being okay with this and if they are, they should not be. Terms like these should NOT be used in daily life, it should NOT be normalized. I don't understand why the editor/writer thought that it would be okay to use this.

deep breath

The Love Interests

The first guy who cheats on her, Rich something. The second one who tries to sex her up, Bobby Jones. The third one she's in lust with and tries to sex up before burning him. There's less love and more lust in this book which would have been okay had the lust not been wrapped up prettily as love or well, tried to be wrapped up as love. The third guy, Colt Halliday is an older guy, his age is not mentioned but his actions are enough to colour him some sort of stalker and give you the creepy vibe that does not make Ashline's proclamations of interest in the dude palatable. Well, not that I cared anymore.

The Mythology

I found this to be confused. The characters in the novel were pretty diverse, hailing from different parts of the world. Obviously reification is not something I veer towards but it was cool to see people from different cultures come together... and then lose whatever they had to become nothing different from anybody else. There's a Norse God, Egyptian Goddess, Polynesian Goddesses.

A Japanese Goddess. This, I found very interesting. Lily speaks Japanese because she's half Japanese and has been speaking it her entire life. I didn't understand why that sentence was important. Or why that fact was important. Did I miss something?

Anyway, the mythology wasn't compelling. There was a big "so what?" dangling all over the story and the mix-match of various mythologies did nothing except confuse me.

Why is Ashline Polynesian? What was the purpose of this?

I'll tell you the main reason I wanted to read this book. Because I thought it would be set in Hawaii. I mean, hello, we haven't had ANY YA books set there or anywhere exotic really. But I thought since we were dealing with a volcanic goddess, we would be somewhere volcanoes are more common.

I'm from Fiji. Not a native but I was born and lived in Fiji for the first seventeen years of my life. My people are not Polynesian but Melanesian (darker skin). However, these are just cosmetic differences and there are certain similarities where lifestyle, theology and philosophy are concerned. They may also have similar Gods and Goddess. Of that, I'm not sure. However, I truly believed I was going to be given a glimpse of that wonderful world and culture that remains largely unexplored in fiction and literature.

Wildefire may have done many things but it failed at the most intrinsic level: to entertain me. It went one step further and offended me. As I said, this is less a review and more of a reaction to the book. I can't be honest and recommend it to you. But as I always say, make up your own mind.

Katya says

What? What?! What do you mean! You can't end the book like this! I demand a sequel!!!

scuffle

straps alter ego to the wall

mutters Damn fangirls.

Q: So, how can I describe Karsten Knight's "Wildefire" without sounding like a complete and utter psycho?

A: I can't. I can promise though that I will not go off stalking anyone - I'm in a session right now.

But on the (relatively) serious note, I have to say that this was one of those experiences that you want to repeat, again and again. Seriously: I'm in heaven. Who cares about accounting? If I didn't get it the first time, chances are I won't be able to draw up a BS on the exam day either (that's Balance Sheet, for those of you currently not involved in a creepy love/hate relationship with your calculator).

I've been dying to read Wildefire for a long time. I've been dying to read it even before I knew of the book. I think... yes, I think that I've been dying to read it since the moment I realized that I won't be able to pick up a paranormal YA without shivering with fear at the prospect of yet another stalkerish "relationship" based entirely on the man's looks. Pre-conception is a horrible thing, and I've wanted to be proven wrong for a long, long time.

Luckily, Wildefire more than rises to the challenge. First of all, this is a book that doesn't revolve around two people falling in love. Instead, it's a novel about coming of age, rising to the challenge of your ancestry, and, most of all, it's a novel about family and roots. No, not quite like What Can't Wait, but it comes as a close second. Perhaps the highlight of this book for me were the interactions between Eve and Ash, and how the relationship between them is explored.

Then there is the mythology, which is actually pretty well thought of. Reading the Greek Myths as a child, I always thought the Gods seemed so human in their passions, only a lot more ruthless and entitled. That image fits with what Knight does in Wildefire, and I'm so very glad that none of their behavior is sugarcoated: there is violence, and there are repercussions.

alter ego Which reminds me! Rolfe! Oh, Rolfe! My black heart weeps for you.

me Hush, woman, or so help me, I'll make you listen to Love Story on repeat!

Speaking of which, rejoice, fellow martyrs, for we have a book with an honest to goodness love story! No stalking! No creepy watching her sleep! And certainly no treating the woman like she's a helpless idiot. I'm pretty sure that if anyone tried to pull that one on Ash, she would have kicked them so hard they'd sail over to the moon. That girl is made of WIN!

Really, I can sit here and rave about this book all night (or day, depending on the time zone). In a nutshell: It's fast-paced, it's enteraining, and it's amazingly well-thought of. Seriously, I recommend it to everyone looking for a fantastic paranormal YA.

looks back

alter ego looks like this

looks uncertain

cracks What?

alter ego There's gonna be a sequel right?

grumbles The world is coming to an... hey wait a minute! The Rapture ended half an hour ago!

Note: I got a copy of this book via Galley Grab for reviewing purposes.

Emilia says

Ok, so I didn't finish reading the book, and let me tell you - I didn't even want to. I would rather go sunbathing on the surface of the sun.

(Also this review might contain a few spoilers for the first three chapters of the book.)

Holy shit. There are just so many things I'd like to talk about that I don't even know where to start.

-How about the beginning?

-Thank you, voice at the back of my head called common sense and logic, something that the characters in this book lacked.

So. In the opening scene we have two girls in a smack down to the death. Reason: over a douche bag guy. Ashline (the main character) was beating up a girl who apparently stole her boyfriend. Ok let's clarify some things. First of all you can't steal someone, because this is a person we're talking about. Second of all, why the hell would you want to beat up the girl? What happened to lady-like manners and dignity? Because – correct me if I'm wrong – the whole thing was the guys fault wasn't it? The prick couldn't control what's in his pants, so she should have knocked his tooth out not Lizzie's, no matter what kind of stupid, shallow, self-disrespectful bitch she is.

So yeah basically every student is just standing around in a circle, watching the two girls. Lizzie is laying on the ground almost unconscious with a missing tooth – and what do the people around them do? Nothing. Just stand and watch, seeing two girls fight is better than TV isn't it? Then a teacher comes along, and guess what he does? Come on just guess? If you answered he dismisses everyone and takes Ashline to see the Headmistress, you answered wrong. He – like everyone else – just stands there and watches. His reaction to an almost unconscious Lizzie on the floor: 'Oh well. Let's see where this goes.'

Then Ashline's crazy psycho sister Eve shows up on a motorcycle. She got kicked out of school at seventeen for being violent. Teachers reaction: 'I wonder what I'm having for dinner tonight?'. When Lizzie got up from the ground, I guess she had a bit of a memory loss moment, because she decided to go all smart mouth on Eve. (It's just so unfortunate that characters in this book lack common sense. If I were her I would have

kept my mouth shut and just walked away. It's bad enough she has two black eyes and a missing tooth, she suddenly feels like ending up in coma? Tsk, tsk, tsk, wrong move my dear.) Eve then hit her with her motorcycle helmet. Teacher's reaction: 'Dang it. Now I'll have paper work to do.'

Later – that same day – Lizzie decided to come to Ashline's house with two accomplices. You know to vandalize it. Because they are just so smart. Because they knew that Ashline would not be home at that time of day. No, of course not, she wouldn't be home at 8 pm at night, she would be in fucking Narnia. Yeah they thought that they would just vandalize the house and run away without anybody noticing them. Because let's face it, using a baseball bat to knock off a mail box is just too quiet (can someone please tell me why she didn't use a chainsaw? It would have been so much more interesting). Or see her spray painting the word 'slut' on her roof (because you always see people on the roof at night, right?). Oh yeah. Her roof. The girl had two black eyes, a missing tooth and with all that falling when getting hit, I'm pretty sure her head, ribs and pretty much everywhere else should of hurt, but no! The girl apparently hasn't had enough! She wanted to come to her house and get beaten up again instead of going to the hospital to check if everything is alright with her. Because, you know, that's what normal people would be doing! Oh but not Lizzie! She needs to show who's boss! (How did that work out for ya Lizzie?) Ashline then sees Lizzie and her cohorts through her window, blah blah blah, Ashline scares the cohorts away, blah blah blah, she gets on the roof to meet Lizzie and sees her spray painting the word 'slut' and do you know what she says to her? Wait for it... wait for it... wait for it... she says "I know that all of this is not worth doing for a guy." What a fucking hypocrite! (Another hypocrite moment: Ashline can beat up Lizzie at school, but when her sister Eve does it, she gives her a lecture? Are you for real?)

Then out of the blue the famous psycho Eve shows up! Whop-te-do! And just to show how crazy and messed up she is Eve kills Lizzie. And the thing that made me angry the most was how the author didn't make a big deal out of someone being killed. Ok, dude, Mr Knight, I get it that you're a guy, and I've heard about that 'men don't cry' thing but seriously death is not a thing to be taken lightly. You don't react to a person dying like you would react if your gold fish died! No matter how much you hate that person.

The opening scene to chapter two was eight months forward. She was in a boarding school and at that very moment she was making out with a douche bag. Ok get this, she finds the guy disgusting but is still making out with him, and their conversation in between kisses indicated that they had sex before. But because she wasn't opening up her legs now, he got pissed off and was leaving her room. (Mr Knight, your perception of teenage girls makes me want to cry and throw up at the same time. All of the girls in the book were portrayed as sluts to some extent.) But before he left her room, he mentioned her sister and the dead girl, so she throws her alarm clock at him, but misses. Then he said something else and she wanted to throw her lamp at him too. Ashline, darling, I suggest you go and see a counselor, you've got some anger issues.

So then at night Ash and her friends are breaking every single rule of the school and are leaving to go to a bar. Because they have to leave unnoticed the two girls were pushing the car. What about the guy that was in the car? There was no saying that he was pushing the car, it was only said that he was steering it. So that means the girls were pushing the car by themselves. Dude, what are you trying to say? Are you trying to tell us that since women have the right to vote they have to push cars too? Just because women can do it, does not mean that we have to do it. Moving on.

So when they are at the bar some boring conversations happen and we meet some new characters. One of them was a girl who liked a guy, and because she liked him she let him treat her like a piece of shit. (If I were her, I would have kicked his ass so hard his intestines would have fallen out. No girl should ever let a guy treat her like that.) Karsten, dude, really? Is that how you see women? As some sort of (sex) slaves? I'm not even going to dig deeper in the matter. Later Ashline finally meets her lover-to-be. And some more boring conversations (you know all conversations between the teens did not look like teen conversations at all).

While talking to him she hears a scream and she's the only one who hears it. She hears it again and then runs out the door. When she's outside some more people come out (all of them from her school). And as it turns out they all hear that scream too. There was no confusion, no freaking out, no panic, basically they didn't react like normal people would have. Then they hear the scream again and run towards it (Why? Just why?). They see a girl who is from their school and she is being kidnapped in the middle of the night. Blah blah blah, they save the girl.

After they were all in the car safe on the way back to school Ashlines thoughts made my blood boil and erupt like a volcano! Do you know what she was thinking? Do. you. know. what she was thinking?! In her stupid, stupid head she formed a thought that went like this: "Serena is sort of a loner at school. So that must have been one of the most exciting things that happened to her in a while." (I wish I was making this up.) How dare you Ashline?! How dare you?! The girl was being kidnapped! That is not the kind of thoughts you should be having! That being said, Serena *was* being kidnapped, but when they were all in the car, nobody was scared or panicking or freaking out. Not even Serena. In fact she was almost smiling and giggling. WTF? Seriously, WTF?!

EDIT: I forgot to mention the most important thing of all. SERENA IS BLIND! And the fact that she was miles away from her school without anybody else would seem suspicious, but you know, nobody questioned that. Ashline asked her how she ended up there alone, Serena said she was sleepwalking. End of conversation.

When they got back to school they all got caught. The next day they were all invited to the headmistresses office for a chat. Oh yeah. A chat. If you could even call it that. And let me tell you, the lack of discipline (in both schools) was laughable. Ashline was talking back to the teacher and being a smart mouth and the headmistress just found it hilarious, instead of being furious and punishing them properly. I just... I can't even.

Then some more boring/unimportant things happened. Let's just skip forward to the part where she was running away from a blue eyed creature in the forest. Ok here's the thing. No matter how minor the action scene is, it should always make me feel what the characters feel. I want my heart to be beating just like it would be for the character in the book, but nothing happened. I was sitting there and reading like a robot. And that was the last straw for me basically.

I wanted to like this book. I really did. This was on top of the list of my summer reads, but why? Why for the love of God, Karsten, did you write it like you did?

P.S. Why does every author always use that 'electricity' crap when two people touch?

And also I don't mind violence in a book, as long as it's justified. But beating up a girl because she apparently stole your boyfriend is not a good enough reason to beat someone up.

Vinaya says

I did NOT see that coming! No, I didn't. Not. At. All.

Okay, so Karsten Knight and I got off to a rocky start. Not personally, of course, but in terms of his prose. I

read the first chapter of Wildefire on the Simon & Schuster website, and I was not very impressed. I wished desperately that a competent editor would take a pair of shears to the prose and trim it. It was florid, there were too many similes, and it was trying too hard to be 'pretty prose', if you know what I mean. Being a hype-whore, I knew I was going to read the whole thing anyway, but I did not expect great things.

I LOVED IT. Don't get me wrong, this book wasn't perfect. My issues with the too-flowery prose lasted for a while, and there are some niggles in the back of my mind, which means I'll probably find some logic flaws on a re-read. But none of that detracts from the fact that this book kicks serious ass. Once you get into the story, the prose smooths out considerably, and once the author abandons his attempt to write 'pretty', the strong, solid core of the plot really emerges. I would (strongly) recommend that you persevere even if, like me, you find the first few chapters hard going.

Where can I start? The pacing. It was perfect. From the very beginning, right up to the end, the pacing was solid. I never felt the urge to put the book down, not once. That hasn't happened to me in a while with a paranormal YA. The action scenes are tight and exhilarating. I was literally on the edge of my seat for most of the book. There is no excessive foreshadowing, and the relationships between the pivotal characters are handled beautifully. I loved the friendship that blossoms between Ashline and Raja. I liked how the entire pantheon have each other's backs and connect so strongly once they find out about each other's heritage. There is a reasonable explanation for why a bunch of reincarnated gods and goddesses end up in a remote spot in Northern California, and it makes sense.

I really admire how most of the pivotal characters in the book were women, but they never once came off sounding like a male author's wish-fulfillment fantasy. They're kick-ass, and a little crude and occasionally funny and very *real*. This book is unapologetically brash, violent and action-oriented, and it's a breath of fresh air in a genre dominated by languid, swooning Victorian maiden-wannabes. And it's not without its more fun moments either.

One of my favourite characters in the book is Colt. I know, right, how trite to have a literary crush on the main love interest! But I dare you not to fall for him. Colt is a great character, not one of those chest-thumping alpha males, but an interesting, witty (my god, when was the last time I used the word 'witty' in reference to a love interest?!) guy who doesn't mysteriously consume the MC's every waking thought.

And Ashline, of course, was the best part. I loved Ashline. She was *fun*. Not stupid, not swoony, not a Mary Sue. She managed to be the backbone of the book without overshadowing everyone else. She's kind and she loves her parents and despite her sudden discovery of goddess-hood and her complicated relationship with her sister, she's never angsty. And I liked that Karsten actually put effort into some of the lesser characters as well. I have a definite soft spot for Headmistress Riley, and I'd love to see more of her in the next few books.

The ending scenes in this book blew my mind. The very last scene pretty much had me screaming soundlessly and banging my head against the nearest wall, wailing for the next book.

Despite being set in an American school, it's not too Ameri-centric. The gods are from different cultures, most of the main cast are persons of colour, but none of this is shoved down the reader's throat. The mythology of their godhood is handled simply and sparsely. You aren't force-fed a torrent of cultural and mythological information. Instead, you're left to accept them as they are, in the present, and it's great.

There are a lot of plot threads hanging loose in anticipation of future books, but none so egregious that you don't find a satisfying conclusion at the end of this one. Objectively, this is probably a four-star read, but I'm still high from the ending, it was refreshingly different from the general run of YA paranormals and I'm

totally giving it five stars. Deal with it! Also, watch out for the tennis match scene, it's one of my favourites!

P.S. A small note for any non-Americans out there who were/are going to be as nonplussed by the strange use of 'nonplussed' in this book as I was. If you speak the Queen's English, and not American, you might not know that, "In North American English a new use has developed in recent years, meaning 'unperturbed' — more or less the opposite of its traditional meaning. It is not considered part of standard English." (Hahaha, the snootiness of the 'standard' Oxford dictionaries never fails to amuse me!)

This ARC was provided to me by the publishers for review purposes.

Kat Kennedy says

Wildefire by Karsten Knight is what The Goddess Test should have been and wasn't.

In fact, Wildefire does many things right that the YA genre has been getting wrong. Those involved in the recent uproar over the lack of cultural inclusion in this genre can take a nice, refreshing, Polynesian breath of fresh air.

Or, you know, enjoy one of the many OTHER aspects of Polynesian culture...

Ashline is the modern reincarnation of an ancient Polynesian Goddess. Her sister, Eve, is also a reincarnation of a goddess. Like most ancient Goddesses - when they're happy, they're happy and when they're not - you're dead.

As it turns out, Eve is just the wrong side of insane and her fixation is on her little sister. Knight does an amazing job of translating the fickle, petty, violent moods of an ancient goddess come to life.

Luckily for Ashline, she's not alone and this novel brings about an epic gods/goddesses mashup without turning it into a corny 80's cartoon superhero rendition of the Justice League.

Alas, it doesn't quite get this awesome, but I can imagine, right?

This novel wasn't perfect. Though I felt the characterization, plot and overall themes were fantastic, I wasn't quite sold on the ending and I had a couple of minor concerns. Mostly, there wasn't nearly enough full frontal male nudity for my tastes.

I'm STILL wondering why he turned up in an image search for "Hot Polynesian Man" but whatever...

Overall though, this novel thoroughly deserves the hype and I strongly recommend it to all my YA loving friends. I look forward to reading the sequel and future works by Knight.

Also, my respect for Simon & Schuster has gone up like a bajillion times for publishing this.

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

"I didn't say anything," Ash said.

"Maybe not with your mouth, but your eyes just called me a slut."

First, the good, because I'm a positive person. The main character in this book is a Polynesian girl. A person of color. A very rare thing to happen within an YA novel.

But now the bad. Just because the book makes an effort towards diversity, doesn't mean it's going to be good. And for me, this book was not good.

Believe me, I wanted so much to love the main character. I wanted her to be feisty, I wanted her to be fierce. What I got instead was **a gigantic slut-shaming bitch**. I like strong characters, but there is a very clear, definite line between someone who is strong-willed, and someone who has massive anger control issues. I don't like those types of characters. I do not like abuse. I don't like angry guys and love interests within books, and the same goes for angry females. **Just because a character is female does not give her the right to be violent towards others without repercussion.** Violence is violence.

The main character, **Ash**, is different because of the color of her skin. That feeling of estrangement can hurt. I understand that, and I understand her frustration.

Ash raised her hand and touched the skin over her cheek, at once painfully self-conscious of how her skin, the hue of earthen clay, clashed against the backdrop of her predominantly white school. She spent the better part of each day feeling like a grizzly in the polar bear cage.

Ash really has anger management issues. She explodes in a heartbeat. She **beats people up if they piss her off, boys and girls alike.**

Ash ripped her alarm clock from its socket and hurled it across the room. It struck the door frame right by his face, the plastic shattering on impact. Even in her unbridled rage she could enjoy the look of terror on his face as he covered his head and shrank back.

And - oh, the hypocrisy - she has the nerve to complain when faced with her (horrifyingly) more violent older sister.

Ash had tears in her eyes. "Why do you always do this?" she whispered. "You couldn't have just come back to see me. You had to make it about destruction. It's always about destroying something."

Oh, honey. "It's always about destroying something?" You could be describing yourself.

Ashline **has no character**. Well, that's not completely true. Her character is thoroughly unpleasant, and that's it. There is no depth to her. That little bit of introspection about her being different because of the color of her skin and her frustration about her missing sister is the only bit we get about what goes on within her head. There is no more driving force to her anger and her violence other than the very rudimentary.

The violence and the profanity within this book was utterly gratuitous. And that should say something, coming from me.

Despite the fact that the female characters in this book are strong - goddesses - there is **a horrifying amount of misogyny**. In the beginning of the book, Ash's boyfriend cheated on her with another girl. Ash ended up blaming the girl.

Rich Lesley, despite all his visible egocentricity, had served as a much-needed bandage, bringing with him an entourage of substitute friends in the form of his fellow tennis players and their plus-ones. But now the bandage had been ripped off with a single flick of the wrist—or, in this case, Lizzie Jacobs's tongue—and the wound of loneliness had sprung open anew.

Calling her a slut, etc.

Ash smiled acidly. “I figured I’d tag you, so that animal control would know that there’s a bitch on the loose.”

“With all the guys who come in and out of the revolving door to your Volvo’s backseat, you had to get your paws on Rich, too?” Ash asked.

Cheating is a two-way street. And if the girls in this book are all unpleasant, the guys aren't exactly winners either.

“Well, I’ll give it two days before she figures out the truth. That you’re a superman on the streets . . .” She paused provocatively. “And a dud in the sheets.”

Rolfe inhaled a sharp breath, and Ashline’s whole body constricted as she prepared to intervene. But then Rolfe let his breath out slowly. “Better a dud in the sheets,” he said coolly, “than a bitch who never had a chance.”

Caitlin says

BEFORE

Well, what the fuck?

That's all I have to say after reading the first chapter/preview. I'll still read it, but now I'm a little annoyed.

AFTER

I give up. I tried. I seriously wanted to see something underneath all the cut-out characters, over the top--*everything*. I wanted to find something that would make my heart race, even if it was for a measly second. But no. Instead, I can't stand it. So, I stop right here (page 104).

I'll keep it simple: nothing is realistic. It's like Knight took what is desirable--teens being adults along with "awesome" godly heritages--and then wrote a book. So instead of having REAL people, we have blown up,

outrageous characters who do outrageous things without batting an eyelash. Cool, right?

NO.

They're have been plenty of books (and other forms story telling mediums) where the author requires to reader to stretch their sense of realism. Example: *Heist Society*(I would use *The Goonies* as an example but it's not a book, so yea). A bunch of teenagers gang together and plan to steal a painting from a museum. It's adolescent Ocean Eleven. Of course we all know a bunch of teenagers, conning a highly protected painting is impossible, but Ally Carter is able to pull it off with tons of charm. The best thing of all--her characters are still children. They still fear getting caught by adults, they still are aware of what they're doing and the consequences, they each of insecurities. The characters themselves are grounded even if what they're doing isn't. You can still relate and identify with one or the other characters, and still be entertained by the absurdity.

Knights--not so much. It's almost like he tried too hard to provide badassery (yea, not a real word) for entertainment. Way, way to hard. Entertainment isn't everything. Depth in fact, is more important than entreatment (IMO). I rather have a badly paced book, with meaning, than a book that goes and goes and goes, but leads to no where. Plus, how else am I suppose to relate to the main character?

In all honesty, I'm too lazy to write it all out. I could probably go on and complain about Ash, her sister, the WTF violence, the teen/adult problem, creepy romance interests, lack of authority. But I want to wash my hands of this book. Let's all move on, shall we?

Tatiana says

This is not for me.

A shocking amount of pointless, gratuitous, glorified violence that is written in such a way as if it should be applauded by the readers (and to my chagrin, yes, apparently some do think it is perfectly OK, no, cool, for a girl to beat up another girl for messing around with her boyfriend); everyone's flippant attitude towards this violence (really, a week's suspension for knocking someone unconscious?); a girl with her teeth knocked out trying to be mouthy with her victimizers and, like Terminator, coming back for more and more abuse, while everyone, including the vice principal, is standing around the school yard doing absolutely nothing.

It is disturbing, it is unrealistic, it makes no sense.

I don't need to finish this to know this is all wrong.

No. Just no.

Lea says

.

Yep, so in a nutshell, I was not a fan of this book. Like, at all.

My main issue with *Wildefire* was that I didn't like the main character.

Wait, scratch that-- I could *not stand* the main character.

Wait, scratch that again-- I wish the main character had taken a running dive off of a cliff and spontaneously combusted in mid-free fall, or met any other catastrophe a la Wile E. Coyote.

Like so:

Yes, that's how much I detested Ashline Wilde-- I had to whip out some visuals of her cartoon-ish demise.

Why you ask? Well, first of all she was violent and abusive, and walked all over everyone and treated them like crap. She was super-aggressive and mean and made me wish someone would slap her into next week. Because of this, she was impossible to relate to or sympathize with.

Not to mention, she was absolutely, positively *crazy*. Let me elaborate on this point by saying that, in the prologue, Ashline beats up some girl that supposedly "stole" her boyfriend-- she actually punches the girl so hard that she's knocked unconscious and loses a tooth. Now, this begs the question, why didn't Ashline confront her unfaithful, loser boyfriend first instead of taking out her rage on the girl? And second, um hello! She just committed serious physical assault! And you now want me to be on this girl's side?! *She's a psycho!* I'm not on her side, she should be headed to a JV detention center for crying out loud! Not cool.

Her craziness continued throughout the book with many random outbursts, leaving me thinking, "um... ok?" And finally, she just wasn't girly. If her name wasn't Ashline, I would've sworn she was a dude. Which made me wonder, why didn't Karsten Knight just make his protagonist a boy? Since he is a guy himself, he would have been able to create a much more believable protag. All in all, Ashline just came across as both unbelievable as a character and really nasty as a person, so I never felt any connection to her in the story. In fact, I was sort of rooting against her.

I wish I could say that the secondary characters made up for Ashline's complete douche-baggery, but they were equally nasty, annoying and immature. The only one I liked somewhat was Colt, but I still couldn't understand for the life of me why he was so smitten with Ashline, who was beyond obnoxious and belittled him every chance she got. The guy doted on her like a love-sick puppy. Really?! Nope, not buying it. Ashline was a real you-know-what. In real life, he would've ditched her without a second thought.

Call me a wimp, but I also wasn't a big fan of all the gratuitous violence thrown into the story, much of which seemed pretty unnecessary, especially the prologue and the whole fiasco with Lizzie Jacobs (Which, by the by, sounds like *such* a fake name). Maybe that's just me, but really, you are going to be pretty hard-pressed getting me to like a character who commits serious *physical assault* within the first few pages of the book. Yeah. *Major* turn off.

Next on the list: The dialogue between the characters was positively dripping with sarcasm and undisguised venom, also for no apparent reason. Now I don't mind a little snark here and there, that livens up the interactions between the characters, but having every line be some biting comment or come back? Nobody talks like that first of all, at least not anyone that I know, and second it comes across as very forced and

artificial. It was like the author was thinking as he wrote: how cruddy and mean can I make these characters without them actually killing each other off? So yeah, I definitely got annoyed with the heavy-handed sarcasm after awhile.

Finally, and I've heard other people say this too but I had the same experience-- it took me a long time to really get into this story. There just wasn't a whole lot to keep me interested until a little over halfway through the book. Unfortunately by that point, I was so fed up with the characters that I didn't really care anymore anyways.

So altogether, this book was a fail for me. Not only wasn't I invested in any of the characters, I couldn't stand them. The sarcastic dialogue got really old about half-way through the story and finally, I didn't think that the graphic violence did anything for the plot. The one redeeming aspect of this book was the ending-- not just because it meant I could stop reading, but it was admittedly quite the cliffhanger. I think that for anyone who *did* enjoy this book and the characters, it was the perfect ending to entice them into reading the next book.

Unfortunately-- and this probably won't come as a big surprise-- I won't be reading the sequel.

Lea @ LC's Adventures in Libraryland

Wendy Darling says

Read the first 80 pages, skimmed the rest, saw the big secret, saw the big cliffhanger.

Style and story are just not for me, and I really have no interest in spending the time to write a review. More details in my reading status update.

Ceilidh says

Over the past few years, in the wake of the sparkle madness, we've seen a wide variety of paranormal mythologies saturate the YA market to the point where much of it has become derivative, overdone and frankly, a little dull. To find something original in the market is always pleasant, so a novel centred around a reincarnated Polynesian goddess was automatically a must read for me. So far, my GoodReads friends have been mixed in their opinions on the novel, so I will have to be the dull one here and fall right in the middle.

Ashline is a great protagonist. She's often stubborn and incredibly sarcastic – the banter she shares with her friends is a particular highlight of the book – and makes stupid mistakes, but she also suffers with consequences and has to learn how to mature and figure out what to do with her life and newfound destiny. Her relationship with her friends, family and the culture clash she has known through her whole life made her an often complex but always interesting heroine. This was also an instance where the obligatory romantic element didn't bother me so much; she and Colt had great chemistry, actually took time to get to know one another and didn't spend all their time obsessing over one another.

Aside from Ashline, the supporting cast ranges from good to bad in terms of development. Her group of close friends and fellow gods were especially humorous and their interactions made for some of the best parts of the novel. They actually felt like teenagers, not adults in smaller bodies, and their own personal

journeys, while handled a little clumsily (the prose is serviceable but nothing particularly groundbreaking), brought further layers to the mythological elements, another high point in the book. However, I had a strong dislike (and not in the way the author intended) to Eve, Ash's sister. She was a straight up sociopath with nothing beyond her two dimensional destruction and selfishness. I can understand what Knight's intentions were with the character, and there are hints of bigger repercussions in her relationship with Ash, but they were overwhelmed by her psychotic behaviour. The moments where she is supposed to develop beyond this felt hollow, making her ultimately an underwhelming antagonist to the story. Another possible antagonist is introduced late into the novel who is even more two dimensional than Eve, complete with Bond villain style exposition of her past, but she's dropped almost immediately.

From the first chapter, the book grabs you and is paced to keep you invested in the mystery, rushed ending aside. However, this opening may also put off many readers because of its violence. There is a lot of violence in the novel and it verged dangerously close to being gratuitous for me. I can understand the inherently violent nature of the gods and goddesses, and their struggles to keep control over their strange, burgeoning powers, but the characters often take a disappointingly flippant view of this violence which I found to be grating as the novel progressed. The opening chapter's fight was a particularly bad example of this – I don't care how violent or peaceful your neighbourhood is, there is absolutely no way you'd only get one week's suspension from school for that sort of fight. The fact that this fight takes place over a boy didn't please me much either. As well as the violent elements, I felt that the group accepted their fates a little too quickly, and seemed to take control of their powers with the same unrealistic speed.

While I didn't love "Wildefire" in quite the same way many of my reviewer friends did, it was refreshing to read a paranormal YA with unique mythos, a strong, complex female protagonist and a circle of friends with witty interactions who actually cared about one another and did more than act as plot devices. Now that the first part of the story is told, I hope Karsten Knight can further develop a great story free deserving of that killer cliff-hanger, which will leave you both infuriated and waiting for more.

3.5/5.

I received my e-ARC of "Wildefire" from Simon and Schuster's Galley Grab programme.
