



Perfectly Damaged

E.L. Montes

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Schizoaffective disorder: a mental illness in which a person experiences a combination of mood disorder and schizophrenia symptoms.

know about this illness — very well — because I suffer from it. It's been four years since my diagnosis, and ever since, I've been living in a dark hole. Voices constantly invading my thoughts. Hallucinations. All of which force me to question if what I'm experiencing is even reality. But here I am, still hanging on, still breathing and living through it.

That is, until he stumbled into my life. Logan Reed. I don't want any part of him. I've pushed him away, but he isn't easily deterred. I've told him I'm different, but he doesn't care. He's trying to slowly break me down. I'm trying just as hard not to let him. He doesn't know how truly damaged I am; what will happen when he does? I know the truth — he'll never be able to look at me the same way again. Just like everybody else.

Perfectly Damaged Details

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From Reader Review Perfectly Damaged for online ebook

Amanda says

New Adult Tropes: 20

“You know, I’m learning a lot, and there are times when it’s hard to love myself, but every time I think of you, I always think, if someone else can dig deep and fall in love with even my damaged side, then there is hope for me after all.”

Few things are as stigmatized as having a mental illness. I've met people who don't know how to react when hearing someone is diagnosed with a mental illness. Even when specifying what disorder it is, such as depression or bipolar disorder, they're still uncomfortable despite the two aforementioned are two of the most common disorders discussed openly. There are many misconceptions about mental illnesses going about, which is why it's so important to, when writing (or talking) about them, do it accurately to not feed these misconceptions.

It's also important - and I can't stress this point enough - to not romanticize mental illness. Which brings us right back to this book, *Perfectly Damaged*.

Jenna is a young woman who's lived with her parents her whole life. She's also diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, which has made her parents incredibly protective of her, almost believing she isn't able to do things on her own. Jenna, to some extent, agrees. Although she'd like nothing more than to get out from under their watchful eyes - but they're almost never home - she still doubts herself and her abilities most of the time due to her mental disorder. Add the fact that her sister died a few months earlier, Jenna has now lost her most important supporter. When Jenna's mother decides to build a guesthouse, she hires a company to do it. Enter does Logan. After an awkward meeting where Logan saves Jenna's life, and then Jenna demanding he kiss her, they now spend the days rather close to each other. Jenna is hesitant to let him in due fearing he'll leave when he finds out about her diagnosis. And so the story goes.

It's sad to say, but this is **exactly the same story as any other new adult story there is**. We have all the usual elements: hot guy saving a damaged heroine from her insecurities and past. A heroine with a tense relationship to her parents. A best friend that's obsessed with sex (and unfortunately that's as much personality this woman gets). Both the heroine and the hero constantly slutshames, and their thoughts (and comments) are filled with misogyny. For good measure there's also the topics of suicide and rape as well as death of a close family member (actually, there are two).

So where does the mental illness join the story? To be perfectly clear: **The mental illness aspect of this story appears to be more of an afterthought than the crucial aspect it should be.** As said, this story is nothing different from a lot of other new adult stories, but instead of rape or past abuse - two of the most common devices in new adult - the mental illness takes their place. Jenna is damaged because of it. It causes the tension in the family. It's what holding Jenna back from pursuing a relationship (of any kind). And yet, the focus is always on the romantic tension between Jenna and Logan. The illness isn't a big part of the story and could've easily been replaced by something else as an excuse for Jenna to be "damaged".

That said, I'll be the first to admit I'm not familiar with Jenna's disorder. As far as I gather, it's a disorder with

the same symptoms as schizofreni, but also of a mood disorder. In this story it means Jenna hear voices, has hallucinations, and has periods of depression. It needs to be mentioned that Jenna's episodes (as she calls them) often seems to be convenient plot devices to progress her relationship with Logan and little else. Anyhow, Jenna hears voices at times (although I only recall two instances in this novel) and sees hallucinations (also two, if my memory serves me right). These scenes were very generic, but that's all I can say.

However, I feel more confident talking about her periods of depression. **To be blunt: they sound nothing like depression.** Jenna, as it's written, is not depressed. She whines, complains, and is just plain pissed off. Which is not what depression is, and I'm speaking from experience here. Given how inaccurately portrayal of her periods of depression are, it's hard to determine if the other aspects of her mental illness are portrayed this way. Accurate portrayal of the mental disorder or not, the story nevertheless romanticizes the condition. Jenna focusing on Logan accepting - and loving - her "damaged" part. Logan being portrayed as something akin to Jenna's savior. It all adds to painting a romantic picture around the mental disorder. Instead of a story about a young woman learning to live with her disorder, it's a story about a woman waiting for a man to love her despite her mental disorder in hope of accepting herself by accepting his love.

Gretchen says

I was excited to read this book, I really was. The concept is a good one, bringing light to the struggle those with mental illness face daily. But as I started reading through it, I began to feel like I was back in middle school, reading the damaged-girl-saved-by-understanding-boy fics that are so popular on youth writing websites. Perhaps the style just isn't for me, but the writing felt underdeveloped, a little awkward, and (for lack of a better description) over-explain-y where the narrators train of thought is used to keep the plot moving instead of action.

L.B. says

I would like to first of all like to applaud and commend E.L. Montes for tackling the subject of schizophrenia and all that accompanies it. Stepping out of the box isn't easy, but she did it beautifully and quite masterfully.

When we first meet Jenna, she is haunted, lost totally in her own mind as she is taunted by her voices. I could feel her frustration, her warring, her fear, and her grief as she experienced them. I love how we are shown exactly what is going on inside her head, because it really allows us as readers to identify with and understand her. But she is not without her own self-deprecating sense of humor, which I absolutely loved. Her journey was not easy, but so worth it. Goosebumps by the end. Loved watching her grow and face her fears.

Speaking of love...LOGAN! GAH! Looooooved him. Nothing sexier than a sweet, loyal, fierce, man that wears...an old worn out Phillies cap. Seriously, I could picture it in my head and trust me, he was H-A-W-T. I loved his patience and persistence when it came to Jenna. I found it endearing and incredibly sexy.

Bring in the awesome and hilarious best friend, Charlie, and the evil mother from Hell, Mom, and you have one INCREDIBLY entertaining story.

I really loved this book. I was enthralled in the storyline. The uniqueness of subject matter definitely piqued my interest, but once I started, there was no turning back. I was hooked. There are several sad moments, several laugh out loud moments, several NOOOO! moments, and several swoon-errific moments.

Great writing, wonderful story, beautiful lesson. Everything a five star read should be. Congratulations on a job well done!!!

E.L. Montes says

I'm the author of this standalone; scheduled to be released late May 12, 2014. THIS is the exact date and it will be released on this date or sooner. Thank you so much for your interest!

Becca says

This is easily one of my top books for 2014. Jenna and Logan's story will push you to the edge of every emotion.

Emmy has done a fantastic job of character and story development. I believe she has grown by leaps and bounds, being able to take you into a story that deals with sensitive subjects with finesse and respect.

High recommend this story of finding ones self and learning to trust a love that seems unattainable.

bibliophile (Romance Addict) says

****FIVE Damaged stars****

“Each day is unexpected. No matter how hard you try,
you can never prepare for the life ahead.”

Synopsis:

Perfectly Damaged is a standalone book, which centers around a mentally ill girl. Jenna suffers from Schizoaffective disorder that cripples her daily life. After a very rough experience, she decides to shut herself off from the rest of the world, and never tell anyone about her disorder. After meeting Logan, she try her best to make everything seem alright, but what happen if he discovers her secret?

This book is a dual point of view, with Jenna and Logan. It also goes back and forth between the present and

the past. The book does do all these point justice, and is understandable.

“Live for today, push for tomorrow,”

Characters:

Jenaa

Jenna is the main character in this book. At first, we get to see how she's fighting her disorder. We read about the symptoms she go through everyday, and how much this disorder is affecting her life. In Jenna's life, there are only few people who knows her, and knows about her disorder. Her mom, dad, and Charlie are the only people left for her until Logan comes along.

I love how Jenna was trying very hard to make her disorder a secret. I think it's very realistic and I have to clap to E.L. Montes because this book is *very* realistic.

“I’m alone in this shed. There’s no one watching”

“My thoughts are all I have and they’re the last things I want to keep me company. I’m a prisoner of my own mind, trapped with the unknown, angry voices.”

Logan

Logan is a playboy who never cared about relationships, until he meets Jenna. After the death of his brother Sean, he is never the same. He has no goal in life, and is trying hard to set his life straight but he never achieved that dream. Then he meet Jenna; the mysterious girl he gets interested in. As they get to know each other, he falls deeply in love with her, and want to be in her world.

I really like Logan, and his respect for Jenna. He is a mature character who treat Jenna with respect even though he is curious to know more about her. At first, I wasn't sure if I'll like him but he grew a lot on me, and by the time he met Jenna, I was rooting for him!

“Judgments are given so easily; learning about a person and their struggles is far more difficult.”

“There are times when you just want to give it all up. But then it goes on to say that maybe, just maybe, there’s a purpose in your life and that purpose could be sitting right next to you.”

Pros

I liked many things about this book.

The characters are very well developed, and we get to know them very well. I liked all the characters except the mom. I mean duh! Anyways, Jenna and Logan are very mature and caring about each other. I really enjoyed their relationship. However, these were times when I was very frustrated with them because I wanted them to be together but it's not possible. I even like the supporting characters like Charlie, and Santino. Charlie was very hilarious and the friendship she has with Jenna is real.

“When the Japanese mend broken objects, they aggrandize the damage by filling the cracks with gold. They believe that when something’s suffered damage and has a history it becomes more beautiful.”

The book is very *unpredictable*. Yes! I thought I knew what was going to happen, but oh no! I so did not. There was a lot of things that happened, and my mind didn't even expect it.

The book is very realistic. Jenna's symptoms were described very clearly. We get inside the mind of mentally ill person, and it was a very good ride. I love how the writer showed the reality of how mentally ill people live in the world; in fear of other knowing. I was kind of confused at first because I didn't know what she was seeing is true or not, but then, we got to see how it's her disorder.

“Grief never goes away. It haunts you, taking over your mind, body, and soul. Before you know it, it has won.”

Cons

This book deals with serious issues, and it's dark. I am totally okay with this because I love Psychology way too much which makes this point a plus for me.

I was a bit frustrated at Logan and Jenna's relationship. I just wanted them to get together, and I felt sorry for Logan because he felt bad many times. However, when we see it from Jenna's point of view, it is acceptable because it's hard to tell him the truth.

“Love is the devil in disguise.”

I wanted to hit the mom in her face! Please *Lemme do it!*

I think that's all the cons I can come up with because I seriously like this book!

**“I hope that there’s a moment in everyone’s life when everything around them just stops. There’s no movement whatsoever, yet you feel...
Every. Single. Thing.”**

**“I breathe, I feel free, and I’m thankful that for today...
I am living.”**

Brandee - Brandee's Book Endings says

NOW LIVE!

Amazon: <http://amzn.to/1hDmpcD>

5 Beautifully written stars

Make sure to add this one to your to read list - E.L. Montes has written a UNIQUE and beautiful story of love, loss, friendship, strength, redemption and hope. FULL REVIEW TO COME LATER.

Dusti Hanrahan says

4-4.5 'Jersey Girl' stars!

song: "Landscape" by Florence Welch (thank you Mud Vein for this musical treasure)

I really loved this book! I love the way E.L. Montes uses her platform to educate us about this disorder and helps remind us that everyone deserves a chance at love.

This was a super emotional story and I felt the profound struggle that Jenna faced w each day. This was beautifully written and I plan to read as much as I can by this author. Depression is everywhere and as much as we understand it we are even more clueless. Jenna is an example of how so many people live and struggle,

and my heart goes out to all of those who relate to this story on a personal level.

Through 90% of this book I wanted, no I planned to give it a 5 star rating but I just felt the ending was rushed.

Christy says

4 Damaged Stars!!!

Perfectly Damaged is a emotional and beautiful story about learning to love your self and accepting love from others just the way you are. Mental illness is a topic that's not often spoken about. You might read about bipolar disorder, anxiety, depression etc, but I've never read about anyone with schizoaffective disorder. It was very interesting and after doing some research, I can tell the author wrote this story realistically so bravo for that.

Jenna is not your average girl. She has an illness that others can't always see. One that she can't control. No matter how many meds she takes, or how much therapy she goes through some days, she just can't turn off her mind. After losing the one person in the world who 'got her' always rallied for her and loved her unconditionally, (her sister, Brooke) things have been harder than normal. She has her father, who loves her dearly, but works a lot, and her best friend Charile, but that's about it.

Jenna is out swimming one day and gets saved by Logan Reed. Logan works construction with his uncle and they are doing work on Jenna's family guest house. Logan is attractive, he's covered in tattoos.

When Jenna kisses him out of the blue to get rid of some guy, he is intrigued. And so is she.

For a short moment within that one kiss, I forgot who I was. The world around us was completely still. I was lost in the arms of a complete stranger. That's what bothers me most: him. He bothers me. I know nothing about him, so how the hell could he make me feel so alone, so at peace, so... safe?

Logan and Jenna develop a wonderful friendship throughout the story. It's obvious to everyone around them how attracted they are to one another, but Jenna can't go there with him. She can't go there with anyone. She can't risk losing this boy she's grown to care for and depend on.

Deep down I know he'll never want to be with someone like me. The real me. The me he has yet to see. The question is if I keep spending time with him, will I be able to keep that part hidden?

?Logan is not naive. He knows Jenna is going through something, he just doesn't know what. All he knows is he wants her happy. He will be there for her, no matter what.

I want her to be surrounded with brightness in her life. I want her to fight through the darkness and find her light someday.

?Logan Reed is a dream man. I love a cocky guy with tattoos, but this man is so much more than that. A guy who starts out as a player turns into a man who is a best friend, a confidant, someone who Jenna can count on. Someone who loves her deeply with out judging, who never gives up on her even when he finds out some of her issues. He is sweet, swoony and snarky at times. I adored him!

"I'm not going to give up on what we have over what you're dealing with. We can take care of it together."

?Jenna was a heroine with some issues, but she was amazing. The strength she has after induing all she has in her life is astounding. I also loved Jenna's dad and best friend, Charlie. Her mom was another story. I'm not sure if the things she said and did would ever be redeemable to me.

Watching Jenna and Logan go to friends to more was something special. The way Logan made Jenna feel and the way he loved her no matter what was inspiring.

The only reason I didn't give this five stars was the fact that it took me a little while to connect with the story. It didn't pull me in right away. That and the fact that it didn't effect me like I expected it to. When I've read books like *Find you In the Dark*, *Therapy* and *Reclaiming the Sand* (Just to name a few) they had this automatic profound effect on me. I felt fully invested in those stories 100% of the time. This one took a while, but once I got further into the story I really loved it. The writing was fluid and loved the message it provided. That no matter who you are and what you're going through in life, there are people out there who will love you with no judgments or reservations. If you're looking for a beautiful love story with a swoony hero and a strong heroine, this is one I'd recommend!

ARC kindly provided in exchange for honest review

Christine says

I can't wait!!! Such a fan of Disastrous!!!

Wendy says

This book's description scares me but in a good way. I'm intrigued. Bring it on.

Gina G says

I was lucky enough to win an ARC of this truly brilliant book. This book truly will open your eyes about mental illness. The characters warm your heart and make you feel the emotions that they are feeling throughout the book. The storyline portrays in my eyes how mental illness plays out in a family. Love Logan and Jersey Girls journey. You will laugh, you will cry and your heart will break and then you will smile. Love this quote "Live today, push for tomorrow". This will be a book that stays with me forever. Will need the hard copy for the bookshelf.

Zakirrah BookBlogger says

4 Damaged Stars!!

"When the Japanese mend broken objects, they aggrandize the damage by filling the cracks with gold. They believe that when something has suffered damage and has a history it becomes more beautiful."

This is the second book I have read by E.L. Montes the first one being *Disastrous* which I also really enjoyed. Reading the synopsis I was intrigued to find out how this book would turn out but there was also the fear that it may be too depressing and that would put me off.

When I started it I was surprised to see that it was nothing like what I was expecting it to be! I really enjoyed this book and it really shows you how frightening it would be to be suffering from a mental disorder. You don't get cured some stay with you for the rest of your life and you have to learn to live with it.

I love how the author took on a subject like mental disorders and weaved it into something beautiful. A love story based on acceptance, love, patience, strength, struggle and much more!

Schizoaffective disorder: is a mental disorder characterized by disordered thought processes and abnormal emotional responses. Common symptoms of psychosis include auditory hallucinations, paranoid delusions..

Jenna McDaniels is a twenty-one year old young woman who looks totally normal on the outside..look a little closer and you find out that she isn't normal, she is suffering, struggling with a disorder that has taken over her life. She has Schizoaffective disorder, what is real? what is her imagination? A struggle to grasp reality and move forward she can't live a normal life.She is still living at home with a hateful mother and a father that is never home. And after the death of her sister who was the only one she could truly rely on things go from bad to worse. Her sisters friend Charlie helps out when her life is filled with darkness, she tries to help her keep going when she wants to give up.

?Logan Reed is a twenty-six year old construction worker. Logan Reed works for his uncle's construction company, a company that has been hired to build a guest house for the McDaniels. Hot, tattooed bad boy with a heart of gold! Logan's first encounter with Jenna isn't a normal one after saving her from drowning instead of being thankful she is pissed off and then she tells him that he is probably gay? Yeah not great but this encounter leaves an impression. Logan is supposed to be a bit of a player, someone who doesn't commit and is pretty much indifferent. That is until he meets Jenna, he knows there is something different about her but hasn't figured out what.He becomes an amazing friend to her, someone she can rely on and someone who makes her feel safe.

'For a short moment within that one kiss, I forgot who I was. The world around us was completely still. I was lost in the arms of a complete stranger. That's what bothers me most: him. He bothers me. I know nothing about him, so how the hell could he make me feel so alone, so at peace, so... safe?'

Jenna hasn't told him about the disorder she is suffering from, she doesn't think he can handle it.Will she push him away, keep the secret hidden or let it all out and let him decide?

I loved how supportive and affectionate Logan was, how patient and gentle he was and how he seemed so perfect yet when you find out about his past..he feels real. His past makes him stronger, his struggles made him better which made him the perfect guy for Jenna. She needed everything he had, the strength to carry on and get better, to never give up. She learns to love herself that is a big part to the story, loving yourself and having confidence in yourself gets you a long way. The dual POV is exactly what I needed,I think its the main reason this didn't get really depressing and put me off!

I want her to be surrounded with brightness in her life. I want her to fight through the darkness and find her light someday.

I think we should have more books on mental disorders and make more people aware of what some individuals are going through.Many times throughout this book I tried putting myself in Jenna's place and it's pretty scary to not have a grip on reality. The voices would totally kill me and you never really wonder how many people live with this everyday and will live with it for the rest of their lives.Something that is constant for them, their struggles, fighting the depression and trying to carry on with life. Hats off to all the strong

people out there!

****ARC provided for an honest review****

Blog: <http://zakirrahsbookblog.blogspot.co.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Zakirr...>

Brit says

I just have to say is WOW. This book was beyond amazing. One of the best books I've read this year to date. I love how E.L. Montes portrays/captures the pain and anguish of mental illness not a lot of authors can. I felt deeply connected to the characters throughout their journey in perfectly damaged. I just knew this was going to be a 5 star read and I was right.

I also love how this book was written in dual perspectives so we know how the other person is feeling and how they come about knowing about the mental illness.

This book will push you to feel. You will laugh and you will cry. and every emotion in-between.

I highly recommend you buy this or put it on your TBR. And I also applaud the author on this amazing story. it will truly stay with me.

Holly says

Perfectly Damaged was a beautiful story about finding love and acceptance just the way you are. Our heroine, Jenna, suffers from mental illness and her story and struggle is told realistically, and honestly. It's told with compassion and dignity. It squashes stereotypes about people with mental illness, they're not crazy. They're just people needing love and acceptance. It's a beautiful story teaching us how the love from another can teach us to love our self. Love from another can give us hope, it can heal. I can't wait for May 12th when everyone can read this one.
