



## Familiar Things

*Lia Habel*

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# Familiar Things

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## Familiar Things Lia Habel

Sixteen-year-old witch Everrose Morgantwill isn't sure which monster is causing her more trouble—the ten-foot-tall wildcat she's attracted as her familiar, or her emotionally unstable boyfriend.

Half her spells go nowhere, and people always have trouble remembering her name, but even so—Everrose's life is idyllic. Born and raised in All Hollows County, a secretive world created by powerful witches and warlocks for the protection of the magically inclined, she's never had to fear persecution. In All Hollows, magic is used openly. A great spell known as the Nestle Ward isolates and protects it, though there is one odd little side effect.

In our world, it's 2015. In All Hollows, it's 1958.

Between sewing the perfect high school wardrobe, experimenting with red lipstick and cake mascara, and dreaming about prom, Everrose has a lot on her mind. When her steady boyfriend returns from a trip to "the Layside" a changed warlock, however—she notices. Handsome Vincent Olwen was affectionate and self-effacing when he left, but he's come back acting sullen and withdrawn. Everrose is lost for an explanation—and lost for what to do.

Troubled by the changes she sees in Vincent, Everrose tries to distract herself by searching for her first familiar—a rite of passage for sixteen-year-olds in All Hollows. But when she does make the Connexion, it's with the last animal she would've ever expected—a massive, terrifying wildeor called a trothenbeast. Only powerful witches and warlocks attract wildeors as familiars. Yet, when it comes to magic, Everrose is completely inept. It makes no sense. Weirder still, the beast fails to alert Everrose to the presence of magic, and refuses to shadow her. In short, he doesn't act like a protecting, guiding familiar animal at all.

Faced with all of this, Everrose is just about ready to throw in the towel. Before she can, though, she learns that the trothenbeast has been cursed by an evil witch named Ebonella Rosu—and that Ebonella wants him back.

Everrose must contend with a witch who wants her dead, a familiar who needs her protection, and a boyfriend who's changing before her eyes. When she finally reaches out for help, she finds it from an unlikely source—her boyfriend's moody, somewhat mysterious father, the mayor of her little town. What secrets does Roderick Olwen harbor? And what do they have to do with Everrose herself?

## Familiar Things Details

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# From Reader Review Familiar Things for online ebook

## Kayla says

Special thanks to Lia Habel for sending me a review copy of this book.  
Check out full review here: <http://www.mycornerofthelibrary.com/2...>

I really enjoyed this book. It is frothy, fun, and clever.

When I first started the story, I was intrigued, and excited to read something by this author. Her Dearly series from Random House was excellent, and I was not disappointed. However, this book did have something of a slow start. While I enjoyed the book, it did not pull me in and grip me until the last 100 pages. However, Habel's plot twists are well-developed and they make sense to the situations. Also, she answers reader's questions effectively without the dreaded info-dump. Her development of the plot and the information we need is well-timed.

**The Theme:** Habel's theme in this novel is fresh and original! I like how she melded many different elements together to create a unique story. I like that the town is sealed off from our own time and they are knowingly living in a 1950's time warp. This really drives the plot and differentiates it from other witch stories. The idea of witches that have familiars is a clever idea. Habel tied this into her title very well.

**The Characters and Relationships:** Everrose and Typhon's friendship was well-developed, and I loved their dynamic. This was one of the highlights of the story.

Everrose is a good character. She is endearing, optimistic, and empathetic. We never see her complaining about her circumstances. Also, it's clear that she is different from people in her town. While she thinks she isn't a very good witch, she seems more tuned-in to life than most of the people in her town.

I did not care for Summerlene because she wasn't a very good best friend. However, Habel explains this later in the plot. I really like how she had a reason that Summerlene is not a good friend to Everrose.

What I did not like was how Everrose is closer to her boyfriend's father than her actual boyfriend, Vincent. Mayor Olwen had moments where he acted more like a dad than her actual father.

This book is not intended to be a romance. While Everrose and Vincent have real relationship issues, this is not fully developed in this book. Vincent is always gone, and in some small way this detracted from the plot.

Still, I found myself wishing that there was more of a romance in this story. The whole time, I was looking for something to happen between Everrose and Vincent, but I think that was because I am yearning for the relationship that exists between Nora and Bram in Dearly, Departed.

**The Plot:** The plot started out a little slow. I did not like how long it took to set up everything, but this could be chalked up to the fact that we are entering a new world. For this reason, I think the sequel will be even better than book 1.

The best part of this book was the climax. I like the relationship that Habel developed between Everrose and Typhon up to this point and their efforts to stop Ebonella. I absolutely loved the explanation for things going on in the story. The reason why Everrose doesn't have a familiar is brilliant! It really added to the story and

explained A LOT. Also, I'm predicting that Typhon and Everrose's relationship might change in an interesting way... there were a lot of clues in the text that suggested this.

Probably the only element of the novel that was a little unexplored was The Laysider world. I really felt that the narrative turned around from being slow at the point that Vincent starts talking about the outside world. There was a lot of opportunity for commentary about our world. This was one of my favorite quotes from the novel:

They live in a world that seems to have no end. A world that never stops to take a breath. A world where a single person can speak and everyone else can hear the moment they say it, where mobs can rise up against dictators at the click of a button....

I really hope that Everrose has to go out into the Layside in the sequel.

This looks like a promising series! I can't wait to read more from Lia Habel!

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### **Diana says**

\*I received an ARC of this digital book from its author in exchange for an honest review. Thank you Lia Habel!\*

You guys, Lia Habel must be a witch because I am totally under her spell! Seriously. I'm not joking. Her debut, *Dearly Departed* (which happens to be my favorite zombie book EVER), catapulted her straight onto my auto-buy list and I have been entranced with her writing ever since.

I absolutely love the world Lia created for *Familiar Things*! The attention to detail is astonishing and I'm pretty sure her creativity knows no bounds. I adored how the Nestle Ward around All Hallows kept it perpetually stuck in the past. And it was so well done that you actually felt like you'd been transported back to the 1950's! The fashion, the cars, the malt shops, being "pinned" by boys, and the lingo! Oh, the lingo! It was so much fun!

And, All Hallows being a community made exclusively for the magically inclined, everything was magical and deliciously witchy! Like how everyone practiced magic in the open—with wands no less! Or how the department store was called Cursewell's, and the grocery store Brew Lo. And I think that possibly one of my favorite things EVER was Everrose's jack-o-lantern dress! Oh, and let's not forget the familiars. I LOVED the familiars and how they made a connexion with their witches. Such an original idea!

World building aside, I really enjoyed Everrose's story. She's a character that you can really relate to and will totally root for. It was so refreshing that her story revolved around her and her familiar instead of her relationship with Vincent. Don't get me wrong, I can't wait to see what happens with them down the line, but I really just fell in love with Typhon. Not to mention that at one point I thought I totally had something figured out about him BUT I WAS WRONG. That, like, never happens and I loved it! Bonus brownie points for that :) AND the whole reason behind poor Everrose being so forgettable? Absolutely. Brilliant.

So, in short, *Familiar Things* is an utterly bewitching read and I CANNOT WAIT for the next installment of Everrose's story!

Originally poste on <https://brilliantlynovel.wordpress.co...>

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## **Sarah says**

Rating: 3.5/5

"Familiar Things" is one of the best self-published books I have read in a long time. The plot was well-paced, and Habel's take on witches was refreshingly original and interesting. I particularly enjoyed the time difference between the magical and regular worlds and the explanation that is given. That is one thing I really appreciated about this book: every time I had a question about why or how something happened, it is almost immediately explained to the reader.

The story was well-paced, and the plot twists were surprising without feeling like they came out of left field. I loved that the frustratingly mysterious pieces of Everrose's life slowly fall into place over the course of the story and collectively point the reader to a rather insightful conclusion about Everrose's magic, her past, her present, and her future as a witch in All Hallows.

Unfortunately, I didn't like the characters in this new series as well as I liked the characters in her previous books. None of the secondary characters were very well-developed, and even the main character was very hard for me to connect with. I wanted more insight into Everrose as a person, something to make her memorable aside from the part she played within the story.

Although it is explained later in the book, I really did not care for Vincent and his hot-and-cold approach to Everrose. This felt Twilight-ish, and not in a good way. Even worse is the creepy-close relationship Everrose develops with Vincent's father, the Mayor. I am not sure why, but the chemistry that developed between the two of them just rubbed me the wrong way and it didn't make sense to me.

One thing I did really enjoy about Vincent and his father was the political debates that are sparked after Vincent returns to All Hallows after visiting present-day 2015. They raised a lot of the same questions and concerns that I had with the time difference and All Hallows rules. This was a wonderful side-plot that really added some dimension to the story and the world as a whole.

Overall this was an inventive, enjoyable read for anyone who likes fiction about witches and magic. The world-building is by far the best part of the story. The plot is delightfully twisty and well-paced, but I wanted a little more dimension from the characters. I am excited to see what the next book in the series brings!

Thank you to Lia Habel for allowing me to review this book! Review copy was provided to me in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Heather Hastings says**

I loved this book like i loved her Dearly books. But there is supposed to be 1 more dearly book and on her blog said there wasnt going to be one. so i am giving this author another chance so lets see if she finishes this series . we can hope just wish she would let us know when the next 2 will be out.

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## **Alisha Tarran says**

Sixteen year old Everrose Morgantwill is a witch, albeit a not very good one, all of her spells never work properly unless it's in aid of someone else, and everyone has trouble remembering her and her name, including her own parents! Everrose lives in the idyllic All Hallows County, a world secret from our world, protected and hidden by strong wards created by powerful witches and warlocks to protect those with magic from the persecution magic users received in our world....you know....Salem witch trials and everything. Everyone uses magic freely in All Hallows, and the ward, known as the Nestle Ward has a really, really cool side effect....in our world it's 2015...but in All Hallows? It's 1958. Yep, they're behind us by quite a few years!

Everrose's life is about to take a turn for the complicated and ever so slightly weird, her steady boyfriend, Vincent has just returned from Currens, a trip from our world over the summer, basically, and he's not his usual self you could say. Instead of being his lovely, affectionate and kind self, he's sullen and withdrawn and has some ideas that could get him in a lot of trouble! Troubled by his behaviour, Everrose distracts herself by searching for her familiar before school starts, in between sewing new outfits, experimenting with red lipstick and daydreaming about prom, something all sixteen year olds in All Hallows do. But when she makes the Connexion....another problem surfaces.

You see she makes her connection with a huge, terrifying Wildeor called a Trothenbeast. Only very powerful witches and warlocks attract wildeors as familiars, so some are suspicious as to how she has one as a familiar, not to mention the so called best friend who's so jealous she turns her back on her. As if that wasn't weird enough, Typhon fails to alert her to the presence of magic like a familiar should do, and fails to shadow her, so he pretty much acts nothing like a familiar is supposed to. THEN she finds out Typhon...can talk. Turns out he's been cursed by a witch called Ebonella Rosu, and she wants him back.

Everrose has to face a witch who wants her dead, a familiar who needs her protection, and a boyfriend who's changing before her eyes, not to mention pushing everyone away and teaming up with the wrong person. Everrose needs help, and she's surprised to get it from a very unlikely source, her boyfriend's moody and mysterious adoptive father, the Mayor, who happens to be the only person in town who ever remembers her once she's left his presence. What secrets does Roderick Olwen harbour? And what do they have to do with Everrose herself? Will she be able to keep her familiar?

Duuuddee I love Lia Habel! Like seriously, I stumbled across Dearly, Departed at the library, read it, absolutely loved it and then went to buy my own copy so I could read it again and again, and don't even get me started on the second book! Still holding out/hoping for a third book! So when Lia tweeted she was working on something new....my excitement and curiosity slowly started to build, and when she finally told us what it was? And offered ARCs to bloggers? I pretty much happy danced and metaphorically shoved people out the way to email her, then when it arrived in my inbox? Total freak out, it was a while before I calmed down!

I read Familiar Things in a couple of hours, I finished at about 1am and immediately felt bereft, I didn't want to leave the world and the characters of the book behind, I wanted to carry on reading, and kept wishing new pages would appear, I totally loved it and I'm so excited there's going to be a sequel I can't even cope with my excitement for it to be released! I'm sure you've guessed that this is going to be one of those rambling with excitement, reviews that I do.

Familiar Things is the one thing I value in books above all else. It's unique. Totally and completely unique

from page one, from its premise and concept to its characters and its world. Everything is completely and totally unique and I loved every minute of it. This book is unlike anything I've read before, familiars that pick you? Wards protecting All Hallows that means they're behind the modern world? The different types of magic? Literally EVERYTHING!

I was hooked from page one, and it was impossible to put the book down....so I didn't. I really loved the vibe of the book, 50's with the music and the clothes and the makeup and the gadgets and everything, it was a very well created vibe that oozed off the page and was infectious, along with the atmosphere! To be honest, it kind of reminded me of Halloweentown, particularly when I realized Everrose legit has a dress with pumpkins all over it that she doesn't just wear for Halloween, so it reminded me of that, but so much better and cooler really.

The world building was so incredibly vivid, I felt like I'd been sucked in to the world, which is quite probably why I didn't want to leave ya know, I mean why would I?! There's magic everywhere. I love magic! Every single one of the characters had plenty of depth and were so very well written, there's hidden sides to everyone, and the secondary characters can very well stand on their own, even if they weren't in it much, and some of which had a bigger role than initially thought, like the Mayor for example. I'm sure we'll be seeing more of some of these secondary characters in the next book, particularly as she'll have to tell Merle and her family about her powers!

I loved Everrose, I mean she turns out to be a fairy godmother, and I didn't see that coming at all, but the explanation for her powers and what she is and the mythology behind it was so awesome and I don't really need to mention the U word again do I? You guys got the picture right? She was such a colourful character, she was strong, willing to stand up for herself when it comes down to it, and she was so loyal to Typhon and willing to do anything for anyone, she's very selfless and sympathetic to everyone, and I just totally loved her and connected with her from the go. I really, really freaking love her character more than I have words for! The same can be said for Typhon! Who was totally more than he seemed, and he was just kind of awesome really wasn't he? I mean....he talks, and he's all RAAAARRR and so loyal to Everrose and willing to do what he did to help her.

I also really liked the Mayor, despite the fact I thought he was a bit of a douche in the beginning and at a few other times, like seriously, HE COULD HAVE TOLD HER I MEAN REALLY MAYOR?! But yeah. I really liked him too, the fact he was so willing to help Everrose with feeding Typhon "for the Hollow", yeah whatever Mayor, and was driving her round everywhere and just so willing to let her hang out with him and talk to her like an actual person and not a child, and the fact he actually ya know...remembers her! Everrose has no-one to really talk to and help her, and the Mayor is all "you can talk to me if you ever need someone to talk to" and I was like man...is it wrong that they're fast becoming my BROTP?! I mean he's kind of too old to be her legit BFF, but I seriously am beginning to ship them as my new BROTP, they're hilarious together, their banter had me cracking up so much, thank God I wasn't reading this in a public place! I don't even like insects and bugs, I really really hate them, won't let them near me, I literally run away screaming, but to be honest, I'll make an exception for Clackwell, he seems quite cool for an insect, I might even use the word....cute. Operating the pedals? SO CUTE.

Like I said, Familiar Things is atmospheric and the atmosphere and vibe of the book ooze off the page and pretty much engulf you and totally pass it on to you. The book really got me in the 50's mood, I'm not gonna lie, I usually do the eyeliner and red lipstick with the quiffed front hair and the ponytail, that's about as 50's as I go, and I'm fairly certain it doesn't really count, but this book has really made me be in the mood to do my makeup all 50's, I'm at acting class on Wednesday and Thursday, so I could totally get away with it! I haven't cracked out the red lipstick in ages mostly because I'm lazy but yeah. It's also swayed me in a

clothing choice. I've found this really cool website ages ago with loads of 50's dresses and swimwear etc, and I think thanks to this book, I'm gonna take the plunge and buy some of the dresses and just do my own thing. Or ya know....just move to All Hollows, I mean....Lia can totally make that happen...right?!

I should probably mention the lingo at this point. A lot of the time with books set in a different time, phrases native to the time are shoved everywhere and totally cliche and kind of annoys the hell out of you and sticks out like a sore thumb. The language was perfectly pitched and toned. It was subtle, it was there, but it was subtle, and very natural, so you knew it was the 50's by the language and the things mentioned, but it wasn't overdone so it seemed weird, you know what I mean? It didn't seem odd that certain phrases were used, and it didn't seem out of place, I'm really not explaining this very well, but any British person who's read a book by a US author that's set in England will know what I'm talking about, not every book, but a fair few, it's the same kind of thing and I'm going to shut up now, just know the language and the phrases etc? FANTASTIC.

The next book has subtly been set up without giving too much away, we know Vincent needs a smack upside the head, and there's going to be something going on with him in the next book, and his ideas, and see what he's doing with the dodgy guy, so we have some inclination of what's going to happen but really, that will only be a small part of the book....or it could be the main part...who knows? I don't, but I'm excited! I'm excited to see what happens, will they embrace the tech of 2015 (I hope not, I don't want to lose the 50's vibes), will Everrose end up with Vincent if he stops being a douche or will he continue to be a douche and there'll be a new romance? What will my BROTP do next?

I mentioned already that everyone has different magic abilities, so far we know that the Mayor is a necromancer, but not the usual kind, so you know, creepy and hangs with zombies, for a change he can't bring people back for more than a few hours, which was a refreshing change to the normal. And then we know Everrose is a fairy godmother, which I have never come across in a book before, and is going to present some interesting problems and dynamics in the next book I'm sure.

Now, don't lynch me for what I say next BUT, I quite enjoyed the fact that the book was focused on Everrose and her abilities and her relationship/friendship with Typhon and the bond they were forming, rather than on her romance with Vincent and how much of a douche he is, I mean their relationship was in there but it wasn't the main focus, which is rare! It was a secondary thing. The bond of friendship between Everrose and her familiar was complex and interesting to watch develop, particularly when YA is usually aaaaallll about the romance, and it's going to be interesting to see what's going to happen between her and Vincent in the next book, and their relationship and where it's going to go!

The plot, I thought, was intricate and had a lot of different threads to it, Vincent and what his problem was, the familiar issue, what Everrose is, Ebonella and so on, and it was all woven together to create a plot that totally drew you in and kept your attention the entire way through, it was engaging and entertaining and full of things going on. I was constantly surprised at all of the plot twists and turns, which isn't something I get to say often no matter how much I love a book or series, but this genuinely surprised me, I couldn't figure out what was going to happen next, and I was seriously on a rollercoaster. I wasn't expecting Vincent to go the way he did, I didn't work out what his problem was, I kind of thought he'd been hexed or something, I also wasn't expecting Everrose to be a fairy godmother, and the explanation for everyone forgetting her, I had so many crazy theories that were way crapper than the actual reason! And like I said, I was totally surprised by the Mayor as a character and him being such a nice bloke in the end!

Honestly, I don't know what Lia is worrying about! I love Dearly, Departed and I LOVED this book, I'm sure other fans of Dearly, Departed will love this book and new series too! Familiar Things is a different vibe, and a different subject matter, obviously, but it's still unique, still has Lia's unique twist and mesmerizing

storytelling abilities, and whatever magic Lia works to make the atmosphere and vibe ooze off the page, totally infect you and get you in the vibe of the book, and whatever vortex/portal Lia uses to pull you in to the world! I honestly didn't want this to end and I was so sad when it did, but then Lia told me there's going to be a sequel so I'm sure I can handle the wait!

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### **Erin says**

Terrific writing and fantastic world building. A truly unique world and premise. I expected nothing less from this author! I adored her zombie books (*Dearly, Departed*). This is her first self-pub'd story but like the really good self-pub'd books, you'd never know it wasn't traditionally pub'd.

I did feel that the middle of the book moved at a slower pace than the first 1/3 or so, but definitely picked up toward the end. I'm really curious to see where this story goes, considering some of the things that were revealed at the end of this book. Can't wait for book 2!

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### **K Orion Fray says**

I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

“He was *prophesied* for you. Some of us should be so lucky.”

*This girl will be loved by a man with eyes like her own. Eyes like a blue winter sky.*

I'm no fool. When Lia Habel puts words like these into her books, she's planning something—and it's going to be *big*.

I was thrilled when I heard that Habel had come out with another book. After the half-personal, half-professional snafus that ended (albeit temporarily) the reign of the *Gone with the Respiration* series, I was worried that it would be quite some time until we heard from our Neo-Victorian authoress again. (Though Bram and Nora are absolutely worth waiting for, and I will jump on their return, no matter when that is.) But when Habel made the announcement that she was looking for early readers for *Familiar Things*, I jumped on it. I've enjoyed everything I've read of hers, and I was looking forward to seeing her branch out into something different.

And something different I absolutely got.

Everrose Morgantwill (God, I love these names) is a 16 year old girl living in the magical community of All Hollows County, where magic is normal and expected, and the year is 1958. Everrose and her best friend Summerlene Hayes are just trying to make their way through the trials and tribulations of being 16 year old magical girls, the most pressing portion of this is the Connexion—a magical bond between witch or warlock and their familiar. Most witches and warlocks make the Connexion by the time they're 16 or so, and while Summerlene has found hers, Everrose has not.

When Everrose's steady boyfriend Vincent Olwen comes back from the present-day (usually referred to as

“the Layside”) as part of the coming-of-age process as a completely different person, Everrose has more than just a lack of a familiar to worry about.

...Until she doesn't.

The story follows Everrose, Summerlene and sister Maple as they encounter a great beast known as a trothenbeast, search for Everrose's familiar, and try to figure out what exactly is wrong with Vincent and why he came back from the Layside such a different person. And maybe, just maybe, Everrose will figure out why no one seems to remember to tell her anything.

I hesitate to say too much about what actually happens in the book, partially because it feels like spoilers, and partly because this is 100% a book that you need to experience to truly appreciate. This is mystery wrapped up in magical realism with a dash of anachronism on top of it, and with Habel's way with words, what could have sounded hokey or contrived just sounds beautiful. Everrose is a remarkable young woman with more resilience than she will ever give herself credit for. Summerlene and Maple are perfectly balanced between supporting cast and unique individuals with their own agendas. The Olwen family is the personification of the dark family with the potentially shady background but the hidden hearts of gold. (They even remind me a touch of some of my own characters, which means I know what I have to live up to when I work on them!)

What strikes me the most is the trothenbeast and his plot line. Without giving anything away, Habel makes the animal so much more than just a quadruped beast, and does it without taking *away* from his animal nature, something many writers fall short of. It was fascinating to watch the way the character—and truly, he was a character—grew and manifested as a major plot point.

It's a much lighter tale than Habel's other work, but I think it is exactly what the author and the audience needed at this point. It shows us another side of what Habel can write, and it gives us a breath of fresh air from the war in the *Gone with the Respiration* series. That is, of course, not to say that *Familiar Things* doesn't have dark moments, because it certainly does. And it is that balance that truly makes the book.

If you liked Habel's earlier work, be sure to give this a look. Without a doubt, this solidifies Lia Habel as a name to watch for.

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### **Lothfleur says**

3,5

Dans cette nouvelle série de Lia Habel, exit les zombies adorables, faisons place à un monde intentionnellement coincé dans le passé où les sorciers peuvent vivre en paix, loin des persécutions qui leur ont fait se séparer du reste de la planète.

On suit Everrose dans ce monde étonnant, aux créatures sauvages sorties tout droit de légendes (wildeors, dragons...) et qui défie les lois de la physique grâce à la magie. Everrose est une fille gentille mais que les gens ont tendance à oublier bien qu'elle ait pour petit ami le fils de l'influent maire. Dès le départ, on ne peut que noter cette étrange façon qu'on les gens de l'oublier et la justification est assez amusante, mais cette révélation et fait surtout de ce premier tome une introduction plus qu'autre chose.

Il faut dire qu'en plus de commencer à parler de la nature d'Everrose, on nous place toutes sortes de problèmes qui ne seront, évidemment, pas tous résolus. Nous avons les intrigues de l'historien ennemi du

maire, la belle-soeur du maire très en colère, le petit ami qui se montre distant en revenant de son excursion dans le monde moderne et commence à avoir des idées pas tout à fait en accord avec les lois de son monde... Non, ce n'est pas tout parce qu'il y a la question du familier d'Everrose. En effet, contrairement à tous les sorciers de son âge, elle n'a toujours pas trouvé le sien, ce qui l'inquiète pas mal...

Le tome s'intitule *Familiar Things* parce qu'il s'intéresse plus particulièrement à la question du familier d'Everrose, comment elle va le trouver, comment elle va le sauver, et quelle est la véritable nature de ce dernier. Elle est attachante cette sorte de félin gigantesque qu'est Typhon, mais des fois, je me retrouvais à lever les yeux au ciel, notamment quand Everrose commence à se sentir gênée face à son familier parfois trop humain (il a des mains humaines en plus, si j'ai bien compris !) – ce qui va un peu de pair avec ses relations qui semblent parfois étranges avec le père de son petit ami. Je vous jure, elle passe plus de temps avec le maire qu'avec son petit ami, et on peut se poser des questions. Mais Lia Habel adresse le sujet et le rejette en bloc car Everrose, n'est vraiment pas là pour ça, elle doit prendre soin de Typhon, de toute façon ! Bon voilà, je crois que vous l'avez vu, c'est un peu fouillis parfois, on part un peu dans tous les sens. Mais l'histoire charmante, elle se lit vraiment bien, ses personnages sont intéressants et son monde assez unique, alors j'ai trouvé que ce n'était pas si gênant que ça, au fond. Ça aurait certainement pu être mieux avec moins de parasites, ou peut-être avec des problèmes amenés plus tard dans le texte, mais ça va, la lecture m'a beaucoup plu, et je lirai une suite avec plaisir.

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### **Jessica (a GREAT read) says**

I received this ARC from the author in exchange for an honest review, I was in no way compensated for this review.

Lia Habel is back with an all new series starting with *Familiar Things*! It was an intriguing read, although at times I struggled to grasp certain things. The world is definitely a bit of a puzzle as where Everrose lives, it's 1958 and the world outside their bubble like place is in 2015. It's odd how Everrose and the rest know that 2015 exists outside their sphere of life. Some of the explanations of why this is the way of things wasn't detailed enough or in a way I could understand. Basically, the world is this way because the universe or things are just wonky! \*grins\*

In Everrose's world, there is also magic. And by the time one turns sixteen they are to find a familiar to be able to work magic and all that jazz. Well, Everrose is behind on that matter. She's been sixteen for awhile now and she still has no familiar. Until one day, she gets one. Though a trothenbeast was not at all what she was expecting, plus he doesn't always behave the way a familiar should. Life just couldn't get more grand then that!

Until it does! Everrose grows more distant from her boyfriend who returns from a visit to 2015 with other boys his age. He's more withdrawn and hung up on his journey there and Everrose feels left behind at times because of this. And if that weren't enough, her best friend starts treating her poorly because Everrose has acquired the ultimate familiar while hers is a guinea pig.

There's a lot of hard luck for Everrose, but yet, she's still an enjoyable character. The story itself wasn't all too bad. It was fast paced, for no sooner than Everrose acquires her familiar then a witch comes a calling and claiming that the trothenbeast is hers. And having a witch mad at you is definitely not a good thing!

What had me struggling the most was the worldbuilding. It's an intriguing idea and all, I just couldn't grasp

the whys of it all. And that left me stumbling. As well as some of the magical bits, but that gets tied back to worldbuilding in a sense! It was still intriguing and all because soon there's a mystery to Everrose herself that explains for a lot of her hard luck in life.

One thing I wished there was more of though was romance. I never thought I would find myself saying that, but as time has gone by, I do find myself a sucker for some romance. Nothing huge or anything, but just a little more than we got. Everrose does have a boyfriend, but pretty much upon his return we can note a difference in his behavior, even though we don't meet him until he returns. There's just a coldness about Vincent that I couldn't get over.

Overall, this was an interesting read, but not without a few flaws. Of course that can always be expected when starting a new series from a beloved author! I am curious to see if Lia writes more in this world. It was different in both sense of the word, but it has definite promise and potential so I am not throwing in the towel yet!

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Overall Rating 3/5 stars

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### **Tehteh says**

I must confess I went through various phases with *Familiar Things* - when I first heard about it I was excited, when I read the summary I was confused, then while reading I had a somewhat hard time stopping. Which is definitely something, coming from a girl who doesn't particularly like fantasy stories and swore never to read any Harry Potter.

The book is set in a world which is and isn't ours at the same time. Our main character lives in a town in the middle of the United States, which is enclosed in a 'magical bubble' of sorts. So while we live in the 21st Century, they are living the 50s. Everrose is a teenage witch, whose biggest worries are not having a familiar - an animal which helps her develop her powers - and the facts that her best friend seems to forget about her easily and her boyfriend's father seems to change his opinion on her frequently.

That is, until her boyfriend comes back from a rite of passage which brings him into our world, and she finds herself with a very uncommon familiar, especially as she still can't control her powers.

The whole narrative is told from Everrose's perspective, who is quite easy to empathize with, because she's funny and energetic, and not at all mopey, considering how many setbacks she faces. In fact, for such a sweet girl, I find her quite pragmatic, which is refreshing. Her narrative is also quite lively and photographic, in a way, which allows us to imagine the world, the creatures and people who inhabit it.

As for the action, it has a great rhythm, with important events constantly happening, even though the major plots twists only take place in the last third of the book as usual. The ending is somewhat open, in the more general sense, but also resolved, which is something typical and good in Lia's work.

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It may not become my favorite book, but I certainly enjoyed it.

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## **Tink Magoo is bad at reviews says**

I wrote a review for this but apparently someone ate it.

Anyway, I loved this one. There was enough mystery to keep me turning pages frantically; all the characters were well developed.

It's just annoying to start a series and not have an idea if there's even going to be a next book, let alone when it's due out. It would be such a shame not to get more this author.

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## **Marguerite says**

5 Stars!

I just loved Familiar Things!

Everrose was a fantastic heroine, I loved how she was so sweet and forgiving. There were so many times in the book when I wanted to scream at the people around her for being so mean, but the way she handled it all, so gracefully was so admirable! I think I liked Everrose even more because a lot of the heroines at the moment are super fierce (not saying I don't like that, because I do), that it's really nice to see a different kind of strength within a female character. I can't wait to see how she blossoms.

The secondary characters really ping-ponged in my opinion. Sorry to say, but I always thought Vincent was a douche. There I said it. I had problems with Summerlene, but I had to like her in the end. Of course, the Mayor was awesome, but my favourite character had to be Typhon! Seriously, the bond between Everrose and Typhon was just lovely. Another reason why I just loved this book, I adore animal/people realtionships (like, oh, How to Train Your Dragon, \*cough cough\*). Once Typhon came onto the scene, I knew that this book was made.

Also, the references to 1950s music was fantastic, and I was pleasantly surprised to find that I knew most of them, and the ones I didn't I was singing along to by the next day. So, yeah.

The plot was fantastic, I loved the build-up and it was never dull. Reveal after reveal. The ending had a fantastic twist, which totally sets it up for book 2, but there are also cliffhangers, which I can't wait to see resolved (or turn into more drama).

Familiar Things had everything I love in a good book, and this has to be my favourite book by Lia Habel. I just can't wait for book 2 and to see what Everrose and Typhon get up to next!

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## **Louisa says**

This was a really incredible book! I loved the twists, and how thing all worked out, and I just really want a sequel now!

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## **Meredith says**

**Actual Rating: 4.5 Stars**

I've been a huge Lia Habel fan ever since I read *Dearly, Departed* in 2011. Three years later *Dearly, Departed* remains near the top of my favorite's list! So when I saw she had a new book coming out, I jumped on the chance to read and review it! And let me tell you, it definitely did not disappoint! I had so much fun reading *Familiar Things*! At its core, it's a witch book. But *Familiar Things* is much more than just a witch book. The world-building was incredible, the unique twists kept me engaged and the wonderful characters made me feel like I was reading about real people.

I usually start a review off by discussing the characters, but this time I want to start with the world-building. The book is set in All Hollows. The best way I can describe it is, it's a world parallel to ours (which, in the book, is called the Layside). It's very similar to the human world except it's for witches and warlocks and other magical creatures. Oh, and while it's 2015 in the Layside, it's 1958 in All Hollows. I loved the tone this time period set for the book. It meant there was no modern technology - no cell phones, no tablets, no internet, old-fashioned cars, etc. The characters' speech, dress and behaviors/actions reflected that of the 1950's. For example, Everrose's boyfriend "pinned her" and they said things such as "golly" and "swell." I basically pictured the characters and outfits from *Grease*!

The idea that it was 1958 in All Hollows and 2015 in the Layside was so intriguing. And the effect that has on the characters - especially one in particular - is fascinating. I think the time period is perfect for this book and it wouldn't have been the same book if it had taken place in modern times. I can't really explain it any more than that without getting repetitive, but I really, really loved the time period and what it meant for the story.

I loved Everrose. She was such an awesome character. She felt really relatable. There was nothing cliche about her; she wasn't the unpopular girl that suddenly became popular and she wasn't an ordinary girl who suddenly received special powers. Everrose was a typical girl. She wasn't popular but she wasn't an outcast. When we're introduced to her, she already has powers, but she's considered a mediocre witch. Everyone always seems to forget about her, but she always treats everyone with kindness and respect, even when they don't deserve it. Everrose is also behind on an important rite of passage for young witches - finding a familiar. This rite of passage really spurs the story on and creates all sorts of problems for Everrose.

Summerlene is supposed to be Everrose's best friend but woooowwww, I really just wanted to slap her. Like, for most of the book. She's SUCH a bad friend. A lot of that gets explained by the end, but her actions still turned my stomach. Maple, Everrose's little sister, was also a major brat and really annoyed me for the majority of the book. She gets Everrose into a LOT of trouble.

Vincent is supposed to be the love interest in the book but man, he scared me... He was mean, self-centered and obsessed with the Layside. He wasn't a good boyfriend at all and he almost always put his needs first. Of course, again, that was partially explained in the end but I still don't like him at all.

Typhon was one of my favorite characters!!! Aside from Everrose, of course. I adored him so much!! In the beginning, I wasn't sure how I felt about him but his character development is insane. He's so intelligent and loyal! I don't think I can say much else without giving away spoilers, but he was... perfect. I'd love to see where his and Everrose's friendship/relationship goes in the second book!

As for Major Olwen... I have many, many thoughts... But I'm still conflicted with how I feel about him and his actions. And I don't want to spoil anything either... So.. \*Slinks away.\*

Of course, I couldn't stand Mr. Silversharp or Ebonella. However, I think there's more to Mr. Silversharp than meets the eye. And I did feel bad for Ebonella to a certain extent. She went through a lot in life and

wasn't always dealt a fair hand.

There were definitely some Beauty & The Beast parallels in Familiar Things, which I loved! I'd love to see these parallels explored more in the second book!

And the ending.. Holy crap. Most intriguing, unique twist in a witch book ever! I completely did NOT see that coming and I really, really loved the explanations and reasons behind everything. This is supposed to be a series and I seriously can't wait for book two! I'm so in love with this world and these characters, I can't imagine not being able to get to know them better.

Overall, I loved this book - if you couldn't tell from my gushing review. I love Lia Habel and I'm so glad she's doing well and writing again (See this post for more on that). I'll always have hope in the back of my mind that we'll get a conclusion to the Dearly series. But authors are people, just like everyone else. Their health and happiness comes before them writing new books. With Familiar Things, I think Lia has come back healthier, happier and stronger. She wrote an amazingly wonderful novel that I count as one of my favorites for 2014.

With that being said, I think you all know what I'm gonna say next.... Go read this book!!!! Soooooo good!!!!!!

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You can also find more from me on my blog: Pandora's Books

### **Beth P says**

Familiar Things is a combination of fantasy and nostalgia that, overall, worked for me. I found the world-building to be both interesting and entertaining. I adored the '50s nostalgia, particularly the music references. (Please note that I was born in 1979, so I didn't actually experience the '50s, but I love the music produced then.) I liked Everose as a protagonist and enjoyed watching her bond with Typhon develop and grow.

I will fully admit to being a bit frustrated mid-book and that I almost did not finish it. There is teen angst aplenty (it is YA) and some dwelling on seemingly insignificant things. BUT (capitalized for emphasis) it all matters and makes sense and allows the reader to see and experience the foundation for the big reveal in chapters 18-19. If you find yourself bogged down in the middle, I encourage you to push through. It was worth it for me.

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With the world-building established and the protagonist equipped with new information about herself, I have no doubt that the second book in this series has great potential to be a 5-star read and I'm looking forward to it.

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