



Fire & Shadow

T.G. Ayer

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Normal people sneak out to a party and have fun. Maya Rao ends the evening by incinerating the guy who attacks her.

Nik Lucas, sexy, new in town and totally forbidden, happens to walk in on her. Normal guys would run for the hills. Nik knows a whole lot more than he's telling.

Maya doesn't believe the gods are real, doesn't waste her time with mere mythology. But when gods, demons and hellhounds become the new normal and wielding fire becomes her new skill, she must decide what it is she really believes.

Can Maya accept that normal is something she will never be because it isn't normal to be ...

The Hand of Kali.

A new Paranormal coming of age series delving in the fantasy and magic of Hindu mythology and its plethora of gods, demons, legends & mythology.

Fire & Shadow Details

Date : Published July 25th 2013 by Infinite Ink Books (first published July 23rd 2013)

ISBN : 9781491073445

Author : T.G. Ayer

Format : Paperback 386 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Paranormal, Business, Amazon, Young Adult, Mythology

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From Reader Review Fire & Shadow for online ebook

Kami says

Maya has a crush on a non-Indian boy, a relationship her parents would not allow. She is learning martial arts from her father and then she discovers she has fire starting abilities. The writing and pacing are really good and Maya is a likeable character. Her parents tell her that she is special and that she can sense demons. A really good, interesting fantasy adventure. 4 stars.

Sher A. Hart says

I enjoyed Fire, very different from Christian paranormal in having demons but no angels. The pantheon of Indian Gods seemed more similar to Greek mythology. I stopped to look up Kali, referred to as the dark Goddess, to make sure Maya's parents weren't worshipping a dark as in evil being. Reassured, I could empathize with Maya's journey from total disbelief as an immigrant immersed in American culture to finding she had a key role to play as Kali's hand. The power to go with her purpose/mission—fire—made Maya a target of the demons.

One aspect of the book I enjoyed was Maya's two opposite friendships, one with an American girl neglected by her parents and another of Indian descent whose father ruled with an abusive iron fist. Ayer did a good job on the characterization, making me want to punch out the bad dad and sympathize with both of Maya's friends during the critical incidents that propelled the plot forward.

I also liked the mysterious newcomer Nik who showed up everywhere Maya went. An out-of-control party set things in motion for Maya's slow acceptance of her own power and of beings she thought were myth. Along with her unwillingness to accept her destiny, Nik made an intriguing part of Maya's conversion. The romance didn't displace the action but became a part of it as Maya trained, so the pace didn't get too bogged down. As the demonic attempts on her life took devious turns, the surprises kept coming too. Plus, I love awkward interactions and misunderstandings like those of Nik and Maya.

Although I couldn't suspend my disbelief enough to immerse myself, curiosity and tension made up for that. I felt Maya's surprise at each new bit of mythology she encountered, not all in the ways she'd been taught. And I felt her sorrow and anger at the (spoiler events) that pushed her to accept a desperate quest to retrieve (more spoilers) from the worst demon. The visuals were mostly well done and the realms where Maya ended up traveling were interesting. The resolution was another pleasant anomaly in the trend of cliffhanger endings—a complete plot arc where the author threw in some new mysteries and tension for the next book instead of leaving the first book's business incomplete.

Not everything worked for me. The runaway sentence fragments drove me crazy, especially when I found what should have been a final clause down in the next paragraph. It's not that hard to change the end of a verb from "ing" to "ed" to make a complete sentence, so I hope the editing cleans up those along with the ton of punctuation problems. Bottom line, an ARC shouldn't be sent without at least a first round of editing because that many errors pulled me out of the story. Overall, this is a solid beginning to a series—3.5 stars for the creativity, complete plot, and characterization, and 4 once edited. There is plenty of room to expand in a universe I would like to visit again.

Melanie says

4*s

review posted here ...

<http://bookpassionforlife.blogspot.co...>

Fire is the first book in the new YA series 'The Hand of Kali' which is inspired by icons of the Hindu religion.

As the synopsis tells us... we have Maya, a teenager brought up by parents who believe all things about their religion – not Maya though, she refuses to see them as any more than stories. Her parents aren't so strict that they would force Maya to believe if she doesn't want to (unlike her poor friend Ria whose family are uber religious) but they still try to instil the teachings into her and she is about to find out exactly why....Maya is invited to a party – first time ever!!- so she disobeys her parents to attend with her friend Joss, when there she gets into a dangerous situation with a boy and after he attacks her, watches him spontaneously combust or so she thinks and to make matters worse her crush – new guy Nik Lucas – just happens to witness the event. When he takes her home to safety, he urges her to confess to her parents who in turn have a confession that is going to turn her whole world upside down.

So, I really enjoyed this book. I liked Maya's character and I liked the fact that she has Indian heritage, it is the first time I have read a book with a main character from that background and I like how she is portrayed, I like that she pushes the boundaries of what is expected of her and is trying to find her own identity and I love that her parents allow her that freedom to do that & to choose whether she follows their faith or not. I also like that through her friend Ria we see the flipside to that and how oppressive parents with faith can be, I think it gives us a good contrast because whilst I would consider Maya's rebellion to be tame, when you compare that to Ria - she could be classed as delinquent. I also like Nik, with his secrets, who he is, what he's capable of & his affection for Maya, I'm hoping for lots more from them.

The storyline was really good, I really enjoyed how the Hindu gods were used as the premise for the plot. Mayas role in the story was great and I love to see a reluctant hero come through their fears & doubts to realise their destiny. I also liked that Maya wasn't a pushover, wasn't ready to believe just for the sake of it but she was willing to try. I liked how the first part of the book was quite focussed on Maya's learning, not just of her power but who she would be fighting, what she is destined for and I believe we are only just getting a glimpse of her capabilities and then the second part of the book took on a more fantasy feel which opened up the larger world with its realms, characters & enemies which, as I said are based in Hinduism. I loved this! I love it when a subject I know nothing about is brought into a book and I end up being really interested ,enough to go and google it when I finish reading and I have to tell you that TG Ayer has done that to me with more than one of her books. I love that she brings something new & introduces me to new things - like this and Norse mythology. I can always tell how much effort & research is put into her books and this is no exception. I can't even begin to explain the appeal of this book because it's one of those where you just have to read it, to appreciate it – which I do and as always am left wanting more.

Cassandra says

My Thoughts - 3 out of 5 unicorns - I liked it!

****Received an arc of the ebook for free as part of the book tour in exchange for an honest opinion.**

Okay I totally love the book cover. It is beautiful and intriguing. I love the fire effect :)

This book is beautiful written, and the author did a fabulous job. I love this world she created. This was new for me because I have not read about the gods of India before. This is a great start to a series. There is a lot of education built into this book, so you understand the culture of India and their Gods. I think this is why there were parts that were really slow, but it was definitely needed. Initially, I didn't think much of Maya, but I can't imagine having people lie to you all your life. I really admired her selflessness, courage, and tenaciousness in the end. I'm curious to see where her relationship with Nik goes too. I liked Maya's friend Joss, and I'm not sure what I think of Ria or her family. I can't wait to see how Goddesses Chayya, Kali, and Varuni fit into Maya's future as well as Yama. I absolutely think this series is going to get better and better, and I will definitely be continue reading this series.

If you like stories of Gods/Goddesses from other cultures with mystically given powers & reincarnation, I think you will enjoy this story and series.

Tee loves Kyle Jacobson says

Fire where to start this review..... man I am all over the place because I have never ever read a book that captivated and kept reading about Gods and mythology. For those of you reading this review wondering why that is important I will tell you that I love love love MYTHOLOGY books and history books. I love reading about the Gods and the different believes people have. This book was no exception and they way it started out to the very end was great to. Tee knows how to weave a story and hold you there until you have finished it and your wondering how in the heck had I read that so fast?

Maya Rao thought she was normal. She thought she was your average teen going to school and parties with her friends until one night she is at a party and she is attacked and burns the kid to death. At first she is not sure what is happening but soon realizes she burned the boy to death. What is more strange is the new guy in town Nik Lucas walks in on her while she is burning the boy and acts like everything is okay.

Maya wants answers and when she asks them what she finds out will blow her mind. She does not believe it at first but soon realizes that her parents kept a very big secret from her and when they tell her she will have to decide on whether or not she believes in myths or if her parents are just flat out crazy. She will have to trust people she barley knows and she will have to come to terms with who she is.

Love reincarnation and myths..... well this is the book for you! Happy Reading!

Seirra says

A review copy was provided for an honest review. I'm one of those people who devour anything and everything that contains mythology in it, the novel Fire which incorporates Hindu myth is no exception. It was a different kind of reading experience for me because I've never paid a lot of attention to Hindu Gods/Goddesses but they are superlatively riveting. Ayer weaves India's culture and beliefs together with fun

fantasy-based twists. Maya, the main character of the story really grew on me. She becomes a stronger person as the story goes along and I loved seeing her wield her power, and have the ability to defend herself and others. Nik is the guy she has a crush on and their relationship is really interesting because he's keeping some fascinating secrets. I thought the inclusion of a variety of Hindu gods/goddesses kept things from getting stale—I loved discovering their history and abilities. The world created is compelling and all the characters are developed well, and the story will grip you from beginning to end.

Maya Rao is a sixteen-year-old girl with a big secret one she isn't even aware of. That is, until she attends a popular girl named Amber's party where she's attacked by a boy and she accidentally incinerates him. Maya doesn't believe her own eyes until her parents tell her he was a demon, and that she's the Hand of Kali. The truth of it all hits her hard and she has to step up and become a warrior. With the help of her family and friends she just may have a shot at ridding the world of demons also known as Rakshasas. Even with her newfound abilities and a goddess looking out for her, she has a lot of unseen enemies waiting to strike when she least expects it.

Fire is told from third person which usually makes me feel disconnected from the characters but the way it's written it pulls you in and engages you. Although the main heroine Maya is from India with strict cultural rules her family is flexible with her and allows her to pursue her own interests as opposed to her best friend who is also from India and adheres to them closely. Maya has really cool powers that allows her to throw fireballs and detect demons by scent. She also has some martial arts training and learns to fight with weapons thus making her an up-and-coming warrior. Maya sticks up for herself and tries to do the right thing so she has a lot going on internally and externally. I'm very curious to see where the romance aspect will go with Nik, and how the story will evolve later on.

Fire is a quick read with a ton of cool mythological figures from India, a powerful heroine, unpredictable events, and great side-characters. It is a slow-building story that takes some time to get into and has a lot of information that needs to be absorbed which I was personally fine with, there is just enough action to keep you reading. Overall it's a good start and I'm hooked with Fire. T.G. Ayer takes Hindu folklore and makes it just as enthralling as other popular mythology. Kali is an alluring goddess and I love reading about her and how Maya is connected. I'd recommend to young-adults interested in mythological stories—this one is captivating!

Mindy says

This was a very intense book. I found it very interesting that this Hindu family was so culturally strict in some ways and so informal in others. I have several friends who are Hindu and others who have lived in that area of the world and it is rare, particularly for girls to be granted that kind of leniency, especially in first generation families.

Of course, as I read further I began to see the reasoning, but it did give me a different view while reading as I compared it to my friends and exchange students descriptions of their lives or their family member's lives.

I enjoyed reading this book. It was exciting, scary, funny, sad, and an excellent read.

I give this book 4 out of 5 clouds.

Athena Nagel says

This is definitely the type of story that I just love. Anything rooted in mythology is a passion of mine - any mythology. I do tend to focus most on Greek Mythology but not exclusively. The story takes off immediately. There is no time wasted at all diving right into the characters and the story. This is the first book in a series and I can't wait to read future editions. These gods(goddesses are new to me - I have never read about Indian mythology. TG Ayer does a great job spinning this story and writing about the forbidden love between Nik and Maya. I enjoyed reading this story and give it 5 stars.

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

Raven says

This is a wonderful book for the YA genre. Where most fantasy type books deal with Greek Mythology, this one delves into Hinduism. It was a refreshing change to see a fantasy story revolving around different Gods/Goddesses and the myths surrounding them.

Maya is a typical Indian teenager who, one day, finds out she is not so typical. The story takes you along on her adventures and her roller coaster emotions as she deals with all of the changes in her life and finding out what she didn't believe in was totally true.

Even though I am a mother and grandmother, I thoroughly enjoyed the story, look forward to the next one, and would highly recommend this series to my grandchildren.

LPJ says

It is with a heavy heart that I write this review. Few book concepts made me happier than this one. A YA fantasy based on Hindu mythology? Seriously? How awesome is that? The concept rocks, the execution falters.

Maya Rao is your average Indian-American teen, balancing her parents expectations and culture with the quest for normalcy in high school. She's not really religious, she doesn't believe in the gods and goddesses and all of that superstitious mumbo jumbo. But when a high school party goes terribly wrong, and the school golden boy gets really aggressive, fire shoots out of her palms burning the guy until there's nothing left.

Suddenly, she finds out that she's the reincarnation of a devoted follower of the goddess Kali, and she's been

blessed with incredible powers for a human - powers that will wrench her out of her normal life and on an extraordinary journey.

I understand that there would be some trepidation if a 16 year old girl found out she had superpowers and started getting visits from goddesses whom she previously didn't think were even real. But I think Maya's reactions were a bit unbelievable. She is one of the least likable, least thoughtful and most annoying female protagonists I've read.

After having several face to face conversations with various deities, who appear live and in the flesh before her, she's still not sure if they really exist. I'm not sure just what it would take to convince her. And her TSTL behavior just defies reason.

(view spoiler)

Maya does have plenty of admirable qualities. She's quite devoted to her two best friends Ria and Joss. Devoted to the point that all rationality apparently leaves her. Part of the problem with this is that we didn't get enough of these friends early on to establish the relationships. We know that Ria is beaten and emotionally abused by her chauvinist father, but Ria also kind of seems like a simpering spineless creature who just takes everything doled out to her without fighting back, so when Maya makes certain sacrifices for her, they just don't hit home. We never care for Ria as much as Maya does. The same thing goes for Joss, though she, at least, is a stronger character.

Love interest Nik just never really came alive for me. He and Maya seemed to have zero chemistry, and so while we're told about the heat and passion between them, we don't ever feel it.

There are other worldbuilding things that just never clicked. Maya's parents set wards around the house to protect from the evil demons out to get her. But what are these wards and how do mere humans set them up? Do her parents have some sort of magical abilities we're not told about? Also, why are her parents so ineffectual at giving her the information she needs to perform her duties? At one point they say she won't be left alone anymore since there are demons trying to kill her, but a few scenes later, she's left alone at the kung fu studio and attacked.

There are tons more questions I had while reading this that were never really satisfied.
(view spoiler)

Add all of those things to the fact that the mission Maya is tasked with half-way through the book, seems haphazard and not set up by anything previously. (view spoiler)

Nik was a character that I really was interested in learning more about. How old was he really? Where was his mother? How did he feel about his life and duties? Why did he like Maya?

So many questions, so few answers. There were so many head-scratching moments for me due to inconsistencies with the world, the powers, the characters and more.

Once Maya got moving and finally accepted her role, the action picked up and we got a pretty decent story. But I think the potential was so much greater. I think that a good story editor may have been needed to pull in the various threads and tighten up the characters so they became people we cared about following to the ends of the earth and back.

I hope Ayer continues the series because these books need to exist, and maybe next time we'll get far more answers.

Susan says

Ms. Ayers pens "Fire" in her usual fantastic writing within a plot filled with Gods/Goddesses and myths, with a touch of religion. As usual her characters are very well developed, interesting and believable. This is a fantastic start to a new series and I can't wait for the next installment to come out. Highly recommended to all fantasy and magick fans.

This review is based on a complimentary copy from the author which was provided for an honest review.

Danielle says

T. G. Ayer's newest novel. Fire, is a welcome addition to the YA supernatural world. What I loved most about this book is that none of it is typical. Told through 3rd person narration, Fire introduces readers to the rich mythology of the Hindu faith. The main character, Maya, has grown up in California largely viewing the tales her parents shared with her of gods and goddesses as nothing more than superstition and nonsense. However, after she is attacked at a party and starts to see monsters, Maya is forced to reevaluate and comes to realize that she is The Hand of Kali. What comes next is plenty of action, demons, spontaneous combustion, and romance.

I loved this book.

I loved reading something outside the mainstream.

I loved the diversity of the characters.

I loved the balance of darkness and humor.

This is the perfect book for fans of Buffy and Supernatural. If you're looking for something outside the typical YA supernatural offerings, this is the book for you.

Find the full review at MyMercurialMusings.com

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

I am a fan of T.G's writing. She knows how to tell a story. She captivates me in each of her books and sucks me into the story.

She has done it again in *Fire*. I really enjoy books that are mythical. This book takes in the Mythology of India. I am unfamiliar with the Gods of India and I am happy to learn more. It's fascinating to me that many cultures have their own God/Goddess mythology, and how many of them are similar in some aspects.

Mia is a teen who is struggling with the beliefs of her Indian family. She wants to break from her heritage and forge her own path in life. Her family has taught her in many of the traditional Indian ways. The big difference though, is that they taught her to fight. She is a very independent and confident young woman.

She lies to her parents one evening and attends a party. She knows that they will not be pleased and tells them she is staying at her friends. While there she goes against her better judgement and is drugged in a drink. She then is given to a young man who intends to do her harm. In her less than fully cognizant state she incinerates him.

This act of self-defense brings her into the world of Indian Mythology. It also brings others into her life. For example, Nic, the boy she has had a crush on. He is more than he seems and adds another layer to the mythology. The story deals with love, loss, loyalty, and courage.

As I stated above, I love the books that T.G writes. I will be seeking out more of her books in the future.

This book has some swearing, violence, and kissing.

Jonel Boyko says

Ayer has a very light, easy flow to her writing that allows you to immerse yourself in the story without thinking about it. She takes you on a walk through a number of different areas and lands, each of which you can picture perfectly. Ayer also gives background information on the Hindi pantheon without making it into a history lesson. Those who aren't familiar with these gods are given sufficient information to enjoy this upbeat and fast paced novel, while those who are will not be bogged down with information.

Ayer definitely takes a very interesting look at maintaining a cultural family in a very multicultural community. She also shows a myriad of different ways in which a single cultural practice can be interpreted and followed. It gives the reader something to think about while thoroughly enjoying their journey with the phenomenal characters that Ayer has developed.

The characters in this novel are just amazing. I enjoyed not only how well developed they were, but how diverse the cast was. There is someone for every type of reader to identify with, to get to know, and to journey with. Everyone has their own distinct role in the story along with the characteristics to follow it through.

This was a beautifully crafted story that draws you in from the get-go and keeps you hooked throughout. I cannot wait to read more from this series and from the author in general.

Please note that I received this novel free of charge from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Book Chatter-Cath says

For the sake of full disclosure, I recently started working as PA to this author

I cannot tell you how much I have fallen for Maya, Nik and this absolutely gorgeous YA book by T.G. Ayer!

Fire is an intricate story that wraps itself in the wonderfully vibrant world of Hinduism. Its fierce and often brutal gods and goddesses, each with a vested interest in Maya, in the hand of Kali, need her help to keep the balance - for the sake of all mankind.

A vast array of characters from different times, places, upbringings and worlds; they are warm and welcoming, mean and nasty, naive and immature, but all with a purpose, all very easy to relate to, and all another beautifully woven thread in this utterly intriguing tale.

I have fallen in love with this author's ability to create such rich and powerful, beautifully descriptive mystical and mythological stories. T.G. Ayer has created a world full of characters that easily become addictive, that drag you by your heartstrings from one page to the next, demanding your complete and utter attention until you're finished - and even then - you can't stop thinking about them!

Full of rich Hindu mythology, Fire is a beautifully written story for young and old to fall in love with. A delightfully different and engrossing 5 star read.
