



# Neuri Shape-Shifter

*Leigh Podgorski*

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Gregorian chants hum, Catholic Saints animate, and fairy lanterns glow as Luke Stone chases his nemesis the black magician Armand Jacobi from New Camen, NH to Alphabet City, NY to the Leelanau Peninsula of Northern Michigan in a battle to save his daughter's life.

## Neuri Shape-Shifter Details

Date : Published July 30th 2014 by Lulu.com (first published December 25th 2013)

ISBN : 9781312373624

Author : Leigh Podgorski

Format : Paperback 242 pages

Genre : Shapeshifters, Werewolves, Paranormal, Fantasy, Urban Fantasy

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# From Reader Review Neuri Shape-Shifter for online ebook

## Donna Foster says

This book surprised me on how good it was and how deep the story went into the supernatural.

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## Brian Wilson says

Neuri Shape-Shifter Stone Quest: Book Three, by Leigh Podgorski, is a fast-moving suspense novel. Similarly to Quray's Peak, which I five star rated, it is well written with a unique plot and complex characters. I did not enjoy this book as much as Quray's Peak though, as I am not into the supernatural- to this extent, and therefore couldn't see fit to rate this book at five stars. The length of this book was not a problem, because one would expect a novel to be of this length or greater. At first I thought the inclusion of Bridget's diary was odd, but it turned out to be another one of Leigh Podgorski's clever ideas. This is a book that would appeal especially to those television viewers who like the CSI series.

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## Zoe Brooks says

When I saw Neuri Shape-shifter go free on Amazon I downloaded it to see what I thought.

The first thing I thought was this is a rollicking good read. Leigh certainly knows how to structure a story to keep the reader turning the pages. Do I detect some of her theatre background here? She uses dramatic irony to such good effect - allowing the reader to see inside the mind not only of Luke and his daughter, but also the antagonist Armand. These shifts of point of view increase the tension for the reader, who can see the impending trap. The POV changes are really clear - the voices are so individual and well-drawn. One suggestion - Bridget's journal entries are formatted in italic, which I thought unnecessary, especially as blocks of italics are hard to read.

The second thought was that I don't envy Leigh's job of classifying this book. When she started the Stone Quest series Leigh described it as magic realism, but in her contribution to this year's bloghop she has changed her mind - <http://leighpod.wordpress.com/2014/07...>

This book could be put in so many categories. Paranormal came first to mind - spirits, black magic and satanism all appear in its pages. I see that Leigh did label it 'paranormal' for a while but gave up doing so. The trouble with that moniker is that what generally passes for paranormal (and what the typical reader wants) doesn't really allow for the depth of the psychology or the spiritual nature of the book.

So what about magic realism? This really got me thinking. My instinct is that it is not magic realism. But why? This question is something that is a constant source of debate on the Facebook Group and in the bloghop posts. Yes the book is set in contemporary USA and yes it features magic, so why not? For me the magic was too upfront, too all embracing for magic realism. But then what about The Master and Margarita? In that book we have not just a satanist but the devil himself wreaking magical havoc on Moscow. It is the nature of magic realism to make us question both reality and magic. Leigh's book didn't have me questioning reality. And Bulgakov's classic does that. Moreover the actions of Woland and his servants are directed at the

realists who will not accept magic or faith as real. If pushed I suppose I would say that it is dark fantasy perhaps, in the way that I would say Neil Gaiman's novels are. Amazon lists it as "horror - occult". I have to say that I never read horror, unless it is also magic realism, and even then have problems with it.

The third thing was how detailed the characterization was. Armand's attitude to Luke is ambiguous - moving from hurt to pride to vengeance in a matter of sentences. There is a strong Jungian influence here and not just in the superficial Hollywood Hero's Journey way. Luke and Armand aren't opposites so much as mirrors. They have much in common. I was struck that all three main characters were gifted with magic, including the antagonist. The magic/realist clash is not reflected in the characters' relationships. And yet one might say the clash is internalized in the central character. In this book Luke is confronting not only his nemesis Armand but also the Shadow in himself: the possibility that he too has murdered.

What to do with a series of books with strong focus on character development is a problem I have experienced myself. A major story arc across the books is the main character's self realization. Then in each book there is also the battle with Armand. I read this book without having read the first two in the Stone Quest series and I think that was a mistake. Leigh does an excellent job in setting up the book so that you can read it as a standalone, but there is so much to set up that I felt somewhat overwhelmed. I needed the slower build up that the other two books would have provided. That is because my interest is in the character development rather than the will he/won't he storyline which this book has in buckets.

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### **Lenny Castellaneta says**

Neuri Shape-Shifter is the Third Book – and quite possibly the best so far – in Leigh Podgorski's Magical Realism Stone Quest series. The tension starts immediately as we are dropped into the disintegration of Luke and Beth's marriage from the beginning. Daughter Bridget Grace is thirteen and as psychic—if not even more so – than her Dad. Her growing abilities along with her fierce need for independence, coupled with Luke's incessant work load searching for lost children who more often than not he finds dead are all causes of the impossible strain. When the case of three girls gone missing—disappeared from New York City's Lower East Side where Luke used to live with his arch-enemy Armand Jacobi – crosses his desk, Luke suspects much more is at stake. Then BG suddenly--- while Luke is following the girls' trail to NYC—vanishes from the New Camen home, leaving behind a bizarre note, and we know he is right. Luke's investigation careens from New Camen to NYC to Northern Michigan and deep within Luke's psychic paranormal Universe as he searches for his daughter then fights to set her free from the one man he fears he may not be able to beat—the black magician and his life-long nemesis, Armand Jacobi. Characters from Luke's past spring into his present; Gregorian chants hum in the forest; Catholic Saints animate and fairy lanterns glow. At the height of battle, the book takes the characters—and the reader—to an even deeper level of magic realism than either Desert Chimera or Gallows Ascending ventured, which I won't divulge here – spoil alert! To find out, you'll have to read the book. You'll be glad you did. It's a terrific ride.

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### **Paul White says**

This book in one word is FANTASTIC! In fact the whole "Stone Quest" series is great fun reading. You like mysteries? You like crime solving? Then you'll love this book and the series even more. Because this author does not stop there....every story is sprinkled and spiced with just the right amount of mysticism and the supernatural. Very special flavors carefully added to already compelling and intriguing stories. Stories and

characters that are clearly written and easy to understand. Add a little extra to your reading diet. Read this book and the “Stone Quest” series, and you’ll be looking forward to reading the other works by author Leigh Podgorski.

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### **David Thompson says**

Neuri Shape-Shifter is the 3rd book in Leigh Podgorski’s Stone Quest novels. I admit to being a fan of the series, and the author, so I’m even more please to say I think this latest offering is the best one yet. All of the brokenness of the characters and their entwined pasts come to a head in this engaging read. In the opening pages, we discover a chasm has developed between Luke and Beth- even as their psychic daughter Bridget needs them the most (and as she comes into powers of her own). Against this backdrop, the black magician again makes his move against Luke and his family. When Bridget is kidnapped, Luke must pull out all the stops and embrace his own powers, as well as the forces and relationships he’s spurned in the past. Bridget’s own powers blossom in a surprising final showdown in this fast paced and engaging read that you don’t want to miss.

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### **Zoe Brooks says**

Leigh Podgorski is a member of the Magic Realism Facebook group I administer and one of the bloggers involved in the Magic Realism bloghop. In the two years of the Facebook Group I have watched as Leigh wrestled with whether she wrote magic realism or not. When I saw Neuri Shape-shifter go free on Amazon I downloaded it to see what I thought.

The first thing I thought was this is a rollicking good read. Leigh certainly knows how to structure a story to keep the reader turning the pages. Do I detect some of her theatre background here? She uses dramatic irony to such good effect - allowing the reader to see inside the mind not only of Luke and his daughter, but also the antagonist Armand. These shifts of point of view increase the tension for the reader, who can see the impending trap. The POV changes are really clear - the voices are so individual and well-drawn. One suggestion - Bridget's journal entries are formatted in italic, which I thought unnecessary, especially as blocks of italics are hard to read.

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This review first appeared on the Magic Realism Books Blog, where I review a magic realism book a week.

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