



## Burning Emerald

*Jaime Reed*

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## **Burning Emerald** Jaime Reed **Book 2 of The Cambion Chronicles**

Dating the most popular guy in school is every girl's fantasy. But to Samara Marshall, he's a dangerous force come to rekindle their tangled past. Only it's not her past. . .

Samara faces a challenging senior year. Controlling her inner demon is a struggle, even with help from her Cambion boyfriend, Caleb. But her life takes a turn for the worse when the hottest jock in school begins pursuing her--especially since Malik's anything but what he seems. They share a connection from a forgotten past--a secret that could destroy her and Caleb.

As the attraction becomes harder to resist, Samara is now at the mercy of the demon within her. To break free, Sam must fight a battle where she is the enemy and the prize. . .and victory will come at a deadly price.

### **Praise for Living Violet**

"Sexy and snarky! I dare you not to laugh while reading this fantastic debut." --Kody Keplinger, author of *The Duff* and *Shut Out*

"Jaime Reed breathes fresh life into paranormal romance." --Lee Nichols, author of the Haunting Emma series

### **Burning Emerald Details**

Date : Published May 29th 2012 by Dafina (first published January 1st 2012)

ISBN : 9780758269256

Author : Jaime Reed

Format : Paperback 304 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fantasy, Paranormal, Romance, Paranormal Romance

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## From Reader Review Burning Emerald for online ebook

### Kacie says

I was initially hesitant to read this book because of the mixed reviews; however, I took a chance and was reminded of how much I loved Living Violet. I enjoy Ms. Reed's writing style because progressing in the story is not a chore. I also like how consistent the characters are. Not all series are successful with consistency. Also, while I was not happy with the introduction of Tobias - I liked it because Sam did not seem to waiver in her commitment to Caleb. So while there was a love triangle - there really wasn't one =) chances of re-read are highly likely because I ❤ this series and it's characters. #TeamCaleb

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### Nika says

Tuto knihu jsem si bohužel m?la možnost p?e?ít až po roce od prvního dílu. Což zp?sobilo, že jsem plno v?cí zapomn?la. Avšak nebylo t?žké si je p?ipomenout, tolik se toho zase nestalo. No, i když n?kolik prvních stránek jsem nestá?ila zírat. Ani nem?žu uv??it, že jsem zapomn?la i ten konec, který jsem v recenzi tolik vychvalovala.

Je sice pravda, že první díl p?ináší n?co nového, ale zase se tolik neliší od jiných knih. Tím mám na myslí pár, kde jeden z dvojice je nadp?rozená bytost a ten druhý se tomu tajemství snaží celý p?íb?h p?ijít na kloub. Takových už tady bylo hodn?, takže to je jeden z d?vod?, pro? se mi o n?co víc než Osudová p?itažlivost libí Smrtící pouto. Taky mi p?íšla o n?co mén? zdlouhavá, i když tohoto aspektu se u této série asi nezbavím. Ale na druhou stranu m?la více akce, i když i tohle bylo na moje pom?ry jaksí málo. To by dokázala vyvážit jen jedna v?c a tou je, že bych si opravdu musela oblíbit postavy. Sice mi vyložen? nelezly na nervy, ale o oblib? se taky mluvit nedá.

Nová postava Tobias je hlavní zápletkou tohoto dílu a musím ?íct, že celkem vyda?enou. Jeho osobnost je hezky vykreslená, ob?as se dozvímé n?co z jeho minulosti a autorka nutí ?tená?e mu porozum?t. Z mého pohledu má nejlépe povedený charakter z postav v?bec. Dokonce ani u Samary – hlavní postavy, z jejíhož pohledu je p?íb?h vypravován v ich-form? – nejsou její vlastnosti tak propracované jako u Tobiase.

Caleb je naopak v tomto díle vedlejší postavou, autorka se ho tém?? na za?átku zbabila a za?ídila, aby se znova objevil až na konci knihy. Tenhle fakt ob?as nabádá p?íklán?t se k rozhodnutí Lilith a už tolik nestát za p?esv?d?ením Samary. Já osobn? jsem Lilith nepodporovala, ale rozhodn? by byl vývoj p?íb?hu v takovém p?ípad? zajímav?jší. A jak jsem zjistila, ,tu zajímavost? si autorka schovala do dalšího dílu.

Konec m? dost p?ekvapil, ale hlavn? z toho d?vodu, že kon?il tak otev?en?. Vzhledem k Osudové p?itažlivosti jsem ?ekala n?co uzav?en?jšího, protože i tam se všechno nakonec vy?ešilo a pokra?ování si vzalo pouze Lilith.

Zav?r Kronik si nejspíš p?e?tu, ale hlavním d?vodem bude, že nechci mít v knihovn? neúplnou sérii.

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### Rita says

I can't believe how she ended this book! Unbelievable! Loving this series. I can't imagine how it will end. Liked Tobias, but unfortunately I believe he is very bad. Ms. Reed's imagination is very interesting. I can't believe the love triangle, she has created. If someone wins, someone will die. Wow. Will be reading number 3 real soon.

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## **The FountainPenDiva, Old school geek chick and lover of teddy bears says**

Just. Wow.

This was so worth the wait! There's always pressure for the sequel to be even better than its predecessor and here Jaime Reed succeeds fabulously. There are roller-coaster ride novels, then there are bungee jump novels. Burning Emerald is a definite thrill rush and has me fiending for the last book (which won't be out until NEXT YEAR...boo).

One of the tropes in YA books which will either make or break a novel for me is the "love triangle". Whenever I pick up a book and read the back blurb, if there's even a mention of said "love triangle", I drop the book faster than a pissed off rattlesnake. Not to give away too much, but the way Reed handles this trope actually works and there's nothing very "loving" about it.

Newly-made Cambion Samara is literally stuck between dangerous and dangerouser as an incubus with a bad attitude and a refusal to heed the word "no" comes into town and turns her already topsy-turvy world into a nightmare of epic proportions. Unlike some authors, Reed doesn't make her incubus--Tobias--just an irresistible chick magnet who's misunderstood. He's completely and utterly amoral and bent on revenge. He behaves exactly the way a demon of lust and desire should act and doesn't care who gets hurt (or worse). His interactions with Samara are at times cringe-worthy, as they should be for a paranormal creation who isn't bound by human morality.

There are so many reasons why this book needs to be at the TOP of *every* YA readers' lists. One reason is Samara Marshall herself. She's the kind of independent, smart and realistic heroine the YA genre so desperately needs more of. In spite of her newfound powers as a Cambion, her physical body hasn't changed. There's no magical weight loss, hair straightening or any other epic fail that other authors would commit. Her snarky and humorous observations are a welcome panacea to the "OMG I can't even tie my own shoes without the help of the mysterious-hawt-boy-du-jour" type heroine who seems prevalent in YA paranormal books these days.

Now Samara's a dude magnet because of Lilith, her sentient host. The only physical manifestation of her powers are the uncanny green eyes which all the students at her school assume are contacts. To borrow a line from Spiderman, "with great power comes great responsibility...and a shitload of problems". Samara's powers cause a whole lot of trouble with practically every female at her high school because they all assume she's after their boyfriends. Worse, she's in danger of losing her BFF's Mia and Dougie (who've broken up) because she can't tell them what really happened to her.

Can I say that I LOVE Samara's mom? Unlike most parents in YA fiction who seem utterly oblivious to the fact that their kids have either developed some strange, mysterious powers or who have attracted those who do, Ms. Marshall is still the overly protective mom for whom Lifetime based-on-a-true-story movies are made for. However, she's also the only one who knows what happened to her daughter and has now become an expert in the care and feeding of Cambions. This is also a woman who sleeps with a .45 under her pillow.

The other reason is this is a book with a diverse and interesting cast. It's obvious Jaime Reed lives in the *real* world, where most high schools and neighborhoods are integrated. It would be nice if other YA authors could join the 21st century in this way. My other reason, it's an interracial romance as well. Speaking of the

romance, there's something sexy about Samara and Caleb, their sweetly geeky but running very hot connection which doesn't feel as if their respective hosts are the sole reason for the attraction. I love it when she calls him "Cake Boy". I love the fact that neither Caleb or Samara are these physically perfect teens--in spite of the paranormal aspect, they feel real--more like quirky best friends than characters in a book.

Lastly, I just love the sly digs at the whole Twilight phenomenon. I wonder if Reed will ever do a spin-off joke sequel called 'Specter'.

My only complaint is that this book felt a little short. Just as I was getting to the good part, I have to wait until next year! Nooooo!

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### **Wanda says**

3.5 stars

Burning Emerald was a good read but it didn't lure me in like Living Violet. With Living Violet, I couldn't wait to finish reading the book. But with this novel, it took me more than a few days, which isn't usually the case. But I'm one of those girls that once I invested time into a series, I need to see it all the way through. So regardless how empty Burning Emerald left me, I will go forward and read her next novel Fading Amber. Which also sounds promising, so let's see.

In this novel you learn a lot more about "Lilith" the demon inside Samara. And you also get to meet "Capone" Caleb's demon. That's where the book got interesting. They kept me reading. They are not pretty. These demons are greedy little things, so when their claws are out. No one is safe. Samara goes through a lot with her demon inside. Also you get to meet a new character who turns out to be very complex. I wasn't sure what to think of him. So that was really interesting.

Ms. Reed wrote a good story. But it fell a bit short for me. I can't really say where it fell short because I'll be spoiling it. However, I do like the way she writes her characters. Especially Samara, she's a really strong character with an awesome personality. I give this book a 3 stars out of 5. Overall, I do recommend this series to those readers who are into demons, incubus' and succubus. So if that's your thing then I hope you enjoy this series.

<http://www.goodchoicereading.com/2012...>

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### **Breana says**

The Cambion Chronicles is one of my all-time favorite paranormal series, yet, oddly enough, I never got around to getting the second book. However, all that has changed. I have finally read the second book, Burning Emerald, and I've been thoroughly reminded why I love this series so much. Really, Burning Emerald had a lot going for it, with character and story development that I initially missed. This is just one of those series that kind of requires a full read, or else pieces will be missing.

Also, the writing in this series is just one of my favorite styles. Reed knows what she's doing, and expertly applied her skills where they were necessary. Reed knows how to write and develop characters. I think that's one of the reasons why I keep coming back to this series. Samara Marshall is one of my favorite characters for a number of reasons—her resilience, personality, and individuality.

Burning Emerald answered a lot of questions for me, and I am glad that I finally got a copy. After all, finishing The Cambion Chronicles was long overdue on my end.

#### **Review First Posted Here**

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#### **jesse says**

[well, slightly less horrible than the first one (hide spoiler)]

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#### **Coranne says**

The Cover: What I love most about these covers is that there is no blonde white girl with a flowing dress on. I have read a few books where the main character is not white and yet they are portrayed as white on the cover, and it is annoying. I love the simplicity of these covers, but I could see how they could turn readers off- they really don't say anything about the story.

The Characters: I love Samara (Sam). I think she is a realistic, down to earth character. She is not skinny, she is not considered pretty by her classmates, and yet she still has powers and a wonderful love story. I loved that we got to know Capone and Lillith better in this book- I will that where is is, because I don't want to spoil any of the book. I also loved the introduction of Tobias into the storyline. I love that he is not a "wounded bad boy" but a true bad guy that doesn't want Sam for genuine reasons, rather for sinister reasons.

The Story: I was a little lukewarm about Living Violet (the first book), but I wanted to give this book a try because the storyline is so unique compared to everything else out there right now- I am so glad I did. This book was much more action packed than the last book (and that says something because the first book had a ton of action). I loved the drama and the huge twist the author put at the end of the story- I can't wait to read the third book to see how this all ends!

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#### **Kristina says**

One of the things I liked most about the first book is that there wasn't a second love interest. Book two, enter second love interest. Strangely enough though it was pulled off in a way that isn't the norm in most YA novels lately, and I found myself still eager to keep reading.

I don't want to give anything away, but because of events in the first book, Samara, the main character, doesn't always have full control of what she does. This new love interest (whom Samara wants nothing to do with) is connected to the part of her she can't control, so in a way it is and isn't a new love interest. Samara

wants nothing to do with him, but he continues to force himself into her life.

I know, I know, it seems confusing. Read the first book and you'll want to read this one, then it will all make sense, and if you are into paranormal YA novels, you won't regret it because it isn't your average vampire/werewolf/angel YA novel, none of those guys have a place here.

And on a side note: AHHH! How can you end a novel that way!!! I'll be biting my nails until Fading Amber is released!

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\*\*\* I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads \*\*\*

### **Naoms says**

Confessions of an Opinionated Book Geek

3.5 stars

“Burning Emerald,” begins a few weeks after the events of “Living Violet.” Sam is learning that her new life as a Cambion, isn’t the greatest situation in the world. She is a guy magnet and she attends high school. All day she must endure the immature leering of high school boys and the catty jealousy of high school girls. Sam wishes for the days when everyone ignored her, but there is nothing she can do to change her current state. Luckily, she has her slightly older and Cambion experienced boyfriend, Caleb, to help her cope and understand her new existence. Everything seems to be working out for Sam, but this is a book and nothing works out for long. Enter Malik, a boy Sam has known all of her life. Now that Sam is Cambion she notices strange things about Malik that sets her on edge. It doesn’t help that he is always staring at her and spreading rumors around the school that they’re hooking up. It turns out that Sam’s Cambion has a connection to Malik, that no one sees coming and the reveal leads to a story that is frightening, intriguing and very frustrating.

I enjoyed the second installment of the “Cambion Chronicles” a lot more than its predecessor. The writing is smoother, the story more focused and the action sequences had me on the edge of my seat. I really enjoyed where Jaimie Reed took us and was absolutely shocked by the end of the story. Not so much the events, but the fact that she left us with such a huge cliffhanger. The story ended and I wanted to scream “NOOOO! I WANT MORE!”

The saving grace of “Living Violet,” is Sam. She was smart, assertive and not quick to trust Caleb and his strangeness. I opened “Burning Emerald,” with the anticipation of loving Sam more. Unfortunately, halfway through I realized that I lost my love for Sam. Lost it. Sam lost her independence, her smart no nonsense attitude and her assertive behavior. She went from a lioness to a lamb. Her behavior and choices were extremely difficult to swallow. I could not believe how self-absorbed and out of touch she became with the people around her.

I understand that the plot has to keep moving and evolving, but she did not spend nearly enough time thinking about Caleb. She becomes so obsessed with Malik. There is this pretext that she is protecting Caleb and that Lilith is actually the one obsessed with the other guy, but Sam should have been feeding images of Caleb and Capone to her roommate. Sam just seemed flighty and fickle; like she latches on to every

mysterious and dangerous guy she meets.

When everything hits the fan, Sam takes a downward spiral. In “Living Violet” she demanded Caleb take responsibility for all of his actions. In “Burning Emerald,” Sam spends half the book moaning it isn’t her fault and that it’s all beyond her control. It really got sickening how Sam lets things spiral out of control. She is the one who kept quiet. She is the one that opened a door for Malik to walk through. Her inability to claim responsibility for her actions really weakened her as a character and made it difficult for me to root for her in any capacity.

I was unimpressed by Caleb in the first book, but I absolutely fell in love with him in “Burning Emerald.” I’m not sure if it’s because Malik was the other option, or because of Capone’s influence, but I love Caleb. So much so that every stupid choice Sam made infuriated me. I felt like a mistress watching the wife mess up. I was all “Why does he love her?!” and “Caleb, you deserve so much better!” Yea it’s a bit overdramatic, but really Caleb deserved better!

Sam completely ignores her friends, evades Caleb and continuously lies or omits important information from her friends. Mia, Sam’s best friend, is obviously having some kind of Dougie related meltdown. Every time that relationship is mentioned, it’s because Mia reaches a new level of crazy and melodrama. Sure, Sam is dealing with her own crap, but this is her closest friend! Sam could not be bothered to take an interest in anyone beside herself.

Then there is the story with Malik. I believed it and found it very interesting, but boy did I hate that character. Malik spreads disgusting rumors about Sam. He follows her around, hints that Sam should not be dating a guy of another race and continuously makes her uncomfortable by staring. If that isn’t enough, Malik cages Sam behind the bleachers, calls her a tease and then proceeds to attack her! This is the guy that Sam and Lilith spend so much time obsessing over. This guy who breaks into the house unannounced and is so focused on Lilith he could careless about Sam. I don’t think that the reader is supposed to root for Malik in anyway and I don’t believe there is supposed to be a legitimate love triangle. Still, Sam spends a lot of time thinking about Malik and it really made it difficult to like her. Caleb spends a lot of this book in real jeopardy and it’s amazing to me that Sam let another guy get into her head when her boyfriend needed her.

My issues with Sam aside, this is a much stronger book than “Living Violet.” The characters were better flushed out and I felt like the world became wider and even more interesting. Again, the ending is a cliffhanger and keeps you wanting more. Luckily the third book in the series, “Fading Amber,” is released this Monday, December. 24, 2012.

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### **Sasha says**

Me, upon learning that I had gotten a signed copy of this book via Goodreads First Reads:

My love knows no bounds for this series. I was so lucky and excited to have won a signed copy via the Goodreads First Reads program. Thank you, Jaime!! I could rave about how amazing Burning Emerald was until I’m blue in the face, but the only way to know it for yourself is to read it! Ignore the dorky cover and focus on the amazing plot, which picks up after Living Violet picks off... **WARNING: SPOILERS from here on out!**

Samara can hardly get used to how different her life is now that she met Caleb, the boy she fell in love with... who also happens to be a supernatural creature that feeds on the energies of other human beings. He's called a Cambion, a dangerous and alluring soul-sucker that descended from incubi and succubi many years ago. After the harrowing events of the last book, which left a high body count that included Sam's best friend (and also Cambion) Nadine, Sam finds herself newfound host to Nadine's hungry Cambion inner demon, nicknamed Lilith. The problem is, Lilith has a dark secret that might just cost Sam Caleb's life.

Where to start with this epic second installment? From the get-go, the reader hits the ground running. The pacing of this book is breathtaking, and every single chapter is important to the movement of the plot. There's no filler in this story, and though the back-to-back action might be overwhelming at first, you end up loving it. Speaking from personal experience, it has been quite some time since a book has grabbed and held my interest from first to last line.

Jaime Reed is pitch-perfect as a writer for a teen voice, sprinkling in accurate and witty pop culture references amid snarky one-liners that will have you laughing out loud and wishing you were as sharp as Samara. Speaking of Samara, while in the first book she had quickly become a favorite character of mine, her evolution in this book as she deals with her newfound abilities and the events in her life is a realistic and powerful one, which truly speaks to Reed's knack for spot-on characterization—it really makes you feel for the character. The antagonist is even more intimidating and fearsome than I expected, as was the true extent of a Cambion's powers. There is one particularly chilling scene between the baddie, Caleb, and Samara, which involves someone losing control over their Cambion. It was reminiscent of an exorcism scene, and it sent chills down my spine.

I can't really say much more about this book for fear of giving something away; suffice it to say that if you were a casual fan of the first book, I dare you to not become a complete fangirl/-guy for this series by the time you're finished reading the second. The cliffhanger is a doozy, and it nearly made me go into cardiac arrest, but I eagerly (and not-so-patiently) await 2013 and the third book in the series. Thank you to Jaime Reed and Goodreads First Reads for giving this lucky reader a chance to read such a fantastic book!

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For more book reviews, visit my blog [The Bookshelf!](#)

### **Kaela Spencer says**

DNF at 44%

I will not be finishing this series.

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### **Marie-Claire says**

Für Samara ist es nicht gerade einfach, mit ihrer Besessenheit klarzukommen. Niemand außer ihrer Mutter und ihrem Freund Caleb darf davon erfahren. Samara entfernt sich immer mehr von ihren Freunden. Als wäre nicht schon alles kompliziert genug, interessiert sich auch noch ihr Schulkamerad Malik für sie. Mehr, als ihr lieb ist. Dabei ist Malik nicht das, was er zu sein scheint ...

"Smaragdgrün wie die Dämmerung" ist der zweite Band der "Cambion Chronicles" von Jaime Reed.

Zwar kann man diesen zweiten Teil nicht als den typischen Sandwichband beschreiben, dennoch ist er nicht ganz so stark wie der erste Teil. Das liegt unter anderem daran, dass "Smaragdgrün wie die Dämmerung" nicht ganz so tiefschürfend und ausdrucksstark ist wie "Violett wie die Nacht".

Zwar ist dieser Roman einmal mehr spannend und ereignisreich, dennoch fehlte dieser besondere Reiz, den Band eins so ausmachte. Man vermisst irgendetwas, ohne es genau definieren zu können.

Während in Band eins der Fokus auf der Liebesgeschichte lag und dieser daher ungemein romantisch zu lesen war, ist "Smaragdgrün wie die Dämmerung" weitaus düsterer und das nicht nur in seiner Atmosphäre. Romantische Szenen treten vereinzelter auf, dafür finden sich weitaus mehr dramatische und actionreichere Szenen wieder.

Weiterhin taucht man als Leser nun mehr tiefer in die paranormale Materie ein und erfährt mehr über sie, da es diesmal aus erster Hand, in Form von Samara, erzählt wird. Dadurch ergibt sich einiges an Spannungspotential, das sehr gut genutzt wird, um den Verlauf der Handlung in straffem Tempo voranzutreiben.

Aufgrund der stärkeren Düsternis dieses Romans, trifft man nun nicht mehr so häufig auf wortgewandte und sarkastisch ironische Wortgefechte seitens Samaras. Der Witz, der den Leser in Band eins noch so zum Lachen bringen konnte, tritt hierbei ein wenig in den Hintergrund, was einerseits ein Pluspunkt für die Authentizität des Romans, andererseits aber auch ein bisschen Schade ist, da der Humor einen wichtigen Reiz in der Handlung ausgemacht hat.

Ansonsten hat mir dieser Roman wieder gut gefallen, weshalb ich ihn in einem Rutsch durchgelesen habe. Auch wenn er an Band eins nicht ganz heranreichen konnte, hat er mir dennoch unterhaltsame und spannende Lesestunden beschert.

Aufgrund des Endes bin ich nun umso mehr gespannt auf den finalen Teil dieser Trilogie, der einiges an Geschehnissen bereithalten wird und hoffentlich einen zufriedenstellenden und packenden Abschluss bieten wird.

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## **L.V. Lewis says**

Okay, so the sophomore offering from author Jaime Reed wasn't as funny as her freshman debut, but the story still caught and held my interest. As Samara (my favorite name in the whole world now) learns to control the gift Nadine left her upon her death, she finds there are both perks and drawbacks to being a Cambion (even by assuming someone else's demon). It's a blessing and curse for her. The blessing is her ability to now share intimacies with her boyfriend, Caleb. However, the curse is the attention from other boys and men she receives as a result. Now she knows first hand what Caleb had to endure. However, the good times could only last so long, right?

Enter Malik, handsome basketball star who's never paid her a lick of attention before she assumed her new green eyes and her very own "roommate." Lilith and she get along fabulously in the beginning and she receives some much needed tutelage from Nadine's mother, Evangeline Petrovsky, however, nothing prepares her for being hotly pursued by two young men who want to "bond" with her.

Meanwhile, Caleb succumbs to a mysteriously illness which cripples Samara for a minute, but she recovers. However, all she can think of when she does is Caleb and she keeps up a steady vigil at the hospital with Caleb's brothers until she is warned by the sinister Malik/Not Malik who tells her a secret that Nadine failed to share with her. This secret threatens to destroy Samara and Caleb's relationship.

The conflict in this book was great, however, the build up to the end of this installment didn't come across as intense as the ending in the first book. Despite everyone knowing what was at stake, everyone goes into self-preservation mode or something. One would think that because Samara's mother knows the scoop, and Caleb and his brothers see the danger, and even Evangeline knows the consequences, they all stupidly let Samara go off on her own which set up a doozy of a cliffie, but yeah, I ain't mad at Jaime Reed, because now I want to read book three more than ever!

Anyway, characters do dumb things sometimes, but hey, if they didn't what would be the fun in reading about someone who did everything just right. Conflict is the lifeblood of a good story, so I'm ready to see what happens next!

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### **Fangs for the Fantasy says**

Sam is adapting slowly to having Lillith, to being a Cambion, but it isn't easy. Her new powers of attraction are alienating her friends and a considerable number of her school peers and Caleb's draw on her is growing to almost ridiculous degrees. Her own draw is attracting a lot of unwanted attention from men – one man in particular.

Malik, he never had time for her before, but now he's paying far more attention to her. Far too much and he's not taking no for an answer. With her new Cambion powers, Sam has an answer to that – but that just opens up a whole new secret she never imagined – and a secret that is tied heavily to Nadine's – and Lillith's – past.

Sam is now torn between what she wants and what Lillith wants and fighting to protect both the man she loves and the life she has, as the Cambions encroach more and more.

This is the second book in the series and has continued the pattern of taking us right to the edge of a trope and then completely subverting it. I see the trope approaching, I'm poised to skewer it and then – last second – we pull back from it and expose it as ridiculous as it is.

This time I thought we were going to have a love triangle. It had all the hallmarks. Here is the evil hot guy to counteract Caleb's nicer-guyness. Evil Hot Love Interest is physically much sexier than Caleb, Evil Hot Love Interest embraces his evil predatory nature while Caleb fights it, Evil Hot Love Interest is more powerful – it's a classic YA love triangle we've seen repeated over and over (usually with fangs and lots of moping and, as the author wonderfully skewers, with the CW logo in the corner). So I braced myself, I gritted my teeth aaand...

Subversion! I am debating needing a spoiler warning here, but it's not really a spoiler – or is only a spoiler because this whole book genre has convinced us that super-powerful hot guys who kill people and stalk you are zomg so sexy! Sam appreciates that Tobias is a very attractive man, and there it ends. She doesn't consensually work with him, he pushed and manipulates and it's not a sign of twu luv and devotion, it's a

sign of predatory behaviour and Sam treats him (almost) accordingly.

Does that mean I'm generally happy with Sam this book? Not so much. In the last book I liked Sam's common sense, I liked her strong determination to do what she needed to do. I liked that she could look past emotion and woo-woo and see the truth. I liked her practicality, her intelligence and general avoidance of so many of the tropes that have become staple in the genre. This time she did things that individually probably wouldn't have bothered me – but collectively reduce the character.

She is being stalked by EHLI and instead of actually telling people with the power/insight to do something about it she tries to make deals with him instead. She makes deals that involve her cutting off Caleb when she knows he's dependent on her – which sends him on the rampage. She guards her house against him then lets him in. She wanders off with him on occasion despite his behaviour suggesting she should be screaming and dialling 911. It just doesn't work for me – she treats him like the villain he is some of the time and then extends considerable unworthy trust to him the others.

I also don't like how much she's letting slide. One thing Sam had going for her was her sense of priorities - focusing on her own goals and school work and not letting romance drop them. But this book her grades drop, she spends no time with her friends (both of whom now seriously dislike her and I'm not entirely sure why) and less time with Caleb... so what is she actually doing? Is it just down to stress of the whole situation? If so that needed more overtly labelling, because she seemed to be spending less time with Caleb, less time at school, less time socialising and, because of her mother's deeply creepy GPS, less time away from home – so what is she spending time on?

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