



Pandora's Daughter

Iris Johansen

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The number-one blockbuster bestselling author delivers her most explosive and compelling novel yet, in which a woman must unlock the secrets of her own mind before she loses her life.

She has a gift of unspeakable power. . . .

He must control her or destroy her. . . .

For as long as she can remember, successful young physician Megan Blair has tried to silence the voices in her head---voices that bring her to the edge of madness and terror. Megan possesses psychic powers that have been dormant for years, hidden deep in the past she's tried so desperately to forget. But now everything has come to a boiling point---someone is trying to kill her, and others are trying to use her, including the deadly and seductive Neal Grady. Shocking secrets about her life and her mother's death bombard her as she fights to take control of her heritage and save herself and everything she believes in. Grady holds the key to understanding her future, a future in which Megan's life will never be the same.

If she survives to have a future.

A fast-paced thrill ride, *Pandora's Daughter* is Iris Johansen as you've never read her before.

Pandora's Daughter Details

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From Reader Review Pandora's Daughter for online ebook

Y says

What we have here is a mediocre action/romance with supernatural elements added in that could have resulted in at least an entertaining beach read or something if it weren't for the god-awful dialog that plagues the entire thing.

The situations are frankly kind of silly, and it gets boring when both the good guys and the bad guys have contacts in super high places all the time that allows them constant access to planes and helicopters and other junk, but okay, the book's going for an action/adventure feel and things are just *easier* that way. Still, the baddie is like every cartoon villain out there, sending out all his incompetent goons to try to dispatch of the good guys first while he sits around in his HQ, maybe stroking a pet cat or going "excellent" from time to time. Meanwhile, the goons all fail. Big surprise.

Personally I couldn't stand any of the characters besides maybe Renata and Harley, but that's mainly because I find most of Johansen's characters to be too boring or one-dimensional, and I'm pretty sure I've already seen all these characters in the two books of hers I've read previously. This is actually something that plagues lots of authors I read, where they just end up reusing the exact same character personalities in every single book, but I find it particularly aggravating here because they're character types I don't like.

Finally, going back to the laughably bad dialog, this had me nearly tearing out my hair in the last book of hers I read, so I decided to keep track of how often Johansen abuses certain words.

Dammit: 58 uses

Bastard: 21 uses

Hell: 22 uses

Damn (it/you, as an adjective (damn arm, damn idea, etc): 40 uses

Screw (you/this/etc.): 6 uses

And those are the only ones I noticed, so it's not actually an accurate count; there were definitely MORE than what I noted in the book.

This is just embarrassing, especially if you're supposed to be some well-known, big-name author. What the hell is her editor doing? Picking their ass while reading the book? So, I don't know, I guess because it's too much *effort* to indicate that Character A is currently ANGRY!, or AGGRAVATED!, or UPSET in any other way, Johansen constantly peppers their speech with "Dammit" or "Damn you" or something similar to show that the characters aren't happy. Who talks like that? Who says "Bastard" all the time? It's not just in the dialog, sometimes to accentuate things, dammit is thrown into the narration. THE NARRATION. Sure, it's supposed to be some character or another's inner thoughts, but it's like, come ON.

Okay, no, look, the evil bad guys are really nasty business, kidnapping children to sell as sex slaves, having the main character's mother gang raped while everyone laughs, slaughtering numerous people along the way...and the strongest word the goodies use to refer to this human piece of shit is "Bastard"? Or even better, "Scumbag". Oh yeah, that was used quite a few times throughout. And this is a book that doesn't mind using the word "Shit" fairly often, either. See, I don't really enjoy reading books with nothing but f-bombs, but if

you're going to have the characters swear anyway, use some more interesting language for crying out loud!
NOBODY FUCKING TALKS LIKE HOW THEY DO IN JOHANSEN'S NOVELS.

Outside of constant repetition of words spoken by characters, Johansen really likes having characters "stiffen". Or maybe "tense" sometimes. I counted at least ten uses of "so-and-so stiffened" in the book. Are there seriously no other descriptors that could have been used?

It's not just the overuse of certain words that kill any sense of reality or suspense in these things. Megan, the main character, gets on the phone with above child-seller/rapist, and when she learns that he has someone ELSE killed, she asks "What did he ever do to you?"

What did he ever do to you.

Oh, oh, and he kidnaps someone in a coma, and Megan is all "It could kill him! His immune system can't handle it!" to a guy who had her mother GANG-RAPED.

HE DOESN'T FUCKING CARE. WHAT IS WITH ALL THIS INSIPID DIALOG? There's not a single drop of wit or cleverness to be had in any of it. If you don't want wit, at least make the lines more *serious* sounding. "What did he ever do to you? Dammit."

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CLM says

I swore I would never read this author again after *Storm Winds*, the French Revolution book where the revolutionaries drank the blood of the nuns. Here, as if the one dimensional writing weren't bad enough, there are so many inconsistencies and holes in the plot it would take me too long to list them and I can only conclude the author refuses editorial guidance. However, surely the biggest hole in the plot is why an all-important ledger (sought by bad guys, protected by moderately good guys) is not destroyed if those protecting it know that their enemy, Molino, will use it to kill/destroy them. Also, characters that stop to have sex so often while a sadistic monster (who has already killed heroine's mother and foster-uncle while torturing dozens more) is after them surely deserve to be killed...

Sarah (Workaday Reads) says

Pandora's Daughter by Iris Johansen was my February commute audiobook. Megan Blair is a doctor who hears voices. These voices are actually part of a psychic power that she only just learned she has. This comes at a time that someone is trying to kill her, and she must learn to accept and prevail, or risk losing her life.

The premise of the book sounds exciting and interesting, but it fell flat. The plot progresses really slowly, and the characters are just annoying.

Megan is supposed to be a doctor in her late twenties. But she alternates being seeming like a child and a

middle-aged woman. I had to keep reminding myself of who she was supposed to be. The further into the story I got, the less I could stand her.

The other characters are very cut and dry, with a huge dose of annoying. There is a very evil villian, and a not-so-nice good guy. Everyone is just simply unbelievable. The only exception being Harley, who provides comic relief while actually coming across as real.

Overall, I couldn't wait for the story to end. Several times, I debated just stopping. I didn't really care to find out how it ended.

A word of advice, there is a lot of profanity and sex. Neither element added anything to the story, and it is really distracting.

The narration was very well done. Each character had a slightly different voice, and they were easily distinguishable. Conversations on the phone had an element that sounded like they were actually conducted through a phone, and were great additions. I was impressed with the narration, just not the actual story.

Pam Meneses says

Books about strong, extraordinary women--that's usually my shtick. But this one fell flat, did not fully showcase the main character's strength, and did not sustain the momentum it generated in the beginning. For those reasons, I'm giving it a 2. This is my first time reading this author, and most probably, my last.

(I better read something good soon. I feel like I'm swimming in a sea of 2's and 3's lately).

Kristen says

In another one of Iris Johansen's stand-alone thrillers, she took us on another hair-rising adventure of its own kind. For Dr. Megan Blair, she'd been hearing voices in her head. She tried to silence those dormant psychic powers for years, when it drove her insane and out of her mind. She couldn't forget the past, when she learned about her mother's death and trying to save her heritage. People were out to kill her, use her and also seduce her, including Neil Grady, who held the key to her future... if she was to have one. But little did she know at what cost would it be in the end to discover the truth behind her powers.

Tabi34 says

The title intrigued me - Pandora's Daughter; I thought it would be about a woman with ties to the Greek myth. Then I read the back cover and there was danger and mystery. I had to read it. It turned out to be one of the slowest reads I've had done. It took me weeks to plow through the story.

A woman, Megan, sees her mother killed when she is a teenager. Years later she is nearly run off the road in an attempt to kill her. Her past is revealed to her and she and Neal Grady go on a quest to find the Ledger which has the names of all the family members who have psychic abilities, while she is hunting Molino, the man who had her mother killed.

The mystery would have been good if there was a definite through-line, but with the secondary mystery of the Ledger it muddled the story. Then the author introduces a third and fourth character that I felt further water down the story. Stick with one strong story line with a second sub-plot and it would've made a better read.

If that wasn't bad enough, the author throws in a sexual element that I thought could've been left out all together. If the author is going to say Megan has highly sensual characteristics -then exploit this facet or leave it out. They fell to the floor and then the next thing we read is that they are talking about how spent they are. I don't think it was necessary for the overall story.

I finished the book because, well, I bought it. But I was disappointed.

Jess says

I have never read anything by this author, and the only reason I picked this one up was because it was a group read. I didn't even read the book description so it was a big surprise to me that it was paranormal!

I wasn't sure what bookshelf to put this one, because it had elements from both romantic suspense and paranormal romance. The basic premise of the story is that there are people in the world who have other abilities that are not "normal". Some are empathic, can read minds, some can hear echos of things that happened etc...

Megan grew up hearing voices, and one night she is with her mom (who told her she might have a mental disorder) and her mom is murdered. A man named Grady did something to her so she could forget. The book fast forwards to the present, Megan is now an adult and a doctor in a hospital. She seems to react more emotionally than the other docs do, and she's not sure why. Then someone tries to kill her, and her past comes back to haunt her with Grady at the forefront. She begins to unravel the secrets of what she is, and what her population of people hide from the world.

The book was very fast paced, by the time I went to put it down the first time I was already half-way through. I liked Grady, he was an interesting mix of bad guy/good guy. Megan was a very strong female lead who I liked from the beginning of the book.

I am interested in reading more books by this author.

Amy Lignor says

One of the most entertaining writers is back. Looking forward to a novel by Ms. Johansen, to me, is a lot like awaiting the next J.D. Robb/Nora Roberts tome. Engaging, fast-paced...the woman knows what she has to do to bring a reader in for the ride.

The plot: For as long as Megan Blair can remember, she has tried with all her might to silence the voices that scream inside her head. She's toiled since childhood to ignore the strange pictures that rise up inside her mind, like demons coming forth from the grave to silence her forever.

As Megan grew into an adult, she turned towards medicine and became a talented, soft-hearted physician. The voices grew dormant over time and Megan concentrated on saving the sick and wounded. Her only problem? Being a little too emotionally involved with her patients.

Her home-life is shared with her uncle. After her mother's strange death, her uncle appeared to raise her and care for her. A great man and a great character. (We should all have relatives like this guy). The only unfortunate part is that he holds a secret within him that could make Megan's security fall apart. One night, coming home from work, she is run off the road by a stranger. In a millisecond, a mysterious, sensual man named Neal Grady arrives at her front door...a man she remembers quite clearly from her past. A man, that no matter what Megan does, can read her every thought and emotion the minute she's having them.

Grady unleashes the secrets of her past and Megan is thrown into a macabre mystery that harkens back to a family who died hundreds of years before. She must use her incredible gifts to help Grady hunt down a log; a book that lists all of the people like her...before the vile man who killed her mother can find the book and use it to destroy not only Megan, but the rest of the "freaks" on the list. A wonderful adventure from start to finish. The chemistry between Grady and Megan is blissful and the character of Harley has to be one of the most charming men Johansen ever created. Enjoy!

Johanna says

[AUDIO BOOK REVIEW]

I liked the idea of the plot and the subject matter (re: paranormal) but felt like the story lacked suspense and overdid it with the histrionics.

Several times the author went out of the way to have a character explain things that I just didn't need to know in order to enjoy the story. The expositionary dialog felt awkward (no one ever explains themselves like the last scene of a Scooby-Doo episode). To boot, the melodramatic adverbs and theatrical blocking actually pulled me out of the story at times because it pushed my suspended belief beyond the breaking point.

I wonder if the audio book made some of this worse? It was read like a cross between a Shakespearan tragedy and a Mexican telenovela. In addition, word-choices like "jerkily" sound harsh to the ear and bring attention to themselves at the cost to the story-telling.

Perhaps the paperback is good for beach-reading, when you can scan the story and take naps at will without fear of losing the plot? Just a thought.

Sasha says

The book was an ok read.

I have read many novels by Iris Johansen, particularly in the Eve Duncan Series, and all the novels have similar plot consisting of a talented, independent, not to forget beautiful and strong female lead who'll have no trouble at all in confronting the obstacles as and when they arose. There will be a male lead that will not

be conventionally handsome, but on the whole will cast a magnetic effect on those around him. There will be another male lead that will support our main character, be truly heroic and in general a do-gooder. Not to forget both these guys will be lethal to the core.

The villain will always be the scum on the Earth and in general wants to kill the heroine for one thing or another. And did I forget to mention he's your average looking guy who could be anyone you pass in the street? No, well then I have now.. :)

The hero will zoom in to save the day and heroine as well. Hero will go on run with heroine and there he'll develop romantic feelings for the heroine who is most probably interested in the physical aspect of love only. Hero will pursue her relentlessly, kill her dragon (the villain) for her, and then make her realize that she loves him too, by distancing himself from her. Well that about sums it up.

But despite this predictable plot, I kind of enjoy reading the Eve Duncan series, and have read 9 – 10 novels in the same. And will continue to read further.

Lauren says

I really tried with this book, but if I can't even pay attention to an audiobook when I'm stuck in a car with nothing else to do, I have to admit defeat.

Kapria says

Wow...I don't even know how to begin to write all of my frustrations with this book. I guess I'll start with my biggest number one problem. The dialogue. Some of the conversations between the characters were so irrelevant to what was actually going on. I had a hard time seeing the characters as convincing people because they were so bland and the dialogue was unbelievable. The bad guy didn't even sound like a bad guy besides the occasional "bitch" and "whore" that was spewed from his mouth, and what kind of name is Molino? I know that sounds petty but come on Molino? Really? Neal Grady... He was the most unoriginal, boring, predictable character I have come across in a while in the book world. His dialogue didn't fit the "seductive" description I had in my imagination. And of course Megan Blair. The main character. She would have been great if the story was about bipolar disorder. She went from acting like a kid, to a middle aged woman, to a horny teenager filled with lust, and of course the "I can't stand you, but I want you to screw my brains out" cliche was instilled.

My second problem with this poor excuse of a novel is the repetition with words. For an author that has wrote so many books I would expect that would be something one would avoid. I don't know how many times I've read the word "Lord" or "Hell" or "Bastard", "Damn", or "Dammit" at least every 10 lines if not less. Can I get some new, more creative words please? Most of the time the words were unnecessary and they were way overused.

This book may sound good based on the description, but save yourself from pulling your teeth and your hair out and pick up a different book.

Anna says

This has been the worst book I've read in ages. I'd feel like a parrot to repeat the flaws that have already been pointed out by the other well-written reviews. In fact, it would be even furiously trite to say that yes, this book is even worse than the *Twilight* series. However, in the bizarrely accepted universal language of *Pandora's Daughter*'s characters, dammit, I'm gonna do it. I'm gonna compare the two.

1. The protagonist is named Megan Blair. At least Bella Swan's name was ironic.
2. Maybe because Robert Pattinson was already established as what Edward was supposed to look like, or maybe because I've been seeing *Hannibal*, but I imagine Neal Grady to look like Mads Mikkelsen. Who else can twist their lips as obsessive as Neal Grady?
3. Why does Megan call her lover Grady? That's what you would call your hybrid nemesis/high school principal. I can believe a thousand-year-old vampire/teenager over the Megan and Neal Grady loveline.
4. Johansen had the potential to make Renata an Alice Cullen, or someone who would be more considerate and more heartwarming and relevant to Megan's "talent" than the creepy Neal Grady. But no, Renata's storyline was unnecessarily complicated by both being the hardheaded trained assassin with no feelings and the hardheaded trained assassin with no feelings that's also boring.
5. Dammit, you guys. You have superpowers and you're cowering away from thugs. I know that this is new to you, Megan, but make us believe that you're more than an angry shit talker. At least put up a fight. (Denying Neal Grady's boner shouldn't count.)
6. Please don't let this book be a sequel. *New Moon*, I can say with confidence, was an improvement. There dare not be a honeymoon for Megan and Neal Grady.

Devin King says

Pandora's daughter

Personal response

When I was reading this book, I was bored. During the prologue. The first chapter had a few hooks that made me want to read until the end and find out what happened.

Plot

This book starts out in the woods outside of Colorado, then Pandora moves into the city. During her time in the city she goes to nursing school and graduated top of her class. She stays there for many years until she is taken overseas to Germany and to a French circus. At the French circus she goes to a carnie's trailer who has

been murdered, and she is able to see exactly what happened. She is able to witness firsthand everything that is said and done before, during, and after the murder. Because of this, she is wanted by very bad people. Eventually, she is found and dragged into a house in the mountains of Colorado that is very hard to access. She stays there until Neil Grady tries to rescue her.

Characterization

For a long time Megan Blair has been trying to get the voices out of her head, but she simply cannot until her mom dies. When her mom dies she has help silencing the voices from Neil Grady. He silenced the voices even though she didn't know who he was or even that he was silencing them. Many years later when he meets her at the zoo and without her even knowing he was there, he temporarily released the voices in her head.

Setting

In the early 20th century Meghan Blair was in the woods with her mom having a picnic. After the picnic Megan's mom was murdered, and she had to move into the city with someone she thought was her uncle. They also went to Germany and France. While they were there, she learned more about what she was capable of. She entered a carnis trailer who was tortured and murdered, even after the fact she was able to watch the whole thing. Even though it physically and mentally drained her for multiple days. She was able to see and hear things she could only have heard if she had been there. This drove her to work hard and try to solve the case of what happened to the book. While she was working, she was captured and taken to a house in the mountains of Colorado until she managed to get help and escape.

Recommendation

Due to some of the explicit content of the book, I recommend this book for people 12 and up male or female. I also feel that some kids will not understand what is going on until it is explained to them. Some of the book can only be understood by people who have a little knowledge of supernatural occurrences.

Alicia says

I struggled to finish this book, as it was predictable, and the characters were poorly executed. Dialogue made me cringe and really, Johansen needs to try a little variety when it comes to swear words or leave em out because seeing "damn" or "dammit" at least once on every page was pathetic.

I've enjoyed Johansen's novels in the past, especially the Eve Duncan ones and have grown attached to Galen, Sarah, and the other supporting characters. Unfortunately, Meghan and Blair were cookie-cutter, and the very unoriginal idea of stubbornness, then sexual attraction to the man/protector, his blatant desire and her eventual giving in...gah. I wanted to cringe. It's like the author couldn't be bothered to come up with a new story, took a previous one, replaced the names, locations and published it.

My mind came up with so many possibilities in directions for the story to turn and still, same ole same ole and I was left annoyed.

In browsing the author's site it looks like Meghan is in the next Eve Duncan book, Quicksand, and hopefully her character is expanded on and given a little bit of life.
