



Star Struck

Jenny McLachlan

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Following on from Flirty Dancing, Love Bomb and Sunkissed, Jenny McLachlan's next book is perfect for fans of Geek Girl and Louise Rennison.

In a huge fantastic final hurrah to our lovable heroines - Bea, Betty, Kat and Pearl - Jenny McLachlan's latest book tells Pearl's story. Pearl is the 'bad girl' of the group - she drinks, she smokes, she swears - and she's mean to Bea and Betty. But she did fly halfway round the world to rescue Kat in Sunkissed. If there's one thing Pearl knows deep down, it is how to be a friend. And now, more than ever, she could really use a friend.

There will be laughter, there will be tears and there will definitely be kissing. Most importantly, Pearl will be keeping it fierce!

Star Struck Details

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Author : Jenny McLachlan

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TheCosyDragon says

This review has been crossposted from my blog at The Cosy Dragon . Please head there for more in-depth reviews by me, which appear on a timely schedule.

Pearl is the bad girl. Rough, swearing, in trouble at school. It turns out that she has some really good explanations for why that's the case – you'll have to read on and find out.

Oh yeah, who's going to cheer for that entirely surprising ending? Uh, that would be me. I didn't see that coming at all. Should I have? Were the signs there? I can't remember.

This is the 4th book in the 'series'. Four friends, four books. There is absolutely no need to read the first three though. I have a feeling that they all centre very firmly on the main girl, and so I think I could go back and read them even having read this novel without having had too many spoilers.

No no no. This is not the right book cover! Well it is... But it's so much more vibrant in real life. Part of the reason I reviewed it was because I was sick of seeing the fluro pink on my bookshelf... No honestly, it's BRIGHT.

Look, I wanted to give this 4 stars, but then again I thought I wasn't quite absorbed enough by it to justify a strong reaction. Good teenage storyline and characters, just not enough real depth for me.

I registered a book at BookCrossing.com!

<http://www.BookCrossing.com/journal/14037135>

Bookish Indulgences with b00k r3vi3ws says

The ladybird series focuses on a quirky group of friends. Each as different from the other that one can be, yet it is their undisputable friendship that binds them together. I stumbled upon the series when Bloomsbury India had sent me a review copy and have been following the series since.

Star Struck focuses on Pearl, a girl who has intrigued me from the beginning. She is the 'bad girl' of the group and fills that role awfully well what with her mean attitude that shows up from time to time. Towards the beginning I really did not understand why she was a part of this group. It was in Sunkissed that she actually makes a mark as a friend. Pearl was focused on landing a role in the school production but the role is given to the new girl, Hoshi. Hoshi seems to be worming her way into everything that Pearl holds dear, including her group of friends. Of course, Pearl isn't a girl to be sidelined so easily and so she plans her revenge. But then she gets to know Hoshi... And well, things take a turn.

The storyline was as usual quite predictable though the dynamic between Hoshi and Pearl did surprise me at a point. The author's style of narration maintains uniformity and meets my expectations from the previous books – I do not see much of a change there, whether good or bad. The easy to get into and upbeat language that the author uses is really a plus of the series. There were spots, especially in the middle where the story

seemed to hold the pace a bit and there were certain issues that remained unanswered which is a bummer since this is the last book in the series.

However, being the story of the 'bad girl' of the group also has its perks. It is totally fun and this installment is now my favourite in the series.

Nikki Sheehan says

I haven't read the other books in the series (yet), so with the word 'Hilarious!' on the cover I was expecting a funny, light read. This *is* a funny book, don't get me wrong, but there is SO much more to Star Struck. The problems which the main character, Pearl, faces (many of which she causes herself!) also make this book both tragic and touching at times, and give the story and the characters real depth. I was quickly hooked and kept sneaking off to read more when I should've been working.

The best bit was the ending, which I didn't see coming, not until the last minute and even then I thought, 'She won't, will she?' And I was so pleased when she did! (you'll have to read it to find out *what* she did). In short, I totally loved it. And now, lucky me, I have the rest of the series to catch up on!

Serendipity Reviews says

I love this series! This book just finishes it off perfectly. Pearl is now one of my favourite Ladybirds and I would never have said that at the beginning of the series.

Kirsty says

Oh this book. I can't say I was all that fussed initially when I found out about it. I've never been a Pearl fan and now I've finished it I can honestly say it was my favourite book of the series so far.

Pearl is one of those girls we all know, I'm pretty certain I went to school with a couple and I can definitely think of a couple I've taught over the years. Pearl is the bad girl. She's tough because she has to be and it means she's really misunderstood. The more I learned about Pearl over the course of the book the more I wanted to go into her life and take her away from all the rubbish she was dealing with and look after her. I think the thing this book did for me, more than anything else, is help me to understand Pearl and why she was the way she was and I'm so glad I had the chance to see that for myself.

The story over the course of the book is really interesting. In addition to seeing our favourite ladybirds again and getting more about Pearl and her background I really enjoyed how it focusing on the developing relationship between Pearl and the new girl Hoshi. I won't say too much but Hoshi's story is a really interesting one and I learning more about her fascinated me.

All in all my favourite book of the series and definitely worth a read.

Cody says

The Ladybird series is about four best friends and their journey of self-discovery and friendship through adolescence. Star Struck focuses on Pearl, the more temperamental member of the group. Throughout the series Pearl's bad reputation precedes her, she's bitchy and mean but while from the outside it looks like Pearl would rather be alone the truth is anything but. Star Struck shows a completely different side to Pearl and valid reasons for her actions and behavior.

Pearl dreams of being on stage so when her school puts on a production of Romeo & Juliet she knows the part of Juliet is perfect for her. However when new girl Hoshi transfers from Japan and manages to snag the lead role, Pearl vows to steal it back; by whatever means necessary.

I wasn't the biggest fan of Pearl but I was able to appreciate her given her background and home life; I truly felt sorry for her. Pearl's character arc was slow but eventually I was able to admire her bravery and independence. What started as a strained relationship between Pearl and Hoshi soon turned into true friendship and I was happy that Pearl finally had someone to talk to and rely on. The romance was slightly messy, I had my predictions but there was a lot of back and forth that made it confusing.

Overall Star Struck remains to be the light and quick read that Sunkissed was but it was also missing that spark that usually keeps me engaged with the story. While I enjoyed the characters the plot dragged a lot in the middle and I also found that the ending to Star Struck left me with more answers than questions and I'm not a big fan of open-ending's, especially when they're the last in a series. Plus after becoming concerned for Pearl and her circumstances at home I would have liked to have known what happened afterwards or if certain issues were ever resolved.

Literary-ly Obsessed (Blog) | Twitter | Instagram

Nori says

I loved this one. I had mixed feelings going in: excitement for another installment of this fabulous series and dread that it would be too hard reading from the perspective of the mean girl.

I read this in a couple of sittings. I loved it. I loved seeing why Pearl is the way she is. Her home life was kind of terrifying. And I wasn't expecting to feel so strongly and feel so afraid in this book (where the rest of the books in the series were a lot more fluffy). I had tears at one point (or two).

I also loved the romance. I wasn't sure if the author was going to do anything with my unconventional ship or not. I thought it might just be a friendship story, and that would have been okay too. But, I was shipping so hard. And I was so happy to have my ship sail. That being said, the one thing I did not love was the ending with the play. That felt a little too forced -too Disney channel. I would have been happier if it went according to plan, and maybe had a little more resolution with Pearl's family life.

All in all though, this was amazing. I loved the humor, sarcasm, girl friendship, romance, family drama, everything. I highly recommend this series to everyone (especially those who are recovering still -years later

from the end of the Georgia Nicholson books).

Kate says

Pearl isn't above some dirty tactics to get what she wants. And what she wants is to be Juliet in the school's modern production of Shakespeare's classic play. When the part is given to new girl Hoshi, Pearl resorts to some interesting schemes to get her new nemesis to quit.

Since starting the Ladybird series, Pearl's story is the one I was anticipating most. She's a bit of a self-proclaimed bad girl yet throughout the series she has shown to be quite complex. In *Star Struck*, Pearl really shines.

When Hoshi arrives and becomes Juliet, Pearl is livid. She wanted to be the one wowing the audience and sharing stage kisses the class heartthrob. As Pearl launches her plan to take down Hoshi from behind the facade of being the transfer student's BFF, she finds that Hoshi is tougher than she seems.

I loved how these two characters contrasted each other. Pearl hides behind her tough girl exterior. The smoking, swearing and bullying are part of Pearl's armour to protect herself. Her family relationship is difficult (that's a bit of an understatement) and there are times when Pearl feels her only friend is an exotic fish. Hoshi on the other hand is outgoing and quirky and open to new friends. Pearl's idea of being frienemies with Hoshi falls apart as the two girls find common ground in their love of performing and being outsiders.

There is a romantic storyline in this book and I loved how the relationship grew over the course of the novel. The course of true love never did run smooth and that definitely applies to Pearl. I was really rooting for Pearl and adored how she accepted that she deserved love by the end. I also enjoyed the friendships between all of the girls in *Star Struck*. The events of the previous books haven't been forgotten but rather Pearl's story brings them all together.

Star Struck is a great conclusion to the Ladybirds series. Much like the previous books, *Star Struck* is a brilliant combination of fun, romance and some more serious issues.

Star Struck in ten words or less: Brilliant story about self-acceptance and friendship.

Jemima Osborne says

Oh my gosh I think this might be my most favourite of the Ladybirds!!! I love Pearl so much and seeing just why she acts the way she does just made me want to give her a ladybird wave!!

I was kindly sent a copy of *Star Struck* by Bloomsbury Publishing in exchange for a review.

Pearl in the previous books has always been a bit of a bully and has targeted Bea and Betty however she's been friendly with Kat. Now throughout the previous three books you learn that all four used to be best friends but fell out one day. Gradually they all become friends again and in the last book you learn that they hang out again.

In this book the school show/musical is Romeo and Juliet and Pearl wants the role of Juliet. As a drama fan I am a total Pearl here. Always want the lead (getting the lead) so I was obviously routing for her until Hoshi appears and just her description sent waves of my K-Pop love back into my head. Hoshi auditions for Juliet and gets it which sends Pearl into nightmare city and she starts off trying to be mean to Hoshi. But after tricking her onto the wrong train home in London and having to get her off it, the pair miss their train home and end up with a few hours together in London.

This helps Pearl realise just how nice and sweet Hoshi is and a fortnight later they're friends with no hostility between the two.

But back at Pearls home her brother, Alfie who is the main reason of why Pearl is horrid at school. Hits her with a controller and kills Oy, her fish. She tells her mother but she fails to believe her, insisting that Pearl caused it. But all is not lost, Hoshi becomes her saviour and one night before the opening night and after Pearl stands up to her brother in defence of Hoshi, THEY KISS.

TOTAL SHOCKER AND TOTAL OMFG!!

Absolutely loved this bit. So so loved it!

Anyway, Pearl goes home to tell her mum just how bad her brother is when she finds her fish tank and the remaining fish, destroyed. Killed by Alfie's golf club.

This helps Pearl to convince her mum how bad Alfie is and he is sent to stay with her dad for Christmas. Pearl then falls asleep in her mums bed only to wake up to an emergency text from her friends.

Something is about to ruin the school show.

Pearl then rushes to the school thinking that Hoshi has abandoned her and gone back to Japan only to find that the leading male can no longer play Romeo and as Pearl knows all of Romeos moves/words/actions the play is transformed and so is Pearl.

I absolutely loved this book. Read it in one sitting and completely love love love love love it. I want more. I'd love for Jenny's next book to maybe be about Hoshi and her point of view of this book. But either way I need more Pearl and Hoshi!

To sum it up in one quote;

Now this doesn't happen in High School Musical

Eve beinguniquebooks says

In the final instalment of the series, we follow feisty Pearl as she is still getting into trouble but wants to desperately play Juliet in the school play.

On her final warning at school, she needs to impress and so when Hoshi a new girl from Japan shows up and auditions too, Pearl suddenly finds herself snubbed in her drama group and sets about showing Hoshi just who she is.

Especially as she's After Jake or so Pearl believes and she wants him, or so she thinks at first...

As the story goes on and the cast gets set, they take a school trip which Pearl nearly loses her friends for good and she finds Hoshi a surprisingly great new friend, especially as she helps her to realise, at home her brother doesn't treat her right at all, threats and hits, so Hoshi helps her and through that Pearl realises there's something more drawing them together...

I loved this book the most in the series now I have finished them all and reflect back on all the separate stories. Pearl does a three sixty slowly in her treatment of people and as she falls in love she changes back to nice Pearl, not like the hard girl she was forced to become because of her situation. It raised the issue of abuse and gay relationships and well as Pearl having a unique hobby in her tropical fish collection. The addition of Hoshi was a great move especially as kawaii and Lolita fashion is huge and more people are spotting that, she was a unique fresh contrast to hard girl Pearl and the action between them was electric and shocking in a good way!

Anna Branson says

I loved this book. So far I think it is in the top three best books of 2016. The plot was realistic yet surprising and being a reader of all of Jenny's books was surprised to see Pearl in a good light. I love you Jenny and write more!

Sophie says

I received an Advance Reader Copy from the publisher via NetGalley. This in no way impacted on my view.

This series soon became a favourite of mine last summer, and I was waiting with baited breath for the final instalment. Pearl, the MC in Star Struck, has been a cow for the past books, but she somewhat redeemed herself in Sunkissed when she flew to Sweden when Kat needed a friend. Well, it's safe to say I understand why she has been so abrupt and bitchy, when you read from her PoV.

In Star Struck, Pearl wants to play Juliet in the school production of Romeo and Juliet. Her plan is scuppered when new girl, Hoshi, arrives from Japan, and 'steals' her role. Pearl, in her usual bitchy self, plans to get even, and make Hoshi's life hell. However, she soon becomes friends with Hoshi, and learns why she had to leave Japan.

I loved Pearl. Her attitude in the previous books had been a bit grating at times, but after I read Sunkissed, I was dying to read more about her. Her home situation is not great - I mean, I was scared for her at times, it was that bad - and she had to put on this facade to deal with it all. She's just re-making friends with the Ladybirds, but they are still on egg shells, mainly because of her. The only thing I can say I wanted more of, was interacting between the Ladybirds, as there wasn't too much.

Pearl's friendship with Hoshi was wonderful to read. It started off really bristle-y, as Pearl was jealous of pretty much everything about Hoshi - she was pretty, she was an amazing singer/actress, and she made friends with the Ladybirds really easily. In short, she seemed like Pearl x2. However, once they became proper friends, and Pearl stopped hating on her, they became really close, and Hoshi was the only person who she told about her home situation.

Like the synopsis said, there is kissing in this book, and it was wonderful to read. No spoilers, but I was so happy with it! Really, it was definitely swoony :)

Star Struck wasn't my favourite book of the series, but I think it was a close second. That title still goes to Flirty Dancing, because Bollie are the cutest! Pearl was nothing like I was expecting, she definitely had hidden depths that we're only just able to see. If you've loved this series, or are a fan of fun, but sometimes serious, contemporary UKYA, this is the book for you!

Luna says

Warning: This review contains book swooning...

First things first: I love(d) Star Struck. I completely admit that I have sparkly rose-tinted glasses when it comes to Jenny McLachlan's books because they just make me happy when I read them. I've given up counting on just how many times I've re-read Flirty Dancing and I think that one and Star Struck are my favourites in this series.

I read Star Struck in one sitting and upon finishing Pearl's story proceeded to completely twitter-spam Jenny's, Bloomsbury and the wonderful publicist feed with emoji's/gifs processing my love for Star Struck and The Ladybirds books in general. I am not going to spend this review trying to find fault in a book that ended a series on a high for me.

But I am going to try and review it a little bit:

Star Struck is the final book in The Ladybirds series and it's Pearl's story. I have been looking forward to this story since we first met Pearl in Flirty Dancing (Ladybirds #1). Back then Pearl was the "mean girl" and while Jenny McLachlan has very gradually been chipping away at this being Pearl's only image it wasn't really until Sunkissed (Ladybirds #3) that that we got to see her being a friend.

Pearl's story had to be the last in the series and while I've said before that the order of these books doesn't tend to matter in this case it does. Do not read Star Struck as your introduction to The Ladybirds because you'll miss out. I think you need to get to know Pearl through the other books first.

One of the things that I love so much about all the books is how there is always more to each of the girls than the surface. The new girl 'stealing' the role of Juliet is Pearl's coping strategy being taken away. All bets are off. Hoshi has to pay but all of Pearl's usual methods don't seem to work. I'm not going to say much else because I really don't want to spoil anything. Just that don't watch Finding Nemo before you read this book.

I will miss Betty, Kat, Bea, and Pearl but I can't wait to see what Jenny McLachlan treats us to next.

Kelly (Diva Booknerd) says

The Ladybirds series begun as a fun and entertaining middle grade series, allowing the reader to grow with each character and now ending with Pearl's story. Pearl is a tough as boots girl, she's confident but underneath her almost abrasive facade, she's insecure. Pearl and her fellow Ladybirds have now reformed a delicate bond after drifting apart during their early teen years. Friends in childhood, they've all come to accept one another for their flaws and differences until Hoshi enters their lives.

Hoshi is lovely. She's kind, articulate and represents a world in which the girls know little about. Originally from Tokyo, Hoshi is a caricature, fun, bright but she also felt like a cliché with her fashion choices. Regardless, I actually liked her character more so than Pearl. She never deliberately sabotaged Pearl but was able to see that Pearl had an ulterior motive. She was nothing but kind and patient and using her natural charm, tried to win Pearl over.

I loved Pearl's character transformation. Although her home life is devastating with an older brother who was abusive and a borderline sociopath, she's always been the popular girl and isn't used to sharing the limelight. Under her fierce facade lies a girl who longs for acceptance and to be respected by her peers. As a genuine friendship forms between the two girls, Jake is quickly forgotten. Needless to say that I adored the surprising romance. It felt incredibly natural and only endeared me to both Pearl and Hoshi.

Like previous books within the series, Star Struck left me snorting with laughter. The easy friendship between Pearl, Bea, Betty and Kat was so lovingly explored and one aspect that is lacking in so many of our young adult reads today.

Star Struck is Jenny McLachlan at her finest. Intelligent, diverse and a wonderful exploration of teen friendships, relationships and finding yourself. Wonderfully written and such a fitting finale to what has been an incredible series.

Perdita Cargill says

Star Struck is the last in Jenny McLachlan's much loved Ladybirds series. This series has grown up with Bea, Betty, Kat and Pearl without losing the sweetness and warmth at its heart. Pearl is a brilliant character all attitude and vulnerability and I ached for her in her home with the locked doors where not even her fish are safe. But with skill McLachlan keeps us laughing even while we worry – not least with her school play backdrop (a musical version of Romeo & Juliet with the rousing numbers, Capulet it Go and Aint No Balcony High Enough). I don't want to be guilty of spoilers but the love story is fresh and real and kind. I love these books.

