



The Strange Case of Finley Jayne

Kady Cross

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Finley Jayne knows she's not 'normal'. Normal girls don't lose time, or have something inside them that makes them capable of remarkably violent things. Her behavior has already cost her one job, so when she's offered the lofty position of companion to Phoebe, a debutante recently engaged to Lord Vincent, she accepts, despite having no experience. Lord Vincent is a man of science with his automatons and inventions, but Finley is suspicious of his motives where Phoebe is concerned. She will do anything to protect her new friend, but what she discovers is even more monstrous than anything she could have imagined.

The Strange Case of Finley Jayne Details

Date : Published May 1st 2011 by Harlequin Teen

ISBN :

Author : Kady Cross

Format : Kindle Edition 83 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Steampunk, Young Adult, Fantasy, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review The Strange Case of Finley Jayne for online ebook

Elizabeth says

This short story was actually at the beginning of the ebook The Girl in the Steel Corset, and I have to say I like Finley more in this story than in the actual book. I really liked the book, but the girl in the short story is more daring and in control. I was a little sad to finish this and then move to the book where she's less feisty.

After being fired from her position as a maid for hitting the governess after she made one of the small children cry Finley is worried that she won't be able to find a new job, and that her darker side is coming out more often. She's much stronger and faster than she should be, she can also hear and see better than a normal person, and all her unusual abilities are more pronounced when her dark side comes out. She's worried that she's possessed by a devil.

So she's extremely surprised when Lady Morton shows up at her step-father's business asking to hire her, at a very high salary, as a companion for her daughter Phoebe, a position she is much too lowly to be offered. She's suspicious but needs the work and doesn't want to be a burden to her parents, so she agrees.

When she gets to the job Phoebe seems like a very sweet person and she's treated much better than she ever expected. The evening of her arrival the family is going to a ball, and Finley is told she is being passed off as the country cousin of the family (though no explanation for the deception is given). At the ball she's introduced to Lord Vincent, Phoebe's fiance, who is much too old for Phoebe. When she goes into a room to get some air away from the crowds she sees a picture of Lord Vincent and his first wife, a woman who could be Phoebe's twin. So Finley decides to figure out why this older man is looking to replace a long dead wife with someone who could be her copy, after all her darker side is looking forward to the idea of sneaking around and dodging Lord Vincent's robot servants.

Vanessa J. says

2.5 out of 5 stars

I don't normally read novellas. I don't think I've read more than five of them, but I decided to try this one because it was said it is better than the series. And it was true.

This less than a hundred pages novella was much more fun than the series. In first place, Finley is better developed... in less than a hundred pages. In the series, she's boring, while in this book, she's more kick-ass, which is what I wanted from the series.

In second place, this is much more fast-paced. Yes, I know, it's a novella. It had to go right to the point, but in the series nothing happened. It was completely boring, while this one was very funny. Really enjoyable, actually.

But even when I enjoyed this book, I cannot rate it more than 2.5 stars. It's not bad, it's that I had many issues with it, and those things always ruin my experience while reading. You see, there are very few books I consider utterly perfect. I've rated some books five stars, but I have complaints (even if they're small) for

most of them.

Let's start with the bad things, then...

- The references to classic books aka references to Frankenstein. Really, Ms. Cross, you could have gone to Wikipedia to get the right summary for that book.
- It felt silly at some points. Like, some unnecessary things happened and they felt laughable.

Those are my two major complaints. They are not so big, but they bothered me a lot, especially the first one. Still, I enjoyed this book. It was a lot of fun. This one I recommend. The series I don't.

Nikki says

The Strange Case of Finley Jayne is a quick, fun prequel to a book I haven't yet read, *The Girl in the Steel Corset*. It works reasonably well on its own, without having to infodump. If you're used to steampunk worlds, it isn't that different, at least at first glance.

It's not very subtle or very deep, but then, it is a short story/novella (not sure how many words it has and which exactly it qualifies as). Basically, it introduces the character of Finley Jayne, who is rapidly realising that she's very different to everyone else.

There's enough detail about the characters/situations to get me interested, and I'll be reading *The Girl in the Steel Corset* for some light fun, but it didn't bowl me over or anything like that.

??ηη, ?σ?ι????????¢?αω says

So I really enjoyed this. I might've even enjoyed it more than *The Girl in the Steel Corset*. Definitely an easy from me.

Lady Morton and her daughter Phoebe are quite lovable characters, and you love them all the more for accepting Finley as she is, not fearing her or wanting to reject her. I really hope to see them again later in the series. Dear sweet people. And how can you not love Finley? She's as badass as they come, and is protective of Phoebe and her mother. Busting up automotons, knocking out teeth, jumping from 2nd story windows, and a bit of breaking & entering, all mashed into this short novella. Love it. And the irony of Silas' choice of book to give Finley to read when they sent her off is quite hilarious. The author has quite the sense of humor. Definitely worth reading if you have an interest in the series.

Nicole D. says

Finley Jayne has always been different. When she is fired for punching a governess for hitting a child, she isn't sure how she is going to find another job without a reference. When Lady Morton walks into her stepfather's bookshop and offers her a job as a companion to her daughter Phoebe, Finley jumps at the chance.

I love Finley. She is a such a great heroine. She is intelligent, stubborn, brave, unique, and stands up for the weak. This is one if not the best prequel novella I have ever read. This novella has great character development, plot and doesn't try to do too much in its 90 some pages. I loved how the author blended history and fantasy together. I can't wait to read the rest of the series.

Veronica Morfi says

I love prequels! You can get a pretty good idea about the real thing from them. And I think I'm going to love these series.

Finley Jayne is not normal. She can see and hear better than anyone and is stronger than any guy is knows. Finley has a new job as a "freind" of a girl her age, Phoebe, who just got engaged. Phoebe's mother is worried about the man her daughter is to marry and hires Finley to find out his secrets, which are darker than she could ever imagine.

This the first Steampunk book I've ever read. I love a world working on steam power, it's fascinating. I also loved Finley. She is a typical case of Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde. Her dark side takes over when it can and makes her do things she wouldn't otherwise. But Finley herself has a strong personality, a great sense of justice and would do anything for her friends and family. She is amazing!

I can't wait to get my hands on the first book of the series! :D

AH says

The Strange Case of Finley Jayne is the prequel to The Girl in the Steel Corset. I picked up this short novella as a free download from Kobo books. The title and the cover were attractive and its relatively short length encouraged me to read it. I'll admit that while I liked the story, I just wasn't wowed.

It seems to me that a lot of authors are jumping on the steampunk bandwagon. I enjoy the genre; I love the contraptions and gadgets. This story had all sorts of cool gadgets, from simple flush commodes to battery operated lights, to brass automatons and mechanical carts. There was even a Dr. Frankenstein-styled laboratory with some strange items in tanks.

I really can't pinpoint why the story did not wow me. I liked Finley's character, but we are never told what she is. I enjoyed her "spider-monkey" skills. I giggled at a description of Finley's riding costume, which

suffered from "eggplantishness." Yes, "eggplantishness."

While I am curious to learn more about Finley, I think I'll wait until the book is available at the library.

Navessa says

This little novella was slipped into the beginning of my copy of *The Girl in the Steel Corset*, and somehow I didn't realize it until I got to the end. Shaddup, I haven't had enough coffee this morning.

If there was one word I could use to sum this up, it would be FUN. I enjoyed every single moment of this. It was filled with the type of witty banter that some of my favorite historical romance authors excel at, the seamless world building reminded me of what I expect to find in urban fantasy, and the heroine proved to be the rare strong, self-sufficient type that some of the few young adult books I've enjoyed contain.

I AM EXCITE.

Kate McMurry says

An action-packed, short-story prequel to the YA steampunk novel, *The Girl in the Steel Corset*

As an appetizer for *The Girl in the Steel Corset*, this short story works really well. It gives a tantalizing glimpse into the life of sixteen-year-old Finley Jayne before the events of *The Steampunk Chronicles* series.

Finley lives in an alternate-universe Victorian England where familiar, modern-day technology exists, but with a brass-and-steam twist in keeping with the actual technology of the real Victorian times. She has known since puberty that she is not a normal girl. When she gets angry, a strange power inside her kicks in that has super strength. Though it feels great at the time when she can defend herself against attack, the milder side of Finley is afraid of her wild side. What if she loses control and harms an innocent person?

Lady Morton is not afraid of Finley's wild side. On the contrary, she is grateful for it, because Finley will make the perfect secret bodyguard for her daughter Phoebe. Lady Morton gives Finley a beautiful room, lovely clothes, and an excellent salary, and Finley attends balls and other society functions with Phoebe while pretending to be Phoebe's distant relation.

Finley is surprised and worried for sweet, gentle Phoebe when she learns that the person Phoebe needs defending from is her much older fiancé, Lord Vincent. Finley's wild side thrusts her into a dangerous investigation to discover what Lord Vincent, an obsessed scientist, is up to. Finley agrees with Phoebe's mother it can't be anything good.

This short story is very well written and filled with action and adventure. It is a great introduction to Finley, who is an exciting heroine. She is strong, determined, honorable and loyal. Her struggles to keep her wild side under control and her desire to protect Phoebe at any cost make her a very sympathetic character.

This is also an excellent teaser for the steampunk universe of robotic horses, steam-driven carriages, and all manner of entertainingly odd, anachronistic technology.

Since reading this I've had the opportunity to read *The Girl in the Steel Corset*, and though it isn't necessary to read this short story before reading the book, I am grateful I didn't miss out on it. The book definitely lives up to the promise of this story.

Kate Copeseeley says

Three words that have stuck in my head since reading this short story/ novella: lackluster, disappointing, and uncertain.

I haven't read Kady Cross before, but I bought "*The Girl in the Steel Corset*" and thought, since this little prequel was free on Kindle, that I'd pick it up and read it as well. The three words I used previous to describe it, highlight each of the three issues I found with this story.

First of all, steampunk is one of the most exciting genres to catch on in YA fiction thus far. It has the potential to be as big as dystopian fiction. Steampunk, for those who do NOT know, is most commonly set in the Victorian period of history and follows closely the society, culture, fashion, and social morays of the period. It also combines a sci-fi element of the authors and thinkers of the period: HG Welles, Jules Verne, etc. So, as an example, it might have robots in it, which are a futuristic element, but they would be more artistic in design and would be called automatons.

The joy of steampunk, to me, is the wonder those authors, thinkers, and artists imagined of the future. The delicious cogs, brass decorations, and delightful machines serve as elements to draw us into the strange and wonderful universe that is steampunk. I say this story is lackluster, because even though Cross does include elements of the steampunk genre, she does nothing to highlight the wonder it has to offer. Instead, the machines and language of the period fall short of all they could convey.

I say the story is disappointing because even though it was obvious the author did a lot of research on the time period, there were two things she failed at: slang and dialog. Words like icky, racy, pissed, and ruckus, not only do not hale from the time period, they are AMERICAN slang and have nothing to do with English high society. The dialog is also so modern as to be distracting.

I also found it insulting, as a YA fiction reader, to read language that was so simplistic a jr. higher could read it. I know that Kathryn Smith (the writer using Kady Cross as alias) writes adult romances, but I have to ask, does she read YA fiction AT ALL??? How can anyone take her seriously when her characters think and talk much younger than they are purported to be?

I say the story is uncertain, because in my opinion, it should never have been a short story, it should have been a novel. If it was a novel, perhaps Cross could have taken more time to flesh out her characters, build a proper world and really draw the reader into the story. Perhaps she does that in her other story featuring Finley Jayne -who has the potential to be a wonderful character, if given the proper attention. I hope so.

TL says

“You’re the very spawn of Satan and I’ll not have you darken this door ever again.”

And so we are introduced to Finley Jayne :)

Really enjoyed this, Finley is a fun and very interesting character... it'd easy to connect with and root for her. She's kickass and loyal, someone I would be glad to have on my side :).

Her abilities aren't really explained here but left mysterious, Finley still getting the hang of things herself and doesn't understand why she is the way she is.

Makes me wonder if it comes from her father's side somehow perhaps, hmm..

Didn't see much of steampunk in here but the things that were mentioned were very interesting.

Loved Phoebe and her mother, I hope we see more of them (and that her father falls down a deep dark hole) :).

Plot: 3.5 stars

Characters: 4 stars

Writing: 3.5 stars

Wendy Darling says

Well, well, well. This short story, which is billed as a prequel to *The Girl in the Steel Corset*, is probably technically better than the actual book, if only because it feels more complete and is much tauter and better plotted. The mechanical wizardry is still a little nuts, but somehow it's in a more enjoyable way here--it's almost what you'd expect from a film that's been MST3K'd.

There weren't quite as many threads connecting it to the main story as you might hope, aside from a few near-miss encounters with Griffin, but overall it's kind of a fun novella. This is actually quite a bit longer than I expected (maybe a tad longer than it needs to be?), but anyone who enjoys *Steel Corset* will probably also enjoy this one.

This book is currently still available as a freebie for Kindle and for Nook, although you may certainly download to read on your computer as well.

My full review of *The Girl in the Steel Corset* may be found in The Midnight Garden.

Anne says

I was blown away by the character development in this short-story, especially considering it was free. I guess it's proof that every now and then a little gem *does* pop up on the freebie list.

The story has some pretty crazy Frankensteinish elements to it, which may not appeal to everyone, but I thought it was fun. The plot was fast-paced, and Finley was a thoroughly interesting heroine.

I've been riding the fence when it came to reading *The Girl in the Steel Corset*, mainly because I'm burned out on the whole *steampunk* genre.

At first it was different, and then it started looking like sci-fi's dorky cousin. Instead of a cool futuristic gadget like, say, a **teleporter**...you end up with a **steam-powered jet-pack!**

Oh.

You've got a jet-pack.

And it's powered by...steam.

See what I mean? Dorky. Cousin.

At any rate, this book managed to make me forget that it's not my preferred genre, and sucked me right into Finley's world. I can honestly say that I'm now looking forward to finding out more about her (and her strange abilities) in the next full-length book.

Kate says

This novella was included as part of the ebook *The Girl in the Steel Corset*. It is a prequel told in first person, where Finley Jayne is employed as a companion for a wealthy young lady engaged to be married to a devious man with a dangerous plan - the lady's mother has heard of Finley's unusual strength and her penchant to fight for what is right, and as the mother hopes, Finley is suspicious of the fiance and takes it upon herself to discover his real plan.

The novella was such a great introduction that I found I couldn't enjoy *The Girl in the Steel Corset* as much. I think a big part of that is because in this novella, Finley is plenty comfortable using her strength and basically comes across as a superhero who was raised poor and now finds herself in high society, while in the novel Finley is much more unsure of her power. Both the novella and *Steel Corset* reference *Frankenstein*, this was in a much more literal way. I would highly recommend anyone interested in *The Girl in the Steel Corset* to read this novella first.

Petra (Safari Poet) says

This prequel introduces the main character of *The Girl In the Steel Corset*, Finley Jane. It's starts with her being fired for sticking up for a little boy, which right away tells me what kind of person she is. This is the second time she's been fired in a short time. She thinks something must be wrong with her and that she's evil because of her sometimes dark thoughts, super strength and hearing.

She goes home to her mother and stepfather, Silas even though she'd rather not be a burden to them. Before she even starts to look for a job, Lady Morton shows up and offers her one to be her daughter's companion. Why Lady Morton wants her specifically despite her reputation makes her suspicious, but she can't pass up the chance. Finley and Phoebe becomes friends and starts to worry about the true intentions of her fiance, the much older Lord Vincent.

This is my first foray into Steampunk and I had no idea what to expect. I really enjoyed the mixture of a historical world with it's futuristic inventions. It was an interesting contrast. One of the reason I think I've stayed away from the genre is that I thought it wouldn't be easy to understand the world it's set in. Which wasn't the case.

A lot happen in this prequel. It's a great introduction to the series. I really like Finley and can't wait to find out the mystery behind her.
