



## Burn Mark

*Laura Powell*

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## **Burn Mark** Laura Powell

In a modern world where witches are hunted down and burned at the stake, two lives intersect. Glory is from a family of witches, and is desperate to develop her 'Fae' powers and become a witch herself, though witch-activity carries a threat of being burned at the stake. Lucas is the son of the Chief Prosecutor for the Inquisition with a privileged life very different from the witches he is being trained to prosecute. And then one day, both Glory and Lucas develop the Fae. In one fell stroke, their lives are inextricably bound together. (Bloomsbury)

## **Burn Mark Details**

Date : Published June 19th 2012 by Bloomsbury USA (first published June 7th 2012)

ISBN : 9781599908434

Author : Laura Powell

Format : Hardcover 416 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Paranormal, Witches, Magic, Urban Fantasy

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## From Reader Review Burn Mark for online ebook

### Jo says

I've been sitting on this review for a while now and it's because I've not really been able to sort my thoughts out. What is it with these British authors who make me *think* about their books? Gawwwd.

I've had trouble with paranormal books before and I often avoid them like I would avoid a zombie. Or you know, minus the hysterical screaming and basically causing a nuisance to everyone who is involved. They're just not my thing. But something about this book really interested me. Witches, in London? IN GANGS? Seriously, doesn't that sound brilliant?

I always like to get the negative stuff out of the way when I review books, so I'm going to try and sort out how I felt about this one. I have to warn you though, it's going to be a bit difficult because the main problem I had with this book is actually my favourite thing about.

I understand that makes no sense.

OK the thing that I simultaneously loved and disliked about this book: the world building.

Let me attempt to explain. This book is *Shameless* with witches.... Well, except it's set in London. One of my main issues with paranormal books or, actually, any books where odd things happen, is how authors tend to insist that these paranormal beings are secret and no one knows about them. Chances are this would never happen. I know we mere mortals are a bit oblivious but come on... I mean, if there were werewolves running around Manchester, I'd like to think I was on the ball enough to notice, right? In this book, however, witches exist and everyone knows about them and their existence is woven into daily life. For better or worse.

Obviously, selling the idea that witches exist in London where they have public burnings in Trafalgar Square and witches are employed by the NHS (I know, brilliant, right?) is difficult. I couldn't do it but Ms Powell really can. I know it sounds weird but I honestly think if there *were* witches in London, it would be exactly like this.

Unfortunately, and this is probably just me, I sometimes found that this book kind of got a bit bogged down with nitty-gritty details of things. The story is fast-paced, there are a lot of characters (maybe a little too many) and there are a lot of little side-stories which is fine, but when you add in all the details of witch politics, the intricate details of the spells, the entire character's family tree... whoosh. It was an incredibly dense book and no stone was left unturned.

I know a lot of people will love and appreciate this, but for me it kind of slowed it down and I found some bits really difficult to get through.

And this is where I'm struggling because if Ms Powell hadn't included and thought about all of these details, then I would have hated it and chalked it up as yet another paranormal book where plot doesn't matter because there's kissing and angst. I really appreciated how much thought Ms Powell put into the world building because, seriously, not a detail was spared. I just wondered whether some details could and *should* have been spared.

I know, it makes no sense. Poor Ms Powell really is damned if she does and damned if she doesn't and I know I'm being unfair.

But what I'm thinking is that now all that pesky world building is out of the way and the stage has well and truly been set, Ms Powell is going to be able to focus on her brilliant story and her fantastic characters and really get into her stride for the next book. And I for one, can't wait!

So, now all that's out of the way and you're just as confused as I am... let's talk about the things I did love. As I mentioned, this world was *fantastic*. It was different and it was so fresh. We've all read books and seen films where the heroine is a witch and she's in a flouncy nightie and she's doing dainty spells to get a boy to love her or to protect her house from a boy who she's inexplicably attracted to, haven't we? In this book, the witch is a chav. She is next in line to run a coven (which, in this world, is more like a gang... with magic) and she could probably bottle you if she fancied it. She's the kind of girl who would carry her PE kit in a Jane Norman bag and she wears big hoops and way too much make-up. She probably even has a Hooch coat lurking in the back of her wardrobe. She doesn't cast spells to get herself a boyfriend; she casts them so she can take part in a heist. That's right, A HEIST TO STEAL JEWELS

I loved both Glory and Lucas (the Witchfinder General's son, by the way, who is just as brilliant in his own way) genuinely hated each other and not in that 'Oh I hate you but my body is drawn to you' kind of way. But in a 'You're a vile chavvy-hag' and a 'You're a rich, poshboy twat' kind of way.

So, you know... the best kind of way.

But what I really enjoyed was how there wasn't even a hint that the two of them were going to start kissing all over the shop. They both have their issues, they both have their secrets and they both have their flaws. But they still respect each other and each other's individual talents and it was great to see this progress at a normal and natural pace.

Whether they'll get together and start respecting each other's *talents*... I guess I'll have to wait and see for the next book. I always have this thing when authors write a series and the lovers get together in the first book and then everything sparky and exciting is just forgotten in the subsequent books and is replaced by googly eyes and sharing ice-cream sundaes and life-altering destinies.

Yawwwwn.

What's the rush authors?

But I think that Ms Powell has something up her sleeve with these two and she's taking her time. No rush for the second book or anything, Laura Powell. \*taps foot\*

What? Oh don't look at me like that. Of course I know that just because a book contains a boy and a girl who don't like each other but have to work together and SPARKS and SARCASTIC COMMENTS fly doesn't mean they have to become an item. But it will be a cold day in hell when I don't root for the boy and the girl from different backgrounds to share a bag of crisps and a cheeky snog at a bus stop.

I know that's not as romantic as kissing in a dreamy and lovely and sweet way after they've just saved the world. But this book *isn't* dreamy and lovely and sweet.

.....

Fine, OK, seeing as it's a YA book we're talking about here, it can be raining or something and the boy can give the girl his posh boy blazer and a cagoule.

Better?

I have absolutely no idea what I was talking about.

OH YES. These characters. Yeah, I really liked them.

And I did really like this book, the world building is rich (although too much richness sometimes, um... too much) and the plot is really clever and, most importantly considering the genre, it's **different**. And if you are a fan of paranormal/urban fantasy books (and don't mind a lot of world building), I wholly recommend that you keep your eye out for this one.

*I received an advanced copy of this book from Bloomsbury.*

You can read this review and lots of other exciting things on my blog, Wear the Old Coat.

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### **Teresa Sporrer says**

Lucas und Glory leben eigentlich in zwei verschiedenen Welten: Während Lucas ein sehr privilegiertes Leben als Sohn des Inquisitors führt und selbst auch mal Hexen richten soll; wartet Glory nur darauf, dass sie wie ihre Mutter zu einer Hexe wird. Derweilen lebt sie in einem der Slums.

Doch dann passiert etwas Unerwartetes: Sogar noch vor Glory zeigt sich bei Lucas das Hexenmal ...

Ich mag Hexengeschichten, aber momentan gibt es nicht so viele auf dem Büchermarkt. Als ich dann "Witches of London" mit diesem wunderschönen Cover entdeckt hatte, stand für mich schnell fest, dass ich es lesen muss. Leider habe ich mir wohl ein bisschen zu viel und eine andere Art von Story versprochen ...

Der Anfang ist interessant. Man erfährt ziemlich alles, was man über Hexen und die Inquisition wissen muss: Wie wird man zur Hexe, wie werden diese behandelt, was ist die Inquisition, ... Das Info-Dumping ist genau richtig verpackt.

Ich fand es zudem toll, dass Glory und Lucas beide Hexen werden. Ich hatte schon richtig Angst, dass nur Lucas zur Hexe wird und Glory nicht. Der Klappentext führt da einem ja leicht in die Irre.

Aber nachdem wird das Buch ziemlich ... anders. Anders als ich erwartet hätte, denn es gibt die WICA, so etwas wie eine Behörde der Übernatürlichen und plötzlich war ich mehr in einem Jugend-Spion-Roman, statt in einer Hexengeschichte. Also ja, das Buch spielt in unserer Zeit, aber die Magie gibt es eben auch.

Nun zu den Charas ... Die Geschichte wechselt immer zwischen Glory und Lucas. Einen Draht konnte ich aber irgendwie zu keinem Aufbauen und ich hätte mir auch nicht gedacht, dass sie so "jung" sind (15). Auch die Liebesgeschichte hat mich dann nicht wirklich von den Socken gehauen ...

Alles in einem kann ich sagen, dass das Buch einfach nur Mittelmaß war.

Das Cover ist so verdammt hübsch! Das allein hätte 5 von 5 Punkten verdient, aber leider hält die Geschichte nicht mit.

"Witches of London" ist die etwas andere Hexengeschichte. Wer neben der Magie auch gerne etwas von einem Agenten-Roman in seinem Buch hätte, hey, vielleicht wäre das Buch dann genau das Richtige für euch? ;)

Ich verzeuge 3 von 5 Herzen.

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## **Georgina Martin (Bookz and Bitz) says**

For more reviews and giveaways go to George's Bookz and Bitz

4.5 Stars.

Following my success with witches in the Winter Trilogy, I braved another witch based book. I'm so glad I did.

Burn Mark is set in modern day London, with one big exception. Witches are very real, and live among us. They have been instrumental in every major even as far back as history records go, from the wars to the plague, sometimes not on the side of 'good'. There are a multitude of organisations set to control the witches and where those gifted with the 'fae' (powers) can work, or if they so choose they can be brindled/bound with iron cuffs which stops their powers working. But witches slip through the net, a terrorist group, Endor have been all but eliminated now, but for year causes panic in London streets. Witch Burning is a punishment saved for the worst of the worst, child murderers and the like, but they still happen and when they do, they are public events.

The book revolves around two teens who come in to their fae on the same day (although they don't know it) and who are both incredibly powerful. First is Glory, or Gloriana, who, quite brilliantly, is a complete chav (for those US readers who don't know what a chav is - think white trash with gold hoop earrings and foul mouths!), she's a coven witch, and her covens one of the worst, think mob or cray brothers. Glory's illegal and hidden from the inquisition, and from her fellow coven members, for fear that if they find out how strong she is, they'll use her for their bidding. Then there's Lucas, son of the very top inquisitor, from a long line of pure bloods, no witch or fae traces as far back as they can see, yet his powers appear. He struggles with who he is, what this means for his future, his fathers future (he can't keep working at the inquisition now, none with witch family members can) and controlling his fae.

Lucas and Glory and slung together in a tale of undercover mastery, deception and a few near misses.

I loved the book. Glory was a brilliant lead character, her chavtastic essence was pure brilliance, and such a lovely balance to Lucas' stuffiness. Lucas was good to read too, it's nice to read a book where the teens trust their parents enough to tell them what's going on, rather than trying to hide or handle it themselves. Lucas and Glory's relationship was a refreshing change. Powell hasn't tried to push them together and build a love triangle or forbidden relationship around them, she's kept the story about friendship and looking past the exterior to learn to trust someone completely different (yet strangely similar at the core) to you.

There were few faults with the book, the story rocked on quickly, was suitably dark and twisted in places, but fun and light in others, the characters were well written and even the supporting cast were deep and powerful. The only one I disliked was Glory's father, who one minute is saving her from bad dreams and the next is a complete waste of space who plays computer games all day, whilst this is explained a little, it's still a bit of a contrast. The only real gripe I had was some of the scene setting, it felt a little like 'oh I'd better explain this here' and then we'd get a completely unrelated paragraph about a building before we could get back to the story, which made it seem a little disjointed. However this scene building was really contained in the first half and didn't affect the overall experience too much.

in summary, a good fun read with a new take on witches and a world where they are part of the scenery was brilliant to break into. I've already started on book 2!

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### **Kirsty says**

Burn Mark is one of those books that draws you in and is so good that you don't want it to end or put it down. It's got witches, it's set in the East End of London, it's got mafia-esque rival gangs and a gorgeous boy or two ... what more could a girl ask for?

Burn Mark is the story of a world in which Witchcraft exists. Those with witch abilities are treated as second class citizens and generally seen as a scape goat for all that is wrong in modern society. The story focuses on two teenagers as they come into their powers. Glory is from a powerful witch family and Lucas from a powerful witch hunter family. Both come into their powers within days of each other and due to a series of events the unlikely pair are to work together and reply upon one another even though their families are natural enemies. The follows them as they work to infiltrate one of the biggest covens in the east end as they try to bring it down.

I loved several things about this book.

The writing style is awesome and made it effortless to read. The first section is, in all honesty, quite slow, but as the story was so well told and the ideas and characters so interesting I just found myself utterly hooked to every page and wanting to find out more and the world the characters were in.

I loved the characters and loved the uneasy relationship that was built up between the two as the book went on. I loved particularly how different they both were to each other yet at the same time there was a lot of common ground between the two.

The action in this book when it kicks off is awesome. I was glued to the book as soon as things started to happen and needed to know more.

I really enjoyed how unique this book was. As a book reviewer I have found myself inundated with YA paranormal romance books or dystopian books which after a while bleed into the same book and I forget which one is which and which I've read or not. This one will stand out for me for a long time simply because it was so different. Yay for originality!!

All in all an awesome read which is highly recommended!

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### **Crystal says**

This book is part Harry Potter and part Godfather! I have definitely had an awesome year with my book selections and this one is no exception!

The story is about Lucas and Glory, two teenagers who live in a world filled with witches. Witches are liked by some, hated by others and there are some who would do anything to become one. Glory and Lucas each have their secrets and these secrets take them into the heart of the Inquisition, a police like organization that

tries to keep all bad witches off the street, and also into the lions den of one of the toughest covens on the street. What happens throughout is an exciting tale and I honestly never knew what would happen next. This one is definitely a story for fans of mob stories and magic lovers.

I have to give Ms.Powell major credit for her world building. This book is filled with loads of history and so many intricate details. I really appreciated the time and effort spent on building everything up. I found that I could just get lost in the story because even though there was a lot of details Ms. Powell has a gift for storytelling that makes it all flow like water.

I loved loved loved the whole mob witch coven organizations. They were so much fun! I would love to learn more about each one of them. They really added a whole new level to your typical witch story. Glory and Lucas were also awesome additions. I have to say that I didn't miss the romance and I am actually glad that the author chose not to have it as a major plot line. Lucas and Glory are so young and they each had so much on their plate that it would have felt forced to have any type of romance in this book. I liked that the story focused more on the plot and mystery, it was a very nice change of pace.

This was an awesome book that I think most everyone will like and find interesting. I really hope that there will be a sequel because there were quite a few loose ends and I am dying to see them all play out.

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### Rose says

This was something different, and special. The modern witches and witch-hunt theme worked really well, and I loved the two main characters - the heroine's a white-trash mafia type, a bit hard to like at first, but you really cheer for her by the end of the book. The hero, Lucas, is her complete opposite, but just as intriguing. I thought the witchcraft stuff was very original. It's a bit like voodoo (no magic wands or made-up words) and you can totally see why ordinary people would be so scared by it.

Can't wait to find out what happens next!!!!

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### Tina ♥ Bookaholic says

<https://martinabookaholic.wordpress.c...>

#### **Meine Meinung zum Buch:**

Ich weiß zwar nicht genau, was ich erwartet habe, aber mit Sicherheit nicht das hier, sondern ganz was anderes. Schaut man sich das Cover und die Inhaltsangabe an, denkt man, hier würde eine spannende fantasievolle Hexengeschichte erzählt, in der eine tragische Liebesgeschichte mit ihm Spiel ist: eine Liebe zwischen einer Hexe und einem Hexenjäger, einen Inquisitor – das alte Romeo und Julia Problem (nicht neu, aber manchmal gut) mit vielen kreativen Konflikten und und und. Hier gäbe es so viele grandiose Ideen, Umsetzungen und der Anfang hat auch wirklich vielversprechend begonnen, aber dann ging es rasch den Bach runter.

Denn aus der zuerst wie angenommen gut integrierten Hexengeschichte, in einer Welt, die wie unsere ist, nur dass dort seit jeher bekannt ist, dass es Hexen gibt und auch, dass diese nach mehreren Versuchen nun Teil

der Gesellschaft sind, wird etwas ganz anderes. Zwar werden die Hexen gezäumt, um nicht einfach so mitten auf der Straße mit ihrem Zauber Schaden anzurichten, aber alle sind nicht glücklich mit dieser Lösung. Dennoch schaut alles nach außen hin sehr geordnet aus, zumindest auf den ersten Blick! Denn es gibt auch Hexenzirkel mit nicht registrierten Hexen, die sich nicht zäumen lassen wollen und hier fängt es an, dass der erste Funke immer mehr erlischt. Denn statt wirklicher Zauberei und atemloser Magie, beschäftigen sich diese ganzen Hexen und die Mitglieder der Zirkel fast ausschließlich mit kriminellen Machenschaften und Kleinkriegen untereinander. Wodurch ich mich erstens gefragt habe, warum es so vorurteilsvooll geschildert wird, dass alle im Hexenzirkel Kleinganoven sind. Und zweitens, weshalb diese Zirkel wie Mafiagruppen agiert haben.

Je weiter man in der Geschichte vorankommt, desto weniger wird wirklich auf das Hexendasein oder deren Befreiung, und auf die Liebesgeschichte wert gelegt, – Nein: es geht immer mehr darum, einen geheimen Agenten einzuschleusen, Mafiazugs zu lesen und bla bla bla. Es hat mir ab der Hälfte immer weniger gefallen und das hat sich leider auch bis zum Ende nicht mehr geändert.

Meine Hoffnung lagen noch darauf, dass vielleicht, wenn schon die Handlung nicht passt, mich die Liebesgeschichte überzeugen kann, damit ich wenigstens etwas davon habe, aber leider war diese Romanze im ganzen Buch nicht existent. Keine Berührung, kein Kuss – kein Gefühl. Überhaupt NICHTS. :/

Leider konnte auch der Schreibstil nichts mehr retten, im Gegenteil. Er wirkt leider sehr hölzern und war gar nicht nach meinem Geschmack, und auch die Dialoge wirkten nicht echt, sondern zu konstruiert. Und die Figuren, was kann ich zu ihnen sagen, wenn sie mich nicht gepackt haben und mich irgendwie unberührt zurücklassen haben? – Nicht viel und daher auch hier nur ein kleiner halber Punkt dafür, weil zumindest der Versuch da war.

Für mich war das leider wirklich ein Fehlgriff, obwohl ich so große Erwartungen an das Buch hatte, aber das lag wohl auch an dem tollen Cover, das mich total geblendet und ‚Lies mich‘, ‚Lies mich‘ geschrien hat. Aber mehr werde ich von der Autorin wohl nicht mehr lesen, das war ein einmaliges Vergnügen.

(Mehr dazu auf meinem Blog)

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### **Annmarie Ager says**

I knew as soon as I started this book I would love it! Glory and Lucus make for two amazing characters. Glory has always hoped that she would some day become a witch like most of her other relatives so when she finally get her wish you think she would be overjoyed but being a witch is not all it's cracked up to be. When the Inquisition hunts unlicensed witch's down and the head coven leader has his own plans for you, life looks more like a danger than fun. Then Lucas the son of the Chief Prosecutor for the Inquisition gets the Fae the same day as Glory and two lives are turned upside down.

I have to say the storyline was something new and very different while I would normally think of a group of witch's as a coven in this book I come to think of them as a gang. People feared and respected them and I enjoyed seeing how the author made witches much more modern and fun to read about. I like how the normal humans cope by making police that deal with the witch population. The Inquisition that hunts the unlicensed witch and burn the evil ones.

I soon come to see that normal people see the Fae as like a horrible virus that changes normal humans into a

witch. While I thought of it as a gift I could understand that witch craft might seem scary to those that could not use it. The book held a magical Quilty but it had to be the family life and drama that really got me. The way Glory was with her family and how they worked together and then Lucas that has always been so shore of his future than having to confront the fact his whole life has changed.

Excellently crafted book with lots to love and enjoy.

The book was a massive hit for me and I would happily reread and recommend to others.

5 stars.

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### **Anne says**

Solid 3 stars, but not what I was hoping for.

The premise is that the Witch Trials were *real* trials for *real* witches, and now all witches have to be registered...for the safety of the public.

Of course, there are *illegal* witches who operate outside the law, and criminal witches who are given a trial, and then burned. Supposedly, they are given an anesthesia beforehand, though, so they don't actually feel anything. <--prepare yourself for a creepy opening scene.

\*shudder\*

In other words, the humans are *very fair* and *humane* when it comes to their treatment of them.

#### **Or so one boy named Lucas thinks.**

His father is the chief prosecutor for the Inquisition, and he's been raised to believe that the laws are fair, and that the witches are just naturally predisposed to evil (and deserving of pity). His father isn't a bad man. In fact, he tries his best to raise Lucas not to believe that cruelty is necessary when dealing with witches. And over the course of his career, he's done his best to be an honorable man.

#### **But not everyone in the organization feels the same way.**

Unfortunately for him, Lucas is about to learn *all* about how the other half lives when his witchmark pops up, and he has to go register.

Enter Glory!

Unlike Lucas, Glory comes from a long line of powerful & *unregistered* witches, and she **can't wait** for her witchmark to show up. Everyone she knows lives outside the law, and in her neighborhood being a witch is a *good* thing. Her family pretty much runs a mafia-like organization, and she's looking forward to having some real Power.

Ok. There's a lot of different themes packed into this story, but the biggest one seems to be about how {insert minority here} is abused privately or quietly, while the majority of people are blissfully unaware. And, quite honestly, *this* had some fantastically accurate insights into how that happens, and why most people choose to ignore and/or justify it.

**BUT.**

I just couldn't get into this one the way I wanted to, because so much of the book was borderline *dull*. Everything kind of plodded along slowly. There was (for me) too much information and not enough action, I guess?

It's *not* a bad book at all, but for whatever reason it just didn't blow me away.

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### **? Kimberly says**

My rating 3.5 Burn Mark by Laura Powell is an interesting urban fantasy set in an alternate London. Filled with witches, inquisitions, burnings, the mob, and corruption. We meet two young people from different worlds who develop the Fae on the same day and suddenly find their lives intertwined.

The tale begins when we meet fifteen year old Gloriana Starling Wilde. She is having a nightmare about a woman being burned as a witch. She has had this dream since her mother disappeared when she was just three years old. She lives with her Auntie Angeline Starling and father. They belong to a mafia type witch family. They are unregistered and make their living in petty crime and running the neighborhood. Every night she prays for the mark of the Fae. We then meet fifteen year old Lucas Stearne. His family comes from a long line of Inquisitors and he is expected to fill his father's shoes. On the very same day these two come into Fae power. The tale that unfolds takes us deep into the world of both witches and Inquisitors. Unexpectedly Gloriana and Lucas find themselves working together undercover. Both enter this arrangement for different reasons and on different sides of a war against/for witchcraft. They soon discover that not everything is black and white.

The characters Powell creates are unique. Gloriana in her dark eye make-up appears hard and streetwise. She has come into her Fae and she is powerful. While she wants to scream this from the tree-tops she is forced to keep it a secret. She is tough and life has taught her not to take crap from anybody. Her boisterous ways had me laughing aloud. She shows no fear and feels a sense of loyalty; even to those who don't treat her well. In the beginning she had clear opinions about witchkind and humans. Her prejudice runs deep, and it's her time spent with Lucas that changes her. Lucas is the perfect son, on track to follow in his father's footsteps; even if he silently disagrees. As he comes into his Fae, we see a change in him. He sets out to prove himself to his father, but quickly forges his own path and begins to be firm in his own beliefs. While I didn't always approve of him jumping into action without back-up, I liked him. Together their personalities worked of each other and made them each a better person. Other characters add to the story-line and present us with characters to love and loathe.

The world-building reminded me of a modern day version of Salem, Massachusetts (during the Salem Witch trials). Today they declare themselves much more civilized. They have rules by which all Fae are governor. They must declare themselves and be tested. They can choose to give up their Fae, by wearing irons or once they reach adult-hood seek work using their skills. Witchkind are constantly monitored by the Inquisitors and police. By all accounts they are second class citizens. They are sent to trial and burned at the stake for acts of witchcraft and treason. As we enter Powell's world it is on the cusp of change. The Inquisitors are recruiting and working with Fae. This has caused a crack in the balance and some fear this change will lead to equality. Some might go to great expense to see that it never happens. I enjoyed this novel but I am afraid the pace

might turn some readers off. I found the world-building fascinating and the writing flowed well, but there was very little action until the last few chapters. The conflict in this novel was resolved and this works well as a standalone, however Powell has left the door open for a series.

Fans of witches and witch trials should enjoy *Burn Mark*. While the pace is slow, the detail is rich. I am hoping a second book develops and that Powell's next plot has more action. I am keeping this author on my watch list.

I want to thank Bloomsbury Publishing and netGalley for providing this ARC in exchange for my unbiased review.

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### **Sam says**

I just couldn't find myself getting into this book. I could barely get past 90 pages without wanting to hit something. It didn't have to do anything with the bad writing or errors, it was just boring to me. Nothing was happening and I didn't like not having any action.

#### **Cover:**

I really like the cover. It has this powerful meaning to it. Or it just looks pretty, one of the two. It reminds me a lot of the cover of *Divergent* by Veronica Roth because of the flame behind the fireball. I mean look at it! It looks similar!

#### **Plot/Writing:**

As I said above, nothing was happening. It was just the boring mundane lives of a confused rich kid and a lower east side girl. Which how I set that up reminds me of a different story. I don't like stories that go nowhere in the first 50 or so pages. If you don't have a good hook, then I will give up on your story. I'm a teenager I get bored easily.

There wasn't anything wrong per say with the writing. It didn't express many details that I would like to know about and my copy of the book doesn't have a Cleo, it has a Glory. Instead of quotation marks above dialogue, she used apostrophes.. Which I don't know why, it really bothered me.

#### **Characters:**

Glory? Or Cleo? I don't know which.. The summary says one thing and the book says another. I'm gonna go with Glory because that is what she is called up until I stopped reading. She was very strong willed and brave. She just wanted to get her power and become an amazing witch. She didn't let anyone push her around and stood on her own.

Then there's Lucas. He is one of those privileged kids. Going to the right school and being the rich and popular kid. Yet, Lucas still has really good morals in place. He stands up for what he thinks is right, and doesn't let other people intimidate him into doing the things that he wouldn't normally do. He's also confused and scared, but that is because he got a power that no one ever thought he was going to get.

#### **All in All:**

I don't exactly request this book. If you like magic and wizards, then go ahead and read this one. 2 out of 5 tacos.

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## Shelley says

Genre: YA Paranormal, Witchcraft

Rating: 2.5

\*Gizmo's First Thoughts\*

Gloriana Starling Wilde is a 15 year old teenager who, as the book opens, is having nightmares about the burning times. \*The burning times is in essence the same as our Salem Witch trials which happened in both the UK and the US, and are still happening today in small countries in Africa.\*

She believes she is seeing things from her mothers prospective. She knows that her mother disappeared without a trace when she was 3 years old. She has been her Auntie Angeline Starling for the past 12 years. She knows that one day soon she will be a powerful witch and lead the coven if only she could finally come into her powers.

Lucas Stearne is also 15 years old but from a prominent family of Inquisitors. His father is the current prosecutor for the Inquisitor court. In this alternative era United Kingdom, witches are put to death by balefire for crimes such as first degree murder, treason, and terrorism. Lucas, as history has shown, is supposed to follow in his father's footsteps once he graduates from school. Lucas's own mother was killed several years before and her murder hasn't been solved.

On the same exact day, Glory and Lucas come into their Fae. For Lucas, it's a devastating surprise that will have massive implications on his family life. Fae is what the writer is calling witchcraft. Fae runs thicker than blood, quicker than water, and wild as wind. Both Glory and Lucas's mothers were witches, or so it appears. Both have been missing from their lives since separate and unusual circumstances took them away from the kids.

Glory is a little git who is both strong and brave. She takes crap from nobody, including her no account father who sits around his apartment all day playing video games. Glory is also a glory hound and everyone around her knows it. She's supposed to be married off to her cousin to make things more interesting in the coven, but she doesn't rightly care about anyone choices that people have made for her. When she first meets Lucas, she's hates the very core of him because he has been sent to infiltrate the covens and find out if they are a danger to the Kingdom. Later, they become partners in crime and maybe even respect the other just enough to get along in order to work together.

Lucas falls into the category of doing the right things under the wrong situations. Until he comes into his fae, he was set to become yet another member of the Stearne family who went after witches and prosecuted them fully under the UK law. Lucas ends up being brought into the Witchkind Intelligence & Covert Affairs (WICA) after his father tries to ensure that his craft isn't exposed before a very important trial is wrapped up. It is up to Lucas to get to the bottom of the threats against the court before the trial is thrown for a loop. Lucas really gets put through a bunch of tests in order to prove himself. He even puts himself in harms way just to dig deeper into a major conspiracy happening within the UK's elite.

I don't mind diving into new story's by new authors to me. I don't mind reading about witches instead of vampires, fae, and werewolves all the time. I didn't even mind that this was intended for a YA audience, and

yet most of the central characters were adults who went about choosing who should be condemned and who should live.

Perhaps the one negative I have is the alternating POV's. It's fine that they were every other chapter. What wasn't fine was when they suddenly merged without a warning. You really had to pay attention to each chapter in order to see who was speaking, as it were.

Another negative for me is that the story seemingly dragged on, and that put me at odds at trying to finish it. I ended up putting it aside for other books more interesting until I finally said, enough is enough--finish the damn book or DNF it!

I will give credit to the world building. It was pretty interesting to read about an alternative history UK where witchcraft is treated like scum on the bottom of a pool.

Overall, I liked it enough, but it just didn't blow the wind up my skirt.

\*ARC recvd 02/15/2012 via Netgalley.com Expected publication: June 19th 2012 by Bloomsbury USA Childrens

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### **Phoebe says**

Just wasn't my cup of tea but good storyline and interesting character dynamics. I couldn't really connect to any of the characters though.

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### **Emma Adams says**

Original review on my blog:  
<http://throughthegateway.blogspot.co...>

Burn Mark is the first in a contemporary fantasy series by Laura Powell. It is set in an alternative London in which witchcraft is real, and although only those who break the law are punished by death, witches are distrusted by most people. However, for the young Glory, who comes from a family of witches, fae-magic is what she wants most in the world. Her classmate Lucas, in contrast, comes from a family of witch-hating inquisitors, whose job is to arrest witch criminals. But the fae is unpredictable, and he is horrified to learn that he has the gift.

The blending of a contemporary setting and witchcraft made this book unique, and the concept of magic was different to any I'd read about before. It reads more like alternative history than fantasy. The world building is brilliantly done, and the setting was completely convincing, with a well-developed political back-story. I liked the use of two contrasting narrators from both sides of the tracks, but both trying to avoid their family's politics. Glory has to keep her developing fae a secret from once-great coven family as there are too many who would want to take advantage of it, and Lucas's could put him in danger from those he is closest to.

This is a well written novel with a very original take on witchcraft and witch trials. I really felt sympathy for Lucas, who is no longer able to become an inquisitor, and as a witch, effectively has a lifelong criminal record. Both protagonists were well drawn and the developing connection between them due to their similar circumstances is well described. Some of the other reviews complain about the lack of action and the slowness of the plot, but I didn't find this a boring read, and I can tell a lot of the book is setting up action to come in future instalments. I thoroughly enjoyed this take on alternative history and witch trials and I'm eager to read the sequel!

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### **Mizuki says**

4.5 stars. It really, really is refreshing to see teenage characters in a YA novel acting and reacting to the harsh environment and difficult situations like actual people would.

Laura Powell had taken on three different topics at once: witchcraft, alternative history/alternative world and the underground world of organized crime, and guess what? She made it. She has withstood the tests.

The world of Burn Mark is an alternative version of the modern United Kingdom, people in this alternative world live more or less like us modern citizens do (they have computer and iPhone, for one thing), but with one major difference: witchcraft and magic are real, so are witch-hunting and witch-burning.

But the existence of witches and magic has already been institutionalized in this fictional UK: the witches are now called 'witchkind' and each of them has to register themselves once their magic starts showing, witchkinds have more or less the same citizen rights like the non-witches but they are also easily subjected to mistrust and discrimination, there also is an official Inquisition Department to hunt down criminal witches. And the most dangerous criminal witches would still be burnt at a stake.

Our main characters, Glory is from a coven/crime family of witches; while as Lucas, is the son of a high ranking Inquisitor. But dangerous secrets from the past and a scheme to break the unstable peace between non-witches and witchkinds, forces these two teenagers to form an unlikely partnership.

What I really like about this book is how Ms. Powell managed to breath realism into her characters and her world. So Glory is a girl brought up by a local crime family? Her actions and attitude speaks that for her before her creator has to step in and *tell* you: "Look, see! This is a girl who has a tough life behind her!"

Just for the record, I also like how Glory's older cousin Tory, the heir of the powerful Wednesday Coven, is written. I like how he manages to show his capability as the future leader of a crime family instead of being stereotyped into some asshole.

Ms. Powell's world is also neatly and reasonably explained as well, not once did I feel like Ms. Powell is making wild claim or unwisely making things up to suit her story. It's so refreshing to see an author being serious about world-building instead of thinking her readers are all fools.

Still, I can understand some readers might find this book to be a bit slow paced and too uneventful, and the plot twists at the end might be a bit forced, but as a whole the story is nice enough for me to look forward for the sequel.

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