



Spells and Sorcery

S. Usher Evans

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You have magic.

One sentence, three words, four syllables. Enough to change my life forever. And I'm not talking about the whole spells and sorcery thing.

Lexie Carrigan thought the weirdest thing about her was she preferred watching documentaries and reading the newspaper to reality TV and Twitter. But on the eve of her fifteenth birthday, her aunt and sisters drop a bomb — she's magical.

Now the girl who never made waves is blowing up her nightstand and trying to keep from wreaking havoc on her school. When a kind stranger shows up with all the answers, Lexie hopes he'll be able to help her control her newfound powers. But Gavon may not be as kind as he seems, and soon Lexie finds out that being magical is the least weird thing about her.

Spells and Sorcery is the first YA fantasy from S. Usher Evans, author of the *Razia* series, the *Madion War Trilogy* and *Empath*.

Spells and Sorcery Details

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Author : S. Usher Evans

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From Reader Review Spells and Sorcery for online ebook

Blodeuedd Finland says

At first (well a long time) things did annoy me. Like why was her sister such a bitch! Trust me, such a bitch, that girl needs a slap in the face. And why couldn't they just teach her magic? And tell her things? For the love of magic tell her stuff! Also everyone So over reacted. Chill people, chill.

BUT, in the end there was a reason why they did not teach her and tell her everything. Though I still felt they could have chilled a bit and told her some. Though why her sis was a raging bitch beats me. Lexie was also really immature, I mean who starts spending time with some old man they just met? Girl, haven't you watched movies?!

Still it was light and I kept wondering why they did not spill the beans. What was up with that? What was up with the secret...I can't say? I needed answers and fast. And at the end I did want more. I am still curious how things will work out when things are out in the open. Some major twists and turns there.

Narrator:

Hmm, is it the author herself? Nothing on GR.

But she does a good job and her voice fits that of a teen who is way over her head ;) Its light and nice I enjoyed listening to this book

Jennifer Y. says

I received a free digital copy of the book in exchange for an honest review.

Spells & Sorcery is just pure magic! Not since Harry Potter have I enjoyed a book on teens with magical abilities more and I could definitely see the influence that Rowling's work had on the author in this book.

In this fabulous book, we meet Lexie, a teen who has just learned that she is a magical with special abilities that will kick in on her 15th birthday...oh, which just happens to be tomorrow. Lexie struggles with her new abilities leading to some humorous moments for the reader. But she also struggles with the secrets her sisters and aunt have kept from her and begins to feel a bit ignored by them when it comes to assisting her in learning more about being a magical.

This leads her to the park where she meets a mysterious stranger named, Gavon, who provides her with books on magic and magical history and seems to know a lot about the magical world and Lexie's family. He gains her trust, but should she really trust him...well, let's just say, you'll have to read to see what happens. But it is definitely worth-reading.

S. Usher Evans has created such entertaining characters and a wonderful world that I wish I could leap in the book and be a part of the story. I loved the interactions between Lexie and her sisters and aunt. They felt like a real family and I could definitely relate to being the younger sister who feels a bit out of the loop.

As for Lexie, our main character, she was so real with all the imperfections, snark, and uncertainty that you'd

expect a scared 15-year-old to have upon learning they have magical abilities. As the story progresses and things get more complicated for Lexie, she also shows growth as a character and matures as one would hope to see. She learns a lot more about the magical world, its history, as well as her family, as secrets get revealed and things get dangerous. That's a lot for an adult to handle, yet alone a teenager, but she manages to do it with a few expected hiccups along the way.

Spells & Sorcery definitely took me on a rollercoaster of emotions as I felt things I wasn't expecting based on the blurb and cover. Not going to spoil anything, but there were times I was laughing, crying, angry, and...you name it. The author did such a fabulous job of making me feel connected to the story and its characters. I became invested in what was going to happen to them and couldn't wait to see where the story would take us. And the final scenes with the main antagonist of the story were just so well done!

I not only want more books featuring Lexie and her magical world, I need more books! I cannot wait for the next installment in this fantastic new series!

Katie Carroll says

Lexie Carrigan's world is turned upside down when she learns she is a witch, and all signs point to her being a very powerful one as she almost blows up her room her first night with magic. But her aunt and sisters refuse to help her rein in her power, or even talk much about it. Luckily she meets Gavin, a kind stranger, who seems to know all about being a witch and Lexie's particular brand of magic. Even with a mentor, it seems nothing will ever be simple in Lexie's life again.

S. Usher Evans puts a fun spin on being a witch in SPELLS AND SORCERY, book one of the Lexie Carrigan Chronicles. Despite being nerdy, Lexie proves to have a hot temper (and being magical means she might literally catch things on fire!). I'm a sucker for a story with complex sister relationships, and there were two in this story to satisfy me in that regard. And that's only the beginning of the complex family issues Lexie faces. The story starts out a little lighthearted but gets really intense by the end. I'm excited for book two!

Stephanie (Reading is Better With Cupcakes) says

So here I am, the day before my review is supposed to go up for the blog tour trying to write my review. I think I read this book over a month ago now, but I have put off writing this review. Even though I knew I had to write it since I promised it for this tour. But I couldn't. I am not even sure I can now....but I must as I am running out of time.

Are you wondering why I didn't want to write this review? Are you afraid it is because I hated the book? What could possibly keep me from wanting to write this review aside from being a huge procrastinator?

Well, aside from the procrastination thing....it is because I don't have the words to describe this book for you. Not really anyways.

No it isn't because I hated it.

It is because I loved it. It is because I devoured it. It is because I want the rest of the series to be out so I can read the whole story up and keep my thoughts, opinions, and memories of reading it happily bottled up inside me.

That is right. I loved this book so much that I don't really want to share it with you, but I will. It is only fair after all.

What is Spells & Sorcery about? It is about Lexie. A girl who is told the night before her birthday that she is a witch and that her powers are going to come to her at midnight.

That wouldn't throw anyone for a loop. Especially not a teenager. It isn't like they are already wondering about themselves enough as it is, but then to add magic to the mix...and she didn't even know magic existed! Yeah. I aside from getting magic myself, I don't envy Lexie whatsoever.

Lexie discovers quickly that no one really is able to help her. Is it because they don't want to? Or because they can't? And everyone assumes she should be able to control her magic without any practice and then get mad at her whenever she uses it accidentally or when her magic goes BOOM.

This is a story about self discovery for Lexie. About herself and about her family.

It is such a wonderfully crafted story. The world, which is mixed in with the world as we know it, is very wonderfully crafted. If there really is a hidden magic world, I am very upset that I am not apart of it!

One thing that you can really tell from reading this book is that S. Usher Evans really likes Harry Potter. You can see the influence all over be it jokes or references. It fed my Harry Potter loving heart!

So read it. You know you want to. You won't regret it!

This review is based on a copy provided by the author in exchange for a fair and honest review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

Find more of my reviews here:

<http://readingwithcupcakes.blogspot.com/>

Anna (Unquenchable Reads) says

***** I received an e-arc from the author. These are my 100% honest opinions.*****

So..... I loved this book. The book drew me in, grabbed my attention, and didn't let go. The characters had such different personalities which was really nice to see in a novel. Usually, when I read a book, only two or three personalities stick out to me. But with this book, I could honestly say that everyone character is different from the other. And I love that so much. It just making the novel more interesting because personalities clash when brought together, some go together perfectly for the most part.

The plot seemed unique, which was also really nice. I don't think I've read or looked at another book that

goes in this direction. Now, of course, there were parts that you could call “typical” to some YA plot points, but doesn’t every book just about have those checked off?

I mostly guessed everything. Well, almost. There was one part near the end that surprised me. I’m not the best person to ask if something is predictable though because as you guys know, I usually can guess what major events happen.

Spells and Sorcery has so many bookish references in it. They are all at amazing parts, sometimes when you wouldn’t think a reference would work because it is more serious or sad or something, but the reference would fit perfectly.

Elaine says

Fourteen year old Alexis Carrigan is a smart, hard-working and high achieving student. She and her two older sisters and they have all been brought up by their aunt after their mother died when Alexis was born. Everything seems fine, though Alexis (Lexie)’s sister Marie always seems to pick on her. That’s until the evening before Lexie’s fifteenth birthday. That’s when Lexie discovered that she will be able to do and control magic as soon as she’s fifteen - starting from midnight. That’s when Lexie changes in other ways, too. She is magically powerful, so powerful she has problems controlling her magic - with some dire and some funny consequences.

Get ready to discover more about her powers, who will help her learn to control them and about the relatives she never knew she had! There’s a lot more to this magic lark than she could ever have dreamed of, especially as it works best when she’s calm and controlled - and Lexie is anything but calm! There are other magical people who will make themselves known, skills to learn, angst and turmoil, too, in this well paced start to what promises to be a truly magical series. There are secrets to be revealed and dangers to be overcome - I can’t wait to find out what happens next in the life of this powerful young lady!

I received an ARC of this. This is my honest review after reading it.

Chelsea says

After DNFing this book at first, I knew I’d eventually go back and give it another shot. It just wasn’t the right time for me to read it. I’m glad I brought it with me on my trip though because it’s one of those easy to read books that fit with all my running around.

I like Lexie. I feel like she could be a younger me. Yes she’s immature and doesn’t think things through. Name me a teenager that does. I’ll wait. She fits the book perfectly and that’s all that really matters.

Her family though. Oh man. They drove me insane. I hated how in the dark even we were as readers let alone Lexie herself. Their reasoning made no sense to me and I hated not having any idea what was going on. Sure I had my guesses but I needed a confirmation at some points.

The plot was fun and went by really quick. I like being able to read a book fast like I did with this one. No unnecessary drama thankfully. This book didn't need fillers and side plots. It stood just fine on its own.

Jamie (Books and Ladders) says

Disclaimer: I received an eARC of this book in exchange for an honest review.

DNF @ 22%

I know I typically go to 25% before DNF-ing a book, but even getting to 22% was a bit of a stretch for me. I started having issues at 7% of this one because of characterizations and the way that the magic was being handled. Mostly because I really disliked all the characters tbh.

It seems as though all of the characters are acting the way they do to fill a stereotypical role that we see in Fantasy: Marie is the bitchy older sister, Jeanie is the distant guardian who is strict but informative, Nicole is the fun one that let's them get away with more (Edit: Um Nicole is her sister? Glad that was made super clear to me while reading), Gavon is the mentor who will help Lexie with her magic, and Lexie is just an idiot. While stereotypes are fine -- and I actually enjoy these types of stereotypes and tropes in Fantasy -- I thought that the characters were on course to stay rooted in their roles without much growth, except Lexie who would become less naive (maybe), and I didn't care about any of them.

At the same time, the magic system is awkward. I thought from the initial description of magic that Lexie receives from her elder sister and aunt that the magic powers would be "awoken" at 15, meaning she didn't have any prior to being 15. But just now (~23%), it seems like the "magical" (*sighs* don't even get me started on the fact that people with magic are called "magicals") have magic from birth, they just can't access it until they are 15. Which is a better way of doing it but I was confused why there were two different descriptions of the same thing.

Also the fact that Lexie doesn't feel the need to tell her adult guardians about the fact that a strange male found her, gave her a gift, and then magically disappeared is ALARMING to me. I don't care if he explains everything to her (which is what was happening when I started skimming) because it is weird and creepy. And she brushes it off by saying "well maybe this is what always happens" but like ask that? Don't just assume? Especially since she is (currently) complaining about how no one tells her anything, yet she doesn't ask a question to learn more information. She is just stupid and makes stupid decisions and I don't want to read about them anymore.

I have no interest in finishing this one. I don't care how many Harry Potter references a book makes, if it isn't my cup of tea, I'm not going to finish it.

Books and Ladders | Books Are My Fandom | Twitter | Instagram | Bloglovin'

Breanna says

Originally posted on [RecommendsBook](#)

I read it every day on the bus to and from school because that was like my only time in the day to read. Now my bus ride is less than 10 minutes every day but I was able to get 2-5 chapters done a day. It took a few weeks but when I was done I was really sad that I wouldn't have anything to do on the bus now. Luckily I now have like six unread S. Usher Evans books on my phone (I think I might actually have all her books.) and I'm going to read them every day until I run out.

The characters in this book were probably the most relateable I've read in a while. Lexie the main character is literally me. She is awkward, overachieving and she doesn't stand for people telling her she can't do things. Her older sister Marie is kind of like me acting towards my brother but in a more extreme way.

There's a few times in the book when Lexie does not have good judgment. She's putting all her trust in strangers she just met and accepting help without questioning them. There are a few times that she should be going to her aunt and telling her stuff that could save Lexie's life but she doesn't do that. You know that line that has been drilled into your brain "don't talk to strangers"? Maybe you should listen to that.

I loved this book. Lexie is like my spirit animal. I gave this book a 4/5 stars and I cannot wait for Magic and Mayhem next year!

Di says

This book actually surprised me - I went into it fully expecting a light-hearted young YA read full of reminiscing about my childhood of "Charmed" and "Sabrina The Teenage Witch." and what is great is that I got that; but I also got a well plotted story and interesting world building right alongside the magical coming-of-age of Lexie Carrigan.

That's not to say that I didn't have some issues with this book - I did, but the **overall enjoyment factor leads me to a 4 star rating.**

The main character, Lexie, is only just turning 15 years old - and that means there's a whole lot going on in her life right now - normal teenager problems. And then there's the fact that she didn't know that she was magical and would suddenly be growing into her powers on her 15th birthday.

I think that the portrayal of Lexie is done fairly well, although she does make some frustratingly silly decisions throughout the story. I could see that most of these are probably age appropriate decisions/mistakes. The one thing that really irked me is that when she met Gavon in the park there wasn't truly a hint of suspicion from her side - she didn't find anything worrisome about meeting a strange man in the park who knew about her magic and just happened to hand her a magical spell book. Other than this though I was able to accept that for the most part Lexie was acting like a normal 15 year old girl - angst and all.

There's a bit of extra fluff around the story that didn't really need to be there - there's A LOT about her schoolwork which isn't really important to the overall plot (although obviously I'm not sure where the series arc is going) and these pages could have been better spent growing the characters of Lexie's family or possibly introducing some regular human friends to Lexie's life (even a geeky introvert has at least one friend at school, right?) but I managed to overlook these issues when it came down to the second half of this story.

It's a short and quick read but the first half of the book is relatively slow as there's the introduction to magic and some world building. I did appreciate that it wasn't a huge info dump and that it did unravel as we went through the book.

Another thing that I loved about this book was that there is ZERO ROMANCE. These days it feels as though YA authors think that it's an unwritten rule that we need romance in YA books - but that is not true! This is about the bonds of family and how they can be strained, tested and broken. There's not one hint of a love interest and I thoroughly enjoyed that fact. Again, I'm not sure where the series is going to take us but for this first book, the focus was entirely on family.

At the end of the book I was more than happy with how things had progressed. The plot had definitely thickened, there was some great character growth and a very interesting set-up for book number two.

Overall this was an entertaining and fun read and I'm going to be eagerly awaiting the release of the second book.

"I used to be calm and rational. I also used to not shoot purple flames out of my hands. Things had obviously changed."

Melissa (The Reader & The Chef) says

Actual rating: 3.5 Stars

This review can also be found on The Reader and the Chef. Huge thanks to the author for the review copy in exchange of my honest opinion.

When I heard that S. Usher Evans was starting a new YA fantasy series, I knew I just had to get my hands on the first book pronto. If there's something that Sush can do is create magical worlds with their own set of awesome new rules.

So really, it was no surprise that one of the biggest things that I enjoyed of Spells & Sorcery was how the magical system works. It reminds me of the one found in Sabrina the Teenage Witch, how with the flick of her wrist and a thought she can get what she wants without being tied down to a wand. It's a lot more practical! I also loved how S. Usher Evans includes small snippets of history and magical writing from Sorcery books. I wouldn't mind more reading like that inside the book, it's informative and pretty darn cool.

Now, Spells & Sorcery per se was a bit of a slow read in the first half since there's a lot of world-building going on. Lexie learns about her magic, how it works, about her family, and so on. I wish things would have been a lot quicker, like in the last quarter of the book. We get to see a new dimension parallel to the normal world and I wish we could have spent more time on it, to explore it & meet interesting characters.

The characters we get to meet in Spells & Sorcery are not bad, but I honestly couldn't care less about them in the first half. It's not until the last chapters that I finally warmed up to Lexie because in the beginning she was just a silly and immature character who trusts in strangers too much and doesn't question things enough

in a smart manner. I liked her sister Marie more than her or her other sister, Nicole, because at least she showed some attitude. Everyone else was just too infantile regardless of their age.

I also feel that Spells & Sorcery needed some normal non-magical human characters to make the experience all the more real. I wish I could have seen Lexie struggle hiding her powers from her non-magical best friend (who does not exist) or just getting her as a side-kick. There is a couple who hang out right besides Lexie's locker but they don't really add much to the story. Hopefully in the next installment though!

Final Verdict:

Spells & Sorcery is a new fantasy book that I would recommend to the younger Young Adult audience. S. Usher Evans introduces an exciting new magical dimension in the second half of the story and the magical system is really fun to read about. And although the characters weren't as great, I feel that they will be better in the sequel now that Lexie knows about magic and some secrets have been exposed. :)

Lilivette says

FULL ORIGINAL REVIEW @ HERE!

I received a free e-arc from the publisher in exchange of an honest review. This does not affect my review in any way.

I found this book so good and intriguing that I managed to read it in two days—and I believe by now that everyone knows that that doesn't happen very often with me! With every page I turned and every plot-twist (or weird thing) that I encountered, I was left wanting more and more until, you know, it ended. And even in the end I was left wanting more! And I need more!

Lexie's story, besides being magical, was fun, interesting, intriguing and even fascinating. At the beginning, I admit that I felt kind of lost with Lexie and what was happening around her, but once things clicked inside my head, I couldn't stop reading! This story was short, fast-paced and so full of magic that I just couldn't stop! Once again I believe that S. Usher Evans did an amazing job throughout the story and I completely loved this younger and innocent take on her writing. Something that I completely loved about Lexie's story was the history behind the magicals and everything that composed their world and the way it worked! Her family, the secrets, the guilds, the clans, what happened years and years before and everything else!

Once again, S. Usher Evans's writing was fantastic and easy to follow. I found it so easy to connect with Lexie after the first few pages! And like I mentioned before, I completely loved this new take on a different—and younger—character! Also, the settings we get to visit through the story were great! I loved how we got to go from Lexie's house to the park where she went to to get all the answers her family refused to give her, from her school to the beach where she practiced her magic, and from the beach to the world beyond the tear which I'll leave as a total mystery.

Anyway, moving on! The characters we get to meet through this first installment of the Lexie Carrigan Chronicles were all very interesting, and very, very important. I loved how well the author managed to make them all unique and connected, in one way or another, with each other. Besides our fun and interesting main character Lexie, we also get to meet people from her family: Jeanie, Marie, Nicole and Grams, and some other important—and very interesting—characters like: Gavon, James, Cyrus, Nina and more! Thanks to

them, Lexie's journey was fun, interesting and completely magical! I found that all the characters were well executed and I have to say that they did an amazing job bringing up some twists that were pretty obvious, and others that you wouldn't even see them coming, making the levels of intensity in the story blow up!

In the end, I had normal-hopes for this little book; they weren't high nor low, but I have to say that they were exceeded! I loved reading Lexie's story, and now I can't wait for book 2 and see what's coming next for Lexie, her family and her enemies!

Irena says

It has been awhile since I read ya fantasy, but when I saw the cover for Spells and Sorcery and read it's synopsis, I knew I wanted to give it a try.

The story follows Lexie who, on her 15th birthday, finds out she has magical powers. She and her sisters are witches. They lost their parents so their aunt (who is also a witch) took them under her roof.

I went into this book without high expectations, but with a lot of adrenaline (not literary, but you know what I mean).

I was on, ready to love it to bits and to finish it as fast as I could.

First thing didn't happen, but the second one did!

I read this book in a record time - just one day!

Who'd say I could read 386 pages in just one day?

I certenly wouldn't!

What I'm trying to tell you here is that the **writing style is pretty easy to read and it makes you turn those pages even if the story is not too original nor interesting enough.**

I came to conclusion that Evans has put so much energy into describing this world and how the magic system works, that in a way she forgot to make interesting side stories that would keep this book compelling.

There was no secondary stories then the main one. **All that this book was about was Lexie finding out about magic and doing researches about this new system. It was like she had no life before her 15th birthday.**

What bothered me the most was how she was always alone, without any friends to mention, while she was still going to public school she went to prior her birthday that changed her life.

There are only two people that are mentioned briefly: Joel and Callista, and Lexie didn't even have a normal conversation with them through the whole story.

If she was a loner, bullied, rebel or someone no one wanted to talk to, I would understand, but **in this case it felt like an author simply forgot to create a decent teenage life for her character.**

Let me ask you this: do you think Harry Potter books (and I appologize to compare this book with HP because they are not similar at all, the only thing in common they have is magic) **would be so good if Harry didn't have Ron and Hermione by his side?** If he was an outcast without friends, do you think people around the world would enjoy reading those books so much? I don't think so, because friendship has a big part in those stories.

Here, **there was a great potential to make Spells and Sorcery so much more interesting.**

If Lexie had a friend by her side when exploring this new world and her abilities within it, this book would be so much more fascinating.

It surely wouldn't feel like reading a magic encyclopedia as it felt at some points.

Another thing I didn't like was how Lexie's sisters left her all alone in this new situation she found herself in.

They were not helping her at all, and I can imagine that if they knew Lexie will get her powers at age of 15, they should have prepared her for it years ago.

That leads me to my third complain (or have I lost my count?): If her sister pepared her for what was coming, Lexie wouldn't have to take instructions from some **strange middle aged man who just showed up out of nowhere.**

That was too weird (and I could see from the beginning who he really was because that was the only thing that was logical to me).

What was even weirder was how Lexie didn't have the need to tell anyone about Gavon (that is his name) or how all she wanted to do was spend time with him (and now I'll probably sound sick to some of you, especially if you read the book and know his story, but she wasn't even attracted to him).

The last 5 chapters were the best in the story.

Everything before that felt like a slow overture, and then, in the last 5 chapters, the real story began.

Overall, this was a quick story to pass time, and will probably appeal to younger audience.

Read this and more reviews on my blog: <http://bookdustmagic.wordpress.com>

Leah says

I loved Spells & Sorcery – it's my first foray into the books out S Usher Evans, but it won't be my last (not least because there's another #Lexie Spells book coming in April next year). It's one of those books that you

just fall into right away, and it reminded me so, so much of my favourite TV show when I was younger, Sabrina the Teenage Witch, they're very similar. Learning the have magic as a teenager (Lexie is 15, Sabrina 16), living with an Aunt (although in Sabrina's case it's 2 and in Lexie's case it's one and 2 annoying sisters), dealing with school and magic at the same time, all Lexie was missing was her very own Harvey Kinkle, but I hear that MAY be coming in book 2?!??!

Seeing Lexie come into her powers was both amazing and frustrating. Amazing because learning you're a witch has been my dream for forever (I'm not kidding) and while Lexie struggled with it at first, it kinda came naturally to her but it was also frustrating because no one helps Lexie. Marie, Nicole, Jeanie, no one helped Lexie, or explained anything and while it does all eventually tumble out, a lot could have been explained before hand and they just irritated me, with their know-it-all looks and ability to yell for yelling's sake. I did, however, like the introduction of Gavon, who seems to mentor Lexie, helping her the way her family should, and their interactions were so much fun.

I really enjoyed this, this really set the world going forwards with the series, and it was actually quite refreshing to have a YA book without a romance, there wasn't even a sniff – it was all about Lexie learning about her magic, controlling it, and that was so much fun to read. All that was missing was a talking cat named Salem. This is the perfect read for Sabrina fans, I'm not even kidding. I lapped it up and I'm so, so excited for Magic & Mayhem and more from Lexie Carrigan!

Elizabeth says

So, there are other magical coming-of-age stories out there, but here's why you should read this one. Lexie Corrigan's discovery that she has magic comes on top of all the maddening teenage problems that even adults can identify with, like a charmingly dysfunctional family, the stresses of school, and the frustration that comes when it seems like everyone but you has everything figured out. She's a very real girl with very real problems, when whomp! she has to figure out how not to screw up with magic as well. The way magic works in this book is also very believable and meshes well with the real-world setting; it's clearly not a quick fix for life's problems but as much of a complication as it is wonderful and cool. I really enjoyed the creative re-imagining of the significance of the Salem witch trials and Lexie's relationship to the descendants from Salem. Lexie's sense of humor is also fantastic; I cracked up at her tongue-in-cheek references to Harry Potter. Can't wait to read what happens in the next book; it looks like Lexie might be caught in the middle of a big magical war....

I received an advance copy of the book in exchange for writing an honest review.
