



Don't Expect Magic

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Delaney Collins doesn't believe in fairy tales. And why should she? Her mom is dead, her best friend is across the country, and she's stuck in California with "Dr. Hank," her famous life-coach father—a man she barely knows. Happily ever after? Yeah, right.

Then Dr. Hank tells her an outrageous secret: he's a fairy godmother—an f.g.—and he can prove it. And by the way? The f.g. gene is hereditary. Meaning there's a good chance that New Jersey tough girl Delaney is someone's fairy godmother.

But what happens when a fairy godmother needs a wish of her own?

Don't Expect Magic Details

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From Reader Review Don't Expect Magic for online ebook

Cait S says

There's something you need to know about this book up front:

For at least 60% of it, you will hate the main character. This is not an option. It's not an opinion. It's fact. She is the single most unlikable twit I have ever had the misfortune of sitting through for the sake of a cute plot.

But, almost like magic, she gets better. She becomes sweet and friendly and...enjoyable to read about. Where at the beginning I was only rooting for her in the "rooting for her...to get punched in the throat" by the end, I really did want to see her get a happily ever after.

I honestly think the only reason people list this book as a YA is because there's a lesbian couple in it. The writing style, the story in general, all of it really points to like...kids roughly the age of watching Wizards of Waverly Place on Disney. Is that still a thing? I'm old, I don't know. Hannah Montana-esque, you know what I'm talking about.

But it's fast and cute and who doesn't love a fairy godmother story?

Melanie says

Every now and again you find a book that warms your heart in a nice, good feeling kind of way. What's even better is this book I feel is something most people from 10 years and over could read. The story follows Delaney who's having a really bad time; firstly her mother whom shes lives with all her life dies, she is then made to move with her Dad who she hardly knows and holds much resentment for and also has to leave her best and closest friend behind. Add to this her Dad is a 'self help' Life Coach author and a bit of a celebrity. Delaney has always felt that 'Dr Hank' has always put his career before her and now she's about to find out why - Dr Hank is also the last of his kind, a Fairy Godmother!

The adventures unfold and its almost a coming of age and finding yourself book. I love how Delaney grows and you can see how she comes to terms with all sorts of things and lays many past feelings to rest. She really is a likeable funny character and I would be proud to have her as my daughter even if she is a little 'individual'. Dr Hank her Dad is also great and amusing at times; coming to terms with how to have a teenage daughter

The book is filled with emotion but in a good humorous way. This book is a lovely short easy read and doesn't contain any profanity (If there was it was minor) and there was no 'sexual' content bar a gay relationship was mentioned. Again this is done just right and in a good way making it still suitable for younger teen readers.

I gave this book 5 stars as I loved how it was written, the characters really were lovely and I enjoyed idea of a fairy godmother with all the antics that went with it!

Review also featured on my blog - <http://www.bewitchedbooks.co.uk/>

Yan says

According the law of conversation of mass, matter cannot be created or destroyed. So how would you transform your ratty PJs for a slinky red dress? Through physics and chemistry...and you know, a handy fairy godmother to make it all happen. What if you don't what to be a fairy godmother? Tough cookies, you really have no choice.

That's where Delany is right now. Apparently her no-good dad, Dr. Hank, is a fairy godmother (who ever said f.g. has to girls?) and the gene is hereditary.

Delany is far from what you would expect from stereotypical fairy godmothers. First off, she's not really a people person. Her homemade kick-ass boot garners praise, but her attitude isn't the most inviting. A bit rude, a little pretentious and definitely not bubblegum pink nice, Delany has trouble fitting in to her new school and her life ever since her mom passed away and she's shipped off to her dad. She's not well liked by her peers, teachers, and me, the reader. Her actions and personality gives off a bad vibe like she's better than everybody. If a person is genuinely nice to you on the first day of class and she's pretty popular, be on your toes because that person is obviously ought to get you. Should my hair stand up and the claws start jutting out if someone smiles at me or says hi?

Since *Don't Expect Magic* incorporates some science facts to help explain the supernatural, which by the way was a very nice touch and was well-thought out and something I definitely appreciate in a fantasy book, I'm going to bring in Darwin—survival of the fittest yadda yadda yadda. If I was Delany's guardian spirit, I'd slap her and tell her to adapt and deal with it. Why make an enemy out of everyone? Assess the new environment, adapt to the new environment, and survive in the new environment. Or else you're going to die. Or fail high school.

Things are touch and go for most of the book. I admit that it was hard to read through it, but once Delany's personality approved, *Don't Expect Magic* became a lot better for me. We start to get more of the fairy godmother business (again, something that I really appreciate in this type of story), further development of the father-daughter relationship, more humor and fun, and a stronger multidimensional main character.

The character of Dr. Hank, I felt, was ironic. Here was a man doing motivational books and speeches telling people how they should live their lives when he could barely live his own life. I quite enjoyed his character because of the way it changes throughout the whole book. He's much nicer than Delany and you can feel the charisma from the pages making him more approachable. The connection he has with Delany as a parent was a great emotional aspect to the book.

While the romantic interest in the novel seems more like a good friend, I could see potential. I wished, however, I knew more about him and that Delany and he had more dynamic conversations. I'm not entirely comfortable with where they came from and how they end up, but I can see it happening.

Don't Expect Magic has a good moral: to never hide yourself in fear of what others think. It's a debut that definitely shows promise of what Kathy McCullough is capable. *Don't Expect Magic* has a unique story plot, a solid foundation, and a budding group of characters that just needs a few tweaks.

Richa says

Originally posted at City of Books

I didn't know what to expect from this book (Get it? Expect! Sorry for the bad pun.) but I ended up loving it! *Don't Expect Magic* is funny, witty, and definitely magical. What I loved most about this book? Delaney, hands down. She's so much like me it's scary! If I met her in real life, I know we'd be bffs instantly.

Delaney's been aloof ever since her mom died, and her only friend is a sci-fi obsessed chick who talks way too much. When Delaney is sent over to California to live with the dad who abandoned her and her mom, she knows she's going to hate it. But she discovers a secret about her father - something that means Delaney is a lot more different than she thought. Yeah, she's a fairy godmother. And she has powers! Delaney gets a client pretty soon, and she's surprised to find it's the goofy camera-obsessed boy in her chemistry class. She does whatever she can to make his wish come true, but things turn out quite unexpectedly.

I adored Delaney. Seriously. She loves boots, preferably ones with skulls and spikes. She wears leather and belts with chains. She's definitely not girly, and she doesn't really like children. She's sarcastic, snarky, and a little pessimistic. This chick sounds exactly like me, so of course I loved reading from her perspective! Some of her thoughts made me literally laugh out loud because of her snark. I connected so easily with her, from the moment we find out she pained red skulls on her suitcase, which is in the first chapter I think. Delaney is tough, and it's hard for her to let people in. Imagine her surprise when Flynn of all people gets her when no one else does!

I loved Flynn too, since he's just so hilarious and adorable. He's kind of a geek, always walking around with cameras slung around his neck, taking pictures. But he's really talented too. And quite the charmer in some cases! I loved the banter between him and Delaney. They really got to each other, and it was pretty funny seeing them make fun of each other all the time when you know they're going to end up together.

Watching their banter turn into a friendship was beautiful to see, and so was the friendship turning to something more. Although I'm disappointed that there wasn't too much of the latter. Spoiler alert - we don't even get to see a kiss! I'm glad I have the sequel to start right away, so I can finally see that.

Another thing I really loved about this book is that there was so much Chemistry in it! As in, AP Chemistry was the class mentioned the most, since Delaney, Flynn and Cadie (the popular girl Flynn supposedly has a crush on) are all in the same class. Delaney relates magic to breaking atomic bonds and activation energy, which I found beyond awesome. I love Chemistry, and nowhere in YA have I seen a concept related to it. So kudos to Kathy for doing that!

I don't want to say too much about the magic part, since I don't want to give anything away. I will say this - this book has a sweet representation of magic, and though it's more lower YA, I'm sure older people will love this too. The ending is cute too, and things tie up nicely. Though of course I can't wait to get started on the sequel! *Don't Expect Magic* is a quick but fun read. It's light and humorous, and I guarantee it will make you laugh.

Thank you to Kathy McCullough for sending me a copy

Alice in Readerland says

Would it be wrong to say that part of the reason I had to get this book was because I loved the cover so much? Because I love those boots and the beach setting (although I'm not exactly sure one would be wearing those boots on the beach in real life)!

Anyway, I guess one thing I should say is don't expect (a lot of) magic in "Don't Expect Magic". That's not a bad thing by any means, but I just want to say that if you're reading this specifically for the whole magic part, then you're probably going to be disappointed. Before you find out about fairy godmothers and magic, you're introduced to Delany, her back-story, and what's currently happening. Delany doesn't seem like a likely candidate for being a fairy godmother (for example, her custom-designed boots feature things like the devil or dragons) and that's exactly what makes her perfect.

This was a very cute read and the first chapter got me hooked (sarcastic Delany is on a plane stuck talking to a fairy-tale loving little girl). I loved how Delany and her relationships actually GREW through the course of this novel and there were also lots of other well developed characters (I have never heard of a dad who is a fairy godmother before)...Read full review on my blog "Alice in Readerland".

Homepage: <http://aliceinreaderland.wordpress.com/>

Direct link to "Don't Expect Magic" review: <http://aliceinreaderland.wordpress.co...>

Sara says

Don't Expect Magic by Kathy McCullough follows Delaney who moves to California to live with her estranged father, a famous life coach after the death of her mother. Delaney feels blinded by the sunshine and positive attitudes in California and longs to go back to New Jersey when she finds out a secret. Her father is a fairy godmother, able to make transformations to fulfill wishes and Delaney may be one too.

I loved this book. It was cute and quirky and filled with great characters and a bit of magic. Delaney was a great bad girl who rebelling against the world who finds herself changed by her surroundings and her ability to cause positive change in others. There is just a bit of romance but it was of equal importance to the relationship that develops between Delaney and her father and her friends. I loved this book, found it impossible to put down and finished it quickly.

Appropriateness: This is a light and fluffy book with no adult content. The romance is sweet and just hinted at. There is a fantastic message of being oneself while not shutting others out. I would recommend this to readers 11+

Autumn (Triquetra Reviews) says

I loved this book. Delaney Collins just lost her mom. We don't know why, but we do know that her mom was sick, from the sound of things I'm assuming cancer. She has to move from her home of New Jersey to where her father, Dr. Hank, lives. Dr. Hank is a life coach who sells a lot of books on the subject and is all khakis and tucked in polo shirts. Delaney, who wears leather books and rocks a "don't talk to me" kinda vibe, hates him, as she has for most of her life. You see, perfect Dr. Hank rarely came to see her, rarely talked to her, and we don't know why.

Flash forward a little to Andrea, one of Dr. Hanks clients. Delaney gets suspicious when Dr. Hank has to go over to Andrea's house to help her. In the middle of the night, the first night that Delaney is there in fact. So she sneaks along the second time Dr. Hank has to go see Andrea. And she sees her dad transform Andrea from mess to glam. What?

Yeap, dear old Dr. Hank is an f.g. A fairy godfather. Delaney doesn't believe it at first, but when she makes apple pie filling fall from the sky right onto a skater kid in school a few days later she realizes that she too is an. f.g.

I loved how this books was from Delaney's pov. She's hilarious and a little prissy, but I love her. I adore how she designs her own boots and how she grows throughout the novel. Flynn, is amazing. Can't wait for book 2.

Anne says

Pretty cute story about a girl finding out that her absentee father is really a fairy godmother...er, godfather.

It wasn't mind-blowing, but I'm giving it a full 3 stars because the author went against typical stereotypes in this book. The beautiful cheerleader wasn't *EVIL*, and the kids at the school were more accepting of the *Strange New Girl* than she was of them. In YA, that's a pretty strange twist all in itself.

It's a really quick read, but a worthwhile way to kill time.

shady boots | #WatchPOSE says

This review is also available at my blog!

4.5 stars!

This book was so fluffy!

The story tells of Delaney Collins, an artistic, spunky girl who moves to California to live with her father, Dr. Hank, due to her mother passing away. Delaney has to deal with a very perfect, happy-go-lucky atmosphere that she isn't used to, and also the fact that her father is a fairy godmother?or godfather?and she might be one as well.

Delaney reminds me of Hartley from *Deadly Cool*. She probably isn't as hilarious as her, but she was very relatable and fun to read about. When she finds out that she has the fairy godmother gene, she gets her first client: the editor of the yearbook club at her new school, Flynn, and Delaney thinks that his wish is to date the popular cheerleader in their school, Cadie Perez.

Now let's talk about the romance. I thought it was interesting, because it was very very slow paced. You barely even see it until the end, because Delaney spends the whole book trying to get Flynn to ask Cadie out?which really entertained me. xD

I do think that this book was predictable, though. So when the ending came, I wasn't shocked at all?except for one tiny bit about Cadie because I did not expect that about her. o_O Speaking of Cadie, I actually liked her. She isn't your typical bitchy cheerleader. Sure, she's good-looking and the Most Popular, but she's actually nice. Sometimes overly nice. And that bit in the end about her threw me off a little.

But yeah, despite me being able to predict the ending from several pages behind, I still had a big grin on my face when I finished it. <3 You guys should definitely check this book out if you want a short, sweet and fluffy fairytale YA.

Amber Wortz says

Amber Wortz
Modern Fantasy

"Don't Expect Magic," by Kathy McCullough is a young adult modern fantasy novel about Delaney Collins, a teenager who has moved across the country to live with her father after her mother's death. Delaney knows that her dad is a famous author and life coach, but she has no idea that her father is a modern day Fairy Godfather. Soon after finding out, she discovers that she has the fairy gene and she will also be able to grant wishes after practice. Her new ability helps her to find friends and fit in with her new peers. In the process of granting wishes for other people, she finds joy that she never experienced before.

My first impression of Don't Expect Magic, is that it's cute, but there is not much depth. I think that the author meant for the book to be life-impacting, but I do not think that the story was developed enough for me to become attached to the characters. It felt like a lot of Delaney's emotions just happened without a process to make it seem realistic.

Adira says

I tried to read this book, but it was a **DNF** for me. The storyline was a little dry and it stalled in getting to the actual meat of the story. The book did not keep my interest and I ended up skimming through the book to see where the magic came in to play and what was up with Delaney's dad always disappearing. I may attempt to reread this later however, I make no promises for this one.

Lilly Bergman says

I had a long droned out review all done up in my head, but I just finished the book so my mind is still numb from all the blah that is this book.(If you can even call it a book, more like 'a reasonable idea, that was massacred' before it was printed.)

I first found this book on Goodreads, it was one of those giveaway's so I entered. It looked nice and had okay reviews, so when I didn't win, I ordered it from my library. I was really looking forward to it, but because I

was reading other things it got put back a day. Once I couldn't take anymore of the other book I was reading, (it was far to awesome and I was getting sleepy.) So I picked up 'Don't expect magic', this should have warned me, the title. Although out of all the 'Drama teen', I feel so abandoned, so I'm going to rebel, acting like I can do anything, parents don't know 'sh!t' I would rather re-read this then touch twilight with an 100 foot poll.

I think the first thing I'd like to point out, I had to Google the main girl's name, just so I could pronounce it. And guess what! I typed in her first name and her last name came up to! But not because of this book, but a famous women's ice hockey player! I know naming can be hard but really, now I have no way of proving anything, collins is a very normal last name. So I won't bug on that point.

But Delaney Collins is not even a likeable main character, she's rude and bossy, nosy and a loner, until made to get to know people. And then magically (I use this word ironically, remember DON'T EXPECT anything.) in the last few chapters she realizes how lucky she really is, she has her dad and friends, and the possibility for more. When she had all that in the first place she was just to stubborn to let it happen sooner.

On top of the fact that she's not the best writer, she uses this form of 'now a days for school teens' like Manga and teen age attitude like she's all 'hip' 'cool' or 'epic' just because she's an adult, and knows what Manga even is instead of calling it a comic like most adults because that what they grew up with. But then bashes things like 'looking nerdy' or other nerdy things like 'star gazing' and 'watching star trek' Seeing as me and my friends and family fully admit to liking 'Nerdy' things, it made me eye roll.

It ended on a sickly sweet note, that I saw miles away, which was start really rather then an ending to prove she's planning more books. If she dose I hope there much better then this heap of.....but even if she dose I don't think I'll read them, I wasted time with the writers of warriors and I'm not making the same mistake again.

And this ended up as long or longer. I will not recommended this book ever to anyone, even if I don't like the person.

Nasty Lady MJ says

Okay, I really, really, tried to get into this one, but I couldn't. It had a cute setup. I mean, the whole f.g. thing seemed pretty cool, but it sort of failed on it's face. It might have been in part due to my instant dislike to Delaney. I get that she's been through a lot and McCullough was trying to depict her in a realistic manner, but I just couldn't warm up to her. She just came off as very immature. And yes, I know she's a teen, but I wanted to shake her a couple of times through the book. Case in point, I know she didn't like Dr. Hank, but she should've brought him to her mother's bedside when her mom asked her to. And I just thought the tough girl act came across a little contrived throughout the book. Props I will give this book, I loved the fact that this book wasn't all fluff. That a lot of it dealt with Delaney coming to terms with her new reality. That was rather refreshing. And I thought McCullough's work was easy to read, it was just that Delaney.....

Click here for full review: <http://yalbookbriefs.blogspot.com/201...>

Valerie says

Pretty fun read; nothing way too in depth but a feel good comfort read. I always have to give authors kudo points for making me laugh because I find it hard enough to make people laugh even with voice inflection and facial expressions.

Each character's personality stood out from one another, but I can't help but feel that it was more because they were cookie cutter stereotypes than really just letting the characters sink in (if that makes sense?). I know one of the lessons to the book was to be yourself and that everyone has some depth, which is a great lesson (I think that is true too), but I didn't really feel it. None of the characters really surprised me with hidden depth. For example, the cheerleader likes some indie bands and she likes some unconventional books, so now she must have some hidden depth. I couldn't completely buy into it.

Another goodreads reviewer mentioned how the death of Delaney's mother felt more like a bad breakup rather than a deep loss. Delaney mentioned how it was always her and her mother against the world, the loss of someone like that I would think calls for a little more page time, especially since it is so recent.

On the other hand I really liked the relationship development between Delaney and her father. There are too many YA authors who just leave the parents as an afterthought. They both own up to some of their misgivings through the process of the book and I always looked forward to some of their father daughter time. The magic included in the book added to a lot of the humor, and the romance in the book was very sweet.

Alanna (The Flashlight Reader) says

At first, I didn't really like this book. I was on page 170 or so and didn't feel any "magic" so to speak of. But then, WHAM! It all made sense. Originally, I was told this book was about something totally different than I what I anticipated. (I can't help but wonder if the book's rep actually read this one or not.) I had built up this image of some hilarious fairy godmother misadventure in my mind, only to be disappointed when I realized this wasn't what the book was about. Yes, there is a f.g. element to the book. And yes, Delaney's shenanigans qualify as misadventures, but there is much more to the story.

On a deeper level, this is a very nice story of dysfunctional families and coming to terms with change. Delaney's mom died from a sudden illness, which leaves her with her father (whom she hasn't seen in many years). I think it goes without saying that there was a level of hostility felt by Delaney for a good portion of the book. Then, suddenly, the ice starts melting. I can't say exactly what element makes the melt down begin, but it's a subtle change. When I realized that change was key to the whole book, it made more sense to me. I started appreciating the deeper, larger story. The magic element was tiny and, honestly, could have been left out. I get the idea of a f.g and all, but the major point being made was the kind of stuff you find in self-help books. (Ironically enough, Delaney's dad writes self-help books. Go figure.)

As far as characters go, Delaney and Flynn are likable characters. Delaney has major sarcasm issues (and I love it). She was so sarcastic at times that it was hard for me not to laugh at loud. I could totally hear myself speaking her words. Flynn, well he's a nice guy. He's not as dreamy as some of the fellas I've read about, but he's more believable. No super hero strength or Greek god looks. Just an average Joe with a great sense of humor. Loved him. The two seem like complete opposites (did I mention that Delaney is a goth girl?), but

the subtle move from I'll-stab-your-eyes-out-if-you-try-to-talk-to-me to I-can-tolerate-you-if-I-have-to to actually becoming friends (or maybe more) was a slow, believable process. I loved the ups and downs that lead them to a "happily ever after" kind of ending.

There weren't really any big surprises with the characters. You can see where everything is headed pretty early on, but it's okay. The story is well layered, so I could appreciate it for more than what the surface story was all about. Or, maybe I was reading too much into it? I dunno. If you're looking for a happy go lucky, all out fairy wand and glittery dust kind of story, don't bother with this one. You'll be disappointed. If you want a story about acceptance and surprise love, then you'll enjoy Kathy McCullough's *Don't Expect Magic*.
