



The Lonely Dead

April Henry

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A killer is on the loose, and only one girl has the power to find him. But in this genre-bending YA thriller, she must first manage to avoid becoming a target herself.

For Adele, the dead aren't really dead. She can see them and even talk to them. But she's spent years denying her gift. When she encounters her ex best friend Tori in a shallow grave in the woods and realizes that Tori is actually dead -- that gift turns into a curse. Without an alibi, Adele becomes the prime suspect in Tori's murder. She must work with Tori's ghost to find the real killer. But what if the killer finds Adele first?

Master mystery-write April Henry adds a chilling paranormal twist to this incredibly suspenseful young adult novel.

The Lonely Dead Details

Date : Published January 29th 2019 by Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)

ISBN : 9781250157577

Author : April Henry

Format : Hardcover 240 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Mystery, Fantasy, Paranormal, Thriller, Mystery Thriller

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From Reader Review The Lonely Dead for online ebook

Alexandria says

I received a free copy through a Goodreads giveaway.

Adele has the ability to see and speak to ghosts, just like her mother and grandmother did. On her way home from school, Adele finds the body of her former best friend in a shallow grave with Tori's ghost sitting on top. She tries to deny that she is speaking to Tori's ghost, calling her a hallucination brought on by her mental illness. But, after she reports the body, she is thrust into a mystery revolving around the death of Tori and endangering her own life.

I was uncomfortable with how mental illness was presented in this book. The way that schizophrenia was explained didn't feel quite right and the medication that Adele took prior to the murder was shown as bad for her. It was described as making her feel less alive.

Tori was difficult to like, due to her awful behavior during her life and I just couldn't feel any sympathy for her. She was a bully and never understood even when her behavior was pointed out to her that her teasing and insults affected and hurt others. There were other incidences, such as abuse, mentioned that seemed to just be breezed over and never really expanded on.

There was a major lack of character development throughout the book. The characters felt flat and seemed overly dramatic at certain parts. It didn't feel that there was much of a mystery and I had guessed the identity of the murderer very early on. I also didn't feel much suspense. However, it was fast paced and interesting. I really would have liked to know more about Adele's powers and how they affected her.

Jamie (Books and Ladders) says

See this review and more on Books and Ladders!

Disclaimer: I recieved a free copy of this book and chose to review it. This in no way impacts my opinion.

I am not sure this even warrants one star. I'm so mad and disappointed. I should have probably stopped reading at page 7 (!!!) when the author started talking about how medication "dulls" and negatively impacts people or maybe a little later when she states the main character would never be liked because she was overweight. But the constant bombardment of negative stereotypes and stigma towards those who take medication made me so angry and upset.

Emily (Richmond Reader) says

Younger readers will enjoy this book more than older young adults like myself.

Outcast girl sees ghosts. Popular girl dies. You can probably figure out the rest.

Where to start... I love a good ghost story and a little mental illness thrown in is the best, but this book reads as if directed towards a very narrow age group. I don't think anyone over the age of 16 would find it

entertaining, and with all the talk of underage drinking, I wouldn't want anyone younger than 14 reading it. So the targeted- but also appropriate- audience for this novel is basically only 15 year olds. Ok maybe 15-17 because the MC is 17, however the girl on the front cover of the book looks 28. So who knows. Seriously though, can I please complain about how many times Adele was so mystified by her new-found knowledge that sometimes people black out when they drink? There was a good 5 or 6 times she recalled her health class teacher mentioning that sometimes people black out after drinking a lot and don't remember what they did. I felt this was basic knowledge but our MC really seemed to have no clue. There was also no romance. The book begins w Adele randomly kissing Charlie (maybe just so the author would have a reason to keep him as a character) and before at Tori's infamous party (hate this trope) where she drunk-kissed Luke, Tori's boyfriend. *gasp* not.

"The Lonely Dead" is an okay ghost story for some teenagers.

Sarah says

I received this from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Adele has been labelled as schizophrenic since she was young. After talking to animals and people that weren't actually there and based on the history of the women in her family, it was obvious that Adele suffered from this condition. However, when Adele stops taking her medications, she realizes that her hallucinations were actually dead people and animals. When she stumbles over a classmate's spirit and murdered body, Adele becomes obsessed with finding the murderer, though many signs point to the fact that she is responsible. Adele is going to need to use her abilities and her budding friendship with two different guys to help find the killer.

I am uneasy about the way that mental illness is portrayed in this novel. It almost feels like mental illness is made up, it creates a dangerous environment surrounding mental health and only briefly addresses these ideals at the end. Also, the main character's obsession with her health teacher's explanation of the effects of alcohol seem strange, especially since she frequently talks about it. Barring the mental illness layer, Adele's abilities and history were interesting.

Rashika (is tired) says

Ugh I don't even know how to word as I write this review. I've written and deleted the first sentence about a 100 times. BUT. I guess. Here is the thing, I read an April Henry novel years ago, liked it, and read a BUNCH by her this year. **Just looking at the books in the chronological order they were published, it seems that the books have gotten progressively worse? Which is to say, that her later books have lost that kick a lot of her earlier books had.**

If you've been a fan for a while and coming to this book because you have come to expect some thrill and some mystery from April Henry, you should stay. **If you want anything more than that, like character development and to read about people you don't want to punch just a little, you should maybe scoot along??** IDK. If I were reading my own review, I'd probably choose to read the book because sometimes I ~am~ just craving a quick mystery to take off the edge but The Lonely Dead really doesn't have much else going for it besides that April Henry basically knows how to write a mystery.

For starters, the girl who died is a bitch. We are supposed to like her better by the end of the novel, but she is a racist bitch and I am NOT HERE FOR THAT SHIT. I will tolerate bullies, I will not tolerate bullies that bully girls by pointing out their darker skin. NOPE. Mind you, there is all but one line that alludes to this but that should give you an idea about the kind of person dear Tori was.

As I've grown up and become more aware, I've also become more sensitive to books that do the whole "MC is thought to have a mental illness (usually schizophrenia) but can actually see things others cannot." I think it's such a fine line to walk and sometimes if not done carefully, it can seem dismissive of people who actually have those mental illnesses and to mental health specialists. I will give April Henry the credit she is due by saying she really does seem to acknowledge this as a larger issue. It did seem a little unnatural, the way it is incorporated within the context of the novel, but I do appreciate the distinction.

As for the actual MC, Adele is SO BLAND. Her entire existence is 'woe is me' and she is so dense sometimes. **I am pretty sure she is a plot device and not an actual character, lol. So is basically everyone else in this book.**

The plot does have a little zing to it in that I became invested enough to continue turning pages even though the characters were basically all cardboard caricatures. I wanted to know who killed Tori and I wanted to the po-po to finally catch the right people. I was also slightly invested in Charlie (who is a sort-of love interest) but he barely had a presence in the book.

UGh. I need to stop talking/typing because this review has also become extremely bland and I am sure anyone reading this wants this torture to end so I WILL SHUT UP SOON. BUT, if you are interested in this book, I say read it if you're just looking for a quick, semi-engaging read. We need those kinds of books too. If you want actual character development or to have any interest in any of their lives, you should probably not read this book.

Maureen says

I have never read April Henry before, but I know my 8th grade students have. I wanted to read this one because I book talk to my students and felt they would be interested in hearing about Adele, Charlie, Tori, and Luke. When Adele is walking home from Tori's party, she finds Tori dead. Adele and Tori's boyfriend Luke become suspects in her murder. Charlie's Uncle begins to investigate and things don't look good for Adele. I was given an e-book from NetGalley.

Lindsay says

Henry's books have been hit or miss with me. I read Run, Hide, Fight Back last year and it was filled with suspense and twists. I also read Shock Point and loved it, but then I moved on to The Girl I Used to Be and it was a bust. The Lonely Dead fit in that category as well. I didn't despise the writing or characters, but more of the plot. I recently finished City of Ghosts and I adore the Darkest Powers series so the bar was automatically raised when I started the first page of The Lonely Dead. The issue was my expectations since I wanted to be swept away like I had been with similar novels.

I loved the fact that Adele is described as plump. She isn't the typical YA main character who is skinny and

average looking but has the hottest guy in the school secretly in love with her. She isolates herself because her classmates think she has a mental illness when in reality she can see and talk with the dead; she doesn't discover this until she stops taking her medication.

I wished there was more mystery and twists with Adele's journey of trying to solve her former best friend's murder. There's almost a whole chapter on alcohol poisoning during a health class discussion that could have been reduced to get the point across that Tori blacked out and doesn't remember who killed her. Adele makes an impulsive decision to buy a pen that records conversations and she goes around and questions the suspects on her list. They don't offer her any information. Her suspect list was rashly put together based on secondhand information from her classmates regarding what happened after the party. It wasn't thought through.

Despite the fact that I was indifferent about this read, I'm sure others will enjoy it and I definitely will read Henry's future works.

Thank you NetGalley for an ARC.

Dylan says

1 star.

I have about 20 pages left but I honestly can't bring myself to read the rest. I've disliked April Henry's writing but for some reason I keep coming back to her books, but I think this was her last chance.

The mental illness and fat rep isn't terrible? It's just not...great.

This definitely reminded me of UNDEAD GIRL GANG and CITY OF GHOSTS because of the paranormal thriller vibe, but I can't recommend this.

* I was sent this for free in advance so I can honestly review it via Netgalley, so thanks so much to the publisher. All thoughts are my own.

Tucker (TuckerTheReader) says

The dead aren't lonely. They're dead.

megs_bookrack says

On a short-cut home through a local park, 17-y.o. Adele, comes across her estranged friend, Tori, crying and distraught. After talking to her for a while, trying to figure out what is wrong, Adele notices a very important fact about Tori. She's dead and sitting atop her recently buried remains.

That's right. Adele **sees dead people** but not in the way you would think. She only sees them in the location where their remains are. The spirits, if you will, are attached to their earthly remains via a cord of mist that extends from the backs of their heads. Therefore, they are tethered to that location and do not necessarily bandy about haunting different places.

Adele knows that Tori has been murdered and she needs to report the body to the police. Fearing she will be considered a suspect she makes an anonymous call from a payphone and returns home to her life.

Turns out there are things called security cameras and the cops figure out it was her that made the call. This and the fact that everyone witnessed a big fight between Adele and Tori on the night of her death makes **Adele a prime suspect**. She therefore realizes she needs Tori's help to figure out what happened to her so she can clear herself and bring the real killer to justice.

This book and I did not get along. As you most likely guessed from the tone of the above-mentioned gifs.

The synopsis sounded promising. A paranormal mystery and I guess, in a way, that is what it was except it **wasn't super mysterious and the paranormal elements were quite simplistic**.

I think maybe this book would work better for a younger age group who is perhaps just getting into paranormal mystery stories, as someone new to the genre wouldn't have much to compare this too.

This being said, while I think the writing works best for a Tween category, the topics don't really mesh well with that age group. There is a lot of drinking, binge drinking, talk of binge drinking, sex, party scenes, etc.

So, yeah, maybe not the best thing to buy your 12-year old. Additionally, the overall feel of the book **made me uncomfortable**. This could completely be me, a personal preference or what have you, decide for yourself but the mental health rep...

I wasn't crazy about it. Adele has been diagnosed with schizophrenia for which she has been prescribed medication. She takes this medication up until the time our story starts when she admits to secretly stopping and hiding the pills.

She goes on to say on numerous occasions how much better her life is now that she is off it even though now she is seeing things again whereas before she wasn't. The medication had been dulling her 'gift' to see dead things.

This is a topic returned to over and over again in the book and I'm just not sure if **glorifying going off prescribed medications for serious mental health issues** in a teen book is a good thing?

Seriously, though, I don't know. Maybe I was reading into it wrong or I am taking it too literally. I don't know. I have never suffered from a hallucinatory disorder personally so may not be the best judge on this. Besides this overriding issue, however, I did have a few other problems with it. The 'mystery' was pretty apparent from the beginning. The build-up was too long and the conclusion too rushed. There was a lesson in a health class about binge drinking that just got brought up over and over again that was sort of lame. Things **got really wacky at the end**.

Meh. Just not for me.

However, if this synopsis sounds interesting to you, I want you to pick it up. I want to hear what other people think of this and the mental health stuff in particular. I seriously hope my review doesn't stop anyone from picking this up. For me, it didn't work, but I am sure some people out there will really enjoy it.

Thank you so much to the publisher, Henry Holt and Co., for providing me with an e-ARC to read and review. I always appreciate the opportunity to provide my opinion.

Jay G says

Want to see more bookish things from me? Check out my Youtube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfer...>

* I was sent a copy of this in exchange for my honest review *

Ever since Adele was a little girl she's been able to talk to the dead. Her mother had the same gift but had always told her to ignore it. One day on the way home, she sees her ex-bestfriend Tori sitting alone in the woods and quickly realizes she's dead. As the news of Tori's murder gets out, Adele finds herself as the main suspect when she is unable to provide an alibi.

2 stars may be a bit generous to be honest, for the most part I was bored. Nothing really happened and most of the story was Adele just feeling sorry for herself. I didn't feel as though Adele developed at all through out the story. I also felt that the other minor characters were all one-dimensional and flat. I really hated Tori, she was a despicable human and honestly I'm not even mad she was murdered. I didn't care what happened to any of the characters or feel any sense of urgency/suspense through out the story.

Patty (IheartYA) says

Unfortunately, I read this.

I'm sorry to say this so bluntly, but this sucked.

It read like an early-middle grade and not YA. The writing is lazy, and the characters are dull and undeveloped. The story was not fleshed out well, and the characters' reactions were absolutely unrealistic. It was very plain and simple which is disappointing because it had so much potential. I only kept reading because the story was about ghosts. I used to write stories and poems many years ago, and I've had a few ideas for books but I'm hesitant to write one for fear it will turn out like this.

Stacee says

I had read a couple of April's other books and I loved this premise, sadly I was pretty disappointed. Also, two stars might be too high.

I wanted to like Adele, but her inner monologue was not something I could settle into. I get that she's struggling with family history and current events, yet I didn't feel empathy. All of the other characters are clichéd and flat. No one felt fleshed out and developed as they should have been.

Plot wise, it was very boring. The reveals were obvious and everything felt dumbed down. And not because I'm not the target audience, more like the reader wasn't expected to be able to figure it out. There wasn't a sense of urgency or tension that I expected from a story like this.

Overall, it was an intriguing premise, but the execution didn't work for me.

FYI: lots of talk about schizophrenia, mental illness, taking medication, and references to being "plump". All of this was done in perhaps not the best way.

****Huge thanks to Henry Holt for providing the arc free of charge****

Liesl Stach says

I received an early copy of this from Net Galley.

"The Lonely Dead" features a girl named Adele, who is able to see, touch, and talk to the dead. Her mother had this ability, as did her grandmother, and her great-grandmother. This ability has been passed down through women in her family throughout the generations, but her mother taught her to keep it a secret so people wouldn't believe Adele mentally ill. Adele has been on medication for schizophrenia for the last ten years, but when she stops taking them and goes to a party where everything goes wrong, she realizes two days later that she can see her erstwhile best friend Tori hovering over her own shallow grave in the woods.

The concept is what piqued my interest in this book. I love a good mystery, and I enjoy watching crime dramas such as "Criminal Minds" and "Law and Order." This is the first book by April Henry that I've ever read, but my research shows she's a very prolific mystery and thriller writer. I'm eager to read her past work now that I've read this. Henry has a flair for this sort of writing. The plot was intriguing and I couldn't put it down, having to know what came next.

I enjoyed the characters as well. I felt Adele was three-dimensional, engaging, and relatable. Her relationship with Tori (the dead best friend) was also realistic. When you've been friends with someone since childhood, the relationship can become complicated, and I feel that this was well-defined.

This will be an excellent read during Halloween, and I will certainly be recommending it to teenagers looking for mysteries when it comes out in January.

Mikayla (MikaylaReading) says

I had many problems with *The Lonely Dead*, but I think it all can be boiled down to lazy writing and poor representation.

This story was told in a very linear way. Once our character found out a new piece of information, she would immediately go to talk to someone who revealed something else immediately. Then, our character would use that information to go find the next person to question. It left little suspense or mystery to the story and everything felt too easy. However, all the information ends up being largely irrelevant to the actual solution. Almost every piece of information given to the reader is a red herring with very little opportunity to solve the mystery for themselves.

This story also does a fair bit of telling and lays out information so plainly to the reader it's as if the author assumed the audience was too stupid to make the connections unless it was spelled out for them.

All the characters were overly dramatic with their reactions, and no piece of dialogue felt genuine. Our main character and important side characters remain one dimensional throughout the novel with very little character development. In addition, our villain character's motivations make no sense in the climax.

Finally, my final complaint with the writing is that it was generally lazy, going so far to time jump out of the climax.

My last complaint is with the representation, both for mental health medication and fat representation.

I can not speak from an own-voice perspective about the medication, however it seemed odd how much this book stigmatized medication. While I recognize people have very many reactions to medication and not all our positive (and, of course, the idea is to show Adele doesn't actually have schizophrenia) it ended up demonizing all medication.

Adele is never explicitly said to be fat, but there are many hints that imply she is, including descriptions of her being "plump," "a bigger girl" and her own preoccupation with how much space she is taking up. While this isn't overtly problematic and can reflect many fat people's experience, her weight has no relevance to the story and to only have her feel negatively about her weight affirms to fat people there is something wrong with their bodies.

I would not recommend this book to anyone.
