



The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker

Leanna Renee Hieber

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With radiant, snow-white skin and hair, Percy Parker was a beacon for Fate. True love had found her, in the tempestuous form of Professor Alexi Rychman. But her mythic destiny was not complete. Accompanying the ghosts with which she alone could converse, new and terrifying omens loomed. A war was coming, a desperate ploy of a spectral host. Victorian London would be overrun.

Yet, Percy kept faith. Within the mighty bastion of Athens Academy, alongside The Guard whose magic shielded mortals from the agents of the Underworld, she counted herself among friends. Wreathed in hallowed fire, they would stand together, no matter what dreams -- or nightmares -- might come.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker Details

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From Reader Review The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker for online ebook

Brooke says

Because the synopsis on the back of the book is so beautifully written (just like the rest of the book) I wanted to post it here for you to read.

From Leanna Renee Hieber's website:

With radiant, snow white skin and hair, Percy Parker was a beacon for Fate. True love had found her, in the tempestuous form of Professor Alexi Rychman. But her mythic destiny was not complete. Accompanying the ghosts with which she alone could converse, new and terrifying omens loomed. A war was coming, a desperate ploy of a spectral host. Victorian London would be overrun. Yet, Percy kept faith. Within the mighty bastion of Athens Academy, alongside The Guard whose magic shielded mortals from the agents of the Underworld, she counted herself among friends. Wreathed in hallowed fire, they would stand together, no matter what dreams or nightmares—may come.

After reading The Strangely Beautiful Tale last year and giving it a five star review and naming it my favorite book of the year, it is obvious that I had super high hopes for The Darkly Luminous Fight. I was not disappointed either! I am not usually big on romance novels, but this series is the perfect blend for me. There is the magical guard that protects London and Athens Academy, Percy being able to speak and see the ghost, a battle of light vs dark, and the romance that unravels for the characters involved.

The Darkly Luminous Fight starts off with the Guard celebrating their win against the darkness, and Percy and Alexi's engagement. They are such a sweet couple, even Percy's shyness about her pale skin and what Alexi will think is endearing. She is very inexperienced with men in general, and to go from nothing at all to a husband is difficult for Percy to grasp.

I really liked the addition of the old Guard trying to help the new Guard even if there are bad feelings between some of them. Percy having to be mediator made it quite interesting, because everyone had to rely on her to know what was going on. It proved to the other members that they definitely need her aboard.

I adore all the secondary characters in this story. They have such large hearts and care so much for what the prophecy has in store for them. They get on each others nerves sometimes, but they are always there for each other; never letting one person fight on their own.

Again, Leanna has such a great voice and I enjoy reading her writing so much. I can not wait to see what she has in store for us in the future. I also wonder how she could come up with another title for the next book (lol). My review definitely isn't getting across how much I adore this series. I do hope those who are lovers of paranormal romance will give this one a shot.

Katie(babs) says

The strange, radiant looking Percy Parker and her gang of ghost busters (think of a Victorian Scooby Doo)

are back in The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker, the sequel to The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker by Leanna Renee Hieber. Darkly Luminous takes place a few days after Percy and a group of six, known as The Guard, was able to stop the evil forces responsible for Jack the Ripper stalking London. They must also keep watch over all those nasty type of ghouls and goblins that have escaped the Whisper-world and enjoy causing havoc in London.

The shy and sometimes timid Percy has now found her calling as the seventh member of the Guard that was prophesized decades before. Percy has also found her one true love and soul mate with the leader of the guard, the older, dashing, brooding, "I look mighty sexy and fine wearing my blood red cravat", Professor Alexi Rychman, who also coincidentally teaches at Athens, the school Percy was a student at. This meeting, and eventual relationship between the two, was most likely fate since Percy is the reincarnation of a goddess Alexi was supposed to fall in love with. After Percy has recovered from her injuries in battle, she and Alexi have a, "blink and you miss it" engagement, are married within days, and go off on their honeymoon to enjoy the delights of marital congress with one another. While Percy and Alexi are enjoying this sensual waltz together, the Guard enjoys some down time to reflect on what the future may hold in store for them.

It seems that all is not well within the Whisper-world and on the moral plane. The former head of the Guard, the spirit Beatrice Tipton, appears to the present Guard to warn them that the ruler of the Darkness (ruler of the Whisper-world), wants revenge. Since Percy is the only one who can communicate with ghosts, and they with her, she is called to action. The Guard must prepare for a major battle with The Darkness, who wants to rise up and destroy the land of living, especially Percy who holds the key, or rather is the key to stopping this grave travesty. The Guard is in turmoil because everything they thought they knew, or were told, may have been wrong. There is also some internal stress as well with Rebecca, the Headmistress of Athens, who has always longed for Alexi, but now knows that can never be together, and with the Frenchwoman Josephine and her lover Elijah, who refuses to give her the one thing she wants above all else from him.

Whereas Percy is more than willing to take up arms so to speak, the others are not as willing to make the sacrifice, or allow Percy to do so. Alexi, who adores and loves Percy, even more than his own life, refuses to let her walk into the fires of hell, so to speak. He has just found her, and after his twenty years of waiting and fighting a good fight, he is ready to put aside his responsibilities and enjoy his newly married status. Whereas Alexi only had to watch out for himself and his fellow Guards, who are quiet skilled at not being killed, now there is Percy, who is still thought to be fragile as she tries to adjust to her new life. Percy feels she must do whatever she can to make all the wrongs of the world right. She places herself in danger, and may do more damage then good, including that of her marriage.

Leanna Renee Hieber's writing is so very beautiful; perhaps even more so than her debut with Percy Parker. Leanna has such a skill at writing wonderfully descriptive actions and dialogue. Darkly Luminous is a story you must take your time and read, savor and ingest, because there maybe some passages that may confuse you. The prologue is a bit disjointed, and the downtime from where Percy and Alexi are off on the honeymoon to those scenes with the Guard, as well as what is occurring in the Whisper-world may turn away some readers. But this is needed because it is all about the buildup to the final battle that brings forth some big fireworks.

Whereas The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker was more focused on the character of Percy, in Darkly Luminous, we are given more insight on the Guard as individuals and their motivations. Leanna excels at writing this connection these men and women have for one another. My favorite scenes are their interactions and why they all care deeply for one another.

But the main reason for reading Darkly Luminous is the relationship between Percy and Alexi. Talk about

one humdinger of a romance! If you weren't certain if Leanna could pull off the older teacher who romances his student angle, you will be astounded by how well it works here. Leanna delivers this and more. Alexi is everything I adore in a hero. He is still very much a brooding stickler, but with Percy, he loosens up a bit, and his tender and protective side comes out. Percy, who was well known as a swooner in the first book, has grown into a more mature woman. She knows how to handle her husband and is sensitive to his nature. And, when these two come together in the intimate sense, meaning their lovemaking, it feels as if you are reading about the communion of souls. The love scenes are tasteful and will make you sigh. Leanna also has a sneaky way of penning The Rychman's love that can be on the naughty side, but still expressed in a very lovely way. A perfect example is an explosion of passion between Percy and Alexi that happens in the school chapel.

Darkly Luminous has a great combination of supernatural, mysticism, and spiritualism. The religious aspect can be heavy at times, but again it does fit the overall tone of the story. One character who grated on my nerves was Beatrice. I couldn't figure if she wanted to help the Guard or hinder them in such a way to suit her own needs. But then as I found myself annoyed, I quickly changed my mind the moment Alexi and Percy appeared. This couple is incredibly engaging, where you can't help but want to know what happens next in their journey.

Leanna Renee Hieber is one author who has a very unique voice that is shown very well in Darkly Luminous. Not only does she have an intricate way with her world building, but her characters are so welcoming, not to mention seductive, mainly in the case of Alexi Rychman, who with one heated glance at his beloved Percy, makes a lover of romance literature like myself swoon in total glee.

Heather C (Darkly Reading) says

Darkly Luminous picks up directly where Strangely Beautiful left off. After facing deadly nightmares in the previous book, Alexi and Percy now get to have a dream come true and be wed. Although the newlyweds as well as The Guard know that their fight is not done and that Darkness may still try to claim his now mortal bride. While Alexi and Percy enjoy their new married life together dark signs begin to gather in Athens Academy that point to a great war coming with the Whisperworld and allies appear in the form of ghosts of previous guard members.

Though this book had its fair share of complicated love stories, Micheal's love for Rebecca as well as Josephine's love for Elijah, it starts on a happy note - the marriage of Percy to her dark and stormy professor, Alexi. Finally, the moment that I hoped would occur but feared would never happen in the previous book is laid out in delicious detail in this book. Thankfully, Ms. Hieber allows her readers to also witness the event rather than start the second book after the marriage and we get to tag along on their honeymoon as well. The romance between Alexi and Percy is young and they have a lot of growing pains to go through in their relationship. Since they were both solitary creatures in their pasts they have to learn how to live with another person and learn to establish their relationship dynamic beyond professor and pupil and more as partners. One of the biggest changes in this book for me was Alexi becoming a bit unhinged at the thought of Percy being in more danger and of the possibility of losing her. Alexi who was always the calm and cool leader has so much tumultuous passion in his breast when it comes to his wife he doesn't know how to cope. Percy also slowly learns how to develop a backbone when it comes to Alexi and stand up to him, even when what she wants goes against his wishes. And it's important that they work out this difficult part of their relationship quickly since they face a war with the Whisperworld. Though Alexi and Percy certainly do have passion for

each other that even overcomes them while in their magical chapel (oh my!).

Another favorite part of this book was learning more about the other members of The Guard and their loves and desires. You had to feel for Rebecca as she watched the man she loved and felt she should spend the rest of her life with married to another. You also felt for Micheal since he had to watch Rebecca go through this and her feelings were not for him. And learning about Jane and her mystery lover was surprising as well, as well as learning more about the mystery of her life and her multiple names. The Guard is integral to the fight with the Whisperworld and Darkness himself, and the sacrifices that have to be made to win the war are heartbreaking.

This book was a 4.5 out of 5 stars for me, a fitting end to this chapter of the fight against Darkness and it was lovely to see Alexi being an emotional mess about his beloved Percy.

Lady Jaye says

This tale was in a sense, Darkly Luminous, I guess. For me, it just didn't have the magic that made its predecessor a strangely beautiful tale. The stuff I found endearing in the first was tedious in this one.

Alexi and Percy, though lovable in the first installment, were rather annoying in this one. "Oh. Percy belongs to ME! I won't allow her to go into ANY danger, even though if she doesn't we all die and the whole world with it and Percy spends eternity being tortured by the dark." Yes, that was pretty much Alexi throughout. Annoying.

Percy wasn't much better. "Oh no my Alexi, please believe me. I love you. I won't have any opinions of my own, because without your constant professions of undying love, my life is over. Oh please please profess your undying love once again. And don't doubt mine. I will NEVER disobey you." Yeah. NO.

The rest of the cast were just there. As usual. Rebecca, who's as unserious a human being if I've ever read about one; Elijah, who's not very likable at all; Josephine who's just there; the vicar, whose bland and forgettable and whose name I just forgot; Jane, who's marginally interesting.

A new cast of characters - Beatrice, Ibrahim, and Aodhan joined in.

All in all, it was a good tale, but nowhere near as good as the first tale. It was all very melodramatic and theatrical (it makes so much sense when you find that Ms. Hieber has a background in theater :D)

Karissa says

This is the 2nd book in the Strangely Beautiful series. There is a 3rd book in this series, The Perilous Prophecy of God and Goddess, which is a prequel to the first two books in the series. This book wasn't as good as the first book in the series, but it does a decent job of wrapping up Persephone Parker's story. This review does contain spoilers from the first book in the series.

Percy and Alexi have solidified their relationship and overcome of the deceipts of the first book. Now they are

planning on getting married. Unfortunately a new darkness (known creatively as Darkness) is haunting London. It will take all of Percy's power, combined with that of her guard to save the city.

This book was another beautifully written story that has both gothic and Victorian overtones to it. There wasn't as much history in this book (pretty much none) and there was about as much mythology as in the last book (which is to say some, but not a ton).

The first half of the story focuses on Alexi and Percy's marriage; which was nice to read about but not all that exciting. The story gets more exciting in the 2nd half; as the Darkness gains ground and Percy and the Guard have to join forces to fight it.

The biggest problem with this story was how protective and domineering Alexi is over Percy. Percy is there to be the Guards' seventh, to be their strength. Alexi is constantly trying to hide Percy away and protect her; without ever asking what Percy actually wants. Percy just goes along with it for the most part, although she does show a bit more spunk toward the end of the book. The whole dynamic between Alexi and Percy kind of ruined the story for me some.

I really enjoyed the rest of the Guard though and some of the Guard from previous times that we meet as well. It's a darkly beautiful story, full of the message that love can conquer all.

Overall a decent wrap up of this story. I enjoyed the beautiful writing style and the Guard. I did not enjoy Alexi's alpha over-protective attitude or how Percy meekly went along with him most of the time. I would recommend these two books to those who enjoy paranormal romance with gothic overtones. I won't be reading the prequel because the character it follows (we meet her in this book) just doesn't interest me that much.

Smokinhotbooks K.C. says

Favorite Scene

“There was that kiss.” Percy giggled. “You threw me against the bookshelf.”

“Ah, yes, there was that.” He smirked. “how did that go again?” He lifted and spun her. Her breath fled as he pressed her against the shelves for reenactment.

“Yes, that was it,” she finally gasped, as he carried her again to the desk. “Alexi, were you really thinking such things during our tutorials? You seemed so cold.”

“I began to unhinge the moment I demanded you reveal yourself, the moment you took off your scarf, your gloves, your glasses, all your shrouds, and stood bravely before me, diamond blue eyes piercing my soul.”

Percy frowned. “You looked at me in surprise, then.”

Alexi leaned closer. “You were a revelation.”

lu·mi·nous {loo-muh-nuhs} when something overtakes a human body – a possession with intent to harm...

war { wawr} spirits say it is war, all hell has broken loose now that the bride is gone. The fight on the borderland was just the beginning...

Where do I begin...I fell in love with Percy Parker in The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker, where a shy, awkward, 'freakishly pale' girl became the missing piece in a prophesied puzzle. We meet the illustrious Miss Parker again in The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker and resume the fight against 'The Darkness', complete with the broodingly handsome Professor Alexi Rychman and the rest of the guard. Now that Alexi has realized that Percy is his mythical destiny, their proclamation of true love is confirmed for all to see. But alas, it's not all moonbeams and rainbows as something sinister is lurking in the depths of the Athens Academy, something that want's Persephone. Percy will have to be on her guard as one within her group is foretold to be a betrayer, someone who she is close to. With the daunting task of being the newest member of the guard, navigating a new position at the academy and being the wife of Alexi, Percy cannot help but feel a little lost. How is she to save herself when someone close to her will betray her at her most vulnerable? All I can say is that Alexi and Percy have a difficult road ahead of them, but not to fear, Percy is a being of light, and light always defeats the darkness....right? Just who is Percy Parker, and is she even human?

Leanna Renee Hieber is one of those authors that can write a romance that is both poignant and heartwarming. Usually when you read a sequel from a beloved first book, there is really no option but to go down. Not so with this book. Although, I did miss Alexi and Percy's tutorial tête-à-tête's I enjoyed the journey of their relationship from whirlwind of forbidden feelings to a working partnership. And yes, Alexi is still the same old aloof Darcy-like character, who only has eyes for Miss Persephone Parker, a fact that I deliciously enjoyed. *swoon* Not to disappoint, our full cast of characters from the previous book come back to life and add a richness and humanity to this second installment. I enjoyed that Alexi and Percy were not always at the forefront of this story and that we began to see more of the Guard than just magical shields against the underworld.

I will make a hint that I can't wait to read more about Rebecca! Rebecca has sacrificed everything for Prophecy, even her feelings for the ambivalent Professor Rychman. So long as they could work together, her sacrifice seemed achievable with Alexi at her side. But Alexi has found Percy, his goddess in human form and now Rebecca is left with nothing but the cold embrace of duty. She is the one who knows of the betrayer but her bitterness of Alexi's feelings for Percy could cloud her judgement. What if Rebecca is the one that is to betray Percy, could she be the one?

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is made of all kinds of awesome and is just as exciting and romantic as the first book. Not to be missed.

Christine Rose says

Although Ms. Hieber set the bar quite high with her first book, she certainly doesn't disappoint her readers with its sequel. Slower paced than the first, the reader gets to luxuriously bask in its Gothic romanticism. Ms. Hieber's eloquent writing style weaves another beautiful, romantic tale along the dark streets of London.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is the immediate continuation of the story from the first book. It begins with the final showdown in Strangely Beautiful seen from the perspective of a new character:

the shade Beatrice, the leader of the last generation's Guard come forth from the Whisper World to assist the current guard in a daunting task. From there, the author takes the reader on a delightful holiday through the horror of the underworld and the wonders of new love. Along the journey, we learn more about the other members of The Guard as well.

Readers got to know the handsome and intense Alexi Rychman quite well in the first book, but we see a different side of him in this book. Having saved his beloved Percy in Strangely Beautiful, he promptly marries her in a supernaturally luminous ceremony and whisks her away on a romantic honeymoon in York where they uncover a new mystery surrounding Percy's birth and strange appearance. However, he becomes quite possessive, controlling, and aggressive when his new bride is put up to a horrifying task. Beatrice tells Percy, the only one of the guard who can hear as well as see ghosts, that she must undertake a dangerous mission into the Whisper World in order to save thousands of imprisoned souls. Alexi, the leader of The Guard would rather the entire world fall into Darkness than allow his beloved to be put into harm's way.

I particularly enjoyed getting to know the other members of the Guard in this book and understanding their unique powers and personalities. By far my favorite was Elijah, the memory of The Guard. He can wipe memories of innocent bystanders when they see something harrowing, allowing them to lead a normal, ghost-free life. His wit had me laughing out loud several times throughout the book. He refers to Alexi as "Your Royal Eeriness," and his quips often lighten a scene, bringing a relief from the horrifying reality they all must face. He is deeply in love with Josephine, the artist of The Guard, who hopes they might reveal their love and get married themselves now that Alexi has found his Prophecy.

Rebecca, the intuition of The Guard and second in command, is heartbroken over Alexi's marriage and obvious adoration of Percy. She has loved him in silence for twenty years, and now she must face the truth that he will never love her. Still, she must hold it together long enough to play her part in the coming fight. And yet, love may not have eluded her completely, as there is Michael, the heart of The Guard, who can calm worry, fear, and anger with just a touch. He, in turn, has loved her these many years. His is the story that touched my heart the most in this book. He endured in the shadows for so long, always needed but never seen. Now he has a chance to come into the light and have Rebecca see him for the first time.

The final member of The Guard, Jane, the healer doesn't have a love interest, at least in the world of the living. Her power enables her to heal any wound or disease with a single touch. All of The Guard is possessed with a muse from ancient times, working together to save the world from Darkness, the character based on the classical Hades, who kidnapped Persephone and killed her love The Phoenix, which now possesses Alexi.

No spoilers here, but I will just say this about the character of Darkness: he certainly lives up to his name! The scene between him and Percy is quite dark and delicious. Ms. Hieber, once again, excels in her gift, describing Darkness as to reveal both his evil, smarmy nature and the desperate love that lies beneath it all.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is pure Gothic brilliance. Ms. Hieber expertly and eloquently weaves together a beautiful story full of Greek Mythology and a myriad of Shakespearean references in this delightfully dark romance. The Strangely Beautiful series is a must-read for every paranormal romance fan.

Bookaholics says

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker by Leanna Renee Hieber

Historical Paranormal Romance – April 27, 2010

4 ½ Stars

In 1888 London, there are six extraordinary mortals who possess the power to keep London from being overrun by ghosts. This group is led by Professor Alexi Rychman, the 6 members of the group have recently welcomed their 7th member, Percy Parker, who is the reincarnation of the Goddess Persephone. Together, Professor Rychman, his beloved Percy, and the rest of this group of misfits must stop the Whisperworld from taking over London. Worst of all, Rychman and his friends must also stop the Lord of Darkness from reclaiming Percy once more.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is the second book in Hieber's Victorian Fantasy novel involving Percy Parker and the other Guardians of the mortal world. I would highly recommend starting this series by reading the first book The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker before reading this second novel. This story picks up right from where the first book left off. If you try to dive in without reading the first one, the second book will seem very confusing and difficult to read. Thankfully, the first book is a great read as well. As soon as I figured this was not a stand alone, I bought and read the first book and then dove straight right into this one. Hieber is such an engaging and talented writer that I could not stop reading for the past five days!

First of all, I think the story in the second book is even better than the first. Percy Parker, our protagonist, really matures by the second book and becomes quite feisty at the end. Hieber did an amazing job bringing Percy to life, especially during the final climax. I was so impressed that I read out sections of it to my husband! The rest of the characters are equally well written, from the brash (yet loving) Mr. Rychman to Jane, the group's Healer. Every character has their own problems/subplot that are original and well thought out.

Hieber is a writer who writes with love and care. You can see how much attention she pays to the details in her story and with all of her characters. She's the only writer who really writes like a Victorian. Unlike other romance writers, who even though they are writing historical novels, they still retain their contemporary "accent," Hieber really writes in the style of Gaskell or Austen. To keep it authentic, Hieber also keeps her books romantic aspects very chaste. If you enjoy classics and supernatural fantasy, you will definitely want to give this book a try. Hieber does a successful job of marrying these two genres to create something unique and well worth your time.

Reviewed by Pauline from the Bookaholics Romance Book Club

Lillie Roberts says

Percy Parker has finally found a place to belong to in this world of hers. She has more than she ever hoped for growing up as a convent orphan. Though well cared for and loved by the good Sisters and Mother of the Convent, she never hoped to find love, friends, and family. Now she has it all, if only she can hold on to what she has struggled to find. The Whisper-World calls to her beckoning her back, ready to take her as she

is. The Whisper-World doesn't like to give up those who cross into it's world, but it may be her only chance to save what she has come to love.

Percy's professor and husband, Alexi Rychman is loath to release his new young wife to the questing hands of Whisper-World, but Athen's Academy may give him no other choice. Even with his refusal, Athen's stones and bricks are coming alive, and if Percy doesn't seek The Darkness, it may be the end of them all. The Guard who have always give their all to The Grand Work may have no other choice than to watch their seventh and one-time Goddess return to The Darkness who had kidnapped and imprisoned her in the deepest, darkest part of the Whisper-World. The Darkness who holds a secret key and only with this key can all The Guard be saved. It's up to Percy to visit gray world and retrieve the key, the key to release all The Guard, both the past and the present.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker by Leanna Renee Hieber is the second book in the Strangely Beautiful Series. In this story, Persephone Parker comes into her own. She can no longer be the innocent student of Athen's Academy, hiding beneath her layers and scarves. She is destined for great things and greater responsibilities. Strangely Beautiful left off with the whimsical Miss Percy Parker saving all of The Guard from an unspeakable evil, all six of her new companions laid at the brink of death, and only she was able to force the evil Gorgon away. Already enamored and endeared to Professor Alexi Rychman, he claims her as his own, his Goddess reincarnated and his prophesied love. But in this part of the story, the whole of greater good needs to be served. The Guard has protected the earth bound realm for centuries, and with the departure of The Guard from this world to the Whisper-World, The Darkness has been imprisoning them, locking them away, foes for an eternity. But there is one who can save them all, to do so she'll have to enter the Whisper-World with all it's dangers and with her captor, The Darkness himself.

Darkly Luminous is a fantastical tale of Gothic romanticism. Once again Percy Parker is called upon to save her companions and friends. She's such a fragile beacon of light, almost transparent, but within her resides the strength of Goddess and it's this power that both the Earth bound realm and the Whisper-World needs. The Darkness wants nothing more to claim her once more as his own, to kidnapped her and drag her into the bowels of the Whisper-World, his prize. But there has to be a way to save them all, the Goddess would not have taken human form only to perish and remain unrequited. Darkly Luminous is a tale of honor, pain, need, sacrifice, and above all love. It is with and through this love that Percy Parker Rychman may save and be saved. Without love and sacrifice, all would be lost to The Darkness. If you haven't started the journey of Ms. Parker, now is the time to pick up the tethers hold of this beautiful story and read. Start with The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker and continue with The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker, both are more than worthy of your time. This series is one of the best I've read, it will be in my top picks for 2010. If you haven't tried it, I'm flummoxed, I don't know how to get you to pick up the series. I highly recommend to all book readers, something for everyone.

Anna says

The story starts the day after the big battle. Percy has survived her fever and saved the day. Now that the goddess powers have awakened in Percy, she is plunged in and is part of The Guard. With the first battle won comes relief, but things are just beginning for Percy and her new family.

Last year I was lucky enough to get an early copy of this book and well it really went above and beyond of what I expected and absolutely fell in love with the Gothic feel and its characters. So, when I received a copy of book two you can probably imagine my excitement.

It was a treat visiting Percy's world again. I loved the romance, the magic and action packed scenes with the Guard. Alexi & Percy's romance plays a big part in the book and it is very sweet. Percy is quite the innocent, which is really fun to watch. While I think in any other character all the blushing and giggling might become a bit annoying, but in Percy it just makes her more endearing. I probably mentioned this in my review of *Strangely Beautiful*, but another thing I love about these stories is the London that Ms Hieber has created, it is dark and very inviting, magical. It is as much a character in the story as Percy is.

Leanna Renee Hieber's writing voice shines brightly. I love it. *The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker* is a lush love story and an enthralling tale about good vs. evil. I look forward to the continuation of the series and learning more about the secondary characters.

If you're a fan of the Paranormal genre and haven't picked this series up. I definitely urge you to do so, you're missing out on a pretty amazing world.

Katyana says

I really loved this book. The tenor of it was much different from the first, but still wonderful. I would say the first sort of unwound or unfurled itself, like a rosebud opening. It was lovely, almost poetic at points, but still told a gripping story. This second book had a feverish pace. Even in the opening, when there were pauses for our characters to live a few moments of life, those moments felt like borrowed or stolen time. As a reader, you were horribly aware of the terrible force building against them, and of how precious those few moments were.

This one also told a much broader story. Or rather, from a broader perspective. The first book stayed largely focused on Percy and Alexi, but this one gathered threads from many directions and wove all The Guard into the coming war.

I don't want to say too much, because I don't want to give it away, but I would just love to impress on my friends how much I loved these two books. And the story really does wrap in this book, for these characters. There are plenty of places the author could go in this world for more stories, but I would be very surprised if these characters are pressed back into the fray again. They have earned their retirement - no more stolen moments, instead they get to enjoy the rest of their lives. It makes me a little melancholy, as is always the case when a story I adore comes to an end, but I am certainly satisfied. And I also have to say: the last 2 lines of this book? Perfect. So incredibly, satisfyingly perfect. *blissful sigh*

Kelly says

Percy Parker and Alexi Rychman have finally confessed their love for one another, and they and the Guard have scored a victory against the forces of evil. They scarcely have time to celebrate and regroup, though, before trouble finds them again.

Roughly the first third of *The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker* focuses mainly on Percy and Alexi's relationship, as they announce their engagement and move quickly toward marriage. The news makes plenty of waves at Athens Academy and at the convent where Percy once lived. If you wanted more closure to the romantic plot at the end of *The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker*, you'll find it

here. Leanna Renee Hieber gives her hero and heroine a resolution fit for fairy tales. I can see now, too, why she waited until this book to tie that storyline up. If these chapters were tacked onto the end of the first book, they'd seem too long and anticlimactic. Placed at the beginning of the second book, they work perfectly. Readers get what they want, and Hieber gets the chance to juxtapose these scenes of fulfillment with hints of a threat on the horizon.

Around the one-third mark, the fantasy plot — previously in the background — takes center stage. Old enemies are rising again, and it becomes clear that Percy will have to venture into the spectral Whisper-world alone if she is to thwart the designs of Darkness, Hieber's "Hades" figure. Yet she will not be without help. I think I teared up a bit when I realized what all those blue dots on the Guard's map represented. Hieber skillfully describes both the gruesome landscapes of the underworld and the beauty of Good's transcendent powers, and places them in a quickly moving plot that will keep readers frantically turning pages. And it's wonderful to watch Percy's continued growth. She's gone from a timid convent girl to a brave woman who can stand up to Kings of the Underworld and snarky math professors alike, while still being recognizably the same character.

Like its predecessor, *The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker* comes to a satisfying close but leaves room for future stories starring these or different characters. Along the way, Hieber gives us plenty of her lovely, delicate prose, and a few moments that are riotously funny.

If anything, I wanted more! Specifically, I would have liked to see more development of one of the secondary romances, filling in the gap between the ending and the epilogue. Hieber has a forthcoming short story that will address this; the story is titled "A Christmas Carroll" and will appear in the anthology *A Midwinter Fantasy*, to be published by Dorchester in October 2010.

Larissa says

I had such high expectations for this book. I absolutely loved the first one in this series (The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker, check out my review [HERE!](#)) and it was the first time ever that I gave 5 Loveys to a book. So, you can imagine that I was dying to get my hands on its sequel. I was lucky enough that the author offered me a galley for it and I simply jumped at the chance.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is a great read. I think it might have lacked the wow factor that I got from the first one, but it certainly kept up the quality and I loved being able to reconnect with the characters I fell in love with in the previous novel.

In this sequel we get to understand better the role of each of the Guard members, whose job is to protect our world from being invaded by the spirits of the whisper-world. Their history is based on the love story between the goddess Persephone and The Phoenix. A tragic story that became a legend and gave birth to a prophecy that has found its way to reality in 1888 London.

The mythology and world created by Leanna is great and very compelling, you can't help but be entranced by the 19th century London she transports us to.

This book starts right when the previous one ended. We have Alexi and Percy finally coming together and in this installment we get to see them actually being together and learning to deal with their love and their personalities.

Percy, Persephone, is such a cute and wonderful character. I adored seeing how much she has grown from the beginning of book #1 and on this new one. She is stronger and is absolutely able to fight her own battles. She stands up for what she believes in and even though she is still the sweet woman you can't help but love, she is definitely a new woman who is not afraid to say and do what is necessary.

I don't give out any spoilers, but the plot gets more complicated and the stakes are definitely higher. We get to spend more time in the other members of guard and get into their heads. I loved being able to follow their own stories, loves and heart breaks.

The Strangely Beautiful Series is a Dark-Goth Fantasy full of heart and adventure, If you're up for a trip to 1888 London and open for a beautiful story of darkness versus light, you should definitely give a chance to this series!

Mandi Schreiner says

Why I read: Author submitted for review, and I adored the first book in this series.

Favorite Quote: "Hello, my north star."

Percy Parker has not only become Prophecy, but she has fallen in love. At the end of *The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker* we discover the meek, almost ghostly Percy Parker fulfilled a destiny to become Prophecy, the seventh member of an elite Guard that keeps the evil spirits and demons in London at bay. Led by their fearless leader, Alexi Rychman, they battled great evil, and it was during the battle, Percy was revealed to have even greater powers.

Her powers are not the only thing making her life more interesting these days. She is in love, engaged and about to get married to Alexi, her former professor. Percy is not only shy and mild mannered, but merely nineteen in age, quite a contrast to the older, and aggressive Alexi. But age does not matter for these two who are quite desperately in love.

Percy is reintroduced to the other five that make up the Guard – Rebecca, second in command who is the intuition in the Guard. Josephine, the artist, and one that always has a pleasant smile. The very rakish Elijah, the memory of the group, and the one that always has a witty comeback. Jane the Healer and finally, Michael the Heart. Percy looks at this group, people that have given their life for a greater cause and can't help but feel a drop of sadness that she is so very lucky to have found Alexi. Percy has not known family, and now she has a very generous fiancé, and a family of people who understand her.

The job of the Guard waits for no one however, and as they dine one evening, the spirit of Beatrice Tipton, a former Guard member appears. Percy is able to communicate with ghosts and translates for the rest of the group. Beatrice brings troubling news from Whisper-world. The Darkness wants vengeance, and Beatrice has a call to arm. As Beatrice starts to warn Percy of the dangers ahead and her duty to one day enter Whisper-world as she only can, Alexi fears for his beloved.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is truly a wonderful book. Now that Alexi and Percy have found each other and are madly in love, the angst of the future war brings many dark clouds. The ever

fearless leader Alexi, is truly terrified of placing Percy in harms way. But because she is Prophecy, that may be her only course of action. He not only fears danger, but that she truly may not be human, and one day she may belong to a different place, rather than at his side. His fierce protectiveness refuses to allow her into the other side. The meeker Percy loves her dear husband, but knows this is what she is destined to do. She looks at her new family, and knows to keep them safe, she must be brave and face Darkness by herself.

The romance in this book is just swoon worthy. There is not a sex scene, but pages of beautifully written words between these two lovers. Really, Alexi stole my heart. They are absolutely adorable together – in the midst of new love. They are so cute going back to Alexi's professor office where their flirtations began. Alexi, the ever strict professor, now with his cravat messed up and buttons undone. We also see them married and on their wedding night:

"Do you require further aid?" Alexi rasped, staring at the line of her collarbone.

"I won't be but a moment," she replied, biting her lip.

Shifting her skirts and closing the washroom door, she learned a sumptuous lace gown awaited her upon the back of the door, with ribbon closures from neck to toe. Percy blushed. It was nearly transparent light blue lace without lining. The note attached to the first ribbon said, *Tie every bow. I have waited all my life for this night, and it must not go quickly.*

This book also focuses on the relationships of the other Guard members whom have all given up much in their life to follow their purpose. Rebecca, who has pined for Alexi for so long, must now truly admit, he is not hers to have. Her despair, her fight for wanting to be strong and follow purpose as second in command, and her despair for wanting to give up on her lonely life, is heartbreaking. But for as many soul-filled glances she has thrown to Alexi, another has been doing the same to her.

Elijah, one of my favorite characters, must decide if his love for Josephine is worthy of public knowledge. And Jane has a long lost love of her own – in another world and time.

While there was a time or two when I thought knowledge of future events could have been communicated better between the spirits and the Guard to warn off of impending danger, overall the build up to the conflict is well done.

The Darkly Luminous Fight for Persephone Parker is a book not to be missed. It is adorable, utterly romantic and while the first book in the series, *The Strangely Beautiful Tale of Miss Percy Parker* made my favorites list of 2009, Leanna Renee Hieber wrote a second book that I enjoyed even more.

Rating: 4.5/5

Melissa says

If the talk of war in the first book made you think, "that was it?" then you know you are in for a huge ride with this book. In this one you also get to meet more of the guard in a more personal way and also see what is in their hearts they so badly hide from one another. The question with these little secrets becomes is this what can tear them apart? Can this be a betrayal not only of the heart, but of the guard or even Percy?

You also get more romance with Percy and Alexi. Lot more of Alexi's Darcy-esque manner and steamy looks he only gives Percy. Not to mention you get a little more action than you would have in those 18th century novels. ;) They do explore their relationship and what her past and his possession means to one another. I felt it was dealt with in a very adult manner which I enjoyed. All of these characterizations are important in understanding how the Guard and Percy stand a chance to beat Darkness. The question remains. Are they able to see past their own mortal hearts? Are they able to stay true to one another? Can they stand a chance against Darkness? Guess you'll have to read the book to find out.

I give this book 4 stars. It is a great companion to the first and really finishes up aspects of the first book that might have lingered. Leanna Renee Hieber has really made a great saga with these books alone. I do so hope you get a chance to read them.
