



# Skin

Jesse Daro



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Unbeknownst to most of human kind, Chimera Enterprises has resurrected a shape-shifting alien race that sank with the lost continent of Lemuria eons ago: the werekin, beings born with both a human and an animal skin, able to shift between the two at will. Seventeen-year-old Seth Michael Sullivan, a werejaguar, has grown up in the Underground, hiding from the hunters that capture and enslave werekin for Chimera Enterprises. After witnessing the murder of his guardian Naomi, Seth arrives in Fairfax, Indiana, on a snowy New Year's Eve, a rare breed on the run. As he reconnects with the mother and sister who know nothing of his true identity, Seth discovers he is a key piece in Chimera's plot to conquer humankind by securing the power of the werekin Totems - and uncovers a secret in his own past that could decide the fate of his kindred.

Top-secret scientific experiments, ancient alien technology, a powerful shadow organization inside the United States military - Seth soon finds himself at the center of a brewing interspecies war. Can he trust his own flesh and blood? Will he choose to stand with humankind or with his werekin kindred - especially when the best part of being human may be Marshall Townsend, the boy next door?

## **Skin Details**

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Author : Jesse Daro

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Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Young Adult, Paranormal, Shapeshifters, Science Fiction, Fantasy, Lgbt, Gay

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## From Reader Review Skin for online ebook

### Tash says

This book is fantastic. Seriously loved it. Read the first two in the series in one day and am just reading the third. The concept, characters, story were all well thought out and draws the reader in. If you like paranormal action stories with a hint of mm romance - this is definitely the book (series) for you. I cannot recommend this book enough - i seriously could not put it down and had to immediately start the next book. The only thing that has started to annoy me with the last book is the chapters jump from different characters point of views. I really can't stand this especially since the this book and the second one is predominately in one protagonists point of view (Seth).

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### Dee Wy says

3.5 stars - This was a super interesting take on paranormal shape shifters. In this case they are werekin and they don't "shift" they "skin" into their animal form. Seth, our 17 year old narrator is werekin, specifically a werejaguar - a bad-ass big cat, though untrained.

This story is both complex and very compelling. I was fascinated with the culture, it's brutal enemies and all the humans who seem to be clueless. Being YA, Seth is in a high-school setting and has all the issues a teenager would have with friends, bullies, attraction to his friend and neighbor next door, parent and sibling issues and of course having to hide from the bad guys who want to collar and enslave him.

About the time you think you have this story mostly figured out, everything changes and gets even more complex. There are so many players in this story that it's almost impossible to keep them all straight, for me anyway. Friends become foes and foes turn into friends so fast it's hard to keep up, but the big showdown battle was worth waiting for. A happy for now ending promises more to come in later books.

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### Duncan Husky says

Rating: 4 out of 5

What an unexpected treat!

From past experiences, I'm a little gun-shy about free, self-published books. Usually they are in need of heavy editing and have a myriad of problems with characters, plot, and setting. I'm pleased to say that (almost) none of that is present in this book, and what little there is does not get in the way of an exciting read.

Daro has done a fine job of world-building here. The ramifications of historical actions are played out in a logical manner, and this makes the world very believable. My only complaint here is that some of the mythical backstory is a little mushy and unclear, but other than that I really enjoyed the setup.

The characters here are believable, and there are quite a few! I admit I sometimes got a little lost toward the

end trying to make sense of the cast. I really liked Seth, the main character, a werejaguar. The author falls a bit into the trope of one's animal influencing the human's actions and behaviors, but that's a minor quibble. As a teenager Seth is a smart-aleck know-it-all, though as the book progresses he starts to get his head in order and this makes him a much more sympathetic character. Marshall, his love interest, is a little one-dimensional but we get a pretty clear idea of what his motivations may be. The rest of the cast is a fun collection of characters, and the shifting allegiances (and sudden reveals) definitely keep the reader guessing.

The plotting here is more than a little convoluted. I suspect a professional editor might suggest reducing the twists and turns just a bit, but it is a fun ride that was anything but predictable. The mix of mundane high-school life and high-stakes life-or-death action can be a little jarring at times, though.

I think that the first chapter is worthy of mention. It's tough to bring a reader into a story from the very first words, and even tougher to throw them right into the middle of the action. The first chapter of this book is one of the best at this that I have seen and is worthy of any professionally-written novel.

Finally, I came by this book in a list of gay romances (and a recommended book at that). While it has gay characters and a budding romance, the interactions on that front are strictly G-rated. I would say that this is a great urban fantasy that happens to have gay characters. (Oddly, I've also seen it classified as Young Adult - as near as I can tell YA in this context is "Yeah, they're gay, but they don't have sex." This seems weirdly different from the mainstream definition of YA, but there ya go.)

Skin is the first of The Ark Trilogy (Skin, Blood, Bones), all of which are downloadable for free from Goodreads. I look forward to reading the rest of the books!

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### **Shan(Littleirishbookcat) says**

I don't know what to say. This book, despite the cover I don't like, was actually very good. I was paranoid starting this because it's free and hasn't been published, the last book I read like that didn't work out well. I was worried it would be awful. I have never been more glad to be wrong.

This book was so fun, not only have we a m/m romance but we also have awesome Jaguars and brave Bunnys. The characters were so awesome and I'm soooooo glad I was right about two certain characters.

I can't wait to see what happens in book two.

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### **Silver says**

I actually wanted to give the book 5 stars, because I truly enjoyed it. I was trying to get my bosses to let me take book breaks at work (kind of like their smoke breaks) just so I could read a little bit of the book and see what was going to happen next.

All the characters were really enjoyable, and I was surprised to realize that I liked them all. Usually there one character that I just can't bring myself to like for some reason. The plot was interesting, different, and I loved the style it was written in. Some of the scenes in the book made me just burst out laughing out loud.

So the only thing preventing this from having 5 stars was the fact that every once in awhile there were just small simple errors and sometimes I thought my Kindle was skipping pages because there was no marker clearly pointing out where one section would end, and another would start. One minute it would be Seth and Marshall and the next it's a completely different scene with different characters. I actually shrunk my text down just to double check everything was really okay.

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### **Jason Bradley says**

Amazing storytelling.

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### **Crystal says**

I don't normally like to read my books on a computer; I don't own a Kindle so my only option was to read this on my PC. I decided to give it a whirl, and I was not disappointed.

Jesse Daro creates a story unlike any other I've read. Her characters--forgive the cliché--seem to jump out of the pages and take hold of you as you read. I found myself caring for quite a few of the characters, all the way down to the family dog. One of my pet peeves with some writing is when characters seem to know more than they should or make decisions that don't make sense given the knowledge that they have. This is not a problem in *Skin*; the characters come across as believable people with responses that echo those that real people would probably make, mistakes and all. The emotional responses Marshall and Seth have, especially in regards to their personal interactions, tug at the heartstrings and remind me of relationships some of my friends have been in. I found myself rooting for them to make good decisions. I'll leave it to you to find out if they do.

Though the plot is incredibly complicated, it is well-crafted and creative. There are plenty of twists and turns which on occasion left me confused, even if only for a few pages. I found myself unable to take a break and ended up reading it in two sittings: once when I read the prologue and the first two chapters (I had only meant to read the prologue) and then when I sat down and read the rest of the book (also not my intention at the time). My only major complaint, really, is that there isn't a print version available. If one comes out, I will not hesitate to grab one. I would love to see more work from Daro and have already purchased *The Last Days of Israel*, which is the next book on my to-read list.

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### **Absynthe says**

Why does this book not have more reviews? It's so awesome! Bunch of original concepts, some really cool characters and fascinating, original world building.

I loved this book! Can't wait to read the next one. Why does this book not have more reviews????

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## Skye Blue ?\*~??(‘?’)~\*? says

I really enjoyed the world here, and I wonder about how it's going to progress in the next book.

I'd love a non YA book set in this world.

Wondering who is trust worthy, and who is going to betray, was enough to keep me hooked.

The Werekin's have a different background, and aren't your typical shifters.

I liked the slow progression with Seth and his mother.

Well done.

I'm not big on YA, and I do think this would work better with non YA characters. But I still enjoyed it, and will continue reading at some point.

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## Meggie says

I'm really impressed by this first book in the Ark Trilogy. **Jesse Daro** wrote and excellent work here. I liked Seth as the main protagonist. His wit, humor and intelligence is well integrated in his character. Even more, I really loved how deeply he knew that his twin J.J wasn't the enemy. I'm happy how this first part ended with Seth and J.J reunion. I liked Marshall, too. His light romance with Seth is good part of this storyline. I'll definitely read all other book in this series.

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## Bev says

Wow!! How do I begin to describe *that* exciting ride?? OK, this is the first story in a YA trilogy with no sex, plenty of bad guys [some that you thought were good...but weren't, and others that you just *knew* had to be bad...and were], **fantastic** world building combined with a thrilling race to uncover two Werekin [*like shifters...and let's not forget, this series came out before Charlie Cochet's THIRDS series*] who hold the key to finding ancient knowledge left by the Werekin people on a lost continent called Lemuria....think the lost city of Atlantis, and all that that entails.

The nasty humans, an organisation called the Chimera, work in tandem with the U.S. military, and are hunting the two teenage Werekin [our hero Seth who 'skins' into a jaguar, and a young girl who is known as Black Swan] to unlock the power of the Ark...and we also have an underground Werekin Resistance movement who are desperately trying to keep the two teenagers apart and alive. Mad scientists abound, crooked lawyers, untrustworthy politicians [nothing new there then ;)], power crazy Generals...this was such a trip!! I'm giving nothing away, already starting on book 2 and can only thank Jason Bradley for recommending this series to me. I would just point out that this trilogy IS available from Amazon Skin: A Werekin Novel, and this first story is free on KU at the moment. Enjoy!!

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### **Kristy Maitz says**

We are presented with great story plot, interesting characters, romance, drama, action and happy ending.

All in all, astonishing very cool book.

So very big recommendation from my part.

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### **Brendan says**

Really really enjoyable. Great page turner. I found myself a little sad at the end of the book, wishing that there was more... Oh wait, there is book two, "Blood." And I will be starting that as soon as I finish this review.

I had thought this was going to be another trashy m/m novel (which I do enjoy), but after a few chapters, I simply couldn't put it down. The plot was really engaging and creative. I would adore the characters Jesse Daro created. Even Captain Hook, the family dog, was dear to my heart. I felt like I was with each characters as they had to struggle with conflicts, make tough decisions, and fight for their believes. The adolescence journey of Marshall and Seth was especially heart warming.

I hope Jesse Daro keeps writing these stories, they are wonderful and inspirational.

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### **Emma Sea says**

While this isn't my book, I do think that it's well written, with some good ideas, is well-constructed, and has particularly great female secondary characters.

I skimmed from 30%, because I was interested enough to want to know what was going to happen, but the high-school setting just wasn't my cup of tea. I would rec it if you're into gay shifter YA with a strong high school/sports team relationship angle.

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### **Matthew says**

I very much thoroughly enjoyed this book. It's a great world, good pacing, etc. There were a few niggling little annoyances.

It bothered me that... the characters seemed to take their clothes with them when they shifted... without any explicit explanation. Things seemed to revolve around and rely upon teenagers far too much. The worldview made it feel like a young adult novel. There was no good reason for these high schoolers to be at the center of all the action other than that the author wanted to write about high schoolers.

But it was fast-paced, well-crafted world and pretty good suspense and action. It has gay main characters who kiss a couple of times but no real erotica. Just a young adult novel with gay main characters... which mentions, at the end, a parallel between the persecution of gays and of the weres in the story.

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