



Spellbound and Determined

Dax Varley

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Welcome to Mimi's Charms & Enchantments - a New Age shop filled with magical merchandise and colorful customers. Cam couldn't ask for a better afterschool job.

When a shady man in gray slinks in one afternoon, Cam is this close to calling 911. To her relief, he hurries away, leaving behind the nauseating odor of his cologne and a curious spell he's dropped on the floor. But this spell is not your average hocus-pocus. It's ancient, odd and promises Power Supreme - something Cam could definitely use to keep up her 3.9 grade point average.

But the spell requires more than what's stocked on Mimi's shelves. And acquiring each item will take some heavy teamwork. With the help of her best friend, Reade, and Zach, the high school's resident genius/nerd, Cam can't lose...unless the Gray man returns.

Spellbound and Determined Details

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Author : Dax Varley

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From Reader Review *Spellbound and Determined* for online ebook

Greta says

Brief Summary: Cam runs her grandma's magic shop. A creepy man enters the shop and leaves a spell for "power supreme." Cam and her friends hunt for the ingredients to complete the spell, and allude the creepy dude. Along the way Cam realizes how awesome Zach is.

*Thank you to Netgalley, the author, and the publishers for a copy of this book in exchange for a fair review.

Review: This was a very light, young YA, paranormal story. The story moves quickly, and there were times I giggled (especially whenever Reade tried to win the attention of her crush.) Since I definitely have a thing for nerdy guys, I also enjoyed Zach. I personally appreciate more suspense and romantic tension, but, still, it was an easy read and a pleasant diversion.

Recommendation: If you like young YA books involving magic and high school flirtation, then this might be for you. Similar works might include the *Clockwise* books.

My reviews at <http://www.fictionsnoop.com>

Jaymi says

Disclaimer: I received an eARC from netgalley.com.

Spellbound and Determined is a quick but fun and quirky read. The book tells the tale of high-schooler Cam and her friend Reade as they attempt to gain love and maintain their GPA with spell work. Cam works in her grandma's New Age store peddling spell components and tarot cards. Reade is a lovesick girl who would do anything to get the handsome Troy's attention. When Cam is given a spell guaranteeing "power supreme" she'll do anything to cast the spell and get what she and Reade deserves. The magical system in this book seems to fall on a more realistic pagan/Wiccan scale but there is a hint of supernatural in here.

What I liked: This was such a fun read. Reade is so dramatic and her attempts to Woo Troy over are over the top and hysterical (and the ways that they backfire on her) make the book just fun. Cam's belief that the spell will solve all her english class woes is fairly spot on and I really liked the development of Cam and Zach's relationship goes.

What I didn't like: The Grey Guy as an antagonist just didn't work to well. He is rarely there and doesn't really present a good case for being "bad". The three kids go around and gather all these ingredients for the spell and then only after it comes together does the "bad guy" appear out of nowhere and just attempt to get what "he" deserved. It just seemed a bit... um...fake. The story was very light on plot and tension; with Reade and her desire for Troy being the only things that give the reader a push to keep reading. Varley also left me wondering why Cam lived with her grandma, and what happened to her family, and why magic in this book seems real but... isn't.

Bottom Line: if you like light-YA books that make you laugh at the folly of dating and reliving the desires

for a straight A grade point average then *Spellbound and Determined* is for you. It's a quick, fun, rainy day read that will pass the time away. I don't know if Varley plans on making this a series but I do hope that we're treated to more of Cam, Reade, and Zach in the future.

Jo Anne says

The author, Dax Varley, has created a witty and fun, teen adventure that includes plenty of ingenuity, suspense and excitement.

Cam's a smart girl, except when it comes to Julius Caesar, which she just doesn't get. She works at her gran's metaphysical shop, Mimi's Charms & Enchantments, where you can "Come in for a Spell."

When a strange (and scary) guy does come in, then drops an old parchment on the way out of the store, Cam realizes it's a recipe for "Power Supreme." Perfect thing to help her with Shakespeare. So the quest is on.

She enlists her best friend, Reade, to help with the project. Reade's willing, as long as she doesn't chip a nail. Then nerdy Zach joins them to help find the weird collection of items needed for the spell. But Zach proves to be much more than your basic geek. I LOVE this guy.

This story has plenty of laugh-out-loud moments. It's filled with humor and adventure, with a very satisfying conclusion. Enjoy!

Dana says

This is a very cute, fun, lighthearted YA paranormal romance. After a strange man comes into Cam's grandmother Mimi's new age magic shop, she finds that he has dropped an ancient spell for power supreme. Deciding that power supreme would help her high school GPA, Cam enlists the help of her best friend, Reade, and Zach, the smartest boy in school to find the bizarre ingredients needed for the spell. As Reade pursues wacky ways to get the new boy Troy to fall in love with her and magic shop customers buy items to try to make things go the way they want, Cam studies Shakespeare with Zach and Mimi finds a love interest who is a fantastic cook. Meanwhile, the strange man who dropped the spell seems to be following Cam and her friends as they procure the spell's ingredients. I received this book free to review from Netgalley and I enjoyed it and highly recommend it.

Jaylia3 says

While Cam is minding her grandmother's New Age magic shop, a suspicious looking man accidentally drops an ancient spell for Power Supreme on the floor. Well, who could resist that? Not Cam and her boy-crazy best friend Reade. With the help of the ever accommodating Zack, their high school's resident nerd genius, they embark on a merry mission to collect all the obscure, sometimes gross, ingredients the spell requires.

Snappy dialogue, likable characters, light suspense, a touch of romance, and a sitcom-funny plot make *Spellbound and Determined* a fast, fun read. As an added bonus, Zach supplies a steady stream of

encyclopedic information on any number of topics, and he has relevant quotes from Julius Caesar for just about every occasion.

Cocktails and Books says

Immediately I did not connect with the main character or plot. The language, behavior didn't ring true and felt like what the author thought someone in high school would say or how they would act.

Cam has the potential to be very sympathetic. However, the supporting characters steal the show, especially, Reade, the best friend. She is interesting and funny. Unfortunately, the book centers on Cam. When reading I never got lost in this story. Instead it felt like I was being told the story and Cam never developed from being a one dimensional teenager into a real character. As a result, I wasn't interested in what happened to her or with how the plot progressed.

I was never sure what Cam's reasoning was. Although she's a teenager she has to have a reason for taking the actions she does and most of her actions felt random instead of like an intricate part of the plot. As a result, the book fell apart for me. Instead of enjoying a great story I kept trying to figure out what the story was about. It became frustrating and took a lot of effort to read.

Reviewed by Karon for Cocktails and Books

Shawna The Crazy Bookseller says

This was a really cute story and I felt the teens in it acted like teens do. Example - calling your friend a butt smurf. I had some laughs reading the interactions of the main character and her grandmother.

My only problem was the ending. It just ended shortly and felt rushed. Also it left me with many questions. My rating will change if I know there is a second book coming out.

--Revision 10/13/13--

After talking to the author at a book signing I had set up I found out that there is going to be another book. So I am a book addict of my word and said I would change my rating if there was going to be a continuation of Cam, Reade, and Zachs' story. Now knowing there story is not over I'm a happy reader.

So if you want a story about a group of teens on a journey, or scavenger hunt, filled with a mystery of the Gray man and humor then you need to read this book. My favorite part that had me laughing hard was their trip to the zoo. That's all I'm saying because I hate giving anything away.

Ceecee says

Working in a New Age shop has its perks!

Cam's life takes an exciting turn when an unsettling customer drops an ancient spell on the floor while

exiting the store.

Although finding the items she needs to work the spell requires the help of her best friend, Reade, and her newest friend, Zach, she's more than happy to share the rewards. With a little teamwork, ingenuity, and patience they work their way down the list.

Mischief, romance, and comedy follow the trio as they embark on an adventure to find all of the ingredients necessary for Power Supreme.

I thought this book was well written, interesting, and easy to follow. There was never a dull moment and I thoroughly enjoyed the comical aspect. There was a sweet note of romance and allure in unexpected places. The ending brought everything together beautifully.

Angela Oliver says

I really enjoyed this fun, quick read. It is a "Scavenger hunt" style story with an entertaining plot; a quick-thinking, witty protagonist; a cute geeky boy; a somewhat crazed best friend and an adorable ferret. Whilst quite a lot of time was spent on High School Hi-jinks (specifically in relation to best friend Reade's foolish crush on the temperamental, and not particularly smart, Troy), the exploits that these three must undertake to collect the ingredients for their magic spell are rather fun. The "grey guy" antagonist could be better developed, he did not radiate particular menace to me, but overall it proved to be easy to pick up, difficult to put down, and had a cute ending (and an adorable ferret).

Thanks to eXcessica and Netgalley for the eARC.

Ceecee says

Working in a New Age shop has its perks!

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I received this in exchange for an honest review.

K.C. Sprayberry says

Cam Harper is a great student, but she's have problems with Julius Cesar. She's also deeply into New Age. With friends, Reade and Zach, Cam decides to go after Power Supreme, a spell that promises a lot, but also demands that they collect some unusual things under strange conditions. On top of all this, the mysterious Gray Guy keeps creeping her out.

Dax Varley has a great paced novel. The reader is hooked from the beginning, unable to stop turning the pages to discover if these teens will reach their goals. The lingo and angst were all what one expects of teens, right down to the desperate boyfriend chase. I highly recommend this novel to anyone looking for a quirky story about enduring friendships. And I'm waiting with baited breath for a sequel!

?????????? says

★★★★Spellbound and Determined by Dax Varley

I won this R2R through LibraryThing Members Giveaway in exchange for my honest review.

Come in for a spell. This is a cute book.

Cam has the perfect job. She works at Mimi's Charms and Enchantments. She works with Mimi. They are both very colorful characters, most of the time, literally.

When a stranger drops a spell as he hurries out of the store, she learns some very useful information. The spell is very old and it is for Power Supreme. This is just what she needs, since her and Julius Caesar aren't really seeing eye to eye. Caesar could be the downfall to her English Lit class and 3.9 GPA.

Her and her friends go out in search for the remaining stuff, needed for the spell. Teamwork is needed to complete the spell, but with this goofballs it may take a while to collect it all.

The book was funny. They are all a bunch of 'smarty pants' like to poke fun at each other and mess around. I was laughing through most of this book. I know my daughter will love it in a few years, when she's a bit older.

Thanks to the author for this witty group of paranorms.

Shilo Quetchenbach says

* disclaimer: I received a free copy of this ebook from member giveaways on librarything*

I really liked this book. I love YA sci fi/fantasy in general. This one was better than many I've checked out of my library recently. The characters were great. Mimi is fantastic. And her hair! Oh, I love her hair.

A solid start happily didn't let me down - this book was a solid 4 stars all the way through. the main character is funny and snarky. her friend Reade is a fantastic bubbly airhead foil. zach is a swoonworthy geeky charming boyfriend. the spell shop is great. the gray man is appropriately creepy.

good high school friends on a quest (for the ingredients to a spell for supreme power). perfection.

Teresa says

4 stars

Got this as an e-arc from Netgalley for an honest review.

I was surprised by how funny this book is, I actually laughed out loud more than once. The three main characters, Cam (Cameron), Reade, and Zach are engaging, fairly interesting and genuinely likeable. The plot is entertaining and while it does fall prey to some of the standard YA cliché's it avoids most of the more annoying ones. (No love triangles, no instant-love and the bad boy (jerk) does not get the girl).

I found only a few flaws worth mentioning. The biggest one is the ending, it seems abrupt and almost anti-climatic, there needed to be an epilogue. The story doesn't feel finished to me. Which is fine if there is to be a sequel but there is nothing indicating a second book. I got invested in the characters and feel rather cheated out of a proper ending. Which is the main reason it got 4 stars instead of 5.

All in all this is a quick, interesting story that is both funny and well written. It is suitable for ages 12 and up. I look forward to reading more Dax Varley.

Joan Watson Watson says

Spellbound and Determined Dax Varley I was gifted this book

What better after school job could a girl have? Cam works in her grandmother's magic shop. She's a person who "can nap and still make A's." When a scary stranger asks her if she believes in magic, she is mystified. When she sees him on occasions later, she becomes suspicious.

Cam comes to realize that all the oils, tarot cards, and lucky rabbits' feet of the shop don't hold a candle, even a magic candle, to the potions Grandmother, Mimi, mixes in her dark closet. Later Mimi will use them to host her Celestial Sisterhood of the Serpent for Tarot readings.

Mimi's charms and Enchantments Shop capture the excitement of many of Cam's teen-age friends. Reade thinks if she can use enough lotions, powders, shampoos and scented oils, Troy will fall in love with her. After all, secret spells win love, gain money or create luck. Don't they?

Cam finds a carelessly dropped spell recipe and is tempted to use it to lure Zach's interest away from Reade. She needs Reade's help to gather all the ingredients that will create Super Supreme Power. Their first

assignment: steal a dead guy's dirt from the cemetery. But when asked for a spell to cause someone to break her arm, she says that's a hex and she doesn't do negative magic.

Author Dax Varley even takes the reader to high school where we are plopped down in a stampede of light strobes and a stretcher. Who's on that stretcher? Teenage speculation invents a knife fight? An overdose? A toilet bomb? What has Reade done intending to make Troy lovesick, but not peanut intolerant.

The author has no doubt spent hours in dozens of voodoo magic shops. We hear about Coltsfoot, mistletoe, Cat's Claw, voodoo dolls. She concludes that magic IS what you make it. Sit for a spell and enjoy the cute dialogue.

JoAn Watson Martin
