



Darkest Fear

Cate Tiernan

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Vivi's animal instincts are her legacy—and maybe her downfall—in this start to a romantic fantasy series that will appeal to fans of *The Nine Lives of Chloe King*.

Vivi has known the truth about her family—and herself—since she was thirteen. But that doesn't mean she's accepted it. Being Haguari isn't something she feels she'll ever accept. How can she feel like anything but a freak knowing that it's in her genes to turn into a jaguar?

Now eighteen, Vivi's ready to break away from the traditions of her heritage. But all of that changes with the shocking, devastating deaths of her parents and the mysteries left behind. Vivi discovers family she never even knew she had, and a life open with possibility. New friends, new loyalties, and even romance all lay ahead—but so do dangers unlike anything Vivi ever could have imagined.

Darkest Fear Details

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Author : Cate Tiernan

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From Reader Review Darkest Fear for online ebook

Giselle says

From lack of excitement to a protagonist I despised to a very bizarre romantic arc, I was happy to be done with this one. To paint a quick picture: the only interesting part of this book is in the blurb.

Darkest Fear starts with an intriguing Jaguar Shape-shifting lore that, for the most part, is well crafted. The narrative when in Jaguar form is particularly clever. I was certain it was the promising start of an impressive series, especially when only a few chapters in, something monumental happens. Something ominous that proposes an epic mystery to come. However, once this scene passes we get a whole lot of mundane happenings, from Vivi finding a job, to her day to day life, to detailed scenes of her baking various things. How positively dull! Perhaps its purpose was to make us bond with the characters. Unfortunately none of them were made to be compelling.

For one, with such a large secondary cast, these characters needed more personality and distinctive voices to avoid blending together. For another, Vivi herself is not very likeable. She's always hated the Jaguar part of herself; never learning about or accepting her world, basically hoping that by ignoring it it would go away. While this is understandable - I would be freaked out too if I learned I could grow fur - as the story progresses, her constant rejection, even disgust, of it all became too much. For instance, she would get into a dire situation due to her shifting ineptitude, this would push her to decide it was time to learn and finally accept that side of her, only to chicken out and be back at step one. It was very frustrating. There are also other quirks like how she repeatedly commented on her boss's hotness (and I mean, punch-book-in-its-book-mouth excessive), or how she would often say "gosh" - urgh! Obviously I never connected with her in any way.

As for the romance. I don't even understand the point of it being in the book for how bizarre and short of a spotlight it got. In a few words, she got a couple of offers for sex and that was that. No passion, no chemistry, no nothing. It felt incredibly random. The only responses it got from me were cocked eyebrows and flared nostrils. It was very attractive-making.

Now, I have a big pet peeve when it comes to shape shifters and realistic clothing... repercussions. This book did well with shredded clothes and nakedness, except for that one time. One out of the 5+ times she shifted, when it was, of course, hugely inconvenient for her to appear naked, her clothes were magically waiting for her in the bushes unscathed. I read this twice to make sure I didn't miss her removing her clothes beforehand, but the shift was unexpected and unplanned. I'm honestly hoping this is just an editing slip-up that will be fixed in the final copy because it deserves a removal of a star for that alone.

I'm always looking for the next epic paranormal series, and I really had hoped this one would fit the bill so it's unfortunate that it failed to impress me to such degree. In the end, I was just very, *very* fed up. Also, we get no answers on anything! None! Here's to hoping you have better luck with it!

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An advance copy was provided by the publisher for review.

For more of my reviews, visit my blog at Xpresso Reads

Lauren says

2.5 stars

Set-up

Vivi's parents told her the big family secret when she turned thirteen: she's descended from a long line of shape shifters called Haguari and can turn into a Jaguar. Instead of being thrilled about this news, Vivi was horrified, and has rejected everything about that nature since the day she found out about it. Why can't she just be normal? But when a tragedy strikes her family, Vivi is forced to confront who she is and reexamine everything she's denied about herself.

Thoughts

I became a huge Cate Tiernan fan this summer, after I read and adored her *Immortal Beloved* series. They feature a heroine whom I fell for from the first page, even though she was extremely unlikable. I also enjoyed that it presented an unique take on immortality and the Paranormal Romance genre. Of course, I was hoping for a repeat of that in *Darkest Fear*. Unfortunately, though I picked up flavors of why I love Tiernan's writing, as a whole this book didn't work for me.

Darkest Fear begins as a typical PNR in many ways. A tragedy leaves Vivi isolated and alone, without her family support. She has a secret she can't tell anyone, and feels lost and alone, especially because she all of a sudden has a lot of questions about her family and can't access them - or so she says. Because Vivi has always refused to discover more about her nature, she's lacking vital information about herself and her people. But instead of asking an extended family member questions, she chooses to do everything on her own. I got increasingly annoyed with Vivi for this. I just didn't buy Vivi's excuses for why asking her aunt questions, even really general ones, was a bad idea.

Throughout this entire story, Vivi would make a tiny bit of progress in coming to terms with her Haguari nature, but then she'd backtrack again. This lead to long inner monologues where she'd struggle and beat herself up about how she felt. While I think Vivi's feelings and concerns were valid (for a time), they dragged on to long. Even after she joins a community of people of her kind, it still takes her forever to come to terms with who she is and that wore on me so much. I got to the point where I didn't understand her perspective anymore and got so fed up with her stubbornness, that I could no longer sympathize with her.

Part of the reason I struggled to understand Vivi, is because I was ready to embrace her animal nature early in the book. In fact, one of my favorite aspects of *Darkest Fear* was whenever Vivi was a Jaguar. I enjoyed how her perspective changed in that form, and also how her human and animal natures came together. I wanted her to explore the bounds of her ability. Although I'm assuming this will come with time, it is probably one reason why I struggled so much with Vivi's rejection of it. It was difficult for me to handle her very slow growth and path to self awareness. By the end of the book she's really getting there, but I'm worried she'll just backtrack again. While there is an overarching mystery that comes out, it is only focused on briefly in spurts, and the rest of the story is about Vivi's daily struggle to come to terms with herself. At the end of the story there is finally some action and forward direction, but all of a sudden everything ends, right in the middle of the (finally) exciting momentum.

Despite all my negative feelings about this book, I did manage to find elements that I liked. Vivi graduates from high school at the very beginning of the story and I like that it has more of a New Adult, discovering your path, type feel to it, than navigating high school. This book features a mix of cultures, races, genders in a community living situation, which I enjoyed (this is also classic Tiernan). I love the house

where Vivi lives in New Orleans and especially her cousin Mateo and his girlfriend Aly. *Darkest Fear* has some fantastic high stress, action sequences in it, all involving jaguars. It also features a few moments of nice romantic tension and swoon, but unfortunately those sections of the plot were only bright bursts in an overall slow moving story. Even though I have a few theories about Vivi's love interest by the end, we still know next to nothing about him, which was quite frustrating. Yes, despite my better judgment, I am apparently still drawn to these mysterious boys.

Even though this review is mostly negative, I'm still curious about the next book in the series. Or at least, I am still a big fan of Cate Tiernan and hope that this story gets exponentially stronger in book two. I'm crossing my fingers, but not holding my breath.

Love Triangle Factor: None

Cliffhanger Scale: Medium - no immediate danger, but story felt unfinished. However, I was anticipating this, as it's standard Tiernan.

Find this and other reviews on my blog Love is not a triangle

Sarah Abigail says

Cheers cate, fucking cheers!! Once again..an awesome read!

Ive missed cate's writing style so much.

It felt so good and familiar.

Im excited for these series, and I cant wait to see what vivi has in store for us! ;)

And by the way, I want to be a haguara too u know.

like holy shit how freeking mental! Its way to awesome..

I LOVE U CATE TIERNAN!!!!!!♥♥♥

Haley says

I don't know what this is but if she writes it I will read it!

11/14/13

Ornella (Nyx) says

1.5 Stars

How do I even begin this review...It's going to be more of a rant because put simply this book was a mess. I think the only thing going for it was the writing style which made it incredibly easy to actually keep reading because I honestly don't know how I even finished.

The characters ... most of the secondary characters were actually pretty great and about half of them were LGBT couples which was both nice, but at the same time it felt like too much, as if she were compensating for the lack of LGBT characters in every other book. It just felt like she was trying too hard in that aspect. As for the main character Vivi, she can be described in one word: pathetic.

Look I understand she was there when her parents were murdered, but for her to go into hysterics like she did and then crying at the drop of a button every 5 mins for the next few months seemed a bit excessive? Maybe I'm being a cold hearted bitch? I don't know, but I just didn't like her. She was also TSTL. Her parents get murdered and she doesn't start even to think about the implications 'till a month after someone tried to breakin...I mean seriously? Her dad gets his heart ripped out and she doesn't question any of this till a whole month later. I just don't get it.

Then there is her overall attitude. She gets told she is a jaguar shapeshifter at 13 and instead of thinking it's awesome, she freaks out. Fine, whatever, I can maybe see that happening. Her parents didn't really come across as pushing it in your face types, they would occasionally try to get her to at least get interested in her heritage, which I think is perfectly normal. So what does she do? The exact opposite of whatever they say, and I mean that about everything. They want her to attend college somewhere close? She wants Seattle (They live in South Florida). Her mom wants her to dress nicely. She turns into a slob. So on and so forth. You would also think that someone who is so opposed to being a shapeshifter will at least want to know enough to you know, not change right? Wrong! This girl is a Coward with a capital C. Oh, and everyone tells her she is hot, but she doesn't believe it even though she knows she looks exactly like her mom and she thought her mom was a hottie ...

TL;DR - I didn't like Vivi.

Let's talk about the plot, or lack thereof. First, 5% her parents die. 50% They find out other shapeshifters have died with a missing heart. Last 5% 2 of their friends go missing and while they go on a rescue mission another 2 get captured, Vivi somehow rescues them and the perpetrators might have died in a car chase. End of book. That was it. There was not even the slightest mention as to why someone might want live hearts, some kind of ritual maybe, for what purpose is anyone's guess. It was ridiculous.

Oh and the romance? Stupid. It's obvious the guy is a shapeshifter as well, but does she at least try having some kind of conversation where she drops hints to get a confirmation that he is a shapeshifter? No. Instead, she bitches and whines that they keep having these steamy makeout sessions, but he won't/can't date her.

This was a train wreck of a book, but I somehow managed to finish it, so it has that going for it at least and that's pretty much it.

Katie Walton says

A few minutes ago I finished reading The Darkest Fear by Cate Tiernan and after desperately trying to make more pages appear by flicking my thumb across my iPhone I sat back and had two intense thoughts that I wish to share with the world right now:

1. That was an awesome book; I need more.
2. I need more; how can it possibly have ended so soon.

Basically... and I can't iterate this point strongly enough... I need more. Do you understand me??? More!

There are aspects of this book that bridge the gap between young adult and new adult.

Who will like this book??

Fans of Rachel Vincent's Stray, Jennifer Lynn Barnes' Raised by Wolves, Shiver by Maggie Stiefvater or Carrie Vaughn's Kitty series. Tiernan is bringing back shape-shifters and I may not have impressed this upon you... but I love it and I need more.

Also, special thanks to Simon Pulse for the advance copy... of course this means I'll have to wait almost twice as long for the sequel.

Emily Anne says

I tried... however Darkest Fear just wasn't what I had hoped :(

Paige (Illegal in 3 Countries) says

See more of my reviews on The YA Kitten! My copy was an eARC I received from the publisher via Edelweiss.

The sole reason I wanted Darkest Fear can be summed up in one word: jaguars. I'm a huuuuuge fan of the admittedly sucktacular American football team the Jacksonville Jaguars, so once I heard about this novel and the jaguar people in it, I knew I needed it. This is poor methodology for picking out books and I don't recommend it, but you know what? It worked this time. Darkest Fear is a great start to a new series and something YA readers--maybe even NA readers--will find refreshing.

Honestly, Darkest Fear is less YA, more NA, but not because of anything steamy. The romantic elements are actually very low-key, limited to two guys who would like to get in bed with Vivi and one of those guys getting a swoony kissing scene or two with her. It's NA as it should be: the story of someone figuring out their life when high school ended so recently. Vivi's parents are murdered on her eighteenth birthday and she moves from Florida to New Orleans so she can find some long-lost family, figure stuff out, and blaze her own trail. It just so happens that the whole she's-a-jaguar-person thing is among the stuff she has to figure out.

Readers get to know Vivi and her newfound family very well over the course of the book, but it can get a little boring at times. The cast gets a little too large to keep track of outside the main characters and there's less jaguaring, more job-searching, working, and everyday stuff at times. The slow pacing is usually forgivable since Vivi's resistance to her own nature is why there's not much jaguaring on her end. If I wanted to complain about that, I'd be saying I want Vivi to not be who she is and that's nothing close to what I want. Vivi as she is in this novel is a great main character and she's only going to get better!

So for the most part, Vivi's living her life as she comes to accept her heritage among one a cast with diverse sexual orientations and racial/ethnic identities will satisfy. Darkest Fear's only major issue is how it's too much set-up and feels incomplete. So many conflicts are introduced and other than Vivi's resistance to her nature, not a single one is resolved. This sounds like a strange complaint for the first book in a series, but when you turn the last page in a book and feel like there are at least three chapters missing to help resolve,

there's something wrong.

The second book is definitely close to the top of my 2015 TBR now. The wait will be long, but I can finally give Tiernan's highly-praised Immortal Beloved books in the meantime! I'd definitely recommend this to anyone who would like a YA novel where the paranormal element isn't overpowering or an NA novel that isn't a contemporary romance with questionable love interests--or someone who wants something that borders on both. Darkest Fear is just that much of an enjoyable, versatile read.

Heather *Awkward Queen and Unicorn Twin* says

This book had tons of problems. The writing was crap, there were too many characters, and the story seemed all over the place. I get that books end on cliffhangers sometimes (well, a lot), but this book wasn't even a complete story. And the cliffhanger was dumb. Oh, and Vivi's thoughts while she was a jaguar? I couldn't even read those. Those passages were SO AWFUL—uninteresting and poorly written.

I've enjoyed Tiernan's other work, but I definitely won't continue with this series.

Emily says

Not sure how to rate this one. Is it really supposed to end that way? That was the most abrupt ending ever.

Jenny says

Darkest Fear is a tale that begs lovers of paranormal stories to pick it up, promising a closer look at a lesser-known shifter than the werewolves who are so prevalent in supernatural fiction, and while the jaguar-shifter element holds us fascinated throughout, this first installment feels more like a novel-length prequel rather than the opening book in the series. We're introduced to a variety of different plot threads—not so many as to be frustrating luckily, just enough to give the story a well-rounded feel—but unfortunately not a one of them finds resolution before the end. Whenever we pick up book one of a series, we know not all our questions will be answered by the time we reach the last page, but with Darkest Fear we're like runners warming up for a big race, working our way up to the starting line fully prepared to make swift progress toward our ultimate destination, but then the gun never even goes off and we're instead left behind the line wondering what happened...

Full review available at: <http://supernaturalsnark.blogspot.com...>

Renee B. says

I think we've established that I will read anything she writes, provided I can get my hands on them. Lol

Stuti (Turmeric isn't your friend. It will fly your ship says

3.5

Overall, the book is quite good, almost contemporary NA-and yes, this is exactly what I thought NA should be like-the MC faces the same struggles a new adult would, getting out of school, facing the world, fitting in, finding her place, being overwhelmed, mending her childish ways, old friends growing apart, except, to some ahem... extraordinary capacities. So yeah, there are jaguars and family history and murders to be dealt with, but for the most part, her fears and insecurities are endemic to people almost grown up. However, due to all this, there was quite a lull in the book, especially if one is expecting a paranormal/fantasy story.

Yet with that ending, I'm so hooked.

Luke says

I loved this book. Like I loved all other books by Cate Tiernan.

I Have to say it is more undefined than Cate's previous novels; the direction in which the story is going is unclear. This makes the storyline unfold a bit harphazardly and sometimes it seems like the pieces aren't comming together very well. On the other hand, it does make the story more interesting and held my attention.

Other than this, I loved Cate's writing-style. This particulary makes me love all her books so much, regardless of the topic. She can describe situations like you've been there yourself. Also, she is very good at conjuring up particular feelings.

I'm very exite for the next book!

Ben Alderson says

OMG THIS BOOK WAS FREAKING AMAZING!! I LOVE SHAPE SHIFTERS!!
