



The Silver Moon Elm

MaryJanice Davidson , Anthony Alongi

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Scaly skin, family fights...it's tough being a teenage dragon.

Jennifer was just starting to get comfortable in her own skin, scaly as it is. She should have known that, as half-werdragon, half-beaststalker, things don't stay normal for too long...

Following through on a promise made to her mother, Jennifer agrees to go to Crescent Valley, where Jennifer and her father find refuge with other weredragons, and where they meet Xavier Longtail. Xavier, a powerful elder dragon, doesn't believe in peaceful co-existence, and after he stirs up trouble in her family, Jennifer wonders if he isn't right. She's about to go nuts with all the fighting, when her ex, Skip, comes to her rescue and whisks her off to the movies, where she falls asleep...

Waking up, Jennifer finds her hometown overrun by weachnids, dangerous half-werewolves, half-spiders. Weredragons are long extinct...except for Jennifer, of course, and the ominous Xavier Longtail, and it's up to them to return the universe to normal. Can they trust each other enough to pull it off-or are they the last of a dying breed?

The Silver Moon Elm Details

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Monkey of Doom says

This book is definitely the weakest of the three Jennifer Scales books. The concept of an alternate universe is very interesting, but Skip went from being a semi-arrogant teenage boy to a stubborn, selfish little prat who can't think of anyone but himself. And although swear words in books don't bother me, (other books are abound with them) then context made it seem false. To me, it seemed like the authors were attempting to make Jennifer "grow up" by adding f-bombs here and there. This made her character inconsistent from the other books.

Hopefully the authors will either improve, or have a reason for why Skip is such an annoying selfish pig.

Diana says

Trying to bring together dragons, werachnids and beaststalkers, Jennifer Scales is frustrated with old prejudices. When she wakes up in a world where werachnids rule supreme and the dragons are nearly extinct, she must discover the source of the enchantment and break it in order to get things back to normal.

The characterizations of Jennifer's parents continue to be problematic, with both of them coming off as irrational, overly emotional, and at times cowardly. The "what if the arachnids won" situation was interesting, but not particularly compelling, and much of the plot seems cobbled together. It was an interesting book, but not worth a second read.

Mike Kalmbach says

This book will probably appeal to people who enjoy a mix of modern-day fantasy, dragons, spiders, and time travel.

I had a hard time getting into this one. Though I read a lot of fantasy, this is my first exposure to were-dragons, werachnids, and beast-stalkers, with several mixes involved (like the half were-dragon/half beast-stalker main character, Jennifer Scales). I later realized that this was the third book in the series, but it stands alone pretty well. Maybe some of the above concerns would have been addressed by reading the earlier books.

After overcoming my initial reaction, I settled into the story and enjoyed the ride. I really enjoyed how the author first separated Jennifer from all of her friends and family, forcing Jennifer to rely on her own cunning to solve the problems in the story. The time travel aspect was interesting from the transformation standpoint- it was fun to see how the world changed in this aspect. I thought the ending was perhaps a little too tidy for me, but overall it's a solid read for young adult fantasy fans.

Sarah Crawford says

Jennifer Scales is a weredragon, changing into one every crescent moon, then changing back to a human.

The book starts with her taking a trip to Crescent Valley. She's bringing along a beaststalker and a wereachnid, both of which are usually enemies of weredragons.

She's there with Susan (pure human); Catherine (weredragon); Eddie (beaststalker) and Skip (wereachnid). The visit doesn't go well.

Xavier Longtail is another dragon. His daughter's father was killed by Jennifer's mother when she was a beaststalker. Jennifer, her father and mother go to meet these two and the meeting doesn't go well at all. Apparently Jennifer's mother did some really awful things when she was a beaststalker.

Her mother gets incredibly angry at her father, viciously so. Both parents have a lot of dark secrets they have been keeping from her.

Worse yet, she ends up in a revised version of history, caused by the wereachnids, where her parents don't exist.

Skip wants her to just let everything be as it is. It turns out (of course) that Skip is a traitor, and Jennifer is forced to flee for her life. She meets one surviving dragon, Xavier Longtail.

Evangelia, her evil sister, is going to have to be one of those helping her. Xavier is killed by a beaststalker, accidentally, but Jennifer finds a group of them who agree to help her.

The war is then on, but with Jennifer fighting under a handicap-she has promised to try and not kill anyone. In a war, that's not the best of advice.

The group storms the school, engaging in a major battle with loads of wereachnids. They storm the observatory, and encounter a number of surprises inside. They have to survive those, and then find a way to try and restore the earth to normal and, if they can accomplish those feats, find a way to prevent the same thing from happening by bringing age-old enemies together and achieve some form of understanding amongst them.

My own comments. Maybe I made a mistake by reading the first and third book (I couldn't get the second one), but I am somewhat confused by the direction change of the books. The first book was fairly believable, given the assumption that the were-creatures were some form of mutation or something. The third book, though, has all-out sorcery being used, so the story has changed from an unlikely but still somewhat believable possibility to a standard sorcery story.

It also makes the assumption that not one single one of the flying dragons was ever spotted by anyone with a camcorder, nor spotted by a pilot or showed up on radar. In this day of numerous spy satellites and on-line places invading people's privacy and having photos of their cities and even their own houses, it's virtually unbelievable that this arrange of were-creatures would go totally unseen.

Finally, I know why the book's ending requires Jennifer to forswear killing anyone in the final battle, but, realistically, if you are going to fight an all-out war, a final last-ditch effort against a more numerous foe that is gung-ho to kill all of your kind, promising to not kill anyone is an utterly ridiculous position to take. It works for the ending needed for the book, but it casts yet another attack on the believability of the events in the book.

Thus, although the story is interesting, some of the events are utterly beyond any form of logic, and the shift from possible reality to fantasy is confusing.

Barb says

When I bought this I didn't realize it was the third book in a series. And also that this is a book about teenagers – even though they are interesting dragon, spider, beast-stalker teenagers – they still are only 15 years old and that is who the book is written for. I read 20 pages and had to give up – just too `teenagery` for me.

Yessenia Andaverde says

The first half of the book was upsetting to read: she was making mistake by mistake and just digging the whole deeper.

Also, the otherworld thing was brought out of the blue and seemed rushed and unbelievable.

It got better when she stopped looking for "allies", which to this point has only managed to get her in the worst situation possible, and started to act.

From this point on, it was all action, adventure, surprises and a bit of teenage drama (luckily not much, as before).

All in all, the book only got better as I kept reading, though the 'hard' parts were not as emotional as it deserved, I felt.

However, it was a good story, and I plan to read at least one more book of this series.

Theresa says

Boy. Talk about dysfunctional families. The Scales are awful. How did they manage to get together in the first place? I'm not sure if I can take much more of this snarkiness. Jennifer is a rude, egotistical loudmouth, her mom is a crazy bitch and the dad is a wimp. In fact most of the males in this are wimps.

The storyline, while kind of interesting, doesn't make up for the characters dialog and actions. I felt like quitting the story halfway through, but slogged on to see what happens. End of series for me.

Fave Scenes: Meteor diving, calling the fire hornets, and the silver moon elm.

April says

Things go from bad to worse, when Jennifer takes her friends with her to Crescent Valley and they are not welcomed by the Weredragons, her mother fights with her father, and then Jennifer finds out something about her father that has her so angry! She ends up sneaking out with Skip for ice cream, falls asleep.....when she wakes up, she finds that things are not the same...in fact they are very, very different!

Jennifer struggles through this reality, making new friends, finding many enemies and looking for a way to change things back to the way they were.

I like that Jennifer tried to be strong and find a way to fix things, but she was still a 15 year old and acted like it!

I really liked this book, very exciting and fast paced. This series has 3 more books, but I think I will stop here as I liked how things wrapped up. There certainly could be more, and is, but I am quite satisfied with the trilogy.

Stacey says

I loved the first two installments in the Jennifer Scales series. I was eager to read this one and excited to find that it seemed a little longer than the previous two. In "The Silver Moon Elm", Jennifer is trying to encourage alliances between the dragons and the beaststalkers. She finds out some things in her parents' past that aren't pleasant and could affect some of her current relationships. Suddenly the world as she knows it has been changed. Jennifer and Skip find themselves in an alternative universe where the Arachnids have destroyed nearly every dragon and beaststalker. Jennifer learns that most of her family and friends are dead and others never existed. She finds an unlikely ally in Xavier Longtail, the elder dragon who never seemed to find much redeemable in Jennifer before. But this alternative universe Xavier is eager to meet the Ancient Furnace and is more than happy to join her on a quest to reclaim the world as they knew it. While I enjoyed the relationship between Jennifer and Xavier, and also enjoyed seeing some regular characters in this odd universe, I felt like this volume was just missing something. The story just felt off, different from the other Jennifer Scales books. From the get go you know that this can't really be the end of Jennifer's parents...you know basically how the story will end. I'm not sure Jennifer got anything from this story that will make any difference in the following stories. For all the different sides to people the Jennifer gets a glimpse of, it doesn't really change anything. "Silver Moon Elm" floats from page to page in a myriad of different tones. There are humorous scenes, sad scenes, angry scenes...even tragic scenes, in a sense. Yet overall, this book really didn't deliver. I found it took far too long to read, which in my way of thinking, means that the story isn't nearly interesting enough. I think if the casual reader was to read this series and skip book 3, they wouldn't miss anything of importance. I am going to read book 4 when it comes out soon, but I do hope it will be stronger than this one.

Andrea says

I'm still not sure how I feel about these books. The main character, Jennifer, just seems so mean at times and I can't really relate to her. Not that I can relate to a weredragon or anything, but even when I was in the middle of my teenage angst years, I don't remember being that mean. And the whole book is just too sci-fi for me.

Angela Cutrell says

I have such mixed feelings on this book. The great parts are great and the awful parts are awful, and there really isn't anything left in-between.

The Good - As the synopsis suggests, this book has a whole Back to the Future idea with Jennifer getting pulled into a rewritten universe. Between the time she goes back to Crescent Valley in the new world and the time they get ready to lead their final assault, this book is great. The twisted details in this world and all the amazing world building are really cool. The Sonakshi and Seraphina parts are incredible. The imagery and mythology are fantastic and I really wish the author was focusing on stuff like this as the main plot, instead of as a rushed chapter to make way for all the weird soap opera bullshit this series makes the focus.

The Bad - As I didn't like in the last book, soap opera plots abound and it all culminates in the beginning with Jennifer's parents injuring/endangering themselves and their own daughter. I found it very hard to like her parents like I did after the first book when every other page they're admitting to some ridiculous secret or screaming at each other and throwing a fit, usually involving literally throwing things. I couldn't even take them seriously as adults anymore, much less fit parents. Also, that ending, it's just about as anticlimactic and a cop out of an ending as I have ever seen. (view spoiler)

The Stupid - (view spoiler)

THAT COVER. I find it funny that this cover is almost identical to the cover of Stray, by Rachel Vincent. But that is a book about a badass and rebellious shifter and the cover, while really just trying to sell the sex in that series, is fitting. This book could not have a dumber cover. This book is about an alternate universe, with beautiful sea creatures and god-like snakes and a magnificent tree (which the title is based on, btw) and a horrifying world filled with spiders where the protagonist must fight to save her entire species. But what's the cover? Is it any of those things that would convey the beauty and horror of this book? Nope, it's a girl's ass in jeans with a dragon tattoo and some lame tagline about "respecting your elders". Fun fact: Jennifer makes several points about not wearing jeans. Seriously, there's a whole shopping scene and a scene where she has to change her clothes and she is very descriptive about what she's wearing and how it has to be skirts so she can access the daggers she keeps hidden on her legs. THE GIRL DOESN'T EVEN WEAR JEANS. But then again, the synopsis on the back of the book gets the details wrong on what the book is even about, so obviously this book did not get a lot of love while trying to make it appeal to readers, whether it was relevant or not.

Terri says

Jennifer brings friends to visit the dragons who are beastmasters, humans and were-arachnids in hopes of establishing communications and improving relations. It doesn't go well. Then things go really bad when Jennifer awakes to a world where a spell has re-written history and the dragons are almost extinct. And she has to fix things.

I enjoy this series, I like Jennifer and her friends.

keirsten says

This is a book of romance, hatred, and betrayed love. Jennifer is a weredragon with a little beaststalker mixed in. her mother is a beaststalker but doesn't kill weracnids (werespiders & werescorpions) and weredragons anymore because she married a weredragon. Jennifer is the "ancient furnace" and a 15 year old girl. Her ex is a weracnid that can turn into any spider and scorpion which is big enough to eat a cow in 2 bites! His mother decides to change the universe so she can "find" her dead daughter that is also Jennifer's half sister. Her ex saves her but later on tries to kill her friends.

Kim says

I still have no sympathy for any character in this book series. So much in fact, that I didn't even have the drive to finish this series, and I can usually read anything. This concept is good, but needs a different author to truly make it into something good. I will NOT be reading any more in this series.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Randstostipher "tallnankym" Nguyen for TeensReadToo.com

Jennifer Scales had the shock of her life when she discovered that she wasn't truly human. She found out who she really was right when she began to morph, which was perfect timing for her parents to tell her how she is beaststalker and weredragon. To make matters even worse, both the halves that make up Jennifer are at odds with each other.

Jennifer wants all sides to have peace with one another, and her trip to Crescent Valley shows this. Bringing along a human, Susan, her best friend who she finally revealed her secret to, another weredragon, a beaststalker, her friend, Eddie, and a weracnid, her ex-boyfriend Skip, Jennifer really does hope that things will go peacefully.

If Eddie and Skip can survive their fight with one another and her parents can get along, then anything can happen.

There at Crescent Valley is Xavier Longtail, a respected dragon who didn't fully support Jennifer when she was being chosen as ambassador, only because he doesn't believe beaststalkers and weredragons can live among one another.

Before she knows it, Jennifer is slowly influenced by Xavier's words, but not for too long. Soon after, an epic battle erupts, and the weredragons biggest threat, the weracnids, have a huge advantage over them. Saved by a necklace given to her by her ex, Skip, Jennifer is left with Xavier, her family gone. This means that they both need to find common ground to save the weredragons and to save Jennifer's friends and family.

Will the idea of peace be totally obliterated or can it still have a meaning?

A wonderful third installment to the already imaginative series, THE SILVER MOON ELM continues

Jennifer's journey of acceptance with even more obstacles to face. Jennifer becomes a stronger character and more history of all the species' is revealed. Detailed and intricate, MaryJanice Davidson and Anthony Longi do not disappoint their readers.
