



Treasure, Darkly

Jordan Elizabeth

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Seventeen-year-old Clark Treasure assumes the drink he stole off the captain is absinthe... until the chemicals in the liquid give him the ability to awaken the dead.

A great invention for creating perfect soldiers, yes, but Clark wants to live as a miner, not a slave to the army—or the deceased. On the run, Clark turns to his estranged, mining tycoon father for help. The Treasures welcome Clark with open arms, so he jumps at the chance to help them protect their ranch against Senator Horan, a man who hates anyone more powerful than he.

Sixteen-year-old Amethyst Treasure loathes the idea of spending the summer away from her bustling city life to rot on her father's ranch, but when a handsome young man shows up claiming to be her secret half-brother, her curiosity is piqued. He's clever, street smart, and has no qualms jumping into the brawl between the Treasures and Horans. Caught in the middle, Horan kidnaps Amethyst, and all she gets is this lousy bullet through her heart.

When Clark brings her back to life, however, the real action starts, and Amethyst joins him in his fight against the Horan clan—whatever the cost. Defeating the Horans may seem easy at first, but going up against men with the same fighting vengeance as Clark, and a Senator with power he's obtained by brainwashing the masses?

Well, Amethyst's boring summer at home has turned into an adventure on the run, chock full of intrigue, danger, love, and a mysterious boy named Clark.

Treasure, Darkly Details

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From Reader Review Treasure, Darkly for online ebook

Taylor Knight says

Can we just talk about this cover for a second? Because I love it so much. I love how the cover reveals that this book is clearly a steampunk novel. I love the girl on the cover and the colors. It's just an awesome cover. I'm a little sad that I had this in an ebook format because I would love to have it on my shelf. Okay, now that that's out of my system.

The prologue starts with Clark stealing and drinking a vial of some sort from a strange man's coat. I had a lot of inner dialogue while reading this book and it all started at this moment in the prologue. Who drinks whatever's in a weird vial that they just stole? Clark had no idea what it was! It could have been poison! It was at that moment, I learned that Clark was stupid. But other than that, the prologue was pretty good. It had me wanting more and even though Clark was an idiot, I wanted to know what happened to him.

Chapter 1 starts two years after the prologue ends. I normally have a hard time with massive jumps in time like this but in this book, it really worked well. Clark's been in the run from the government because he drank the vial and now he can awaken the dead.

The female protagonist is Amethyst, who happens to be Clark's half-sister. At first I was super excited about this. The idea of a brother and sister teaming up and kicking butt seemed perfect to me. I feel like authors are always putting unnecessary romance in Young Adult books these days. A brother/sister team would eliminate all the unnecessary romance and stick with just butt kicking action, right? Wrong! That's right, Jordan Elizabeth Mierek went there. Even though both Clark and Amethyst know right from the moment they meet that they are siblings, Amethyst is encouraging Clark to like her and flaunting herself around. It's nasty. And even besides that, Amethyst is really over the top snobby and bratty. Why the author would write a protagonist, a female one on top of it, that's so unlikable, I'll never know. Nothing about Amethyst is promoting well written female characters in YA. If anything, she's a character that's holding the genre back from being taken seriously.

The "romance" or "love" between Clark and Amethyst is forced and unnecessary. This book should have been purely about Clark and his new-found powers. Not a brother and sister having some sort of wacky romance. Because in a month, that's all I'm going to remember about this book. How horrible the "romance" was. And reasons Clark found Amethyst attractive were so stupid! How is "naivety" a good thing in a girl? In anyone? I just... Ugh.

I could go on and on about how much I hate Amethyst. She is so stupid and shallow, it's unbelievable. When the story switches from Clark's perspective to Amethyst's, the whole plot is put on hold for all her stupid ramblings. A line from her perspective that really stood out to me was, "She wondered if he'd eaten watercress before. She could introduce him to a new plate of tastes and textures. How exciting!".

Overall, this book doesn't promote well written, strong female characters in YA. I spent almost the entire book shaking my head. One thing that I will say about this book is going for it, it really got a rise out of me. I hated it and I've rarely been so angry at a book and fictional character. But Jordan Elizabeth Mierek wrote a book that really got me emotionally invested. Even if it was in a negative way.

Jeremy Mortis says

This book has a little bit of everything in. It takes place in a world similar to our own but very different. The location is the wild west and the tech is steam power. The hero, Clark is looking for his father and ends up caught up in an adventure that has the potential to change the world he lives in as he knows it. So if you like steampunk, romance and westerns this is the book for you.

Emma Adams says

A fun steampunk fantasy with romance and even a dash of the supernatural. An original and fun read!

Leigh says

I received this from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

I am relatively new to the Steampunk genre. It combines an old world feel with gadgets and technology beyond its years. I find the contrast fascinating. Treasure, Darkly is a perfect example of a well written Steampunk novel. Despite its YA listing, I would recommend it to older teens and adults.

There should have been a warning label on that drink Clark stole from the captain of the army...serves him right for stealing! Little did he know it was a special invention to give a person the ability to bring the dead back to life. Now, Clark is a wanted man. He runs to the father he never knew. Clark is welcomed with open arms. The Treasure family is well respected and with great influence. Hopefully, they can keep Clark safe. The army may not be Clark's only problem when his sister, Amethyst, is kidnapped. Can Clark help save Amethyst? Will his family find out Clark's secret?

Despite his unfortunate upbringing, Clark is a hard working young man who doesn't want a hand out...just a little help. Being on the run has shaped his character, but he still holds true to what his mother taught him. Amethyst is one spoiled princess. Nothing a summer in the country and a kidnapping won't cure! What an enjoyable read! I will have to say I stared at the last page for a while...wanting, needing more. I can't wait till the next book in this series comes out!

Brenda says

While his mother's client was asleep, Clark Treasure rifled through his coat pockets – the vial with a green liquid inside he assumed was absinthe – but the taste was dreadful. But it was what happened afterwards which made Clark realized it wasn't absinthe that he drank; the strange ability he attained meant the army was after him and wouldn't give up until they captured Clark...

Garth Treasure was a wealthy ranch owner and when Clark, a young man Garth had no previous knowledge of, arrived on their doorstep, Garth and his wife accepted him into the family with no hesitation. When sixteen year old Amethyst arrived from the city to spend the summer on her father's ranch, she was surprised

to learn she had a previously unknown half-brother; the boring summer she had been dreading looked like it had immediately improved.

A fierce and ongoing feud between the Treasures and nearby neighbours the Horans suddenly became violent and deadly – with the army on one side and the Horans on the other, Clark wasn't sure where to turn. He knew the Treasure name would keep him safe – at least he hoped so. But as Clark found himself needing to use his strange ability he feared he would be found out. His life wouldn't be worth living if the army got hold of him...

Treasure, Darkly by Jordan Elizabeth Mierek is a light and entertaining read which has a mix of a futuristic wild west, mystery and paranormal blended throughout. It has an intriguing plot with interesting characters – both good and bad. I enjoyed Clark's character and felt the need to smack Amethyst on occasion! I have no hesitation in recommending *Treasure, Darkly* to lovers of paranormal, steampunk and young adult – all would enjoy! And I look forward to book two when it's released soon!

With thanks to the author for my copy to read and review.

~JustMel~ says

Oh man... This was some read! It's shock full of steam-punky goodness, action and romance.

The story opens with an intro into how it all began with Clark Treasure. It gives a beginning to how things play out throughout the book. It makes the reader feel for Clark and want for everything to go in his favor. Clark's character was very well written and his goals weren't far fetched at all. I was very happy to see him gain so much when all he was looking for was protection. He never imagined that he would gain that and so much more, including the woman who would become the love of his life.

The story moves at a steadily increasing pace that doesn't overwhelm, it keeps you wondering what's going to happen next. There isn't much backstory, but the little that's provided is delivered in a way that keeps the story going smoothly. The world building was done in a very believable way that brought back memories of old westerns with their saloons and horses, and of course the town drunk (lol) The romance parts of the book actually added to the story quite well. It was so sweet and tender it put smiles on my face every time, and had me rooting for Clark and Amethyst (along with Eric, they are my three favorite characters). At first it was a bit weird, but that didn't last very long (can't give away that little tidbit since it's a HUGE part of the story). The villains really angered me (which is an excellent thing). They had me yelling at how awful they were and I couldn't wait for them to get their comeuppance.

Even though I'm fairly new to the steampunk genre, I feel like this was a very good fit. There were steam powered vehicles used in conjunction with horses that kept things firmly planted in a Western time-frame. I have only read Victorian steam punk, so this was a delightful change. The classic corset and skirt combos for the women, and the numerous brass buttons on the pants and drawstring ties on the shirts (not to mention the cowboy hats) was what I expected as it always helps to draw me further into the story if I can imagine exactly what the characters are wearing. I really enjoyed reading this book, and I look forward to the continuation of Clark and Amethyst's story.

I highly recommend this to any steam punk fan.

Yzabel Ginsberg says

(I was given a copy by the publisher, in exchange for an honest review.)

I had read a couple of short stories by this author, and thought the world she developed would be worth the read. I'm sorry to say I couldn't push myself to enjoy *Treasure, Darkly*, in spite of a good beginning. Or perhaps because the beginning led me to hope for something quite different, something I'd have liked instead.

Adventure in a steampunk, western-like world, along with a mysterious power allowing the male protagonist to bring people back to life: that would've rocked, and it's what I got in the first chapters. Clark seemed an intriguing character. On the run from the Army after he accidentally used their latest invention and ended up with powers over the dead, he turned to the only people he thought would be able to protect them, thanks to their wealth and reputation; a risky move if you ask me, but why not, when you don't have much left to lose? Clark was kind of resourceful—ready to use whatever resources he could find, aware that he had to be ruthless at times, yet still trying to fit in in a "good" way no matter what.

The world depicted in the novel was interesting, too. Perhaps with a bit too much "steampunkish eye-candy", in that you'd have to simply enjoy the descriptions and atmosphere for what they are, not look for any detailed explanation behind some of the machines. At some point, Clark goes on a quest for missing inventions, and if you like reading about such contraptions, well, those fit well within a steampunk universe.

However, I found it really difficult to remain invested into the story after the 40%-50% mark. First, Amethyst's expected death doesn't occur before then, i.e. a bit too late to my liking. Second, what would've been somewhat stereotypical but still enjoyable plot in a western-type plot (the Treasures vs. the Horans) wasn't that much developed, with the race to find the missing inventions getting muddled in there. Third, and a killer for me, those parts of the plot, along with Clark's power and running away from the military, got lost in the romance.

I didn't care the least bit for the romance here. Partly because of the brother/sister thing, even though there's a twist here. Partly because I *wanted* to see a kickass brother/sister pairing living adventures in a Weird Wild West world. Partly because it didn't make much sense when pitched against the other stakes (the Horans, Clark being on the run, how the family in general was supposed to accept him...).

Amethyst I found fairly unlikeable all along. I could've forgiven her snobbish ways in the beginning, if only coming back from the dead would've redeemed them. I'd expect dying, then being resurrected would leave heavy traces in someone's psyche, make them contemplate their mortality, see the world in a different way; but Amethyst doesn't change, and remains as superficial as ever (all the more as she's cast several times in a Damsel In Distress role, moments during which she worries about the wrong things).

Clark's power remained vague and not exploited after the first half. For instance, we're told that when he brings back someone, he has to give death in the next minutes or so for the first life to indeed be spared, yet he's never seen doing it, which felt like a cop-out. The villains didn't do much in the second half either, the two brothers vanishing from the scene fairly quickly, to better leave room to Clark and Amethyst traipsing around, buying clothes, camping in the woods, and so on. Also, Clark's secrets got out in the open too easily, and it was hard after a while to believe that people wouldn't talk about it sooner, that he wouldn't get in trouble sooner because of it.

In short, based on the first half of the novel, I was somewhat enthused, and expected adventure and a grand finale. In the end, I got bored by the romance and distractions from what should've remained the issues at stake. By the time they came back, it was too late.

1.5 stars.

Cassie C says

I need to collect my thoughts on this...review to come!

Update 11/21/15:

See more reviews on my blog Novels and Necklaces

I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

I don't really know where to begin with this review because I really wanted to like this book. The cover is gorgeous, and obviously shows this book is steampunk. Right away, that got me excited because I love me some steampunk. While I've never read a western in my life, I thought it was an intriguing idea to mix the 2 genres, so I thought, why not give it a shot? Well, the cover and the summary were the first of many deceptive things about this book. I definitely didn't get what I expected, and that is really unfortunate as this could have been a great book. I know I'm in the minority here who didn't really enjoy this book, but there was just too many things in this book that I couldn't get over.

I'll start with the characters. The prologue was actually pretty interesting and made me want to keep reading, and it is in this prologue that we meet one of the lead characters, Clark. It was also in this prologue where we learn that Clark is pretty stupid. That's a little harsh, but I thought this could have just been a one-time-deal, but throughout the book he constantly reminded me that he wasn't someone I was going to like. He did have his redeeming moments though, so I will give him that. The biggest problem I had with Clark was why he was attracted to Amethyst, our female lead. Now I will admit that Amethyst is the biggest problem I had with this book. I couldn't stand her from the moment we met her, and that disgust (yes disgust) continued for the rest of the book. She is vapid, stupid, and shallow. I could barely stand her chapters because of her nonsense rambling. It bothered me because Clark's chapters were filled with the (actually somewhat exciting) plot and her chapters just put the book on hold with babble. I could go on and on about her character but I want to keep this review as short as possible. Ultimately, the biggest problem with the characters was that they weren't developed enough, and I could never truly connect with them in anyway. I was waiting for some sort of inner struggle with Clark's character and his ability, but there was nothing. Plus, the characters don't grow throughout the book, so they didn't change how they acted or who they were as people, which both leads needed.

The romance between Clark and Amethyst disturbed me a bit. I know that (view spoiler), but their romance was forced and I never thought it was actually necessary for the story. Originally, I thought it was going to be pretty cool that Amethyst and Clark teamed up...they would be a brother/sister butt-kicking team. Clark would rub off on Amethyst and she would become less spoiled and stronger and willing to fight. But then the story went in a completely different direction and had them get together as a couple.

It bothered me from the start, because while I had a feeling that there would be a revelation with this relationship, I didn't think either character acted in the way they should have. Amethyst seemed to be enticing and encouraging Clark just for the sake of it, and Clark just liked Amethyst because she was attractive and naive. Personally, I think it's kind of nasty.

Lastly, I don't know if this book knew what it wanted to be. The start of the book was steampunk/western, but then about halfway in it turned into a straight up teen romance novel, which is not what I expected at all. Ultimately, this is where I was most disappointed because if I'm reading a steampunk/western, I want this to be continued throughout the book. The jarring switch confused me at first because I truly wasn't expecting it.

Overall, this book just didn't work for me. I was tempted to DNF it, but by that point, I was invested and I kept hoping the book would get better. The plot was actually kind of interesting, it was other aspects of this book that made me dislike it. It's a shame because this book could have been phenomenal, and to some, it might be. But that person is not me.

Happy reading :)

Tabitha (Lovely Books Blog) says

Read more reviews like this at <http://lovelybooksblog.blogspot.com!>

Let me just start this review by saying that the cover of this novel is one of the most beautiful, amazing, fantastic, awesome, brilliant covers I have ever seen in my life. The second I saw the cover of this novel I knew I wanted to read it and I just have to give the biggest shout out in the world to the person who designed it, because honestly it's just gorgeous. Okay, now that I've got that out of my system, on to the actual review!

Treasure, Darkly is one of those novels that's going to be interesting to review because I'm just so on the fence about how I feel about it. The novel started off interesting enough, with Clark stealing a vial of what he thought was absinthe, and instead gaining some cool preternatural abilities. Though his abilities are fascinating, they really take a backseat to the rest of the drama going on in the novel, and I wish we could have seen them in action a little more. However, with the army after him, a long lost father to learn about, inventions to find, and a new family to meet there was plenty going on in this novel to keep me turning pages.

When Clark is taken in by the Treasures, and instantly accepted, the action really picks up and I absolutely loved the western/steampunk setting. Elizabeth really did a fantastic job with the world building and I loved learning more about the world she created. From steamcycles to evil ranchers this novel had it all. The only problem I had with the plot was that there was no resolution to any of the conflicts, there are so many story arcs going on that I figured at least one of them would have been resolved. Instead all we get is a rather abrupt ending that had almost nothing to do with the main story.

Though there were a lot of good things about this novel there were a few that really bothered me too. First of all there was just something about Clark that rubbed me the wrong way. I don't quite know what it was about him but as the novel went on I started to like him less and less. His cocky attitude and some of his inner dialogue had me quickly losing respect for him and toward the end of the novel I just couldn't stand him anymore. Amethyst, on the other hand, had a bit of a flat personality but wasn't as bad as Clark. Though for the amount of times she was kidnapped you would think she would have some sort of reaction, but she just goes back to lusting after Clark instead.

Maybe part of the reason I disliked Clark as much as I did was because of his relationship with Amethyst. The romance in this novel was so lewd and lust driven that reading about Clark and Amethyst honestly made me uncomfortable. There was absolutely no mutual affection between them and some of the inner dialogue

Clark had about Amethyst was just plain disgusting. I wanted to root for them, I really did, but in the end I just couldn't do it.

Though there were a lot of things I really enjoyed about this novel, mainly the setting and the steampunk elements, the romance made me feel so icky that I had to knock this one down a little bit. Overall not a bad read, but I could have done without the romance.

*I received a copy of this novel from the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for a free and honest review.

Laura says

Thank you to the author, Jordan Mierek, for providing me with a review copy. All expressed opinions are my own.

This is another book I feel conflicted about. Just like [Such A Good Girl](#), I couldn't decide on the first read through how I felt about it. On one hand, it has such a dangerous feeling and I've never read anything like it, and on the other hand, some passages felt irksome to me and I couldn't get over how the world is glossed over. I finally decided that in spite of that, I did like it, with some reservations. Let me explain:

- 1. The plot.** This is the **most interesting aspect** of the book for me. The story centers around Clark and how he finds his father after being on the run for several years. He's sent on a mission to collect certain items and that's when it gets really interesting. On both read-throughs I was **completely absorbed** in the story and what would happen. Mierek does a wonderful job of keeping the reader on the edge of their seat as there are so many little hiccups along the way. The plotline is a piece of art.
- 2. The characters.** The book is set up as a third person omniscient POV which means that the narrator pops into all of the characters' heads at one point or another. For a while, I was worried the characters would remain flat as they had been throughout the first fourth of the book. However, once these **little jumps into different consciousness's were first introduced, the characters really began to be fleshed out in a more substantial way**. We get to know Clark and Amethyst pretty well because they're the main characters but there are also dives into Amethyst's brothers (Jeremiah and Zachariah) that provided a wonderful insight. **One point I couldn't get over, though, is the use of 'brass glass' as a curse**. I completely understand that the author used it as a device to connect the reader to the world but to me, it just felt silly and impractical. Curse words roll off the tongue and are typically all-purpose (like you can't use 'shit' in basically any other context other than swearing but you can use both 'brass' and 'glass'). I don't know, maybe I'm getting too into the morphological uses here but it bothered me throughout the novel.
- 3. The world.** This is **where I had the most issues** with the book. While I did enjoy each of the settings the author introduces the reader to, they aren't exactly painted with a fine-tipped brush. They're more represented by broad sweeps and most of the outer world isn't touched at all. This is the first book so there can't be a whole lot of world building (there's character building to be done, after all!), but **I couldn't really picture the places they went** and their specific layouts. Characters went here and there but there was no in between and no directional orientation which made it difficult to become fully immersed.
- 4. The romance/customs.** Of course, there is a romance, and **I found it to be rather meh** considering that it doesn't add too much to the story. It adds a slight secondary plot line and a little more tension than normal but otherwise I didn't find that there was too much chemistry between the two. I was also slightly **confused on what the customs are exactly in terms of courting** and whatnot. This book is set in a sort of post-industrial wild west (think the Western US in 200 years after a government collapse or something of the sort)

and there's sort of a mix between what we think of as traditional and modern dating practices. The characters kept mentioning courting and modesty but the next minute, there seems to be scandal everywhere with the romance (or what I should think would cause a scandal; premarital sex for one thing). The **world seems to be undergoing a sort of transition between the two belief systems** but I just wish it was made a little more clear what the sort of expectations are for couples.

5. Clark's powers. I wanted to give this its own little section because Clark's powers kind of **puzzle me**. He has the ability to bring the dead back to life (only the very, very recently dead apparently) and then can maybe sometimes use it to kill people too. I would have loved a little **more information on the mechanics** of this because that's pretty much all that's said about it. I also would have loved to hear more of Clark's feelings on the fact that he has these crazy, abnormal powers that he's somehow completely okay with. I mean, in his thoughts he almost sounds cheered that after bringing someone back, he can transfer that power to a living persona and kill them but an hour later he's saying that it's a curse and that's that. We **don't really get any of his feelings on the subject** which is a disappointment.

The Final Verdict:

The shining star of this book is the plot and characters and I have no doubt that their majesty will continue in the next books. The world, however, could use some more development and a little clarification on the romance standards also wouldn't be amiss. Also, Clark's powers continue to puzzle me (I seriously am thinking about another reread to maybe clear this up).

3 stars

Naturalbri (Bri Wignall) says

What I Thought:

I am a true lover of all things steampunk. I can't get enough of it, and absolutely LOVE reading steampunk!

This book is a steampunk story, which has a Wild West sort of theme to it, with gunfights and horseback, all mixed in with a man who has gained some unusual powers and, of course, a load of steampunk action.

I found that the author threw us into the mix straightaway. We met our main character, Clark, who is trouble himself, even though he doesn't always mean to be. He is a small time thief, at times, and believes he's stealing a vial of absinthe - which is already enough to make you go mental - but he is actually stealing a government produced elixir, and soon he'll be paying for it with his life.

After drinking, he is involved in a mine incident, which ultimately brings out his powers and puts the government on his trail. We then shoot to a few years in the future, where Clark becomes part of the family of his father, and then the real action begins!

I love that this story is a bit of a mix of steampunk, with a little paranormal thrown in the mix. The action and intense moments where there are feuds between locals and Clark avoiding capture, are excellent. They have loads of details, blended with the emotions and thoughts from the characters. The amount of steampunk in the book is good, though I wouldn't mind a bit more detail and usage of steampunk weapons. (Though toward the end we saw more, so I am very excited to see how much is in the second book!)

I thought the story was interesting and unique. There was a minor love story sort of taking place, which is both awkward and understood - but I'll leave you to read that. I thought, though it was at times very awkward, it really added to the tension and suspense of the story.

Overall, this was a brilliant beginning to a steampunk series. I am very keen to read more and I really think steampunk and paranormal readers would love this read!

Amberle Husbands says

I was offered a free copy of *Treasure, Darkly* in exchange for my honest review. I was immediately excited upon reading the novel's synopsis, as I love a good western and especially love one with a genre-bending twist such as this. I was just the tiniest bit hesitant, though, because the steampunk writings that I've enjoyed in the past were few and far between; I don't seem to have very good luck within the genre.

Jordan Mierek completely took my breath away, though. To begin with, the cover is absolutely gorgeous! Very eye catching, elegant, and with a captivating quality that kept me staring at the details long after I should have pressed on to page one.

But finally I did press on, and the action kicks in right off the bat. The lead character is soundly established very early on -- characterization seeming nearly effortless on the part of this author -- and the setting itself flows naturally into being without the strained, heavy-handed world-building that so many cross-genre stories find themselves faltering in. In the afterword, Mierek mentions that she was inspired by shows such as *Big Valley* and *The Lone Ranger*, and those influences are very apparent. I personally was put in mind of the movie *Wanda Nevada* over and over again, especially as the plot's central romance developed. The lead character is just noble enough -- just, *just* barely -- to convince readers to overlook the coarseness of his lust, which in itself seemed to me very fitting in this pseudo-cowboy epic. I thought it was a perfect balance, and even though I'm not much of one for romances in general, I really must say that it won me over.

The story line itself is entertaining and fast-paced, and I thought all of the crossed-genre ingredients came together perfectly; the novel is just as much a western as it has to be, just as much a steampunk expo, just as much a ghost story as is necessary. All in all, I was very pleasantly surprised; even the abrupt ending -- not quite a cliff-hanger, but bloody close -- didn't really put me off that much.

I will definitely have to keep my eye out for the sequel. Five well-deserved stars for *Treasure, Darkly*.

Karissa says

I got a copy of this book from the publisher to review (thank you to Curiosity Quills Press for forwarding a copy on when I kind of didn't download it from NetGalley before it was archived). I really enjoyed this book a lot. There is a lot of action and adventure, some magic, and tons of wonderfully western steampunk goodness.

Clark Treasure stole a bottle of what he thought was absinthe off of one of his mother's customers. Well, it ended up being something else...something that made Clark very hard to kill and gave him the ability to raise the dead. It also made it so that Clark is being hunted down by the military who wants to use him for his ability. When Clark finds out his unknown father is the famous General Treasure he goes to the General's

home seeking protection.

However, Clark was not counting on a ghost haunting him to demand Clark retrieve his inventions which are being weaponized by General Treasure's rival Horus. Clark did also not count on the beautiful and spunky Amethyst Treasure who is set on making her summer away from the city something to remember.

This was a very well written and entertaining read. I read this book very quickly, it was engaging and incredibly hard to put down.

Clark has such a good ole' noble cowboy tone to him, but with a dangerous roguish edge. He has a great sense of humor, has some interesting magical abilities, and is just all around fun to read about.

I loved the rest of the Treasure family as well; they are surprisingly supportive of Clark (well most of them are) and very entertaining.

There is some great world-building here. The story has a very old-west feel to it, however in this alternate old west there has been a technological revolution. The result is a number of crazy contraptions and high tech inventions that you don't expect to see in a western.

The story wrapped up nicely and I am very eager to read more about the adventures of Clark and Amethyst and about this fascinating world.

Overall I absolutely loved this book. The story is fast-paced and engaging. It's a wonderful blend of steampunk, fantasy, and western with tons of excellent action. I loved the characters as well. The story balances action, adventure, politics, mystery, and romance in perfect proportions. I would definitely recommend this book to fans of alternate history, steampunk or fantasy with a western feel to it. I can't wait to read Born of Treasure when it releases in September!

Ashley Tomlinson says

This was the first full fledged novel I've read by Jordan Elizabeth and I wasn't at all disappointed. I read her short stories in Gears of Brass which was the first time I tried out steampunk. I have to say I am really loving the steampunk world! If I could pull off wearing gears and such I would start wearing them right now.

The cover is awesome! It really shows that iconic steampunk style that so many people love. I think it would be appealing enough to draw peoples eyes to it and that's always the goal with the cover.

Clark steals a vial of what he thinks is absinth and downs the entire thing. He realizes it wasn't absinth when he can bring someone back from the dead. Now he is on the run from the army, where he would become a science experiment. He runs to the family that didn't know he existed, The Treasure's. When another family starts causing issues with his new found family Clark will stop at nothing to protect it.

I did think it was a little odd that Amethyst and Clark were crushing on each other when they thought they were related. I guess it's good that they were not really related but it was still odd. Once I found out they were not actually half brother and sister I did start to root for them. I'm a very odd person apparently.

It was awesome and strange how quickly Mr. and Mrs. Treasure accepted Clark into their family. And how okay she was with hearing her husband was unfaithful all those years ago. It was strange how easily Mrs. Treasure got used to Clark killing people, she acted like it was nothing. But I guess he did save her life so

maybe that helped.

I liked how Eric followed Clark around helping him when he needed help. Though they did not have that father and son relationship, Eric still watched after him in spirit- literally. I did wonder how many times Amethyst was going to get captured by the Horan family though.

All in all I enjoyed this book and since it's book one, I look forward to book two.

For more of my reviews visit: <http://www.hyperashley.com/>

Cee (The Mistress Case) says

It appears I'm the black sheep here . . .

Alright, let's start!

Treasure Darkly is my first western steampunk novel. It's an original read, though the obvious plot twists are rather too obvious and unexciting. Therefore, I might as well spoil the story in ways that can't be considered "spoiling" when it won't even ruin the book for you. Read at your own expense.

The story opens with the 15-year-old protagonist stealing a vial of some sort from one of his mother's clients. His mother is a prostitute and Clark lives with her at the saloon. He hopes to earn enough money from his job at the mines so they can move out of their mining town and to a pleasant farmhouse.

His hopes, however, are destroyed.

Stealing and drinking from the vile has deadly consequences.

Two years later, we discover he's been on the run, keeping his ability to resurrect the dead a secret. The army's search isn't ending any time soon and they intend to use him as a government weapon. He seeks refuge at Treasure Ranch, where he is surprisingly and warmly welcomed by his father, Garth Treasure, and his wife. Only the children have a hard time adjusting to their half-brother.

I won't give too much away. You'll have to read the book in order to find out more about Clark's ability and what happens with him during those two years on the run. At first, I found Clark to be an intriguing character. He's underestimated and shunned by people, but he has the survival skills set, determination, and devotion to prove them wrong. My problem with him: Having a gift/curse to raise the dead doesn't make you oh-so-special in my eyes. He gets less and less interesting and impressive as the story goes on and I didn't give a rat's ass about what happened to him anymore.

Amethyst, his half-sister, rubs off as a snobby and self-absorbed spoiled brat just because she wears the Treasure's name. (I'm positive the author intends for readers to dislike her.) The Treasure family is one of the most powerful families in the kingdom and she is used to being idolized. She's a city girl; not a ranch girl and hates having to move back. She happens to return home on the same day Clark arrives and announces himself as Garth's bastard. What I really find repulsive about Amethyst is she flaunts herself at Clark, even when she reminds herself that they're siblings. I can't blame Clark for his attraction, but the girl doesn't have to encourage it.

Another reason for me to detest her character: When she's kidnapped, do you want to know what goes through her mind while she is held captive? She doesn't fear death and worry about what her captors can do to her— rape, torture. Oh, no, all she thinks about is making headlines in the newspaper, about the people who will sympathize and send her gifts, about how this little episode will convince her father to send her back to the beloved city. Even after she's rescued, it's like nothing happened. She seriously thinks she's untouchable, which only serves her right that she dies later on for running her mouth off.

But then Clark resurrects her and things go on from there. (I'll talk more about this later.)

The building romance— or love, if you want to call it that— is absolutely boring.

I wasn't reading for the romance and expected this story to be straight-up badass and awesome. And what did I get? Two horny teenagers. How do you expect me to care about a relationship between Clark and Amethyst when Clark's attraction to her is mind-numbing and Amethyst is a shallow human being? I tried. I really tried not to hold Amethyst's privileged lifestyle against her, but she's an awfully dull and annoying character. I especially don't find "naivety" and "tenacity" attractive, which I guess it's why Clark likes her because she's from a whole different world.

And because the allure of a forbidden romance between brother and sister.

Eventually, Clark learns they aren't blood siblings.

Good for you, Clark. You don't have to feel dirty about wanting to touch your "sister" anymore. **Now tell me why should I give a fuck?**

What bothers me the most is I find it hard to believe how Clark can trust Amethyst so effortlessly just because he *thinks* he knows her nature. I can understand that he needs an explanation after bringing her back from the dead, but he easily confides in her and spills out everything.

And you know what else is unbelievable?

When the readers are let into Amethyst's thoughts, do we see she's troubled by the fact that the entire terrifying army is after him?

Let's see . . .

"What would he look like with that shirt off, his skin tanned and glistening with the sweat of the hot day?"

"She'd wondered why she found him so irresistible when her parents claimed he was her half-sibling. Staying at the ranch wouldn't be dull at her. He spoke to ghosts, for steam's sake."

"She wondered if he'd eaten watercress before. She could introduce him to a new plate of tastes and textures. How exciting!"

"His throat worked with each swallow . . . how would he taste if she licked those muscles?"

“Clark wiped his mouth on his linen napkin. What manners for being a street urchin!”

Uhhh, no.

On the occasions when the author peers into Amethyst’s mind, does anything she has to say useful to readers?

No.

Right again!

The established trust and chemistry (or lack of chemistry) between Amethyst and Clark feels forced and is still gross to me.

And did I mention she has a boyfriend— a boy toy— back in the city? A boy who she just happens to forget about when she had contemplated marrying him in the beginning?

Yeah.

You know that saying that goes something like “your book is only as good as your villian”? Well, I’m applying it to *Treasure Darkly*. Even with the bad guys, the danger is nonexistent and the adventurous drama is plain boring. (How many times have I repeated boring by now?) Funny how Amethyst is the damsel in distress who’s *always* getting kidnapped and coming close to death when Clark is truly the one with a price on his head. Throughout the book (and what felt like forever), they spend their time traveling, kissing, tumbling in bed, visiting the city, shopping, dining out, dodging death, being pursued, etc, etc, whatever rich lustful teenagers do. They end up falling in love, getting married, and more crap happens. You read correctly: **They got married**. And this is all within one book!

I think this pretty much sums up the story. The only outcome I can appreciate about their relationship is Amethyst soon realizes what a naïve and selfish person she is and wants to change for the better. The downside: And it’s all because of Clark. All because of a fucking boy and hundreds of near-death experiences.

Overall: I know all I talked about was the romance, but this is more of a romance book than anything else and that’s why I didn’t enjoy it. I’m not impressed one bit and don’t plan to continue the series. **It is not fantasy**. It’s a fucking love story.

I have to give *Treasure Darkly* a one star and it's not out of hate. It's out of a deep scorching disappointment in the book . . . and in myself for being fooled by the cool and badass misleading cover. Never again. What a book cover fraud. It is nothing like I pictured.

Anyways, don’t let my review discourage you, readers! You may enjoy the book more than I did and you should definitely form your own opinions instead of adopting mine.

ARC was given through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.
