



Dorothy Must Die

Danielle Paige

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The *New York Times* bestselling first book in a dark new series that reimagines the Oz saga, from debut author Danielle Paige.

I didn't ask for any of this. I didn't ask to be some kind of hero. But when your whole life gets swept up by a tornado—taking you with it—you have no choice but to go along, you know?

Sure, I've read the books. I've seen the movies. I know the song about the rainbow and the happy little blue birds. But I never expected Oz to look like this. To be a place where Good Witches can't be trusted, Wicked Witches may just be the good guys, and winged monkeys can be executed for acts of rebellion. There's still a road of yellow brick—but even that's crumbling.

What happened? Dorothy. They say she found a way to come back to Oz. They say she seized power and the power went to her head. And now no one is safe.

My name is Amy Gumm—and I'm the other girl from Kansas. I've been recruited by the Revolutionary Order of the Wicked. I've been trained to fight. And I have a mission: Remove the Tin Woodman's heart. Steal the Scarecrow's brain. Take the Lion's courage. And—Dorothy must die.

Dorothy Must Die Details

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Author : Danielle Paige

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Download and Read Free Online Dorothy Must Die Danielle Paige

From Reader Review Dorothy Must Die for online ebook

May says

UNA MANERA ORIGINAL DE REINVENTAR EL MUNDO DE OZ

Dorothy debe morir es una novela para lxs amantes de Oz y los retellings. Una novela que continúa la historia del mundo de Oz tras la victoria de Dorothy y que sabrá ponerle los pelos de punta a lxs lectorxs de este gran clásico. Bien escrita, con unos personajes profundizados, Dorothy debe morir ha sabido hacerme replantear ciertos detalles de la novela a la que hace homenaje y me ha mantenido con ganas de saber más hasta el final.

Como digo, estamos ante un buen retelling o supuesta continuación homenaje a El mago de Oz.

Sinceramente, El mago de Oz fue uno de los libros de mi infancia y le tengo muchísimo cariño. Por eso mismo tenía cierto miedo de leer esta novela que, finalmente, me ha sorprendido y ha superado mis expectativas.

Como mínimo tengo que decir que Dorothy debe morir es una novela original, que se sale de lo que se espera del mundo de Oz y que sabe reinventar la historia de este gran clásico. Además, cuenta con una trama bien elaborada, que da pie a tener continuación y que deja con ganas de más con el gran final que tiene.

Los personajes están bien contruidos. La protagonista es un personaje redondo, trabajado, que evoluciona, sorprende y emociona. No me esperaba en ningún momento los giros de esta protagonista ni que tampoco se desarrollara ni evolucionase como lo hace.

Más allá de eso, Dorothy debe morir es un libro trepidante, que cuenta con una buena pluma que se desenvuelve con descripciones detalladas, un lenguaje denso en su justa medida y un estilo marcado por su simpleza.

En resumen, Dorothy debe morir es una novela original, bien escrita, con buenos personajes y que, sin duda, gustará a lxs seguidorxs de El mago de Oz. Muy recomendable si os gusta la literatura juvenil fantástica.

Reynita Maharani ★ The Night Reader ★ says

3.5 Stars

**REMOVE THE TIN WOODMAN'S HEART
STEAL THE SCARECROW'S BRAIN
TAKE THE LION'S COURAGE
AND THEN DOROTHY MUST DIE**

Once upon a time, There was a pink-haired girl named Amy Gumm. She lived in a trailer park with her mother. Her father left her and her mother behind to live with a woman named Crystal. When Amy turned 13 years old her mother had a car accident and started taking pills and this was the time her life was changed completely. Her mother wasn't a sweet mother anymore, she did not make breakfast or dinner anymore and she often went to bar, she cared her pet rat and didn't care about Amy. So Amy, she had to take care herself and her mother.

One day, there was a tornado and transported her and her pet rat to Oz.

But Oz was different. Dorothy found a way to come back to Oz and she had a taste of magic. She turned wicked and all of her friends were wicked and Amy's adventure was began.

My Opinion

when we talk about Oz I'm sure you would be thinking like this Oz

But this book is very different from that Oz. This Oz is very dark and corrupted and I liked this book, the story was good and I liked the writing style too.

the first day I read this book I was so excited and the pacing was pretty fast but it all changed when I reached chapter 30. I don't know why but it got slow and it bored me so much. I even thought to DNF it but I was already on chapter 30 so I had to make myself to finish it *sighs*

the most thing I didn't like about this book apart from the pace was the relationship between the MC and the people around her. is it just me or this book doesn't describe the friendship between Amy and the people around her???

seriously, I felt nothing. when the first time I knew this book was a retelling from The Wizard Of Oz. I was so excited because I thought there would be an amazing friendship between the MC and her friends. while reading it I felt like this book was just focused on the how to kill dorothy and forgot to describe about the friendship. In my opinion the friendship between the MC and the people around her/his is as important as the story.

The Romance

thankfully there's no love triangle in this book. . The romance in this book is so weird. at the beginning of the story they hate each other and all of a sudden they love each other. the romance in this book ~~was~~ is confused me, the MC and the love-interest (Nox) don't talk much and all of a sudden he kisses her. it is weird they don't even talk much and then fall in love??? if there were a guy kissed me suddenly, I would definitely punch him. but Amy, I think she looks happy.

Will I continue reading this series?

thank you so much for reading my review guys!!Happy reading and hope you all have a great weekend!!❤❤❤

Jon says

There's no place like home! Enter to win a Dorothy Must Die prize pack!

Cait • A Page with a View says

That was so much fun! The idea sounded a bit silly to me at first, but the story is in no way simplistic. I know I'm super late to this party... but here we go:

Amy Gumm's an unpopular girl who lives with her unsupportive mother in a trailer park in Kansas. There's a lot of unnecessary girl hate at the start, but then a tornado comes and drops Amy off in a dystopian version of Oz. Princess Dorothy and Glinda are no longer good and are carrying out a frilly pink Happiness Decree of tyrannical oppression. It's kind of amazing. Glinda even has some Botox-like PermaSmile cosmetic stuff.

After escaping from prison, Amy ends up with the Revolutionary Order of the Wicked... wicked is good and all sorts of opposites (only everyone sort of has their own agenda). She learns that Dorothy's become a "magic-hoarding facist" who's mining all of Oz's magic out of the ground, so therefore Dorothy must die. Amy starts training in magic & etiquette so she can impersonate a servant and get close to Dorothy.

Amy has to really figure out who she is on her journey and isn't quite sure at the start. She hears a lot about how *"it's not magic that makes you who you are. It's the choices you make."* Magic supposedly corrupts outlanders because they're "not built for it," so Dorothy just keeps wanting more. Amy can decide what kind of magic she practices and access it from either a good or bad/angry place.

I really liked the darker undertone with how the Scarecrow does so many creepy experiments on people (like liquefying their brains and injecting the fluid into his own). And all of the other servants are like a brainwashed cult praising Dorothy nonstop... or else they're sent in for an Attitude Adjustment.

There were a lot of other neat ideas, like how the Lion eats fear, the flying monkeys cut off their magical wings to be free, and how magic *"always wants to be something different from what it already is."* The worldbuilding and twists on the familiar Oz stories were fun, too.

I wasn't particularly into the first 50 pages, so I was surprised by how much I ended up liking this story in the end! I adore retellings, but have learned I'm super picky about them. I think the main character will really make or break them... and Amy turned out to be pretty likable.

The strong writing also made it really easy to get into this story. The plot is complex enough to carry a whole series, so I'll definitely read the sequels!

Lola says

Oh gosh, where shall I start?

This book...was really something; an amazing thing.

★ ★

4 "It made my day" stars

To be honest, I never absolutely was a big fan of Dorothy's story in *The Wizard of Oz*, which means I was a little reluctant to buy this one. Ok, I was very reluctant. Except, reviewers kept bringing up how a great retelling this one is, and I just love retellings of any sorts. And thank you Belle for the recommendation.

The story...

It hooked me from page one. It started very 'contemporary' with Amy's (MC) memories and her being at school and how girls bully her. I felt kind of bad for her because she didn't necessarily deserve the crap bitches gave her, but there were sure moments when she needed to shut the hell up. Then we learn how her mom has drinking problems and I started to actually sympathize with Amy. Just imagining how her constant life must be like made my heart sink.

This wasn't a happy story, but it wasn't either one filled with only horror and tragedy.

The writing...

Can I just say WOW a thousand times? Because I totally would. The way Danielle Paige brought the characters to life was impressive and remarkable. I was worried I couldn't connect with them, and that I would feel like they aren't 'real' because of the fantasy Oz world which I never really believed in. I mean, it sure isn't real, but it truly never got my attention as it did to most people. Although, this one did hook me. I also liked the way the author made the comparisons to Dorothy's story.

This fictional retelling inspired by The Wizard of Oz feels like its sequel. If you're a fan of that story, stop reading this review. You technically don't need to know more to convince yourself to read this book. JUST.READ.IT.

The writing pace was perfectly suiting the story; neither fast nor slow. No problem there at all. In some moments, it may seem to you fast or maybe slow, depending, but globally it's just absolutely 'right'. It's not the kind of book that'll take you one month or more to read but, of course, it depends of you at the end. Don't get scared by the number of pages, that's all I'm really meaning to say.

The romance...

Was not the main attraction of this story. Actually, it was present but absolutely not at the beginning. The romance starts after one hundred or more pages. If you've read the synopsis and eyed the shelve, I bet you already knew that, but I felt like I needed to clarify it. If you're a hopeless romance lover in the YA genre, I'm not sure you'll enjoy this book as much as you usually do, but it definitely is a great first book in a new series. And it's good to have some change and read something completely different sometimes.

Did I talk about the world building?

No?

Well, I'll let you discover that by yourself. *Winks*

Seriously, think Oz after an evil mind has taken control of it.

Overall, this book equals:

Happy reading!

Krista says

The CW is developing this book and it's time to get excited!!! Not only does this book sound awesome but it's going to (maybe-potentially) be on TV!

And I just really want to see Dorothy die.

Is that too much? ;)

UPDATE: 4/1/14

So good!!! Lots of action and twists that I didn't see coming. One of the most brutal and violent YA books I've ever read, which just makes it that much more epic since it's set in Oz. And Danielle Paige knows her L. Frank Baum. I've read probably 10+ books about Oz and I was so impressed how she wove his world into hers, making it unique but still stayed true to the original. Loved how she brought up all the specific countries in Oz. Plus, super cool points for the Patchwork Girl shout out! Definite 5 Star read. Now all that's left is a long wait for the sequel.

Oh, and apparently the CW passed on the script and didn't pick it up for a pilot. Which is beyond stupid! This would have been a fantastic TV show. Excuse me while I mourn what could have been...

Navessa says

I won't be reading this. Not because of the author, but because of this:

<http://bibliodaze.com/2014/04/say-no-...>

Rose says

I think "Dorothy Must Die" was one of the titles I initially thought had the most potential among some of the newer releases in YA for this year. I find the quirk in the title rather humorous and have seen variations of it before (a.k.a. "Hello Kitty Must Die," etc.) But sadly, Danielle Paige's debut really didn't impress me all that much.

It's the very definition of what I call "great premise, lacking execution." But that's not to say that I disliked it collectively. No, it left me quite disappointed because of its respective potential not reaching up to what was actually delivered. The ideas were sound, the delivery was not.

Amy is a sharp girl with pink hair, considered an outcast with a trailer park lifestyle, alongside considerations over a father who abandoned her and a mother she barely recognizes. When her home is swept away by a tornado, Amy lands in Oz. Yet, Oz is not the majestic wonder depicted either in L. Frank Baum's classic story or in the movie with Judy Garland. Dorothy, Glinda the "Good" Witch, Tin Man, Scarecrow, and Cowardly Lion have all turned evil. Amy not only has to figure out exactly what happened to Oz, but determine her respective loyalties and ultimately accomplish one task: Kill Dorothy.

But for all the promise in the latter notation, maybe this narrative should've been titled "Dorothy Should Die." Or "Dorothy Almost Dies." Because there wasn't any Dorothy slaying going on in this book. More like the precursory details getting to that point. For as often as it kept reiterating that Dorothy **must** die and the build up associated with that, it didn't deliver. But that's not what bothered me the most about this book (though I'll admit the ending felt lackluster and not really an ending at all, just a cruel, incomplete lead-in to a series starter).

The story started off with steam - I followed Amy well enough as she was determined as an outcast thrown into Oz's otherworld, which seemed like an alternate version of Wonderland or Tim Burton's imaging of Halloween Town. Initially, this was cool. I also liked her rapport with Indigo, a cursing munchkin and Ollie, the wingless flying monkey. I even liked that this book didn't skimp on the violent details with some cruel fates delivered at the hands of the familiar character that were once pride and joys of the Oz narrative. So where did it all go wrong?

First issue that bothered me about this book was narrative pacing - it dragged to no end after a respective time. In some cases I was forgiving of the narrative because it seemed like it was trying to set up details about what happened with Oz, but when I realized Amy wasn't accomplishing a whole heck of a lot and that the characters would appear only to disappear for long stretches at a time (i.e. her pet rat Star and the boy entrusted to keep her safe, Pete), I became concerned. I wasn't really sure why so much time was spent on Amy being undercover, training, being in the dark about her Wicked associations and the like. I wanted the action to start picking up its pace and her goals to be more meaningful. It felt like Amy really wasn't doing a whole heck of a lot, despite some spells where we see examples of Dorothy, et. al's cruelty in this reimagining of Oz.

The second issue is related to the first: the more I thought about it, the more I realized this reimage of Oz really didn't have a lot of flesh to it. The environment was threadbare in its drawing, never immersed me completely. The strength to L. Frank Baum's original tales was that it had a strong sense of place in every book, alongside its respective cast of quirky and interesting characters. In this, I could only get a fraction of where this was taking place despite some cool descriptions here and there. That's probably the main thing - it **sounded** cool, but its heart was missing, much like Dorothy's purported turn to darkness. It felt lacking to a fine point.

Even the characters themselves felt only threadbare in their construction - serving a purpose before being tossed aside, sometimes for chapters at a time, with lacking development or threadbare motivations. I couldn't feel for them all that much. I initially felt for Amy because of her respective problems and even something of a snarky voice, but by the time I got to Oz, I just felt like the character motivation was dropped several notches on the building ladder. Amy's voice no longer carried her, she was being carried by the story events itself. It carried a guise where it seemed like Amy was being proactive for what the situation allowed,

but only in spurts. I could get her motivations for wanting to help Ollie's sister, and consulting the magic mirror. But I just didn't get all the time spent where she was undercover for so long without so much as an idea of what she would have to do next. Not to mention waiting for other characters to act (though I understood that she was kept in the dark on purpose and some of her tasks were "tests" if you will.) The problem was that I just couldn't care despite being kept in the dark like Amy was.

Her attention to (and jealousy over) Nox annoyed me, but not to the point where the relation completely threw me from the novel. I think that may have been the start to where I started noticing things going downhill for the work, and where the pacing of the tale became problematic. I'll admit that even with Amy's recruitment into Wicked, I was bored from the lack of motivation and depiction. So much of that time could've been tightened up for events. I couldn't even feel for one of the major character deaths around that time because the pacing in that part of the novel crawled so much. The writing really wasn't that strong to me. Throwing in bits of Oz lore alongside major pop culture references didn't really endear me to the novel either. As much as I appreciated references to Wicked, the movie Highlander, Star Wars, and Harry Potter ("~~Not my daughter, you bitch!~~" "Not my dog, you bitch!"), it was trying too hard. It was trying *way* too hard to be modern and edgy. It felt false and *that* was what threw me out of the story more than a few times. It all came across as "wink, wink, nudge, nudge" and I wasn't buying what it sold for its commercial measures.

And maybe that was the problem - this feels like a commercial title, not so much taking advantage of the imaginative and interesting pieces that it puts forth. It's an introduction, but it never really carries the ideas home. Probably the only story thread I even felt remotely satisfied by in this tale was the journey to rescue Ollie's sister (and Indigo's respective role, but that was over before it really began). It's cake icing that's pretty and sweet, but you take a bite of it and that's all you're getting. Bring all the action, visual gore, snark, cursing munchkins, brain eating, ax grinding and such you want, but if you get to the heart of this, what does it really contribute? The answer really isn't all that much.

I may end up trying the sequel, but definitely with a lot less expectation and excitement than I had for this one. I can't say I would recommend it personally, though I think some will end up enjoying it for what it offers. You just have to wade through a lot of scenes where it seems like it introduces a lot of build up and cool stuff, but in the end, just puts a finger on the pulse of potential. And that leaves the experience hollow and something that I just couldn't get behind.

Overall: 2/5 stars.

Wendy Darling says

4.5 stars Well, color me surprised--this was excellent! Such a great reimagining of a skewed Oz, with interesting characters, awesome and imaginative use of magic, lots of humor and gore, and genuine emotion. And it's just plain fun.

Abrupt ending, and a couple of other little quibbles, but it's really exciting to have a debut author burst into the scene with such a confident, smart debut. Easily followed if you aren't so familiar with the original books or films, but also so many layers to appreciate if you are.

Full review on the blog: <http://www.themidnightgarden.net/2014...>

Plus look at the awesome ARC packaging for this book!

Candace Robinson says

I like weird! And this had some awesomely weird stuff! The Oz world was pretty cool with some very dark aspects, yet some good humor was blended in along with it. There was a twist at the end that I would not have guessed, if I hadn't read the prequels first! I liked Amy, and she felt like an actual teen, not a forty year old in a teen's body. I'm ready for the next book! Full review on my blog <https://literarydust.wordpress.com/20...>

Shreya (?High Lady of The Night Court?) says

I like this story better than the original one! I give it 4-4.5 stars

Danielle Paige's version of Oz is a version where Dorothy went back home, realised she didn't particularly care for it, came back to Oz, gathered magic, and became the most barbaric ruler in the history of Oz. In this version Dorothy isn't the only girl who went to Oz there is now another and she has seen that the Dorothy she thought she heard about let the magic get to her head and wants nothing more than to be the sole bearer of the magic residing in Oz. Amy has realised that the words 'Wicked' and 'Good' no longer mean anything in this fight to save Oz, and she will stop at nothing to kill Dorothy.

"Good is Wicked, Wicked is Good" .

I enjoyed the fact that the line drawn between the people who would have been considered 'Wicked' or 'Good' is no longer viable and the only person who holds the title of Wicked in this world is ironically the person who was once considered a hero.

I certainly enjoyed the characters and the plot of the story but more than anything I was fascinated by how much this Oz is different from the one we heard of as kids. Dorothy turned the once magical land of Oz into this dark and twisted version where no one but Dorothy is happy. The Munchkins, the flying monkeys, the witches everything has changed and Amy is horrified by how Dorothy constantly abuses her power and tortures those not completely loyal to her cause.

The sweet girl from Kansas turned evil, the magical land of Oz under the tyrannical rule of a selfish ruler. The tinman now with a heart, the scarecrow now with a brain, and the lion now with courage at their most debauched selves. And the one thing we know for sure -

Dorothy Must Die

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

Welcome to Oz. Take a look at the Yellow Brick Road. Like it? Good. Now run away, run faaaaaaaaar away. Pray for a tornado to take you back to Kansas, because man, **Oz is fucked up as shit.**

"Oz has changed," Gert said. "The trees don't talk. The Pond of Truth tells lies, the Wandering Water stays put. The Land of Naught is on fire. People are starting to get old."

People are forgetting how it used to be.”

But let's get back to the beginning, what the fuck happened?! How did Oz get to...this?

The Summary:

Tornado or no tornado, I wasn't Dorothy, and a stupid little storm wasn't going to change anything for me.

Amy Gumm is white trash. She lives in a trailer in Kansas, with a drug-addict mom, no dad, and no future. She's stuck with her mom's pet rat named Star that, with her luck, might turn out to be Peter Pettigrew in the long run (I'm just kidding). Life fucking sucks. So when a tornado warning is announced, Amy doesn't really care. What's the worst it could do? Kill her? Life sucks, remember, so who cares about dying? Until well, shit, the tornado actually happens. Hint: it *really* sucks to be airborne in a metal trailer.

My stomach dropped and kept dropping. I felt my body getting heavier, my back plastered to the cushions now, and suddenly—with a mix of horror and wonder—I knew that I was airborne.

The trailer was flying. I could feel it.

She lands, thankfully intact, but it soon became very clear that she's not in Kansas anymore.

“Welcome to Oz,” the boy said, nodding, like he expected I'd figured that out already. It came out sounding almost apologetic, like, Hate to break the bad news.

And yes, **Oz is bad news.** Cause this ain't your grandmother's Oz. That cute little film with the pretty pretty verdant land of Oz? Nope. **This Oz is more post-apocalyptic than fairy-tale.**

A vast field of decaying grass stretched into the distance. It was gray and patchy and sickly, with the faintest tinge of blue. On the far side of the pit was a dark, sinister-looking forest, black and deep. The air, the clouds, even the sun, which was shining bright, all had a faded, washed-out quality to them. There was something dead about all of it.

After some mysterious parting words, the boy disappears, leaving poor Amy wondering **what the actual fuck just happened?** So she's alone in a strange land, cute boys appear and disappear out of nowhere. There's a **yellow brick road**. Should Amy make like Dorothy and follow Der Yellow Brick Road? *angelic choir sings AAAAAAAAAHHHHHH~*

I knew the answer already: what I was going to do next was the same thing I'd been doing my whole life.

I turned back. Just put one foot in front of the other. Nothing had changed except the color of the road.

Fuck, no!! This girl's got some common sense. She doesn't want to go wandering into a nuclear wasteland-Oz. **Amy runs away!** Bah, unfortunately, there's really nowhere else to go. I mean, think about it, you can either follow the ONE BRIGHT THING in this dilapidated world, or you can go wandering off to fuck-knows-where in the dark scary totally creepy mysterious forest with **man-eating corn stalks**.

Before I could even touch it, a black vine sprung up from the ground and curled around my

arm like a whip, squeezing tight. It burned.

snorts And I thought High Fructose Corn Syrup was bad.

Amy follows the road. Reluctantly. Shit's looking reeeeeeeal familiar. There's Glinda, the Good Witch, only she looks like a Stepford Wife with a plastic grin. And apparently plastic grins are a thing in Oz, as a very angry Munchkin sees fit to tell Amy.

Other than the twitching, [her lips] didn't move. At all. Even when she talked.

"What's with her mouth?" I asked Star under my breath.

I jumped when an actual voice answered in a hoarse whisper from behind me.

"(A) it's PermaSmile, and (B) are you out of your dumbass mind?"

Ok, so there really ARE munchkiins! Hooray! Except they're really sad munchkins, and **to be fair, you would be too if your fellow Munchkins were being imprisoned and made to work their ass off to generate magic all damn day.** And the monkeys, the flying monkeys. Fuck, they're now imprisoned, and some of them have had to take drastic actions.

"Don't mind those," he explained, seeing the look of confusion on my face. "That's just where my wings used to be. Before I cut them off."

So yeah, clearly Oz sucks now. So what happened?!

"They talk about Oz where I'm from. I've heard about it my whole life. But this is messed up. What happened here?"

*Indigo's impassive face twisted into a snarl. "**Dorothy happened,**" she said.*

Oh, Dorothy. The lovely Dorothy. The crazy as shit Dorothy. You know that saying about **power going to people's head?** Yeah. That's what happened. Dorothy got more cray-cray over the years, and now she's imprisoning people, making poor munchkins work, enslaving flying monkeys, forcing everyone to wear Perma-Smiles like **:DDDDDDDDDDDD!!1!!1** every fucking day. **And it's up to Amy to save them all.**

Wait, what?! What the actual FUCK?! No! Amy just got here! She doesn't want this shit! She hasn't even graduated from high schoool. What the fuck is this about saving Oz?!

"That's why you're here. We need you to stop her."

I sat up straight. I didn't know the first thing about magic. I didn't know the first thing about Dorothy. "Me? I just got here. How am I supposed to stop anyone from doing anything?"

That's right! You tell them, Amy. I'd run away too. Screw this destiny shit. But there's a sect of people, the **Order of the Wicked** whose plans are to restore Oz to its former glory. **Dorothy has stolen Oz's magic, and they want Amy's help to restore it.** So what do they want Amy to do?

"Simple. You're going to kill her." She looked right at me and said, "Dorothy must die."

MWAHAHAHHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAA YES KILL THAT BITCH.

Sorry. I get a little excited over murder.

Needless to say, there's a lot of work to be done to take Amy from white-trailer-trash to "Teen assassin." There's going to be **magical training, combat training, and tea parties.** Yes, tea parties. Don't worry, it's

all part of the Master Plan. *cackles*

Will Amy be able to help the people of Oz? Will she be tempted to make the same choices that Dorothy did?

"It's your choice," he said. "It's not magic that makes you who you are. It's the choices that you make. Look at Dorothy."

"What about Dorothy?"

"That's exactly what makes Dorothy evil."

The Setting: Just fantastic. This is Tim Burton's Oz.

I'm not sure if someone has bought the rights to the movie yet, but this is a book that deserves to be visualized. The setting is just beautiful. It is such a dark, twisted version of Oz. There's the beauty and darkness of the land itself, the stunning Emerald City hiding all sorts of horrors. You think you know the **Tin Man**?

His oversize jaw jutted out from the rest of his face in a nasty underbite, revealing a mess of little blades where his teeth should have been.

The Scarecrow? The Lion? Not these versions. The Lion and his army of rabid animals (including a giant fucking murderous bunny) will eat you up. Get ready because people will die.

This book is so dark. The characters are so angry, with good reasons. So many have been enslaved, so many have been killed, sacrificed at the whim of Dorothy and her gang. Yes, there are munchkins, but munchkins have family, friends, loved ones who have died, too.

"You asked why they work for her," she said. "You asked why the Munchkins don't just tell Glinda to fuck off and take her machine somewhere else."

"Yeah. I was wondering that. Maybe it was stupid of me."

"It was," Indigo said, shooting me an annoyed look. "Do you think they have a choice?"

They cannot stand up against the power of those with magic. Hell, even the trees aren't allowed to be happy.

"Did that tree just move?"

"They talk, too, but they've taken a vow of silence."

"Voluntarily?"

"The princess felt that their conversation ruined the apple-eating experience and was therefore a violation of the Happiness Decree."

Dorothy: My one complaint here is that Dorothy looks like a slut. Really, was it necessary to have Dorothy the Evil resemble a street walker? But man, her appearance is deceiving.

Instead of farm-girl cotton it was silk and chiffon. The cut was somewhere between haute couture and French hooker. The bodice nipped, tucked, and lifted. There was cleavage. Lots of cleavage.

Don't be fooled by her appearance, Dorothy is twisted. It takes brains and manipulation and power to get

as far as she did in the land of Oz. She commands her minions, the Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow, Glinda...etc, and they, in turn, command their own army. Dorothy may be vain, but power gets to people's head, and before you know it, they turn crazy. And yep, that's what happened. I'm not fond of the fact that Dorothy is pictured to be so vain, but underneath all that, there's sheer madness. And I can totally understand why she hates Amy so much.

*Dorothy's face was burning with aggrieved rage. "I am the only one. There can only be one."
My gut twisted. I understood. We had the same story. It was like we were wearing the same dress to the prom. Dorothy thought her landing here was fate—that it made her special.
Another girl from Kansas meant that it was just a regular occurrence and that she wasn't special at all. Or—worse—that I was here to take her place.*

She loves torturing animals, and there was a scene involving a mouse that was truly painful to read. Look up psychopath, that's Dorothy in a nutshell.

Amy: Amy is the kind of character that I love; she feels **realistic**. Yes, she does heroic things sometimes, like rescue people she really shouldn't be rescuing, but she **acknowledges** her stupidity. She is **not TSTL**, she sometimes has a few mean thoughts, and she gets a little mouthy and talks back when she's nervous. The difference between Amy and other bitchy YA characters is that **Amy is never malicious**. She's just kind of a jerk sometimes, like me.

Amy also has a tendency to get scared, to **run away**. And that's just fine with me. She's not perfect.

*Why did I hesitate? Was I that weak?
I told myself that I didn't want to ruin the Order's plans—they'd told me to wait—but I knew that wasn't entirely it. I'd chickened out.*

I understand perfectly. I'm a wimp. I like the normal, the routine, if you hand me a Special Destiny, fuck no, you can take my destiny and you can have it. I just want to read books and be mean.

Amy actually **trains** for her skills, for her magic. It doesn't come to her naturally. **She also doesn't hesitate to kill**. Can I get a fuck yeah?

I sliced diagonally across his chest and then drew the knife out only to plunge it right back in, drawing an X along his left side with the blade.

Final comments: Reader beware that this is the first installment in the series, so expect a lot of world building, a lot of plot development, but not a lot of resolution. **This book is a setup for the eventual showdown.**

There is romance, but it's light. Amy has a crush, there is a hot guy in the book, but the romance is very light and it didn't bother me. The plot takes priority.

Overall: Highly recommended.

Whitney Atkinson says

4.5 stars

Nataliya says

So, Dorothy must die, huh? Well, perhaps. But if this book is any indication, the cause of this cardiopulmonary arrest would be little else but frustrated boredom.

How do you make the flip-one-of-the-most-known-and-beloved-stories-onto-its-head book uninteresting? Good question. Let me give you some pointers:

-- **1) Make the beginning relatively strong, to draw the readers in and to remind them as the story drags along that this story had potential**, that it could have had a strong narrative voice and a memorable protagonist. Then deploy the strategies below, catching the excited readers unaware:

-- **2) You can consider padding your book out to make sure your story can eventually fit a trilogy, since trilogies is where the money is.** However, instead of coming up with enough material for the trilogy, just stretch the boring segments of the story to achieve the necessary word count. For instance, take up a huge chunk of the book with drawn-out scenes of training that do not lead anywhere, and allow the reader to feel firsthand the monotony of a job of a poorly informed spy by detailing every little bit of the castle cleaning she needs to do while waiting for the plot to leisurely catch up with her. Drawn out does not even begin to describe it. Pacing? We don't need no stinking pacing!

--- You win extra points if pages and pages have been spent on the boring scenes full of whiny inner monologue (oh, that unavoidable staple of first-person narration!), but the actually interesting bits are skipped over, and suddenly you realize that the regular girl from Kansas has suddenly become a witchcraft savant without apparently putting more effort into it than a few clumsily constructed fighting scenes that appear to be written by someone who only has a very theoretical idea of fighting.

"You've gotten so much better. It's not just the magic. It's the rest of it. I don't even think you know you're doing it. The way you move; the way you think on your feet. You've gotten so good so fast. You're a natural, you know."

-- **3) While you're at it, why don't you throw in some requisite stereotypes about women?** Here are some suggestions:

(A) Openly describing your villain looking as a proverbial... Well, let me have the book speak for itself here:

"Instead of farm-girl cotton it was silk and chiffon. The cut was somewhere between haute couture and French hooker. The bodice nipped, tucked, and lifted. There was cleavage. Lots of cleavage."

Because, clearly, provocatively dressing and being evil is closely related. Because good girls clearly would never dare to wear revealing clothes. Because hypersexualized evil is so much worse and easier identifiable than the same evil dressed demurely. The sad thing is that this book, while stooping to slut-shaming, tries to project the opposite:

"I hate to break it to you, but just because someone has pretty hair and good skin tone and a crown instead of a pointy hat doesn't mean she's not the baddest bitch this side of the Emerald"

City.”

(B) Introducing petty jealousy among women, centered at the whatever boy they find attractive. Because, as books tell us, women have to be in constant competition for male attention, regardless of the context and situation. Like this bit, where Amy meets a wounded girl to whom her love interest seems to pay some attention, because priorities, clearly:

"Being abandoned with no explanation didn't bother me. What bothered me, suddenly, surprisingly, was how much more Nox cared about helping this other girl."

Or the bit where our lovely protagonist's hostility towards another woman is triggered without any cause - except for the 'culprit' being another woman, therefore another potential competitor for the precious boy. This particular side character serves no other purpose in this book other than the jealousy bit:

"Something about the way Melindra flicked open her metal lashes reminded me of Madison back home. Like she already hated me and we hadn't even met yet."

Good thing the noble love interest has eyes only for our lovely heroine who's better than anyone else:

"Nox returned, handing a knife to Annabel, who thanked him with a flirty smirk. Nox ignored it. Or maybe he just didn't notice it in the first place."

Because Oz or another magical place, in books like this one it always comes down to nothing but this:

"It was the halls of high school all over again."

-- **4) Overload your book with modern slang and pop culture references to make it sound modern and edgy.** I'm sorry, but a character native to Oz should not be referencing 'History of Oz 101' unless Oz *just happens* to share American educational system.

-- **5) Heavily rely on readers' familiarity with the Oz characters thanks to the books and the film, and therefore put minimal effort into developing most of them for the purposes of your story.** Just throw in a sentence or two and expect the readers to fill in the blanks thanks to the pre-developed world someone else created for you. After all, why would you make the extra effort? The lack of overall character development is so much more prominent when comparing them to a few that have actually received proper literary treatment.

-- **6) And in the end, have the entire bloated book read like little but a prequel-sort introduction to all the interesting events that may happen in the next book - as long as you shell out some \$\$ on it.**

Was there anything good about this book? Well, yes. The beginning was reasonably solid. Not all characters felt weak - for instance, I still had a soft spot for Indigo even all the long boring pages later. The creepiness of the setting was frequently well-shown.

2 stars. That's what I think about going on another adventure with Amy Gumm and her crew from this book:

Emily May says

"I realized, looking around for the first time, that we weren't in Dusty Acres anymore."

Disappointment #1: This book was extremely boring for about 80% of the 432 pages. I was tempted to call it slow at first because it certainly felt like it, but I guess stuff was constantly happening - I just didn't care about any of it. Occasionally I would perk up because I read an interesting page and then I would go back to forcing myself to absorb the words properly. It was a lengthy and difficult slog, despite the exciting premise.

Disappointment #2: The quirky Tim Burton-esque Oz didn't work for me. The strong beginning made me wonder if this was actually a contemporary novel with *The Wizard of Oz* parallels and metaphors woven into it - well, I think that would have been a better book. The story is about Amy Gumm who has grown up in a trailer park with a mother who is slipping further into a drug-induced oblivion. She has been called "trash" her whole life by other kids at school and the teachers never believe her side of the story because they know all too well who her mother is.

Amy is exactly the kind of character I enjoy reading about. The kind who is realistically flawed, complex, well-rounded and interesting. She's had it rough enough that you feel sympathy towards her, but she's no sappy pushover either. I was instantly intrigued - captivated even - by her life, by her relationship with her mother, by the sad loneliness she obviously felt... then she got tornadoed out of Dusty Acres and into Oz and that's when everything went downhill.

"This wasn't the Oz that I had read about or seen in the movie. It was as if someone had drained out some of the Technicolor and introduced some serious darkness."

I lost all connection with Amy and her story when she landed in Oz and began moving from one group of people I didn't care about to another. In this version of the story, Dorothy returned to Oz from Kansas because she found our world lackluster in comparison. Caught up in a world of magic where she was deemed a hero, Dorothy was soon appointed Princess of Oz and became obsessed with the power awarded to her. Dorothy proves the saying that power corrupts and begins slowly terrorizing the land and people. And it is up to Amy Gumm to stop her. Honestly? I think an interesting character like Amy Gumm is wasted on a quirky fantasy filled with odd laws (reminiscent of Lewis Carroll's Wonderland) and Permasmile lipstick.

It was almost like it tried so hard to be quirky and weird, that I could see right through the charade. And the reality was dull.

Disappointment #3: Instalove or instaromance or instaangst. Who cares, anyway? People and talking animals are being tortured, the world is in peril, your life is in danger... d'ya think you could control your bloody hormones for a sec? Or at the very least stop getting unreasonably jealous at really inappropriate times. I swear some potentially excellent scenes are ruined by petty jealousies and romantic angst. I want magic and nastiness and darkness and twists! Not young lovin'.

Disappointment #4: Dorothy doesn't even fucking die. It's all lies! You better be prepared for that sequel! Or two. Or three. Maybe it'll never end. I'll be walking around with a zimmer frame* and that bitch Dorothy will still be alive. I wish you luck if you're continuing on this journey, but it's time for me to bow out. I'm glad it's over.

.....

*Apparently it's called a walker! Jeez, ~~bloody Americans~~. Thanks Khanh! :D
