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Everything about Jessie Gillmansen's life changed when her mother died. Now even her hometown of Junction is changing. Mysterious dark things are happening. All Jessie wants is to avoid more change. But showing a hot new guy around Junction High, she's about to discover a whole new type of change. Petr Rusakova is more than good looks and a fascinating accent—he's a guy with a dangerous secret. And his very existence is sure to bring big trouble to Jessie's small town.

It seems change is the one thing Jessie can't avoid.

13 to Life Details

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From Reader Review 13 to Life for online ebook

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by AdrienneBe for TeensReadToo.com

They aren't supposed to like each other. It was just a new student, helpful (had no choice) current student show-him-around deal.

That went down the drain in less than a week with not much help from dark, foreign, tall, all-too-handsome, get-lost-in-his-eyes Pietr. Jess wasn't looking for a relationship; in fact, she was looking for anything but after her mom died a few months ago.

Jess is just trying to put her life back together and help her messed up friend, Sarah, but love doesn't really care, does it? Not even if the boy Jess falls in love with is absolutely, undeniably a werewolf who has more dangerous secrets than just his paws.

13 TO LIFE is all about one girl's heart-pounding choice to be with a boy who might never have been hers in any other circumstance. Delany's tale takes a new spin on the always undeniable attraction to the new boy in town, and is filled with a heroic mix of the supernatural with everyday life, and spiced up with some not-so-sweet Russian mafia men.

I absolutely couldn't stop flipping through the pages, only deciding to take a break to set the dinner table. This is a deliciously romantic mystery filled with so many unknown dilemmas one won't come around such a well-written novel like this very often.

Katie says

13 To Life was a fast-paced, romantic story that for some reasons is sticking to my head like glue. I think I say this quite a bit, but it's not your average werewolf novel.

The plot really doesn't pick up until the very end. I still can't decide if that's something I loved or disliked. I think it definitely paved a good path to the second book; even if I had hated this novel (which I don't!) I would still be dying to read what would happen next. But except for the occasional foreshadowing happenings every few chapters, most of the story surrounded Jessica and Pietr's relationship. On one hand, I wanted the plot to thicken, but on the other, I enjoyed just witnessing their interaction and developing romance before the monsters came out to play. Like I said, I'm still on the fence about that.

But to redeem itself, when the monsters did come out to play, I got shivers. Shannon Delany did an awesome job at writing suspense and intense scenes. And despite the small amount of foreshadowing, everything was awesomely set up. The little things that clued us in, like an eerily creepy scene containing Russian nesting dolls.

Overall, I really enjoyed 13 To Life. It's mysterious, romantic, suspenseful and scary all at the same time. And since it has the biggest cliffhanger that I have ever read, I'll definitely be impatiently awaiting its sequel. I definitely recommend this to all paranormal fans!

Shannon (Giraffe Days) says

There was a time when I had real enthusiasm for these books; now, I can barely summon the energy to write a review of one of them. That's the problem with genre fiction. The first few that you read are great, and then you read a few more and the formula starts to smack you on the head. Which ones you love just depends on which ones you read first. This is especially true of Fantasy fiction, but even more so for YA Paranormal Romance. If I was a graph nerd, I could show you on a daggy graph how my enthusiasm has petered out the more of these I read, each one getting less and less, the excuses I make for them getting fainter and fainter, the gaps between reading them longer and longer.

But I also want to be fair, and give a new author a go. You never know, do you, what the next book you'll love will be. And I DO enjoy some good ol' paranormal romance, I truly do. I'm just becoming disillusioned with the whole - not genre, but formula. Even when authors try new things, it still feels like the same formula to me. I don't even mind the formula, if the characters are strong enough and have enough chemistry to carry it. If I *care*. It seems like such a small thing to ask for.

This one was purely a whim purchase; that, and I'd left my book at work and needed something to read on the subway home, so I stopped in at the bookshop to get one. And thought, why not? Let's try another one. Are you familiar with the formula? No? It's quite straight-forward: New girl/boy in school with a mysterious past and a Big Dangerous Secret that's oh so obvious from the beginning (is either a vampire, a werewolf or has some other supernatural power). Romance and sexual tension between Protagonist (often with some tragedy in their past) and Newbie begins suddenly but hits snags of Hesitation, Mystery, Poor Manners, Miscommunication, Rivalry and whatever else you can throw in. Toss in some third party that's out for blood and there you have it: yet another Young Adult Paranormal Romance.

Yes, I know, you can hear my jaded cynicism (yes even my cynicism has become jaded); like I said, I don't really have the energy to dust it with sugar. It's not that the formula is particularly bad, even if it is repetitious and tiring; worse than that, it feels like all these new YA authors are reading each other's books and learning bad habits from them. They all feel like they're written by the same author. The *style* is the same. The *characters* are the same, or could be.

The story in *13 to Life* is much the same as all the others. Jess is the Protagonist With Some Tragedy in her Past: her mother died in a car accident a year ago. She lives with her father and younger sister, Annabelle Lee, on their property outside the small railway town of Junction, where Jess has taken over her mother's horse stud. She's moderately smart and works on the school newspaper, and has been spending a lot of time researching reports of mysterious wolf prints in a neighbouring town (I mention this specifically because I will come back to it).

She's assigned to show a new boy around the school. Pietr is an instant hit with all the girls in their classes, but Jess has eyes only for popular Derek who plays on the football team. But having Pietr around constantly, sparks begin to fly. For some reason that wasn't clear, Jess pretended not to be interested. Her best friend Sarah latches onto him instead, and because Jess has made it her mission to help Sarah ever since Sarah was in an accident and "changed", Jess tells Pietr to go out with her. That's essentially the plot for most of the book.

(As I'm writing this, it sounds stupid and ludicrous and all my nagging problems with the story are only

becoming stronger. It doesn't help to learn that Delany originally wrote it as a "cell phone serial"!)

I honestly don't know how to summarise this book to make it sound like it has a plot, or a plot that isn't entirely predictable, or just not ridiculous. Pietr's a werewolf, and it's blatantly clear to us from the beginning - but for some reason Jess, who narrates, can't see it. Even when he tells her. She's very good at *not* seeing, at *not* thinking.

You know what else she was good at? Manipulating people. I sort of liked her (although she seems to have been written as the antithesis of the Bella Swan character who comes across as passive and sweet to many people), but I really hate people who try to fix other people's lives, who make projects out of other people because they want to help them. I know people like that - you probably do too - and they're bossy, patronising, emotionally manipulative, superior and repressive. I can't stand people who "only mean well" - it's no excuse! In fact, people who "only mean well" often do more damage than good, because they're really doing it for themselves.

Well, Jess was one of those. Sarah was her pet project, and I don't know what was scarier: Jess or the truth about Sarah.

I'm holding back that "truth" because I don't want to spoil everything (other reviewers have spilled the beans, if you really want to find out), but it does bring me back to the mysterious wolf prints I mentioned earlier. What was Jess's interest in the crazy wolf stories anyway? I mean, originally. What was she looking for? She *seemed* to be following a very specific train of thought, but it never materialised. And when or how did Pietr know about this? Maybe I just missed that detail ... It was all rather disjointed. The story read fine at the time, but trying to think of it as a coherent whole after having finished it just doesn't seem possible. There are way too many plot holes and inconsistencies in this book. There are too many things that aren't explained - not things that are deliberately not explained because it's Heavy and Deep and part of the Big Plot; but things that are minor yet necessary to the overall forward momentum of the plot. Like the "mysterious" wolf prints. It begins by the author wanting to set up a bit of mystery, not give too much away all at once. It ends by them forgetting to clarify things, and if there's enough of these little holes, the whole plot starts to look moth-eaten before we've even reached the Big Reveal (i.e., the climax).

I won't list them. I didn't take notes while I read. But I did notice them. The story rushed on, heedless, and littered along the way. I don't know why Pietr fell for Jess, what he saw in her, or what "triggered" it. Just, all of a sudden, he became interested in her. I didn't find Jess's attraction for him convincing either, and I didn't get why she kept stringing Pietr along and being such a cow (another sign of her manipulative behaviour: you only realise she's a cow *later*, upon reflection). There were lots of things that didn't really make sense to me. I don't get (and maybe am not meant to) what the title refers to (except for some comments towards the werewolves' life spans). That annoys me, because *it's the title* AND the title of the series. So it is rather important.

There is some good humour here though. Amy, Jess's other best friend, is the "wise cracking" character; I couldn't help but wish that she were the protagonist, though: she was the only person to tell Jess that what she was doing to Sarah was wrong, and many other bits of wisdom, and I lost respect for Jess the more she stubbornly held onto old decisions that no longer applied. It became hard to feel sympathy for her - which is a big problem. I did like Pietr though. He was sometimes a bit wooden, and I don't know what he saw in Jess, or why he would go out with Sarah at all - and then be snogging Jess in the barn! (Yeah Delany skimmed over *those* scenes!)

And then we came to the climax, and it got *really* ridiculous. I won't tell you what it is because that would

spoil the fun - seriously, you'll laugh. You're not meant to laugh, but it's hilarious. (I'm *dying* to make a snarky remark, but I'll refrain.)

For all the above, Delany's *13 to Life* is not the worst in the genre that I've read. It's got lots to offer those new to the genre, and I can see where the author tried to do new things. It can still be a fun read, but what kept me reading to the end was that I was waiting for something to happen. It might have been better if Delany had gone the way of *Twilight* and built up the relationship between the two main characters earlier, instead of the *Jessica's Guide to Dating on the Dark Side* route whereby the main characters seem to hate each other until the very end (why is that fun?). Instead I kept reading and wondering when Jess would finally find out that Pietr is a werewolf, and when it did happen it was quite the let-down. If I'm going to read a cheesy book, I'd like some cheese please! Overall, it just wasn't very satisfying.

Wendy Darling says

Boy, it sure takes some girls a long time to figure out there's a werewolf in her midst. Dogs react weirdly to Pietr, the new boy in school, he sniffs people, his eyes look "disconcertingly feral," he has "startlingly beautiful teeth," he heals super fast, he thinks vampires get more attention than werewolves do, there were *wolf attacks* in the town his family just left...do you need more signs? Oh, how about HE TELLS HER ON PAGE 205? But Jessie Gillmansen doesn't believe him until he actually leads her into the woods and transforms in front of her on page 286. And then the book ends 22 pages later.

I am somewhat shame-faced at having read this entire book. I kept waiting for it to get better, but if anything, it just got more and more convoluted. The Russian Mafia stuff makes no sense, the cheating thing makes no sense (Jessie's making him go out with her best frenemy Sarah, who was formerly evil but then killed Jessie's mom with her car, but who is now "good" thanks to Jessie's good samaritan project. So if this girl likes Pietr, Jessie can't have him, so he's got to go out with the other girl, but Jessie can't stop kissing him. Got that?), and the wolf thing doesn't have time to make any sense, because you only get 10 minutes with the knowledge until it's all over. And while it's clear the book was set up for sequels, it's very odd how abruptly the story ends, and how weird behavior from the killer best friend and Derek, the sometime-crush, is never explained (although it's pretty easy to guess what's going on in Derek's case), not even a little bit. Most of all, Jessie herself seems really young and misguided and naive, and with a main character so painfully unaware of herself and those around her, the book seems very skewed towards younger teens.

The thing is, I think somewhere buried deep down (okay, deep, deep down) there might've been a decent book in this. But it needed to go through many more revisions with a lot more character development, a refresher on the importance of providing motivation, and a huge overhaul on planning out a coherent plot. But maybe I'm just kidding myself, just like Jessie did.

Heather says

I may be overly critical in this review. Only because, I have read so many different stories similar to this one, especially ones that have been excellent reads. The above statement is part of my problem with this book, it is only one of a thousand stories just like each other. Nothing really setting them apart. It's getting quite boring actually. None of these books are sparking any real excitement for me any more...urgh!

All these stories are all the same. The plots all seem to follow some formula: girl or boy falls for a vampire or werewolf. There is some momentary drama in which some other person comes between the two lovers(that same old, love triangle), then the two make their way back to one another. There is also some small sub-plot that can also interfere with the happily ever after...blah...blah...blah...

This book started to get more interesting towards the end, but by then, I was already fuming from feeling like this was a another *deja vu*. It's sad really, because, if I would have picked this kind of book up for the first time, I know I would have loved it.

Oh yeah, I'm also really tired of the self-sacrificing characters. Oh poor me and I have to do this for the good of others. urgh... I'm a good person, but I don't go around announcing it.

I said, I may be overly critical. It's just I've read some really amazing books and then, just okay book. It gets frustrating because I love to read, but I want something different, even from my favorite genre. I love vampire and werewolf stories, I want them, but with different scenarios and more unpredictability.

Give me something fresh and new, please...

~Tina~ says

13 to Life was a good read.

I found the main character Jessie to be refreshing. She didn't swoon over the guy and fall in love with him as soon as she meet him right away so I thought that was nice, and while I liked all characters and the writing was well done I just couldn't get into the plot.

The mystery and intrigued needed more punch to it and it lacked, well, Werewolves? This is probably just me since I'm really picky when it comes to this paranormal to begin with.

All in all I liked the book and look forward to reading the next one.

Stan says

This is an incredible debut novel -- a must read! I had the pleasure of seeing Shannon Delany create the first draft of this on <http://www.textnovel.com> over the course of about 5 weeks. From the very beginning, I could tell it was going to be a hit! I particularly think readers will love Jessica, the quirky protagonist whose well-developed yet understated sense of irony makes her the perfect narrator. And you will find yourself not wanting to put the book down as you follow Jessica's adventures and her budding relationship with Pietr, the mysterious new boy who soon becomes the center of her world.

I read this on Textnovel.com, I read it before it was submitted to publishers and I have seen the advanced reader copy. And I am so excited about its release!

While this novel is in the same genre as the *Twilight* series, it is really nothing like any of those books. Why? Because its so much better! Among other things, in my view, Jessica is more interesting, more real, more compelling and funnier than any character in *Twilight*. And the underlying premise of *13 to Life* is more

believable.

I suggest you pre-order this book so you can get a copy as soon as it is released -- I promise you won't regret it (and I likewise promise you will regret missing out).

I suppose I should disclose that I acted as Shannon's agent in selling this book to St. Martin's Press, but at the same time, its important to say that I am being totally honest in my review as well!

Emilee says

Review at: <http://penultimatepage.com/>

My Thoughts:

In a market over-saturated with werewolves and vampires and others that go bump in the night, 13 to Life stands apart.

Shannon Delany's debut novel is a fast-paced, quick-witted thrill ride. From page one, I was thoroughly engrossed by Jessica and Pietr's story.

13 to Life was filled with suspense and mystery and mobsters and was so much fun to read. Jessica was an any-girl and completely relatable while Pietr was dark and mysterious and Russian, so really, where could you go wrong?

The story was a bit slow in the beginning but picked up after a few chapters and kept up the pace straight through to the last page. Secrets were revealed at frequent intervals, so that definitely kept me turning the pages. There were definitely more story lines than just Jessica and Pietr's relationship. I felt like a few were more "off the beaten path" than others, meaning to say they came out of nowhere, but I am definitely excited to see where they go in the next installment of the series.

I loved that Jessica lived on a farm. Since the author does, as well, it felt very real and gave the story a different twist than a lot of paranormal stories set in urban areas. Shannon's descriptions were vivid enough for me to picture everything without overloading the reader with details.

The Blurb:

13 to Life by Shannon Delany is a fabulous debut novel that introduces new twists to a once-typical werewolf story.

Renee says

Ah, Goodreads First Reads program. It was nice knowing you.

Despite the high GR average, this is not a good book. The writing is distractingly bad, so that I couldn't finish it (and I devoured the Sookie Stackhouse series, where someone's penis is referred to as "Mr. Happy"). Sentences like

"I stepped forward, slipping between observers until I stood intimately close to Pietr, and before I realized what I was doing, my hand was touching a wicked-looking scar that started at his side and twisted cruelly, racing raggedly across part of his abdomen, just below the ribs."

should not survive final edit in a professional publication. The problems are glaring (misuse of breathless syntax, a buttload of worthless adverbs, and it should be two sentences, at least) and more importantly, they're easily fixed. So why weren't they?

It'd be one thing if that were a momentary lapse, but it's not. The prose disappoints throughout. More examples:

"No one lives forever," he said.

He had no idea how well I understood that most simple and cruel fact.

Even eliminating the word "most" from the 2nd sentence would be an improvement (although I'd kill the whole thing).

We heard the roar of Pietr's motor grow dimmer, weaker--more distant.

Three adjectives that serve the exact same function, & none of them interesting (also, each at odds with the noun "roar").

"Nyet...I love animals," he said, but his tone made me think of the way I'd say *I love pizza*.

"No," his voice rumbled in his chest, deep with my ears so close. "You're right." The words reminded me of Hunter's growl.

Hint: He's a werewolf. Really, really (also "deep with my ears so close"? Wha-whaT?). In short, the bad writing choices are everywhere, smothering the story like kudzu.

There are other things I don't like. None of the characters felt 3-D. The author tells rather than shows (and shows when she should tell). There's seriously-written-yet-ridiculous scene involving a mystical Matryoshka (I am not kidding). Pietr intersperses his excellent English with *Da & Nyet*, which is what writers do when they are trying to show an accent. It's just...oh, not good.

Kate says

13 to Life is an interesting start to what could possibly be an amazing werewolf series. The novel kicks off really nicely by letting the reader get to know Jess. Her background, family, etc. She is a great character who only gets better once Pietr is introduced. Pietr and Jess have amazing chemistry. The kinda of chemistry that I love to find in Young Adult novels. It is honest, raw, and took time to build. Yes, there is that almost immediate spark. But it does not suddenly jump from spark to "I love you and cannot live without you." It is a slow burning passion that increases with time and familiarity between the characters.

Initially, I was completely captivated with 13 to Life. Fantastic characters, interesting plot and writing, and just enough mystery to keep me glued to the novel's pages. But as the novel went on, I found myself continuously wondering, "Where are the werewolves?" To be honest, there is very little werewolf action in 13 to Life. And when the werewolf appearances do occur, it almost feels like it is too little, too late. Now, I am not saying that I did not enjoy the werewolf experience, but rather, as a reader, I wanted less of the subtle hints, and more of the actual werewolf goodness.

Despite the lacking werewolf factor, 13 to Life was quite enjoyable. I thought Jess and Pietr have a

wonderful and healthy relationship, regardless of some background drama, and have the possibility to become a favorite literary couple of mine. Where the series is going, I am not sure. It seems that 13 to Life is just one huge build up of things to come. And I am looking forward to the ride.

Jen (The Starry-Eyed Revue) says

Edited 8/17/18 to add:

Okay, so I'm definitely a different reader than I was back in 2011 when I first read this book/series. It's not as good as I remember, but I'm trying to divest my shelves of books I'm unlikely to read again or encourage my tween to read, so I thought I'd give the series one more go before eliminating it completely from my stacks. Also, I apparently never read the 5th and final book? That wasn't really my MO back then, but it's been the case in recent years, an issue I'm trying to rectify using my "so I can finish the series" shelf for re-reads and final books.

At any rate, it appears I enjoyed the sequel to this book a bit more, so I'm willing to soldier on...

Originally rated ???? on 4/16/11

i love werewolves. throw in the russian mafia, and you've got awesome possibilities. i thought this novel was exceptionally well done, especially considering how it came to be. see shannon delany's profile for the full story...pretty impressive.

jess is a small-town girl who's recently suffered a devastating loss. enter the rusakova family, who have suffered a loss of their own, and who are willing to protect the secret they share that links them to that loss. when the family is set to join their peers at the local high school, jess is paired with pietr, the youngest male rusakova, and assigned to show him around school, and from there on out, their lives are forever changed.

the characters were all well-developed and likeable, and the main character was completely relatable, even the self-sacrificing aspect, to a degree. good friends always end up giving up something they want for the sake of a friendship, right? maybe not, but it's still a redeemable quality, to a point...like when it becomes an unforgivable character flaw.

delany's writing is phenomenal, the descriptive components never lacking. the narrative was fluid and encompassing but not exceedingly wordy. it was succinct rather than long-winded, and it got the point across exceptionally well. i very much look forward to reading more from this author.

Dixie Marie says

I loved this book and I loved Pietr! I would recommend this book to anyone that likes a super sweet romance with a dark mystery. From the first moment we meet Pietr we just know that this guy is weird. You knew from like the 2nd page what Pietr was. Jessie is very bright. She resists Pietr in the beginning, because she has this huge crush on this jock named Derek. Derek is supposedly really hot, but Pietr hates him! I know he

was jealous because Jess liked Derek instead of him, but I think there might be more to it. Everyone kept warning Jess that Derek was evil under his beautiful face. I kind of let my imagination get wild, and started thinking that maybe Derek is a vampire... Maybe?

Pietr's family was quite a shock. His older brother Max (totally hot, I fell in love with the guy) is funny, and his older twin sister Catherine (by 2 minutes, haha) is really nice. His eldest brother Alexi (Sasha) is the guardian of the family. His parents died a year before. Pietr is the youngest. Isn't that cute... This book was frustrating at times, but mostly very sweet. I had it finished the first day I got it. So, read it! You'll love it. Psh! I did.

Tink Magoo is bad at reviews says

1.5 'I'd gladly punch you in the face' Stars

I'm going to go on a rant because I'm pissed off. I'm pissed off because I'm disappointed. I'm disappointed because this had so much potential, but it was all thrown away because the female lead is a complete and utter idiot!

Up until the 100-page mark, I was quite enjoying this; the writing was engaging and I made allowances for the plot being a bit slow seeing as it's the first book in a series. What started to tick me off was that the more I read the more I realised that there wasn't an actual plot and Jessie was a complete and utter judgemental hypocritical raging bitch who only thought about herself and yet everyone tiptoed around her like she was some spoiled delicate princess. OPEN YOUR EYES PEOPLE SHE IS A TWAT!

And Pietr. Well, let's see he COULD have been a decent male lead if he had any balls and bought a new set of eyes so he could see that Jessie was dragging him along like an abused puppy.

If she told him to lick her shit covered feet, he would have thanked her for the privilege, all while she carried on and on for half the book about how much she loved that stupid jock. Why the fuck did he keep chasing her when she kept brushing him aside, then pulling him back, just to shove him away again.

'Oh I like you and I like you. Let's kiss. No stop we can't cause my friend who killed my mother likes you so you need to be with her, but wait let's kiss again. But no we can't.'

Rinse and repeat. Jessie not only wants her slice of cake but everybody else's too and when she makes herself sick from too much, she'll blame it on them for giving it to her.

And let me say it again - SHE'S A RAGING BITCH.

The plot - well there wasn't one. And it's only in the last 30 pages that our 'oh so amazing' heroine discovers the stupid hero is a werewolf. Give me a break.

And have I mentioned the stereotypes yet? I think this book had every stereotype I've ever heard of surrounding high-school. Cheerleaders are dumb bitches. Nerds have thick black glasses, are scrawny and pale. Everyone worships the jocks like they're gods. And I haven't even talked about the Russians yet. Argh.

What makes this whole thing so frustrating is that this had real promise. To get to 100 pages when nothing had actually happened and still be interested is a testament to how good the writing was. But that was all that worked. Maybe if you put this author with someone who can write a kickass heroine then you'd have a best seller, but for now, I'd save your time- unless you like snide little bitches and books filled with copy and paste stereotypes.

D.J. says

13 to Life was one of those books I simply COULD NOT wait for. Everything from the cover to the plot captivated me. Shannon Delany's friendliness also fueled by anticipation.

For starters, Jess is an extremely likable narrator and character. She's funny, smart, and a kind-hearted person. She entangles herself in a web of lies, but in my opinion, her lies were spun with good intentions. Her love of vampire novels is amusing since vampires are currently all the rage. I admire her ability and willingness to put others before herself, despite the fact she often gets hurt as a result.

Pietr is a mysterious, yet charming character. His feelings for Jess are romantic and passionate. Although he has some personal issues to work out, he still proves to be a gentleman when it comes to Jess. I like how dark he is and how he's afraid to let Jess in on his secrets. He loves her, but the last thing he wants is to hurt her. I also really love the fact that he hates a certain Shakespeare play that many people, myself included, love. I don't know why, but I find it amusing--in a good way.

I really like how Ms. Delany included Pietr's siblings in the story and how they all interact with each other. In particular, I really like his sister, Catherine. She seems genuinely sincere and happy for Pietr and I can't wait to learn more about her in the sequel.

Ms. Delany's writing is wonderfully descriptive and funny. She has not only given Jess an authentic voice, but she has also given each supporting character their own voice and identity. Her descriptions are beautiful, but not over the top, which allowed me to see everything clearly in my mind. To me, it felt like each page came alive. Also, due to the fluid and even pacing, there's never a dull moment and readers will quickly become engrossed in the story.

Next to vampires, werewolves are one of the most popular supernatural beings in literature right now. But like Maggie Stiefvater, Shannon Delany has taken a known mythology and made it fresh again. I don't want to say too much for fear of spoiling the story, but although the wolves themselves don't really differ from other ones in books, their history does.

In the end, I fell in love with 13 to Life! I couldn't put it down and now I'm left hungry for the sequel. I love Jess and Pietr's relationship and can't wait to see them grow as a couple. Please do not hesitate picking up a copy of this beautiful, suspenseful, and riveting novel! You'll regret it if you do.

Peep (Pop! Pop!) says

Sigh. This had been on my tbr list for a while. I really wanted to like it. No, you don't understand, I **REALLY** wanted to like it. I think that was the problem, I had my hopes up way too high.

Mainly, this book annoyed me. I don't know what in the world is up with love triangles. I mean, was there a writers convention somewhere that sold authors on the idea that love triangles were going to be the **next hottest thing**? If not a conference, then maybe a memo. There had to be a memo. I *abhor* love triangles (my ode to Sarah).

In real life, do people really think werewolves are an abomination? Someone said that in the book, and I thought that was the dumbest word to use. Really? An abomination?

Speaking of real life, if the boy I was crushing on kept sneaking around with me, and then keeps telling me that he can't just break up with his girlfriend, I'd start getting a little suspicious. That whole cheating thing annoyed me and really it did NOT make sense.

For most of the book Jess just annoyed me. She was moody and mean and I did not get her reasoning for what she was doing at all. She lied constantly. She lied to herself, her dad, and her friends. I didn't get Pietr. That's all, I just didn't get him. And if it was such a small town, I wonder why no one bothered to tell the "truth" to her "friend"??? Really, no rumors, no whispers? Nothing? I did like Amy, she had sense. And I liked Annabelle Lee (what a mouthful). Though I often wondered why she was even in the story.

And don't think I didn't miss all those subtle and ridiculously obvious canine references - "he bristled", "looked feral", and "my mind howled", etc - before the werewolves were revealed.

Halfway through the book I realized that this was a series. I could have sworn it didn't say it was a series when I added it. There are a ton of questions left unanswered that will likely be answered later in the series. There were things that I felt should have been resolved in this book. Like why Derek was such a big part of the first half and then the author kind of dismissed him from the book.

ARGHHHHHHHHH! I don't want to give spoilers but something happens in the end that annoys me. If I had any need to read the next book, there it went down the drain. The same thing happened in another book I read. UGH!!!! It just got absurd. (WHY do they have to even include them?)

Charisma says

You probably already read a number of reviews on this book. Some were bad, some - undoubtedly - great. What would be the point of describing it once more? Let me introduce another view of the novel... From the point of view of a person with Russian-Ukrainian-Polish background on the topic, well... the main character supposedly belonging to the same ethnic group.

OK, here is the deal... It is possible for second/third generation immigrants to transform their first and last

names to something that doesn't make sense to people from their heritage group. So as my husband said, it is possible that the *Family Name* at some point will become something like *Rusakova* which at this moment wouldn't be translated at all and would have to have been given to the family by a Mother very long time ago... *Imagine somebody's grandmother very young and proud of her ethnic background, most probably quite uneducated who came one day to a different country, a couple of months later had a bastard child* (a child without marriage, I mean) and ... well, she could only give her son her last name. Imagine her just giving birth to a baby boy (remember a long, long time ago there was no epidural, there were no painkillers, no giving birth-in-a-water kind of thing... you were lucky to get a doctor and to be in a hospital...), she's relieved, but very, very tired, somewhat in pain, and the doctor or a nurse is asking her to give name to the newborn baby, asking her about her last name and well... writing it exactly as she had said it. There you go, a male child with a female last name. A mother dies soon enough and the child doesn't know better or is too attached to it to change anything...

As you see, it is possible in real life, but chances are, by the time her grandkids were born and grown the last name would have been transformed beyond recognition anyway.

Coming back to our story, I don't think this is the case. I only read about 25% of the book, but I can tell, that the boy is implied to know Russian, which means he couldn't have had an *improper* spelling of his last name. (And first one too, of course.) It is totally true that he could have used *Peter* instead of his original name to present himself just for the sake of it being easier on *local people*. I also use an English version of my name instead of the one I've used since I was a child, or instead of the Ukrainian version of it, that I have on my documents. It is very true that Jessie would have tried to read his *real* name and would have undoubtedly had troubles with its pronunciation. *It is actually very, very true and quite funny. I had a laugh or two reading that part. It was exactly like some people would try to read my husband's name, or even my Russian and/or Ukrainian name.*

What's Up With Names?

"These are the Rusakovas" - a family name... Rusakov(s) :: ??????? :: if I would have translated the Russian surname.

"This is Peter Rusakova" - Peter or **Pietr**. OK, if you read it in Russian, that should be closer to 'o', something like Piotr, :: ??? :: and of course Rusakov... :: ?????? :: there would be no 'a' in his last name... in comparison to, say, Natali(j)a :: ?????? :: (girl's name) who would be Rusakova. :: ??????? ::

And here we come to the short name for Piotr, which in Russian would be something like "Petia". :: ??? :: Instead the coach calls him "**Pete**", which, I'm sorry, I cannot even pretend to read. **Don't get it!**

"My brothers, Alexi - Sasha - and Maximilian." It took me a while to count brothers... the author mentioned THREE brothers, but there were FOUR boy's names all-in-all... Or maybe, Sasha was their sister? Nope! Her name was Catherine. Beautiful Catherine. Anyway, there were THREE brothers, and TWO new names, not three as I thought in the beginning. You see, my confusion arose from the sentence above. **Alexi** sounds more like the Russian version of "Aleksei" :: ?????? :: which could possibly be shortened to Alex without an 'i' at the end. And **Sasha** is short for Aleksandr :: ??????? :: (or Alexander in English version of the name.) Apparently someone got confused here, because what was meant to be written is the person's 'full AND short' name in one sentence. Which should have been either **Aleksandr - Sasha** or **Aleksei - Aliosha** :: ??? ::

And **Maximilian**... well, in general they don't call kids in Russia Maksimilian, it could have been Maksim :: ?????? :: (or Maxim in English version).

"Our sister. The beautiful Catherine." And now tell me why their sister's name is 100% English? She's supposed to be Peter's twin, she's supposed to have the same parents, even be born the same day. They all know Russian, so it would be only natural to assume that they've been born in Russia, and with Peter having THE RUSSIAN name shouldn't she have one too? If you'd think so, then her name should have been something like Katerina :: ??????? :: with the short version Katia :: ??? :: And yet we have... what we have.

Additional Facts About Russian:

"Prosteetcheh," he said. - What was meant here is an apology word in Russian. Which I would have written something like "Prostite" :: ??????? :: (*e* at the end should be pronounced). The problem is, people... school kids, classmates would never say to one another "Prostite", this is a polite form of the word which is usually used in a conversation between an adult and a kid, or maybe between two polite strangers... not between schoolmates. In this case it would be "Prosti". :: ?????? ::

"Eezvehneeteh," he whispered, breathing stirring my bangs and warming my face. (Boy, he's been 'breathing' a lot!) Once again, it seems like Peter is talking to his teacher apologizing for stepping on one's foot... If I've been in the same situation as Peter, even if I was, for some strange reason using Russian, (in my opinion, it's way faster and easier to say **Sorry**) I would have said "Prosti" not "Izvini" :: ?????? ::

"Horashow. Good," he said. - and here we come to another 'not-quite-right' pronunciation of the word. You see, if the Russian was reading it, he would have read all the letters in the word which is not supposed to be... Or if you're an English speaking person, wouldn't you try to read the last part as 'show'? I most probably would. The real Russian word would be "Horosho" :: ?????? :: which would translate to English more so 'OK', than 'Good.' *I tend to correct myself all the time using "OK" when talking to my friends abroad, just because it is easier, and they do know the meaning of the word, of course, English being so popular and all.*

"Da. Spahseebuh." - I could have understood it if Peter murmured the words, sort of talking to himself, in not-expecting-Jessie-to-understand-or-hear-what-he-was-saying kind of way. This could be close, to make it sound Russian if you're reading it aloud, but if I was to write it, it would have been something like "Spasibo." :: ?????? ::

"Za udachu," she whispered OK, here's the deal... You can drink **Za udachu!** :: ?? ?????! :: but you cannot wish someone 'luck' like this. You'd say, plain and simple, Udachi! :: ?????! ::

Tsarina Ekaterina Hmm... **What was that?!!?** Well, I mean I know she (the author) meant Tsaritsa Ekaterina :: ?????? ?????????? :: (remember, Peter's twin was supposed to have the same name, but she does not?) but what's **Tsarina**?

What's With All This Russian in All the Inappropriate Places?

I get it, I do... (The Russian blabber, I mean.) I sometimes use Russian words when I'm not paying enough attention or am too tired to control myself. The normal reaction to something like that is, yes, confusion of the person you're talking to... Which leads to further apologies, translation, and continuation of the

conversation in English. It seems like Jessie wasn't confused at all by his "Da" and "Nyet". It's like she knows Russian, and doesn't have to question *at least once* to understand the meaning. *Here in Alberta a lot of people, and I mean A LOT, have come from either Ukrainian or Polish background, so they do naturally know simple words from those languages... as well as some swear words... as well as some words their grand-mas used... The problem is this book didn't give me the feeling that somebody in Junction, except for the Rusakov family, had any Russian background whatsoever. So naturally it surprises me that Jessie just understands Peter... I mean, this can be happening between old friends, but not with a person you just met.*

I would have to agree though that using Russian words in the conversation between Peter and his brother, and other 'Russian speaking community' would be very much appropriate, as it gives a realistic touch. (When we talk in our family we tend to mix-and-match instead of using one pure language.) Instead, they seem to only use 'simple' words in Russian, instead of saying everything in it; or at the very least using Russian for more complicated words. *I find it harder to remember complicated words in English, and usually the first one that comes to mind is in Russian, then you're trying to translate it before actually saying the word. Instead, things like 'OK', 'Thanks', 'Sorry' are popping off of your tongue just like that...*

You know what, probably the most accurate and appropriate use of Russian was for the word **matryoshka** :: ??????? :: I would have probably corrected an English speaking person on the 'real' name for the 'thing', as well if written I'd probably use the same letters... *You could consider using 'i' instead of 'y' but this is usually personal preference in Translit Writing which doesn't change pronunciation that much.*

This concludes my 'review' of the book, which I didn't really hate or love that much. I think it wasn't terrible especially when you know to ignore the Russian used. I don't think though that the book inclined me to reading the rest of the series. I just have too many 'wanna-reads' on my list to bother with the next book that will be 'so-so'...

Alex Bennett says

I really knew very little before starting 13 to Life. I knew that it had something to do with werewolves, and that is all I knew. Because of that, I really didn't have the chance to have any expectations. But what I found was a great read which I devoured, eagerly wanting more and more with every flipped page.

Jessica is a great, strong, and smart character. It was great to read such an exciting story from the perspective of someone who has a clear enough head to be smart about what's going on around her. Though she didn't pick some obvious things up, she was definitely quicker than her friends. Sarah and Amy were okay, but not as good of friends than I would expect. I'm convinced Sarah is going to stab Jessica any second, and Amy isn't really around enough to help.

The writing was great, though nothing really stood out about it. It got the story where it needed to be, though I think it included some things that didn't necessarily need to be included, such as Derek. I think it was obvious all along that Jessica was going to be with Pietr, and Derek may have just been thrown in so there could be some sort of love triangle... because we need more of those, right?

The story, though it starts out slow, is very engaging and kept me reading on and on. I couldn't wait to get more of this book, and by the end of it I found myself upset that there were no more pages to eagerly flip

through. But thank goodness the sequel comes out in just a few months, because I don't think I can wait much longer than that. Especially with that crazy ending!

I definitely think that most people will find themselves enjoying this unique new page-flipper of a novel. Its great cast of characters, great writing, and unique and exciting plot will make readers chow down this book as quick as they can.

Sandy says

I picked up the sequel, *Secrets and Shadows*, and I realized I remembered almost nothing from *13 to Life*, so I thought I'd read it again. What a mistake. Rereading *13 to Life* only reminded me of the three things I hated about it when I read the book the first time.

1. LAMEST. PLOT. DEVICE. EVER. Jessie likes Pietr. Pietr likes Jessie. So Jessie "unselfishly" tells Pietr to be with her best frenemy, Sarah, because that's the "honorable" thing to do. What is honorable about telling the boy you love--and who loves you--to be with your psychotic friend and then kissing him behind her back? YA books seem to have to find a way for the lovers to be star-crossed--a reason why they can't be together--but this is the WORST excuse I've ever seen. I can't be with you because my friend likes you. Even though you don't like her. So pretend you like her and I'll kiss you when she's not around. Ugh.

2. The events of this book take place over, like, two weeks. I added up the days the first time I read *13 to Life*, and the book spanned something like 2-3 weeks. Love like that doesn't happen in two weeks. I mean, Pietr's passionately kissing Jessie at the football game after knowing her TWO DAYS. The love and attraction between Pietr and Jessie (as claimed by the book) would be much more powerful if the story actually let them GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER FIRST. They meet. They're immediately in love. With barely even any conversation.

3. Pietr's secret isn't revealed until the final few pages, even though it's obvious to the reader within the first few pages. This created really strange pacing. So much of the plot is wrapped around Pietr finally revealing his secret to Jessie, but the author drags this plot point out for the entire book, and I grew impatient. This should have been revealed much, much earlier--the secret is TOO OBVIOUS to the reader, and I grew frustrated with Jessie for not realizing and with Pietr for not telling her. I felt the story couldn't move forward until Jessie knew, but the big reveal didn't occur until the very end. Much too late.

Despite these issues, I will read the sequel. Let's hope the author dumps the sham Pietr/Sarah relationship and moves the story forward now that Jessie knows Pietr's secret.

Kirsten says

Not quite a fiver but this was the first book in a while that I was able to really get into. I was into it from the first chapter and I thought it was just a nice quick read and I found the plot interesting. I wasn't crazy about having the book end with lots of questions unanswered but I guess if you're writing a series that's the way to bring readers back. Another problem I had was that it was too short! I wanted to keep reading for days. I think the biggest draw for me was all the Russian culture and language. I had to write down a few of the Russian words that were used but I found that to be one of my favorite things about it! I've been in love with

all things Russian since Dimitri in VA... So this was a treat.

Naomi says

I don't like this book very much at all. First of all, with all the Russian-speaking in it, it annoys me because I don't know these words and it takes reading the word several times to know what it means. I wouldn't mind if they just defined it after it was said. Second, it took the whole book just to get to the part with werewolves! Third, I hate the main character Jess. Just tell Sarah you want to be with Pietr! Just because Jess says that Sarah likes you and that she can't be with you, doesn't mean you should ask Sarah out, which makes for an even stupider main guy character. And break up with her if you're going to! I know she thinks sneaking behind Sarah's back is for the best, but that is the most hateful thing a friend could do! Be a true friend and tell her you like Pietr and you're dating him. You are such a LIAR!

Other problems I had with this book: Amy, you're even a worse friend for not telling Sarah. No sane person would ever help someone they hated and that made fun of them after they killed their mom! NO, not even an insane person would do that, so it makes this story highly unlikely. Russian mofia? Well, I won't get into the MANY problems I have with that. Rushed ending. And they have a short life-span, I hope they'll find a cure soon. And if they're only going to live till they're thirteen, how old are they now? And what is up with the many love triangles. Derek-Jess-Pietr and Sarah-Pietr-Jess, seriously, did we really need that many. And it's practically like Sarah and Pietr aren't dating, just break up with her already. You'd think if Sarah was so smart, she'd figured it out already and dumped him. And she was supposedly the worst of the trio? Yeah, she had a nasty fit here and there in the book, but they said she was the smartest, obviously not. Okay, now I'm seriously wondering why I even gave it a two, but that's because I was able to actually finish it, unlike Beautiful Creatures which still is lying on the table collecting dust. I almost forgot about it. And there was a few, VERY few, points where this book made me laugh, but I'm not sure if that was because of the sheer stupidity now. And yeah, I'm sorry Jess lost her mom and all, but seriously.

Other things that makes this unbelievable: Jess gets off with beating up two cheerleaders with NOT ONE punishment, even if the two cheerleaders said she shouldn't a real school would've given her a couple detentions at least! The Russian Mofia really want these werewolves, but didn't come sooner to collect them? Why let them live such a luxurious life, it makes no sense at all! Then this book has so many references to other books, does she really expect us to read all these so we get the reference? Really? Also, I don't get the title at all, 13 to Life, how does that relate at all to the book. And if that's the whole series name, then they should've had a subtitle that DID relate to the book.

Overall, I would not recommend this to any of my friends, who would? Oh yeah, you should totally read this Russian mofia, werewolves not until the very end, two love triangles that were not really needed at all, and most annoying female lead book. Yeah, I think not. Reminder, the only reason I gave this two was because I was able to finish it.

EDIT: Forgot one thing. For ONCE can't it be the girl who's the creature, not the guy. Why is it always the guy that's supernatural? Why? I want a girl that's a werewolf or vampire, instead of the guy, just for one book.

Also, I think they could've fit all of this series into one book, because there was a lot of unneeded stuff. And I'm betting the next book will have a lot of more unneeded stuff. Why can't an author write a short book anymore, this could've easily have been only two hundred pages or less. Also, they could've left the Sarah love triangle thing out of it. Jess could still be nice to her and help her heal (even though that is SO UNBELIEVABLE), but she didn't need to give her Pietr, and Sarah could just be the killer of her mother. And it looks like she tried to leave it off at a part that left you "wanting more". Not really, not reading the second, not even looking out for it. I'll have to reread another book before I burn this one. I still paid nine

bucks for it, and even if I hate it, I'm not going to waste my money even more by burning it.

EDIT: I actually changed this to a 1/5 because I still can't get over how bad it was. I also don't think it deserved a "it was okay" rating, and after reading more books you really realize how much worse it was. I'm usually not one to bash a book, if you looked at my books you'd see that very few books on my list ever get a 1 or 2, but I just think this book is ridiculous and I don't want anyone to waste their money on this. Hopefully they check ratings like I do before buying a book.
