



The Bitter Seed of Magic

Suzanne McLeod

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On the surface, Genny's life seems ripple-free right now. Finn, her sexy boss and -- well, Genny's not sure what else she wants him to be -- has stopped pushing for a decision on their relationship. The seductive vampire Malik al-Khan has vanished back into the shadows. And the witches have declared her no longer a threat. But unless Genny can find a way to break the fertility curse afflicting London's fae, she knows this is just the lull before the magical storm.

Then a faeling -- a teenage girl -- is fished out of the River Thames, dead and bound with magic, and Genny is called into investigate. As she digs through the clues, her search takes a sinister and dangerous turn, exposing age-old secrets that might be better left buried. Then another faeling disappears, and Genny finds herself in a race against time to save the faeling and stop the curse from claiming its next victim -- herself!

The Bitter Seed of Magic Details

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From Reader Review The Bitter Seed of Magic for online ebook

Wanda says

2017 Summer Lovin' Reading List

On the most obvious level, this is just a very good story, chock full of magic, mystery, and action. Faelings are being killed and Genny is trying to figure out the motive and the perpetrator. In the meantime, she must also be aware of the curse put on London's Fae community, preventing them from reproducing and putting them at risk of "fading." Prophecy seems to indicate that Genny is the key and all of the Fae communities are lobbying to provide her with a baby-daddy in order to break the spell.

When I read the book with the curse very much in front of mind, I couldn't help but think of all the women in the world who are forced to bear children, whether they want them or not. The whole issue of who owns women's bodies—the women themselves or their families or husbands? Does the community get a say?

For me, this was the best book so far in this series, and I look forward to the next!

LadyTechie says

Just as the other books in the Spellcrackers series were good, The Bitter Seeds of Magic continued that winning streak. There was a huge mystery, well several huge mysteries, and some serious surprises along with a bit of mystery left unanswered. There are a ton of magical beings and I was confused a bit for a while with all the twists and turns. But, by the end I had things figured out. Good read!

Joanne says

On the surface, Genny's life seems ripple-free right now. Finn, her sexy boss, has stopped pushing for a decision on their relationship. The seductive vampire Malik al-Khan has vanished back into the shadows. And the witches have declared her no longer a threat. But unless Genny can find a way to break the fertility curse afflicting London's fae, she knows this is just the lull before the magical storm. Then a faeling - a teenage girl - is fished out of the River Thames, dead and bound with magic, and Genny is called into investigate. As she digs through the clues, her search takes a sinister and dangerous turn, exposing age-old secrets that might be better left buried. Then another faeling disappears, and Genny finds herself in a race against time to save the faeling and stop the curse from claiming its next victim - herself! From Amazon UK

Being a fan of so many authors and series, I do sometimes find it difficult to keep track of release dates, much to my annoyance. Don't ask me why, but for some reason, I don't think of pre-ordering. Thankfully, we have the wonderful social networking site Facebook, where Suzanne McLeod announced that her new novel would soon be released. And not long after that, it arrived on my doorstep.

What can I possibly say about The Bitter Seed of Magic that I haven't already said about The Sweet Scent of Blood and The Cold Kiss of Death? I'm not sure there is anything, because all of the books in the Spellcrackers.com series are just so good. They are amazing!

There is the usual amount of action you come to expect from a Spellcrackers novel, always exciting, always with you sitting on the edge of your seat. With Genny going from one problem to another, it's so difficult to put the book down! Even though I'm only reading, I find reading McLeod's novels, like Karen Chance's, to be exhausting - but in a really good way! So much happens! But this doesn't mean that they are rushed through, and before you know it something else is going on. No, there is more detail in than I've read in any other book - or that I remember reading, at least. I'm not much of a details person, it wouldn't bother me much if an author didn't give a lot of description about a setting, as long as there was a story and characters I could believe in. But with McLeod's books, I love it! Perhaps this is half down to me being from London; even if I don't know the exact places she's talking about, I can picture London very clearly, so I can get the atmosphere almost instantly. But it's more than just the setting; there's sight, touch, sound, taste, smell. We get it all! The detail in the action sequences, or the detail when it comes to the twisting plots, it's all just fantastic!

Overall, I'd say *The Bitter Seed of Magic* is a more emotional novel than the other two. In the previous books there are moments of emotion, but in this book, it's throughout - for Genny and for the reader. With the deaths of the faelings, and the effects of a spell put on Genny by a goddess, there are lots of moments where I felt myself mentally going "oh!" at how sad things were. There weren't any tears, but I was definitely touched by some of the things we see. That's not to say this novel is depressive, there are the light, funny moments too - got to love Sylvia the Dryad.

The only found two problems. The first was, although I remember loving it, I struggled to remember what happened in the last book, so sometimes people or events were mentioned and I was left a little confused for a while until I vaguely remembered what was being referred to. This is my fault, the events were quickly surmised in this book, but it had been quite a while since I read *The Cold Kiss of Death*, so I should have done a re-read. Also, there was a bit of a problem with the timeline, I think. There is a point in the book when Genny spends quite a number of hours someplace, but we don't see her there for most of that time. Then later in the book, the characters would be discussing an event which happened "yesterday", when I thought yesterday included those hours we didn't see, so it would have been the day before. I got a little confused. It's not a big deal, really, it doesn't confuse the plots or cause any problems for the story, I just think I'm a little anal when it comes to knowing when something happened.

I absolutely loved this book, and seriously cannot wait for *The Shifting Price of Prey*, which is due out next year. I can't recommend this book, or this series, enough! McLeod is still up there with my favourites!

From Ink and Paper - fantasy book blog.

Michelle Cummings says

This is the third book in the Spellcrackers.com urban fantasy series. Our MC is Ginny, a full-blooded sidhe fae who has no magic of her own, but is capable of cracking (breaking) other peoples magic.

There is a major continuation here from events in the previous books, but essentially, a fertility curse has been placed on the fae, and they have been unable to conceive any full-blooded fae children for a while. They are able to have faelings (half fae/half human). Ginny has been viewed as the hope of the fae race, and if she can conceive and carry a child to term, it is believed that the curse will be broken. There are some pretty funny moments of everyone courting Ginny, but she is really not interested in getting pregnant to break the curse.

Also, in this story, the faelings have started dying of mysterious circumstances, and Ginny is trying to help

solve the case. Not to give anything away, but the central mystery turns out to be tightly intertwined with the curse and Ginny's hidden family tree.

The major things that I like about this series are that Ginny is not a powerful, kick-butt heroine, although she does have certain talents. And Suzanne McLeod has done some great world-building here, with the different races and their primary characteristics. And there are also some powerful sexy love interests!

Karen says

Absolutely loved this book! Suzanne has grown throughout the series as an author. I am waiting for the next book now....if I could pre-order it now would!

I loved the revelations about Genny's family tree. I had guessed about her Mother but not the rest! I can't wait to see how this will develop! I am also torn between several of the male characters as to whom I would like to see her end up with....but I LOVE that in these books the romance side is not the majority of the plot/story!

Fiona J Mackenzie says

Wonderful third book in this fab series. Brilliant characters, excellent story line and a pleasure to read - can't wait for the next one!

Caroline The HEA Lover says

*(This was originally posted on **Book Lovers Inc**)*

Warning: This is a spoiler-free review for this book. But I make some references to the previous books which can be a little bit spoilery.

The Bitter Seed of Magic is the 3rd book in the Spellcracker.com series, and it's now my favorite! I couldn't wait to start reading it when I finished the previous book. The story takes place a few months after the end of The Cold Kiss of Death. Genny's life is still very complicated. To sum it up, there is a fertility curse affecting London's Fae. Genny has to be the one breaking it or the magic will die. Also there's a killer murdering Faelings all over London. Genny think those murders are linked to the curse and starts investigating.

The obvious way for Genny to break the curse would be to get pregnant. Ah! but having a baby is not in Genny's plans. Everything gets complicated when she realized that all the Fae in London are waiting in lines to seduce her to be the potential 'daddy' lol. She has to find a way to break the Curse without getting killed in the process. And when the gods decides to enter the game, it all becomes even more deadly.

This book was fantastic. It's even better than the 2nd book. The story has so many twists and turns, it was a 'OMG'-fest in my house. (Suzanne you're still EVIL!) I just didn't see any of these events coming. Suzanne McLeod created a very fascinating and complex world. I didn't want the book to end.

We learn a lot about all our favorite characters. Of course we get to see more of Malik the smexy vampire, Finn the SexGod satyr, and Tavish the wylde fae. Tavish isn't easy to understand, there's a lot to him we don't know yet. This is not an easy book to review because saying more would spoil the story. I love how the author included different myths in her story.

I think one of the most important thing is that Genny is a great character. She is intelligent and has a big heart. She is courageous and very lovable. She's not one of those Too Stupid To Live (TSTL) heroines, she can't even be qualified as a 'kick-ass' heroine. No, Genny shines for a very different reason. I love this character and I want her to get a HEA. She deserves happiness.

Now, here is proof of the author's writing skill. I had a 'favorite' character I wanted Genny to get involved with. While reading the book, I kept changing my mind. I ended up not knowing anymore which one I wanted her to end up with. (because let's be honest I WANT her to end up with one of them *wink*). Suzanne found a way to make them all appealing in one way or another. I can't believe I'll have to wait a year to know what's coming up next. I feel like Genny with 3V (the virus she has), this series is a drug.

Fanta-bulous, that's how i'd summarize this book. The Bitter Seed of Magic is an action-packed adventure filled with twists and turns. Vampires, Fae, Witches and so much more...this books has them all. It keeps you on the edge of your seat from start to end and you can never guess what's going to happen next (or I don't have much imagination lol). I salute Suzanne's fertile imagination and I can only say this: Give this series a try! It's well worth your time, you won't regret it.
5 stars!

ALPHAreader says

Life is never easy when the fate of London fae society rests in your womb . . . it has been months since sidhe Genny learnt that her ability to conceive would unlock an ages-old infertility curse. Since then she's had dryads and kelpies on her dance card and some less-than-subtle advances on her person.

Genny is busy looking for an alternative curse-breaker that doesn't involve a bun in her oven. Meanwhile, a dead girl turns up in the river Thames and Genny is dragged into a police investigation that sees her butting heads with DI Helen Crane (again). Matters are made more awkward when Helen's ex-husband, Genny's current boss and almost-kinda-boyfriend, Finn, wants to solidify their courtship.

Not to mention the mysterious and enigmatic head-honcho vampire, Malik Al Khan, and all the delicious problems he entails . . .

'The Bitter Seed of Magic' is the third book in Suzanne McLeod's brilliant urban fantasy series, 'Spellcrackers.com'.

I was beginning to run out of reader-steam after second book 'The Cold Kiss of Death'. I was mostly disgruntled with the lack of romantic-development in Genny's life, despite the central plot of her baby-making curse-breaker indicating that love interests should factor in heavily . . . so it was with slight trepidation that I went into 'Bitter Seed', but I came away a reborn-devotee of McLeod's fascinating series.

In this book, Genny really can't hide from her destined curse-breaking baby-making any more. London fae are getting impatient, orderly courtship cues are being formed and Genny is rudely forced into acknowledging her fertile-role in the whole thing. Whereas in previous books the baby-making curse has wrecked Genny, forcing her to question Finn's attraction to her and run for her life from fae-rapists, in 'Bitter Seed' she isn't so much reacting as she is acting. She is actually taking matters into her own hands and getting to the bottom of her fate. Yes! This is what I wanted from our girl Genny! She is somewhat pushed into action by a trip to 'Disney Heaven' and a psychotic fae-child, but still – it's nice to see our heroine sit up and take control of her fate.

She crouched next to me and I froze as she fixed me with her pale gold gaze. "She prays for my help." Shadows shifted in her eyes and she touched her finger to my breastbone. "Her prayers disturb my thoughts. Put ashes in my mouth. Pierce my flesh." Her voice took on a deeper timbre. "You will stop this. You will answer her pleas. You will break this curse. You will give them a new life."

This book also marks a new transition in Genny's love life. Finn is getting antsy and clearly wants to start something with Genny . . . but she is still struggling with her attraction to the devilishly delicious vampire, Malik Al Khan. I loved the development of Genny's romances in this book – especially with Malik. We learn a bit more about him and what he has done to keep Genny safe, and I've got to say – he's now a real contender for Genny's affections. Finn is still a question-mark for me, only because he has so much to gain from getting Genny pregnant . . . but McLeod also drops a few bombshells where he's concerned, and I was thankful that so much of the book was spent developing his character in relation to Genny.

I also loved 'Bitter Seed' for concentrating more on Genny's adversary, DI Helen Crane. She's such a fantastic witch-bitch; both for being Finn's (somewhat) jealous ex, but as McLeod demonstrates in this third book, Helen has many reasons to make Genny her 'whipping girl'. I loved the femme-fatale tension between Helen and Genny, and I hope we haven't seen the last of Scotland Yard's finest.

One thing I always love about 'Spellcrackers.com' is McLeod's London setting. She does often go for the obvious scene-setter – like using the River Thames as the final resting place of a dead girl. But she paints the London picture so well that I absolutely fall into the scene. I love the city, and McLeod's descriptions leave me yearning to revisit London town (even if her vision is scarily noir at times);

The wind-rippled waters of the Thames reflected the blazing clouds, giving the river a metallic sheen, and in the distance the Ferris-wheel silhouette of the London Eye was a dark, nobbly circle against the bright sky. Nearer was the Tower of London, its two outer stone walls guarding the massive castle compound with the mediaeval White Tower dominating the centre. Dusk seemed to swathe the Tower's regimented battlements and the lead-capped turrets in ever-shifting shadows. As I looked the shadows coalesced into a huge amorphous shape that rose high into the heavens, the sound of wings buffeted my ears, and the bridge beneath me turned insubstantial and swayed.

I wasn't overly thrilled with past 'Spellcrackers.com' instalment . . . but 'Bitter Seed of Magic' is a real crescendo in the series. There's curses to be broken, babies to make, Jack Sparrow-impersonators and a love triangle that gets heated up a notch. I can't wait for the 2012 release of 'Shifting Price of Prey'!

Yaz says

I wasn't too sure where the series was headed with the fertility issue in book 2. I admit I did think that that

this one wasn't going to be as good as the previous books. But boy was I wrong! It was amazing, and the shocks kept coming, I had no idea what was going to happen next. I practically had to force myself to put the book down and pull my head out of Genny's world. I gave up fighting it in the end and finished the rest, lol. Now I'm sitting down, biting my fingernails, thinking how I'm going to survive until the next instalment in 2012. At least we got a happy ending and yay! no cliffhangers. Which'll make the next year or so bearable!! If you haven't read this series, you should. I promise you won't regret it.

Noodle TheNaughtyNightOwl says

Book three in the *Spellcrackers.com Series* and things got a little confusing for me. I found this instalment a lot harder to follow and did not like the prominent fey storyline. It wasn't until the vampires reappeared that things made a little more sense. But on the whole, a bit of a hard slog this one.

I'm still liking the overall storyline and enjoying the interaction between Genny & Malik in particular. Although both Tarvish and Finn are interesting as well. I'm hoping in the next instalment we will see some resolution to the romance quadrangle rather than this to and fro from one to the other. After a while it does become a little old hat.

I am still very enamoured with the vampire concept in this series. They are not your typical romance novel vampires. I love the four fangs, the venom addiction and their base evil, manipulative and deathly characters. These are not warm and fuzzy vampires and it is what saves this series from being another run-of-the-mill PNR.

This book features the fertility curse and involves goddesses, fey, witches and vampires. Interesting, but as already stated, unfortunately difficult in parts to follow. A little too complicated for my liking so this one gets a lower score than the first two as it was simply not as enjoyable.

Still a decent score on the NBRS, 6/10: "Good light-weight read, well done".

Mardel says

Really, I'm afraid I'm not going to do the book justice. I never really analyze books, characterization and plot points, etc. Frankly, I wouldn't know the first thing about this type of reviewing. I do know whether I like a book or not though. Mainly I focus on whether I enjoyed reading the book, if the dialogue was good, great or lame and how the story flows....

for me, this means *The Bitter Seed of Magic* scored high on all three points. The dialogue was great, the enjoyment factor was high and the book flowed from beginning to end, from the first page to the last.

Genny Taylor has come to enjoy a sort of peaceful existence after the events of the last two books - She's not under any immediate threats, the vampires are leaving her alone, the witches are tolerating her, and the fae are holding back on pushing their courting of her. But this is just the eye of the storm, because really, everything has just been on hold. Being called in to look at a body, checking for spells seems to be the catalyst for a series of events that shatter Genny's world and even changes what she thought she knew about herself.

Previously, Genny had found out that the fae were under a curse - no fae would be fertile and they all expected Genny to be able to crack the curse. Many of the fae expect her to be able to break the curse by

bearing children with them, or doing the nasty with them. Of course Genny doesn't want to be forced to bear any children with just anyone (or anyfae). But at the beginning, things are calm, until the body is discovered. Turns out this isn't the first body, and they've all been faelings.

Genny is now being pressured in a huge way to find out what's going on, at the same time the same people seem to be going against her finding out, the fertility curse becomes important again to all, and things begin to spiral out of control.

There were many twists in this book. It was great. Just when I thought I knew what was happening, nope - that wasn't it. It's fun being taken by surprise with who's behind the deeds and who's plotting against whom.

I also love the way the different characters speak to each other. Ms McLeod is able to have (for instance) Genny and Malik have a conversation with Genny's more modern speech and Malik's more formal speech with out it feeling forced and awkward. Seems like this should be an obvious skill for writers, but it doesn't always work out for some.... Speaking of characters; I love a good mixup of character types. And the Spellcrackers.com series has lots of fun characters....dryads, brownies, goblins (might be some of my favorites, with their love of the shiny bling), witches, ghosts, vampires, satyrs, and more. I also love the way they are described under their glamour - or their human guises. The attention to detail without being overwhelming, the many varied appearances - I am consistantly amazed at the creativity of writers like Suzanne McLeod. sometimes you get to read a story that calls itself paranormal and yet has very little interactions with different species. Suzanne's novels are all about all the different appearances and species, and behaviours.

Even though one of the main points of the plot was fertility, or the fertility curse- with all the accompanying feelings and desires that go with fertility - I didn't feel like I was getting ambushed with the "hawt and heavy" - y'know, the heaving breasts, and turgid...well y'know. There were some steamy situations and some hot-blooded wants, but it never felt like that was the complete purpose of the book. The parts were there, the situations were happening - but it wasn't obsessively so; there wasn't a time when I felt like rolling my eyes and saying "oh please". Believe me, with some books that's all I felt like doing. I usually don't finish reading them. There was a good blend and balance of story, subplots and all those....y'know - feelings. :)

Fun characters, good plots, fun dialogue, some steam and lots of humor to go along with the suspense and mystery. What else could I ask for in a novel? Wonderful! If you've already read the first two in the Spellcrackers.com series, you're going to enjoy this third book. If you haven't read any of them yet, What are you waiting for?

Jeanie says

These books are so complicated but real fun

Kelly says

Up until this point, reading Suzanne McLeod's Spellcrackers series has often been an exercise in frustration. The novels were frequently confusing, but were well-written enough that I couldn't dismiss them and always felt there was huge potential for the series. With book three, *The Bitter Seed of Magic*, McLeod finally strikes the right balance between clarity and obfuscation.

The Bitter Seed of Magic focuses on the curse laid on the lesser fae of London by the sidhe queen Cliona. The curse is introduced earlier in the series, but McLeod recaps it in the prologue, a refresher for which I was grateful. Among other things, it has blighted the lesser fae's fertility, which causes problems for Genny Taylor as the various fae races see her — specifically, impregnating her — as the key to saving their people. The other main plot thread, though the two are linked, is a series of murders of female lesser fae. Genny investigates these crimes and learns more about the messy history of Cliona's family tree and how it relates to the curse.

I was briefly worried that this book would be confusing too, especially since the fae and the vampires often give Genny cryptic information instead of straight answers, but as I mentioned above, this time the balance is right. *The Bitter Seed of Magic* is mysterious without being confusing. I didn't always know how the pieces fit together, but I always felt confident that they belonged to the same puzzle. Heck, I feel like the first two books make more sense now too, after finishing this one.

Also especially satisfying is Genny's character growth. In this installment, she grows a stronger spine against the powerful vampires and fae who seek to manipulate her, striking hard bargains to give her leverage against them. I also love her determination to not let magical forces control her sex life. Her emotional reactions to revelations about her personal history are compelling. And the ending is fantastic, bringing a touch of lightness into the dark world of Spellcrackers and dealing with the fertility issue in a refreshingly non-cliché manner.

I was worried about *The Bitter Seed of Magic*, but ended up really enjoying it. I look forward to *The Shifting Price of Prey*, scheduled for US release in June 2012.

Janet Robel says

Enjoyable and would recommend reading the others before this one. I really liked Genny because she's a strong protagonist.

Ann-Therese Killingmo says

I absolutely loved this book! For those of you who have not read this book yet I have only one thing to say. Don't hesitate you will not be disappointed!
