



## The Trouble With Witches

*Shirley Damsgaard*

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## The Trouble With Witches Shirley Damsgaard

When psychic librarian Ophelia Jensen is awakened in the middle of the night by an old friend, Rick, he amusingly asks, "Know where I can find a good witch?" But Ophelia soon learns that her friend needs help with a situation much more serious than his initial teasing suggests. Rick's friend's daughter has disappeared, and it seems that a strange pseudo-religious scientific cult the young woman recently joined may be responsible.

But Rick is having a hard time penetrating the secretive cult, and enlists Ophelia to help, hoping her magick skills and special knowledge will help uncover the mysteries of the suspect group. Ophelia and her kindly witch grandmother Abby jump at the chance to use their powers to help their friend, and travel to Minnesota to pose as vacationers. And with the help of a young psychic and a Native American Shaman they meet along the way, the witches hope to save the young woman before she's lost forever to the clutches of this harmful cult.

## The Trouble With Witches Details

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Author : Shirley Damsgaard

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## From Reader Review The Trouble With Witches for online ebook

### Gemma says

This one is my favourite in the series so far. Abby is starting to embrace her powers to help solve the mysteries. A really cute 'cosy' mystery to help my brain switch off. I am going to stick with this series.

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### Sue says

Another fun little adventure with Ophelia, the psychic librarian and her grandmother, Abby, the wisewoman witch from Appalachia. This story takes the out of their small Iowa town on a road trip to Minnesota to help their journalist friend, Rick, from the first novel. So he re-appears, but Henry from the second book, disappears. Henry and Ophelia are making progress toward friendship and understanding by the end of the second book, but at the beginning of this one, he finds out she's going to do some "investigating", slams out of her house, and is never heard from again in this novel. Interesting how these are revolving characters. The plot is good and well-puzzled out, and I was far into the book before I definitively figured out the whodunit, so that always makes me happy because I don't like it to be too easy. The characters are engaging and the stories are summer fun reading.

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### Carolyn Rose says

Not every book is for every reader and this one wasn't for me. I couldn't seem to connect with the characters and finally set it aside.

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### Angie Lisle says

Shirley Damsgaard has carved a new niche in the market: Appalachian Paranormal Fiction! Being a West Virginia gal, I love how Appalachia figures into the books without all the negative stereotyping that usually goes along with it!

I always have problems getting started with Shirley Damsgaard's books. But once I make it past the first couple of chapters, I fall in love with the characters again (and again). I am sucked in by the storyline and I have a very hard time putting the book down.

I love that these books are "chick lit" without all those annoying sex scenes! Finally, we have a main character whose biggest concerns are her family (especially her adopted daughter and her grandmother), her job, her best friend, and her special psychic gift that helps her solve mysteries. There is a guy involved - sometimes, he even helps solve the crimes - but Ophelia's entire life doesn't revolve around him. And, because they aren't rushing off to bed together, they actually have a real relationship forming. It's a nice change from what's normally published and called "chick lit." I hope it takes!

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## **Nancy says**

I thought about this overnight. This is more 3.5 than 4.0 for me. I'd have liked to see my psychic and magical action and less talk about it.

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## **Lesley Looper says**

Two stars here is a decent two stars. I didn't dislike this one, I just didn't like it as much as the first book in this series. (I skipped the second one, may go back to it later.)

I was hoping to really sink my teeth into this series with this installment, but Ophelia, the reluctant witch who happens to be a librarian (hey, right up my alley!) seems to be a reluctant reader (why didn't she read those journals?) and researcher (of witchcraft, magick, etc.). What's up with that?!

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## **Kimberly Ann says**

This is..I dunno the middle one in the series....Ophelia (Psycho..oops! Psychic Librarian) and her Grandmother Abby (Appalachian "Wise" Woman) are asked to use their "abilities" to locate a missing young woman, Brandi, who has run away from home to join the PSI community, as she is "Different".

In the process of searching for Brandi, Abby & Ophelia come across the troubled "daughter" of the PSI founders, Tink, an old Native American man who has strange powers, Walks Quietly, and an evil supernatural presence.

I still think Ophelia is quite a bit of a Dummy-head who when it comes to her own innate "powers" participates in "Active Ignorance", and that makes her character weak...because she constantly vacillates between being a scaredy-cat, doubting Thomas, & superpower woman.

But aside from her weakness in character, this is a good story and it held my interest. Another book that I stayed up until 3:00 a.m. reading.

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## **Erin ? \*Proud Book Hoarder\* says**

They say three time's a charm. As I've said before, this really seems to be the case with most series. This paranormal series follows the same - it's when I fully wanted to continue. In this one Rick, the man missing from the second book, calls Ophelia and her grandmother in to do some investigating out of town, waving goodbye to Henry introduced in book two. The author seems to introduce men only to take them away in the next novel. Strange.

While we leave the familiar town behind, it's interesting in the new mountain and lake setting as the author introduces some changes. Thankfully Darcie tags along; I like her humor and she brings a bubbling enthusiasm the series is missing when she's not around. While Ophelia doesn't humorously stumble over a

dead body for once, the author changes it to an investigation of a disappearance instead of a murder. The mystery isn't incredibly strong on who the culprit is, but it works on finding out what the mystery actually IS.

Ophelia is still an average character - nothing special, and she gets annoying with being too paranoid of the local Indian. She also butts her nose into situations and gets rude with some of that intrusiveness. Abby is her usual chin-stroking, knowing self. I never got the appeal of her that other fans of the series have. The biggest mystery of all may be why the two are so attached to the girl-child introduced. I never got instant love and connection with a child just because they are a child.

Damsgaard's writing has improved since the first book but she still falls prey to overdoing mannerisms and spelled out character movements. It's almost like picturing teens trying to act out a high school play where they make it incredibly obvious when they're thinking deeply, wondering something, pausing for a moment, or being imitations of characters.

The Trouble with Witches digs into the darkest subject of magic compared to the others. The subject isn't overly detailed but it shows a hidden element of demons that is dark considering this is a cozy mystery.

Overall this is the best of the three, but I missed Henry. This sequel changes it up some by altering the formula, but in doing so shakes away some of its working humor. By this point I'm more forgiving of flaws since I've fallen further for the series.

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### **Peggi Warner-lalonde says**

Ophelia continues to come to terms with her gift. A great read.

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### **Hazel says**

Ophelia is slowly getting less dense as the books progress. She still is overly protective of her grandmother & friends, but given that she isn't very close to many people it's understandable. I'm a little surprised though that she is kind of reckless with her safety still after all that she has been through. That is one side of her that I don't understand.

I thought the plot for this book was very interesting. For one thing, I was wondering what would happen between Ophelia & Rick. It was also a nice change of scenery to take Ophelia out of Iowa. The descriptions of Gunhammer Lake sound really lovely. Wonder if there is such a place in Minnesota? I will look it up. Also thought the references to Harry Houdini & other magicians was interesting. I can see Tink becoming more powerful than Ophelia one day. For one thing, she didn't reject her gift like Ophelia did. Walks Quietly is introduced in this book & I hope to see him in future books. He could teach both Ophelia & Tink a lot.

Anyway, lots of new threads woven in this book. Lots of potential for character development for Ophelia & Tink in the future. It's nice to see more depth in the storylines with the characters. I first couple of books felt a little light to me. Looking forward to the other books!

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### **Doris says**

[ When she brings in a sachet from the outside, she introduces foreign and possibly hostile magic. Not only doe

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### **? Irena ? says**

Rick called Ophelia to help him find a missing girl. The last place where she was seen was with the cult-like group in Minnesota. Rick took them to see the girl's parents and there they found out that the father thought the psychics are nonsense. I really didn't like Rick at that moment. After the danger they'd been in the first book, he deliberately used Ophelia's weak spot (unhappy, lonely girls) to drag her into something which might be dangerous. I found Henry's reaction to Ophelia's trip spot-on.

I didn't count but I am certain that the word worm/worming was used more times than necessary. I am not sure if there is Madam Tissauld somewhere, but since there had been wax figures in Ophelia's dream, at least they could have corrected it to Tussauds.

Nevertheless, this is not a bad mystery. Just nothing great, nothing serious.

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### **Lori Schiele says**

This is actually Book 3 in a series, but the first that I have read. I liked the fact that the author did her "homework" and had the characters properly use the "tools" of The Craft (witchcraft) i.e. crystals, herbs, candles, etc. Being Wiccan/Pagan, myself, I am very aware of these things and so was pleased to see that she was accurate in their usage. Unfortunately, that was about the only thing that I truly approved of and the only reason I gave the book 2 stars at all.

The plot line was only so-so, and the characters--mostly the granddaughter, Abby--drove me absolutely nuts. The series is based on the fact that Ophelia--the grandmother, and Abby, the granddaughter--are both psychics and witches, the grandmother much more powerful, of course. Yet, after I'm not sure how many supposed years--but at least 3 books--the granddaughter seems to constantly question Ophelia's "feelings" about things or completely miss signs that I would think should be more than obvious. I understand that some of it might be necessary to get her into the situations she finds herself in--but it began to seem like the author should never have bothered to make her psychic at all, or gave her reasons not to learn from her grandmother because Abby, time and time again, acted like a complete idiot when neon signs appeared to be flashing right before her eyes and she wasn't seeing them.

Definitely not going to bother reading more of the series.

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### **Jeannie and Louis Rigod says**

Well, this series is truly becoming a favorite of mine. I love the premise of a family that carries the traits of being true witches/psychics from the Appalachian area. They continue to quietly live their lives and help those they can without any hoopla.

The above is the case with Ophelia Jensen, a Librarian who along with her Aunt, Abby are witches. Ophelia is just learning the talents of the long-lived women of the family. Aunt Abby is an amazing medicine woman, in her own right, and studies the journals of the women passed before her. Not all the women get the abilities, but, Ophelia has and Abby is training her as best she can.

Rick, a friend of Ophelia's, phones with an urgent request...a child, Brandi, is missing and was last seen in the company of a group professing their psychic talents. Is the group a cult? Or, is it legitimate. Rick, a journalist feels something is seriously amiss. There is a Native American shaman who refuses to speak with anyone, the group itself wears garb and acts like a cult, and Rick figures true psychics like Ophelia and Abby can get to the 'truth' quicker than the authorities.

So, Ophelia and Abby head to Minnesota where they are soon joined by Ophelia's assistant, Darci. The action is well-paced, the mysteries are many, and the prose pulls you into this story.

An amazing twist occurs at the ending that I both was surprised by, and applaud. I love where this series is heading.

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### **Linda Smith says**

The Trouble With Witches is a cute, fast read. The main characters are quite appealing. The story is narrated by Ophelia Jensen - a small town librarian who is psychic and a witch and who seems to have a hobby of solving crimes. Ophelia has a powerful partner in her adventures - her gifted 74 year old grandmother, Abby. And a good friend and co-worker, Darci, who wants to be included in their cases. And a dog named Lady and a cat named Queenie (both of who seem to be better judges of character than their owner). This particular mystery involves a missing girl and the mysterious group that she moved in with shortly before her family lost contact with her. Ophelia and her crew head off to a remote lake in Minnesota to investigate the problem head-on. I enjoyed reading this book and probably would have given it four stars except for one annoying characteristic. The narrator and other characters spend too much time referring back to previous stories in this series. I would normally be out looking for the other books but feel like so much plot was revealed that it would spoil the mysteries.

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### **Jim says**

Each story in this series seems to delve deeper into the world of spirits and demons. This is okay, maybe it is just the author showing the growth of the central character, but there is a fine line between that and the author feeling that each book must have bigger monsters. That path is a dead end. That being said, this was a pretty good story with a somewhat shaky ending that introduced a couple of new characters that may add a lot to future installments.

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### **Sally906 says**

THE TROUBLE WITH WITCHES is the third book in the Ophelia and Abby series. When Ophelia and her grandmother, Abby, are asked to find a young girl who has gone missing in Minnesota they are at first reluctant to go – but when they find out she was last seen in the company of a dubious paranormal and psychic research group that borders on being cultish the two witches decide to go and see if they can help locate her. They rent a cabin on a lake near the group's headquarters and strange things soon start to happen. Mystery lights floating in the night, a young girl with psychic powers, scary shadows that try to attack, a mad man and a bad tempered Native American shaman are all integral to the plot as bodies start to pile up.

The mystery in THE TROUBLE WITH WITCHES is clever and the storyline is good. Ophelia is growing in

to her powers instead of resisting learning about them. All the characters, both the good and the bad, are well developed and believable and 'who dunnit' and why is all revealed satisfactorily at the end. Have the next book on the TBR pile.

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### Sam Jones says

This was a fun read. I am enjoying this series. Nice easy read, good plot and interesting, entertaining characters.

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### Natalie says

Enjoyed this story very much, looking forward to reading more by this author.

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### C. says

**Shirley Damsgaard** is a dilemma. Her stories are sensational. Plots eventually grab you with impressive multi-layers. I keep hoping an irritating style is cleaned up. Does she notice "*tug*" keeps repeating? Also "*narrowed her eyes*" occurs on every page! People don't do that but if the description got used once, I wouldn't think anything of it. Repetition hinders enjoyment of books that are really wonderful. **Shirley** can also omit "*5 years ago*" when mentioning Brian and series readers GET that *Abigail* is from 'Appalachia'. What she didn't do, is say where that is. I'm surprised it's in the USA. Having *Darci* pout at intervals, even tear-up for being advised to leave, was a turnoff; silly. The author asserts the character's maturity but regresses.

With future novels hopefully touched up by an editor, here's why "**The Trouble With Witches**" is great. You learn about folk magick from a gentle and original perspective. This isn't a trendy coven. This is a respectable heritage appropriately compared to Aboriginal traditions. It shows we needn't scorn one culture, when others are similar. Readers new to the craft aren't hit over the head *Juliet Blackwell*-style, with trolls and bat potions from page 1. *Ophelia* is our perspective. Apprehensive, learning as she goes, and the reader is quickly ready for more.

It's odd *Henry* knew of the trip but didn't burst in and investigate. This novel does add exciting elements that will complement the rest immensely! I merely wonder if **Shirley** was a playwright because she focuses on physicality. She describes glances and hand gestures so much, they're like cues for film direction that are out of place. If she smoothes things out and keeps up her fantastic imagination for plots, I'll gladly ride along.

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