

[PDF] Silver Is For Secrets (Stolarz Series)

Laurie Faria Stolarz - pdf download free book



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Description:

About the Author

Laurie Faria Stolarz (Massachusetts) has a great interest in teen culture, and admires young adults for their passion, energy, and creativity. Blue is for Nightmares is the product of her desire to write a novel that would have appealed to herself at that age, namely one that has a blending of suspense, romance, and the art of keeping secrets.

Stolarz has an MFA in Creative Writing with a concentration in Young Adult Literature from

Emerson College in Boston. She currently teaches writing and is a member of the SCBWI as well as several professional writing groups.

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One

It's late, past 3 am, but I can't fall asleep. I feel like there's this tugging inside me, like an invisible rope is attached to my gut and someone's pulling at it from the other end, urging me to stay awake.

I do my best to temper the feeling-I flip-flop a couple times in bed, rub patchouli and peppermint oils at the pulse points on my neck, and even haul my butt out of bed to make a dream sachet out of dried lavender and rosemary-normally surefire fixes for temporary insomnia. But it's just no use. The more I try to ignore it, the tighter the knot in my gut becomes. I just can't shake it-the gnawing, incessant feeling that something horrible is about to happen.

I crawl out of bed, once again, and step into a pair of fuzzy slippers, doing my best to keep quiet so I don't wake Drea and Amber, asleep in their beds only a few feet away. I throw a sweatshirt on over my cotton PJs, grab a few spell supplies, and head out to the beach behind our cottage.

The moon is in full view, smack dab in the middle of a blue-black sky, the two dark colors swirling together like a giant slab of marble. I find myself a spot just in front of the water where the outgoing tide meets the sand and sit back on my heels. The warm, salty breeze sweeps over my face and combs at my hair tangles, sending spicy tingles all over my skin.

I remove the necessary spell supplies from my bag-a jar of sea salt and a Thermos full of moon-bathed rainwater. My grandmother, who taught me most of what I know about spells, used to stress the importance of offering up gifts to nature. She used to say that what we offer up to the universe comes back to us threefold.

I sink down into the cool, powdery sand and stare up at the moon's fullness, imagining the light soaking into my skin, the energy awakening my soul. I pour the sea salt into the Thermos and hold it up to the moon's light. Then I say, "O fullest moon, on this night of dread, please accept this gift from the ocean's bed. And I ask thee, with a heart so pure, to help my body tell me more. Blessed be the way."

I dig a six-inch hole in the sand and pour the mixture inside, patting a layer of rocks over the top as a cover. Then I lie back and stare up at the moon, thinking how much I've changed these past couple years, how it wasn't so long ago that I used my spells to try and stop what my body and senses were trying to warn me. Now I'm using my spells to summon forth these same instincts. I close my eyes and concentrate on my body and what it can tell me, imagining the moon's energy drawing forth the answers from deep within my core.

But I don't feel anything. After several minutes spent meditating on the spell, I have no better idea of why I can't sleep than I did before coming out here. So what is it? What's this feeling inside me? Why can't I relax? Why do I feel like the seams of my world are about to rip wide open?

But unfortunately the answers don't come that easily. I know I need to get some sleep. I grab my Thermos and head back to my room, leaving the moon's gift on the beach.

I lie back against the coolness of my sheets, suddenly feeling a bit more centered, more relaxed. I imagine the moon's energy penetrating through the ceiling and my bed covers, casting light over me, easing me to sleep.

The next thing I know, I'm covered in it.

I wake up a couple hours later and find it everywhere-on my pillow, the bed sheet, matted to the tips of my hair. I sit up in bed and notice dark cherry-red stains on my forearms and wrists. A knot forms inside my chest. I do my best to unbind it, to inhale a calming breath.

"Stacey?" Drea asks, rolling over in bed. "Are you okay?"

But I can't answer. I go to wipe my face, noticing more stains. My hand trembles over my lips, trying to hold it all in, but then a trickle of blood rolls over my fingers.

The light clicks on in our room. "Oh my god!" Drea rushes out of bed. "Stacey, what happened?"

I pinch my nose closed to try and make the bleeding stop and look around the room for a box of tissues.

Amber sits up in bed and leans over her Superman blow-up doll to get a better look.

Still holding my nose, I end up swiping a sock from the floor and pressing it to my nose. "I'm fine," I tell them through a wad of cotton. "I dust hat a little dosebeed."

"A little nosebleed?" Drea questions.

"You look like Carrie freakin' White at the prom," Amber says.

"Who?" Drea asks.

"Carrie White. You know? Stephen King's Carrie."

I ignore their banter and press the sock into my nose to try and clot the bleeding, knowing that I should be grateful, that this is obviously the response I was praying for, that I did the spell for. I wanted my body to communicate to me, to give me insight-a clue, basically-into why I'm feeling so unhinged. And so this is it. I look down at the spattering of blood on my pillow, wondering what it could possibly mean.

"You're supposed to tilt your head back," Drea says.

"Not unless you want to drink it down," Amber corrects.

"So disgusting." Drea reaches into the mini-fridge for a pint of Ben & Jerry's. "Here," she says. "I think you're supposed to hold something cold at the back of your head to stop the bleeding."

I place the Chunky Monkey against my nose instead and glance at the clock; it's just after six-at least two hours of sleep, and yet I can't remember what I dreamt about.

I blot my nose to make sure the bleeding has stopped and move over to the dresser mirror to have a look for myself. It's even worse than I thought. It looks as though I've been beaten. There are patches of blood at the sides of my nose and over my lips. I grab a strand of my long, dark hair, the end now soiled with red. I wonder how long my nose was bleeding before I woke up, how I possibly could have slept through all this mess.

I sit down on the edge of my bed and silently count to ten. I wonder if I even dreamt anything at all. And, if I did, if it had anything to do with blood. I shake my head because I just don't know. Because the only thing that seems sure is that I can't break this feeling-this morguelike heaviness that sits on my heart and presses down into my gut.

"Um, Stace, no offense, but you're totally grossing me out here." Drea sweeps her hair up and secures it with an elastic; the loopy golden mass sits like a crown atop her head. "Don't you think you should clean yourself up?"

"Not to mention the crime scene you've got going on your pillow," Amber adds. She points to the bloody splotches on my bed.

I fish my bathrobe from the recyclable pile of laundry on the floor. "I'm gonna go take a shower." "At least this'll teach you not to go digging for treasure." Amber clutches Superman extra tight, one of her numerous mini raspberry-red pigtails poking right into his eye. I respond by closing the door behind me.

Two

After a shower and a cleansing walk on the beach, I head back to the cottage. To my surprise, everyone is up. While PJ overnukes box after box of microwavable egg-and-cheese sandwiches in the kitchen, Amber butter-and-Nutellas the toast; Chad flips through the sports section of the Cape Cod Gazette in the adjoining living room; and Jacob watches TV.

Jacob pauses from channel surfing and comes to greet me with a kiss. "Hey, beautiful."

"Hey there," I say, pressing myself into his embrace, like a breath of fresh ocean air.

"Enough already," Amber says, dunking her finger into the Nutella jar and licking a giant fingerful. "If the cook's not getting any action for breakfast, then nobody else should either. It's a matter of respect."

"Say no more, butter biscuit." PJ says, licking his greasy finger. "I can cook for hours."

"I'm hardly in the mood for string beans."

I hear the blow dryer click on and off a couple times in the bedroom. Drea has this thing about blow-drying her hair upside down so that it goes all wild, and then she spends the next hour and a half putting each strand back in place, one by one.

Chad pauses from his newspaper to glance down at Jacob's grip on my hand, making me almost feel like I should pull away. But I don't. It's just so weird to be vacationing all together. I mean, it's one thing when you're in school, in classes, in the cafeteria, and pretending it isn't unbelievably awkward to see your ex with someone else. But it's a completely different thing when your ex is dating his ex and that ex just happens to be your best friend. Then, toss in the added awkwardness that comes with living together and, before you know it, your current significant other can feel completely ex-ed out. Translation: Chad and I are exes. Chad is dating Drea. I am dating Jacob. We're all vacationing under one roof.

Jacob is sensing our drama.

I squeeze Jacob's hand and lead him over to the table to set it up. Meanwhile, PJ has apparently

aborted his microwave-egg-in-a-box idea, having pulled a carton of real eggs from the fridge. He's attempting to fry them in a spaghetti pot.

"So how's the snout?" Amber asks me. "Me and Drea were super scared for you. I mean, you looked like a freakin' chainsaw massacre."

PJ revs the blender a couple times for drama. "Amber told us all how you picked your nose to its bloody death."

I ignore him and look toward Jacob, sensing that he can tell something's wrong, something beyond just a normal nosebleed. He stares at me hard and bites the corner of his lip, almost as though he expects me to get right down to it. But I look away, trying to keep things light. For now at least.

"I'm fine," I say, plunking a couple plates down on the table.

"Well, that's a relief," Amber says. "Just let me know if I'll need to do anything drastic, like wear a raincoat to bed tonight."

"You could move in with PJ," I say.

Amber turns to look at him, at ...

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