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Dead Spots (Scarlett Bernard Book 1)



Synopsis

Scarlett Bernard knows about personal space: step within ten feet of her, and anything supernatural is instantly neutralized. Vampires and werewolves become human again, and witches can't cast the slightest spell. Scarlett uses her status as a null to cover up crime scenes for Los Angeles's three most powerful magical communities, helping them keep humanity, and the LAPD, in the dark. One night Scarlett gets caught at the scene of a grisly murder by the all-too-human LAPD cop Jesse Cruz, who blackmails her into a deal: he'll keep quiet about the supernatural underworld if she helps him crack the case. Their pact doesn't sit well with Dashiell, the city's chief vampire, who fears his whole empire is at stake. And when the clues start to point to Scarlett herself, it'll take more than her unique powers to catch the real killer and clear her name.

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Customer Reviews

Scarlett is a null. She grounds out all magic in her close vicinity. So werewolves and vampires become human again and witches can't cast spells while they are close to Scarlett. They all go back

to whatever they were when they move away from Scarlett's null field. Her job is supernatural crime scene clean up so the mundane world does not find out about the supernatural world. But Scarlett arrives too late to a crime scene in La Brea. There is too much to clean up and a cop has just arrived, witnessing not just the gory death scene but also a werewolf passing through. And our story begins. We meet all manner of creatures that call LA home and learn about Scarlett's sad past. This is a great story, folks. I can't recommend it enough.

The POV jumps around unnecessarily: the villain, the heroine, the love interest, even going into third person for no discernible reason. If it's supposed to add interest it doesn't work; it's more like the editing was half-hearted and lazy. Our emotionally damaged heroine makes her life more complicated than it needs to be, but since we feel sorry for her (altho I didn't) it's okay, both hot hunky dudes find her sexy and appealing. Of course there's two of them, these days apparently every fictional heroine needs two men panting after her. It was a decent murder mystery, and I enjoyed that part of it. But I'm not interested in continuing the series. Neurotic women are just not my cup of tea.

I accidentally read the second book before reading the first, (which I don't recommend.) Even so, it didn't really ruin anything for me. When I find myself getting frustrated with Scarlett's self-defeating attitude at times, I have to remind myself of all the horrible things she's been through, in a relatively short space of time. Most people would be broken, and pretty much everyone would have some issues. The storyline is a familiar one, as far as the supernatural aspects; vampires, werewolves, witches, oh my! That is where the familiar ends, and the fresh, new begins. Scarlett is a "null." Within a certain radius around her, all supernatural's lose their, "magic!" What a cool, and original concept! The one thing I thought the writing could use, was a little comic relief, now and then. It is a dark subject, with a lot of all the emotions you would expect in that kind of story. A little wit and humor, in just the right place, would keep the story from getting too bogged down in angst, (which it does, occasionally.) That is really my only complaint. I very much enjoyed both books, so far!

I'm not going to rehash the summary since it's pretty straight forward. I came across Dead Spots while browsing for new books to read (the usual lol), and thought the summary sounded intriguing. The only thing is that this is published under 47North, which is an imprint under publishing...and I never tried any of their books before (ended up getting two more books under the children section lol!). Curious about the book, I went to the author's website and read the first chapter for free. It was

a great first chapter; sounded promising and definitely piqued my interest in which I immediately order a copy! While this book has the usual vampires, werewolves and witches, Olson's supernatural beings were formed from an evolution concept having to do with Darwin and how every branch had a 'magical branch' splitting to form the three groups. Also our main heroine Scarlett is a null, able to cancel out magic within a 10 foot radius give or take. This means werewolves/Vampires become human again till they leave her vicinity and Witches can't cast spells. I haven't seen many 'nulls' in books I've read except for the Parasol Protectorate series by Gail Carriger but then again Carriger's series is steampunk and more on the lighter/humorous side. I really like Scarlett, she is not perfect, a little broken by blaming herself for her parents' death and what she does for a living but even after all that, she strives to be better for the people around her. Although she's not a kick-butt heroine she's still one tough chick, and does whatever she can to keep her friends safe. There is also a love-triangle in this book between Eli, the second-in-command to the alpha werewolf and Jesse, a human LAPD cop. I don't usually like love-triangle but this one didn't bother me, I mean thankfully Scarlett is not an angst-y little teenager. The secondary characters were also interesting, although not all of them were well-fleshed out. I hope to see more of the group dynamics in future books (PLEASE let there be more books!) since this book's main problem focused on the vampires, not the weres or witches. The book alternates back and forth between chapters from first pov and third pov, took me a little while to get used to but once I got into the story, I hardly notice the changes. Olson's debut novel is a dime a dozen in an already saturated genre, and I hope that this is a start to a new series. Fans of urban fantasy will want to put this book on their wish-list; it has wonderful world-building, great supporting characters, suspense, and a few twists/surprises that I didn't even see coming! Overall a well-written book (I can't believe this is a debut novel), and an entertaining story...I can't wait for more Scarlett and company. This is among the best books I've read all year! I suggest checking out the free chapter on the author's site, found here [...] and see if you like it as much as me...I hope you do! :D

This book is one that I truly don't know whether to rate a two or a three. To begin with, changing from a first person narrative to a third person narrative as chapters change was so confusing! Just pick one Dangit. That's what I kept thinking as I read this book. You can't be writing everything with 'I did this and I did that' and then move into another character narrating. I really hated that. I liked the idea of a null. I liked the way the supernatural community was explained. I didn't like how submissive the heroine is to the vampires. I'm really still not sure why she is so cowed by them. Could have used some more work there to make it believable. I didn't like how the heroine blamed herself for her

parents death. Why wasn't she fighting mad and full of vengeance about it instead of all 'my fault my fault poor little me'? She didn't seek anything out that led to it. She took no action that caused it. If she had, I could have understood her attitude better. My opinion that's another flaw. Probably what saved this book for me and made me want to read the second was the ending. No cliffhanger, mind you. Everything is wrapped up. But the door is opened to the next book and I wanted to walk inside. Brilliantly done. So I'll give the second one a try to see if more skill by the author shows up in the next one.

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