

Perfected

Kate Jarvik Birch

Reviewed by: Rina Guo, 17

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Ella was genetically engineered and trained to become a “pet”, a human companion and piece of property for other human families. Despite her thorough education and training, it doesn’t seem to prepare her enough for the new life and job she is thrust in, when she is bought by a Congressman and taken back to his luxurious abode. As time goes on though, she slowly adjusts to her new life naturally and becomes well acquainted with all the members of the family. But when she starts seeing deeper flaws and begins to think for her own happiness, can she still manage to stick to her role as a mere pet?

This novel is for readers age 13 to 18. There are some indirect suggestive content.

This novel was a bit of a letdown. Ella’s character lacked much nuance and distinctiveness. She seemed very naïve and submissive, and her mindset and characterization grew little over time. Her personal voice and ambition did not come out very strong. As a protagonist, she didn’t seem to have a lot of control or have clear intentions for the things she did. Some of the events of the novel confused me. There were times when the plot seemed to impulsively turn to new directions, but then eventually, the plot would divert back to the low level of excitement that was barely pushing the story along. Lots of open ends remained unanswered, such as the case with Ms. Harper. To be honest, it seemed that there wasn’t sufficient background information and context that could fully explain the whole reason for the “pet” system. Ella didn’t have much of a specific thing to do except sit still and look pretty, so I feel that the context supporting the story could have been explained and developed better. Also, at times the character relationships seemed a bit shallow or simple. In a way, the relationships seemed too ideal and too perfect, to seem genuine.

Around the end, the story became more interesting and thrilling. However, I feel that the resolution could have been built up and supported better in the earlier parts of the novel. Everything seemed to go down at once, as if on a whim, and instead of seeing Ella has determined and courageous, she seemed suddenly impulsive and indecisive out of nowhere.

I had some conflicting feelings while reading this novel, but I understand not all readers may feel the same way. If you enjoy reading dystopia and romance novels, *Perfected* may be worth a chance reading.

Recommended Titles:

Tarnished by Kate Jarvik Birch

The Jewel by Amy Ewing

Wither by Lauren DeStefano

The Glittering Court by Richelle Mead

Ever the Hunted by Erin Summerill