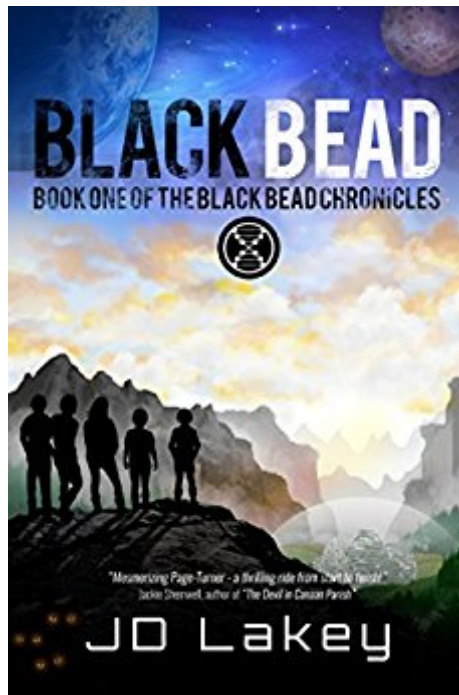




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Black Bead: Book One Of The Black Bead Chronicles



Synopsis

Benjamin Franklin Digital Award: Silver Honoree: September 2016; Indie Reader Approved, 4.5 star rating: July 2016; Library Journal Self-e Selection: July 2016 Editorial Reviews: "Lakey's stories have magic, a complex mythology, and her dedication to avoiding milquetoast females." Kit-Bacon Gressitt, San Diego Uptown News "The premise of Black Bead is wonderful, and it was a fun, short read I happily breezed through. It was refreshing to read new sci-fi/fantasy with an original plot, on a new planet." Carly Courtney, Sci-Fi Addicts.com On a savage, outlying planet an enclave of psionically-trained humans have built a utopian, matriarchal society that lives in harmony with all life. Leaving behind the polluted and corrupt world in which they lived, they colonized a new home far from the eyes of the galactic empire. Shielded from the rest of the galaxy by the dangerous beasts that inhabit their lush, forested world, the village lives a simple life under their Home Dome. Under the direction of the ruling mothers, each child of the Windfall Dome is tested at a young age to assess their abilities - a test which can plot the course for the rest of their lives. Unfortunately, Cheobawn - the daughter of the ruling First Mother to the dome - is marked with the Black Bead on her Choosing Day, a symbol of bad luck and shame. It seems the child the mothers had placed so much hope in would not be the future ruler they had hoped for. Yet there is something powerful about her that the elders don't understand. Finally of age, Cheobawn is chosen to join a pack to act as the psychic Ear on a foraging mission outside the dome. She knows this is her chance to prove herself. But something sinister stalks them and each member of the pack must draw on their unique strengths and a lifetime of training if they want to survive to see another day. In her visionary new series The Black Bead Chronicles, author J.D. Lakey invites you to journey along with Cheobawn, Megan, Tam, Connor, and Alain as they use their wits and their Luck to unravel the mysteries of the deceptively bucolic life beneath the dome in this coming of age metaphysical science fiction adventure.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Whenever there is a fuss about the prospect of human gene-engineering, more of the arguments are focused on moral than technical grounds. Ought we to change the genome? How do we deal with any technical failures? Black Bead seems to be about an entirely different question: Can a society into which such planned changes have been introduced recognize the value of an unexpected change? Six-year-old Cheobahn's black bead labels her as a maladaptation in a tribal society that resides in a "home dome" serving as a nightly fortress against a hostile environment. "Man is not the peak predator in this world, despite the psi powers that have been carefully introduced to man's genome. (That's actually a subtly misleading statement; gene-engineering is done by the women of these matriarchal tribes, and they have succeeded in isolating these new powers to the females of the species. Maybe.) Cheobahn and an older "Little Mother" friend Megan join with a trio of boys—Tam, Connor and Alain—to form a hunting group that will let the older four travel unaccompanied outside the home dome and its daytime farms. Their rite of passage to tribal adulthood is impeded by Megan's insisting that her too-young, black-bead friend Cheobahn be included in the pack. The tribal powers allow it, but because of the poor showing that brought the six-year girl her black bead, they restrict the pack to within two kilometers of the dome, barely past the local farms and gathering areas where pre-adults are routinely allowed. What the tribe's leaders don't realize is that Cheobahn's unrecognized powers have already seduced the four older members to ignore the restriction. The five will end up far beyond the elder-imposed boundaries, in high joy and deep danger, relying on the uncertain abilities

of the youngest amongst them to get home before dark. This is excellent story-telling, thrilling and absorbing, with such a light hand on precursor clues that you scarcely notice the unanswered questions. (How did the boys persuade the Mothers to let them dress in new clothing? Is a real entity supporting Cheobahn, or is that just her visualization of her powers?) But those questions will keep you awake at night, long after you have finished reading the short (166 pages) novel. They will whet your appetite for the next novel in the series, and the next.

In a remote area, a colony of psionically-enhanced humans lives a utopian existence, in harmony with most of their surroundings. The matriarchal society seeks to further improve their psionic ability, so each girl child is tested during a coming-of-age ceremony. But, Cheobawn, daughter of the First Ruling Mother of Windfall Dome, is marked with a black bead on her Choosing Day. The black bead is a sign of bad luck and shame. But, a group of adventurous boys desire to explore beyond the dome, so they defy custom and select Cheobawn to be the psychic Ear for their group. *Black Bead* by J.D. Lakey follows the adventures of this intrepid group as they discover what lies beyond Windfall Dome, and Cheobawn learns that luck is what you make of it.

Just finished reading *Black Bead: Book One of the Black Bead Chronicles* by J.D. Lakey. I won a copy of this book on Goodreads.com and this is my first read by J.D. Lakey. This is a really well developed Fantasy/Adventure. J.D. Lakey has created a wonderful world and very interesting creatures and characters. While it's been some years since I've been a young adult, I still quite enjoyed this read and I think that it will appeal to both YA and Adult readers alike..I look forward to my continued reading of this author..Synopsis: "On a savage, outlying planet an enclave of psionically-trained humans have built a utopian, matriarchal society that lives in harmony with all life. Leaving behind the polluted and corrupt world in which they lived, they colonized a new home far from the eyes of the galactic empire. Shielded from the rest of the galaxy by the dangerous beasts that inhabit their lush, forested world, the village lives a simple life under their Home Dome. But their goal was more than just to live in peace - they wanted to create the perfect human who could bring peace to the galaxy. Rather than merely cloning themselves, they began to manipulate genes in order to create a race of mutants with enhanced telepathic powers. Under the direction of the ruling witch coven, each child of the Windfall Dome is tested at a young age to assess their abilities - a test which can plot the course for the rest of their lives. Unfortunately, Cheobawn - the daughter of the ruling First Mother to the dome - is marked with the Black Bead on her Choosing Day, a symbol of bad luck and shame. It seems the child themothers

had placed so much hope in would not be the future ruler they had hoped for. Yet there is something powerful about her that the elders don't understand. Finally of age, Cheobawn is chosen to join a pack to act as the psychic Ear on a foraging mission outside the dome. She knows this is her chance to prove herself. But something sinister stalks them and each member of the pack must draw on their unique strengths and a lifetime of training if they want to survive to see another day."

Black Bead is a delightful tale that is refreshingly different. The author has carefully constructed a unique universe wherein females have psychic powers, but these powers are not ludicrous or over-the-top (as super-powers are sometimes wont to be). The heroine, Cheobawn, is only six years old. She possesses a wonderful mix of little-kid naivety, unexpected wisdom, and self-doubts that must be overcome. This is a short read, but compelling. I was quite pleasantly surprised by this book, and therefore just purchased the second volume in the series. My only gripe with the author is that it seems to me that the books are over-priced, but I am not willing to knock a star off the rating because of it. The price has nothing to do with the skill of the author, and this author is truly gifted.

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