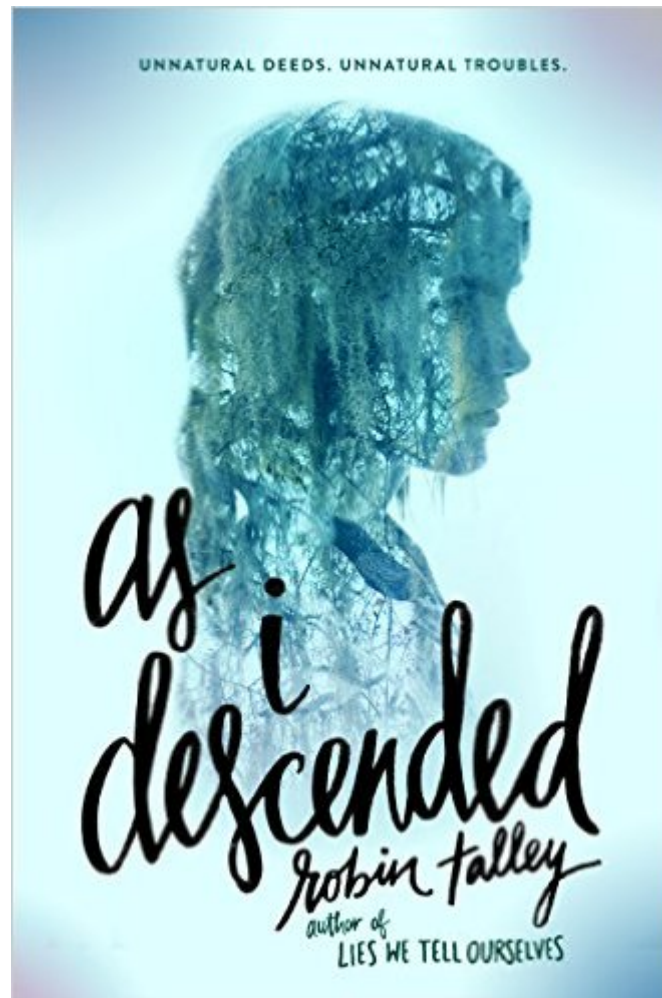


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# As I Descended



## Synopsis

From the acclaimed author of *Lies We Tell Ourselves*, Robin Talley, comes a Shakespeare-inspired story of revenge and redemption, where fair is foul, and foul is fair. Maria Lyon and Lily Boiten are their school's ultimate power couple—but one thing stands between them and their perfect future: campus superstar Delilah Dufrey. Golden child Delilah is a legend at exclusive Acheron Academy, and the presumptive winner of the distinguished Cawdor Kingsley Prize. But Delilah doesn't know that Lily and Maria are willing to do anything—absolutely anything—to unseat Delilah for the scholarship. After all, it would lock in Maria's attendance at Stanford—and assure her and Lily four more years in a shared dorm room. Together, Maria and Lily harness the dark power long rumored to be present on the former plantation that houses their school. But when feuds turn to fatalities, and madness begins to blur the distinction between what's real and what's imagined, the girls must attempt to put a stop to the chilling series of events they've accidentally set in motion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*As I Descended* is an eerie novel that tells the story of teens attending Acheron Academy, a school shrouded in mystery and suspense. The two main couples in the story are Lily & Maria and Brandon & Mateo. They are quirky characters and I immediately liked them all. The one character I didn't like was Delilah, I have my reasons but I won't tell you why (I don't do spoilers). I loved the fact that this was based around *Macbeth* and I really liked that it was an LGBT story. I read a lot of genres and

that includes M/M and F/F, so although this is YA, it intrigued and excited me. As the story developed, I grew suspicious of one half of one couple (again, no names) and with all that went on, my fears were proven correct. The journey was one fraught with danger and suspicion. Just when I thought I had figured something out though, I turned out to be wrong. There were so many elements to the story and it was a fast paced, thrilling read. It was so creepy and I just loved that it kept me on the edge of my seat. Throughout the whole story, I kept wondering how it was possible to write something with so many sub-plots and stuff with such ease. The truth is, Robin Talley is a very talented storyteller. She takes you on an adventure, lures you along by using just her words. There's darkness within these pages and I love how it made the hairs raise on the back of my neck. One lesson I learned was, NEVER play with a ouija board. Over the years, I've always wondered what it would be like to play with one, although I suppose "play" isn't exactly the correct term. I've wondered whether it's pure superstition or if there's more to it than meets the eye. But I've never bought one, just on the off chance it's more than I bargain for.

Maria and Lily are roommates at Archeron Academy and they are close friends. They are keeping a secret from most of the other pupils of their school, they're also a couple. The only one who knows about them is Maria's best friend Brandon. He's part of the popular crowd because of his boyfriend Matteo, who's loved by everyone. The queen of their school, Delilah, seems to be good at almost everything she does and when she isn't brilliant at something she always finds another way to make sure she keeps her number one status. Lily and Maria despise her and want to find a way to dethrone her. When Maria, Brandon and Lily start a séance session with an Ouija board something goes wrong and they accidentally unleash a dark power, something that slowly takes over their lives. They've awakened spirits and they are unstoppable. The power makes Maria and Lily cross lines they wouldn't have crossed before. Only, what can actually be attributed to that what's lurking in the shadows and what is being caused by the darkness that's always been inside their characters? As I Descended is an amazing spooky story. I was intrigued from the start. I love stories about Ouija boards and the consequences of using one. Maria is a sweet girl who's always there for others and who can do everything she wants to do, but she's number two and never number one. She's the princess while Delilah is the queen. Maria's love for Lily is strong and beautiful. Lily is disabled and she doesn't like that people see crutches instead of a person when they look at her. There's so much she has to offer and it remains mostly invisible. With Maria it's different, she really sees Lily. They are a unit and when they make plans together they stick to them. They set something in motion they can never undo.

As I Descended is a modern day loose retelling of Shakespeare's play, Macbeth. I was super excited to read this novel and it doesn't disappoint. Acheron Academy, located in Virginia, is an elite boarding school where the Cawdor Kingsley Prize Scholarship is what everyone has their eyes on. Maria has a good circle of friends which include Brandon, Mateo and Lily. Power couple Maria and Lily will do anything to get what they want and unfortunately Delilah is in the way. As I Descended opens up with an intriguing scene where Maria and her friends are trying to use an Ouija board at their boarding house school. However, something goes wrong. Maria is haunted by a premonition by the spirit she spoke to through the Ouija Board. Throughout the whole novel, Maria and Lily try to usurp Delilah in order to obtain the Cawdor Kingsley Prize. Robin Talley does an excellent job incorporating paranormal horror within this Macbeth retelling. The eeriness of the haunted boarding school built on a old Southern plantation is the perfect setting for the story. Talley's modern day version of Macbeth will capture the attention of those who adore Shakespeare as well as those who normally don't enjoy reading Shakespeare. She is able to suck you into the plot from page one. Although, I enjoyed the retelling in terms of plot and pacing, the character development seemed weaker than in Talley's Lies We Tell Ourselves. This may be in part that there are many more key players in As I Descended. I wish the characters were fleshed out more since I only gravitated toward Mateo. What I love is how Talley included all types of diversity within the novel including ethnicity, disability and gender and sexuality.

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