



The Haunted House Project

Tricia Clasen

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Since her mom died, Andie's family has crumbled. Instead of working, her dad gambles away insurance money, while her sister, Paige, has put her future on hold in order to pick up extra waitressing shifts. Andie's afraid of what will happen if people find out just how bad things are. She's not sure how long she can hide the fact that there's no food or money in the house...or adults, for that matter.

When her science partner suggests they study paranormal activity, Andie gets an idea. She wants a sign from her mom—anything to tell her it's going to be okay. Maybe the rest of her family does too. So she starts a project of her own. Pretending to be her mother's ghost, Andie sprays perfume, changes TV channels, and moves pictures. Haunting her house is Andie's last hope to bring her family back into the land of the living.

For anyone who loved *Counting by 7s*, *The Haunted House Project* is a journey through loss and grief, but ultimately a story of hope and self-reliance. As much as Andie has been changed by her mother's death, the changes she makes herself are the ones that are most important.

The Haunted House Project Details

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From Reader Review The Haunted House Project for online ebook

Casey Lyall says

Andie's world is falling apart. After the death of her mother, she just wants things to go back to normal, but between her father's alcoholism and gambling and her sister working hard to make ends meet, that's not going to happen any time soon. When her science partner suggests a study of paranormal activity for their project, Andie has an idea to try and turn things around at her house. Heartbreaking and beautifully written, this is a story about grief and loss and the things we do for the ones we love.

Jennifer says

A really moving book about the bonds of family and grief. Loved the friendships in this one, too!

Wendi Lee says

Andie's mother died, and all Andie wants is for her family to be normal again. Instead her older sister is working extra shifts at a diner, and her father often forgets to go grocery shopping. Andie, who has always been obsessed with ghost stories, decides to pretend that her mother is haunting her family. This seems to be the only way to get through to them.

I was very impressed with this MG novel. Every single character, even the minor ones, are three dimensional and multi-faceted. In addition to dealing with her grief, Andie must navigate middle school, where alliances shift, and her friendships no longer seem eternal. Her old friends are tired of her grieving. She finds a new friend in her science partner, who, despite being bullied, is able to support Andie and her haunting project.

Grief and healing are both hard subjects to write about, but this novel is full of tact and grace.

Mark Frisz says

This book had me reminiscing about my childhood and my parents. I was fortunate enough to have both of my parents. I could still empathize with Andie, the main character. The story tugs at your heart strings. Anyone who has lost a parent will be able to appreciate this book.

Kathleen Burkinshaw says

THE HAUNTED HOUSE PROJECT will touch your heart. Tricia Classen found the perfect balance for how a 12-year-old would express her grief and how she would react to her father and sister's very different grieving process. She tapped into the fact that each person has their own personal journey with grief. There is no right or wrong way to miss someone, and it's not abnormal to feel that you want them back into your life

in any possible way.

Andie's new friendships meant she had to let another one go. She found out who her true friends were, but she had to learn that it was okay to let them in as well. The friendship that Andie forms with Isaiah and how she finally decides it doesn't matter what people think is a wonderful subplot. He cares about her and is the one person that will let her talk about the need for her to have some sign from her mom. I loved that the science project involved paranormal activity! Also, by them having to do this project, it gave an outlet for Addie to find a way to bring her family back together.

Although, Andie was deceiving her dad and Paige, it did bring them closer. Andie could see that her family was imploding- showing that children are wiser and notice more than we give them credit. When the family finally gets a chance to say what they feel, they all learn a little more about each other and can empathize with each one's separate way of expressing how they miss her mom.

I feel that A HAUNTED HOUSE PROJECT may help some readers to realize that by talking about the person they love who is gone, one can keep their memory alive and in their heart. No one can take that away from them. There is hope for the loved ones left behind.

Some of my favorite quotes:

"Inside I'm like a simmering pot of water. Lots of bubbles hanging out at the bottom of the pot. Almost there...and suddenly I'm at full boil, popping and raging." Loved this description.

"It's almost too hard to deal with the disappointment when what you hope for never comes true."

"I realize I've sketched my mom...she was the glue and without her, maybe we'll never stick together again."

"...it's like a lake. Shimmery and smooth like glass on top, but if you start to dredge, everything gets murky and nasty."

And of course,

"I know what I did was wrong and all that, but maybe we needed to believe in her ghost before we could finally stop feeling haunted."

Hoover Public Library Kids and Teens says

Andie's family has basically fallen apart since her mother died. Then Andie gets a good idea from her beloved ghost stories and her current science project. Will "haunting" her house help bring the family back together?

Janet says

I will confess, I am not big on scary books, so I started this one with trepidation. It was nothing like I expected and so, so good! The thing is, while the title may have mis-led me, it fit the book perfectly.

It has been less than a year since Andie's mom died suddenly and unexpectedly in a car crash. And nothing has been the same since. Her dad and sister have changed so much, and Andie is worried about them. Their mom was the glue that kept them all together and the thing that made her family work. And while she can't bring her back, she thinks that even her presence could make them better. And that's when she comes up with

her plan to haunt her family with her mom's ghost.

This story was so powerful to me. What do you do when the person who is the biggest influence in your life is gone? How do you go on? And how do you help the people you love go on? Tricia Clasen had me rooting for Andie from page one, and I cheered on every positive gain as she tried her experiments. Readers of all ages will identify with her and hopefully bring them some comfort that they are not alone.

I highly recommend this book!

Rita Mariani says

3.5

Jenn Bishop says

My heart broke for Andie, who yearns for something resembling normalcy in the aftermath of her mother's death in a car accident. Andie watches on as her father struggles with alcoholism and gambling, and her older sister drifts off the course she and her mother charted for her future. But she has a solution--an intriguing one--that forms the basis of the plot. Could pretending to be her mother's ghost put everyone back on track?

Clasen smartly keeps the book out of saccharine territory, firmly rooting Andie's experience into the realistic mind-set of a thirteen year old with a multifaceted life. I loved watching Andie's methodical but tender attempts to bring her ghost mother to life. The middle grade crowd will be won over by Andie's accessible voice and this charming story.

Jamie (Books and Ladders) says

Full review to come.

Jennie Brown says

Let me just say ... I LOVED this book! So many feels throughout! After Andie's mother dies, she decides the best way to bring her family back together is by pretending to be her mother's ghost. I absolutely loved this clever premise, and Andie was such a strong, intelligent, and very realistic character. I will definitely be recommending this to middle grade readers when school begins in a few weeks!

Lois Sepahban says

I was lucky to read an ARC of The Haunted House Project.

Beautiful story about loss and hope. Main character Andie is so easy to love--her yearning for her mother and for a time when everything was okay is heartbreaking and, ultimately, uplifting.

I can't wait to pass this book along to students.

Richard Denney says

5 STARS!!!!

This was me throughout the entire book:

This was such a sad, heartbreaking, and beautifully written story. I couldn't help but cry a few times because this type of story hits home like crazy and I appreciate it so much now after finishing it. If you're looking for something beautiful and heart-wrenching, pick this up now. It will break your heart and make you smile at the same time. It also has tones of the paranormal, which I loved as well. My full Book Thoughts video will be up October 11th on its release day. :)

Jen Petro-Roy says

Such a poignant story about loss, transitions, and hope. I loved Andie and her desperation and determination.

Heather Spang says

This book takes on some very heavy topics in an age appropriate way. You'll find yourself rooting for Andie and her family as they work through their grief and you'll cheer Andie on as she navigates the social morass of middle school. So many great characters and lessons in this book!
