



School of Fear

Gitty Daneshvari

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Everyone is afraid of something...

Madeleine Masterson is deathly afraid of bugs, especially spiders.

Theodore Bartholomew is petrified of dying.

Lulu Punchalower is scared of confined spaces.

Garrison Feldman is terrified of deep water.

With very few options left, the parents of these four twelve year-olds send them to the highly elusive and exclusive School of Fear to help them overcome their phobias. But when their peculiar teacher, Mrs. Wellington, and her unconventional teaching methods turn out to be more frightening than even their fears, the foursome realize that this just may be the scariest summer of their lives.

School of Fear Details

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From Reader Review School of Fear for online ebook

Meli says

Genial este libro, fantástico para los más chicos y una delicia para los grandes, ¡tanto sarcasmo! *¬*

La trama es muy predecible, pero es perfecto para el publico al que está orientado y se disfruta mucho a cualquier edad.

Me divertí mucho leyéndolo, es una lectura de lo más agradable (ok, por momentos no tanto, hay cosas MUY asquerosas xD) y me hizo reír como loca.

Si Tim Burton hiciera una película de esto, la primera en la cola del cine sería yo, lo garantizo :P

colleen the convivial curmudgeon says

This came to my attention when it got mentioned in a group I'm in, and it looked like something I might like. Unfortunately, it didn't quite work for me.

It starts by introducing us - at length - to the four main characters and their fears. First we see them individually, and then as they start to come together. But this extended intro doesn't really add anything new, it's just the same sort of introductions to their phobia-induced quirks over and over again.

We finally get to the school and meet the quirky headmistress, who calls the kids contestants and treats everything like a beauty pageant.

Yeah - quirky is all well and good, but you need more than that to move a story along. For the first, heck, 75% of the book nothing much happens, the characters were more annoying than sympathetic, and Wellington is pretty much a bully. I was tempted to DNF it a couple of times, to be honest, and probably would've if I were not such a completionist. Plus I figured I could push through since it's at least short.

Anyway - it did pick up towards the end and was actually marginally interesting, but it was also pretty obvious that the whole thing was (view spoiler) But, still, things finally moved along, predictable or not, and the last quarter was probably 2.5 level.

But while some things are learned, we're also told that facing your fears is a continuous process - and so the groundwork for the following books in the, I believe, trilogy is laid. I'm not sure I'll be continuing with it, though.

ETA: The illustrations go well with the book, in that (view spoiler)

Karina says

Cumplió el propósito que debe tener cualquier libro que es divertirme y entretenerme. Es un libro muy bueno para los niños aunque también podemos leerlo aquellos que ya no somos tan niños. Mi personaje favorito sin duda es Madeleine y su educada forma de hablar. Lo más interesante es que creo que el libro tiene algo de razón la única forma de superar una fobia o un miedo es enfrentando se a el de manera inconsciente y cuando te das cuenta que lo superaste y que sigues vivo puede disminuir un poco esa fobia, que es al final como la resuelven los niños.

Raina says

Quite enjoyable TBCD for a drive down hwy 101.

I've always been fascinated by phobias. Personally, I'm afraid of clowns/interactive performers/performances and loud noises (can't stand fireworks, balloons, suspense involving a gun going off, etc.). As a kid, I thought myself very unusual for not liking typically kid-beloved things (clowns, balloons). Anyway, that may or may not be the reason I enjoyed this book. Irrational fears are fascinating.

School of Fear is about four kids who are forced to go to a school where they will be trained out of their fears. The heightened (though basically realistic) world reminded me of other quirky j fiction like The Mysterious Benedict Society. I would have been happy if they'd simply spent the whole story discovering the school.

But I thought the headmistresses obsession with beauty pageants tiresome, and when the plot "derailed," I was irritated.

Definitely enjoyable, but lost a star for those things.

Great hook for booktalks, though.

Mary says

This is a funny, offbeat book for middle grade students with an intriguing premise: four 12-year-olds go to the School of Fear one summer to overcome their phobias. Madeleine Masterson comes from England with a fear of bugs and spiders; Theodore Bartholomew is afraid of dying (and endearingly annoying); Lulu Punchalower is claustrophobic and mean; and Garrison Feldman, athlete extraordinaire, from Miami is afraid of large bodies of water. Eccentric former beauty pageant contestant, Mrs. Wellington runs the school on top of a high plateau, the base of which is surrounded by a forest. She is assisted by her faithful, visually impaired servant Schmidty, who is responsible for such things as cooking and applying Mrs. Wellington's makeup. She has 5 pets, 4 cats and 1 bulldog named Macaroni whose companion, Cheese, recently passed away. The chapters are short, and some of the phrasing is so delightful it is arresting. While sophisticated readers will catch on to what is happening in the story, I think most of its target audience will love the surprises.

Sarah says

What's up with people not being able to write an ending to save their lives?

It was fairly easy to see what was happening during the final quest, since the title is School of Fear, and

somehow, all the kids were forced to confront their fears during the journey. I know it's set up for sequels, but it literally just sort of stopped. I turned the page thinking there would be more, and then there was blankness, the worst kind of blankness since I was expecting something. I will read the second one, because I did enjoy the writing style and laugh out loud at certain parts. I wish there was a choice between liked it and it was ok. I want to give it 2.5 stars. I do think people between 7 and 11 would really adore the book, ages 12 to 18 maybe less so.

Kori says

I had this book in one of my piles for a while now, as my mom picked it up because it looked interesting.

While it was indeed interesting, and had a fun concept, it was predictable, in my opinion, and I didn't find it a new plot line. I personally wished they had played up on the actual fears though, as it seemed they were rather untouched throughout the entirety of the book.

The style and illustrations heavily reminded me of The Benedict Society. It was similar in ways, though I feel School of Fear had less of an impact.

It was, overall, good, and I'm going to finish the series, of course. It's an entertaining read if you want something quick and not too serious.

Reading Vacation says

REVIEW

I can describe School of Fear in one word....wait for it....QUIRKY! I bet you thought I was going to say spooky or scary or phobias or fearful. It has those too, but it's mostly quirky. And I really like quirky.

The four main characters are children with serious phobias. So serious, in fact, that their parents have sent them to the School of Fear to be cured. My favorite character was Madeleine She was smart and soft-spoken, but she also had a major fear of bugs – especially spiders. I can relate to that. Bugs are scary!

Another character that I enjoyed was Mrs. Wellington, the children's teacher at the School of Fear. I don't even know if quirky is a strong enough word to describe her. Her antics had me laughing as I read. I was surprised by her unusual teaching methods.

School of Fear is a great middle grade book that is not so much scary as it is funny and QUIRKY. Thank you to Little, Brown and Company for sending this book for me to review.

RATING

5 Plot

5 Characters

4 Attention Grabbing

4 Girlie Meter

4 Ending

22 TOTAL

5 STARS

Sofia says

This book is very interesting and I liked it very much. I liked how it was funny and creative and unique. It showed all the characters thoughts. It did, although, have some more dull parts that made you just want to skim through to get to the interesting part. I really enjoyed how they described the characters and made them very unique. It is definitely one of the more unique books I have read, and I like that. I have read the second book, and (Spoiler-ish) (not really) in my opinion, it is a little better than the first book. I do want to keep reading the series, and see where it goes with the story. If you're looking for a more unique book, then this is a good book to read.

Ntworek5 says

Co mog? wi?cej powiedzie?, oprócz tego, że ta książka jest po prostu genialna?
4,5

Nicole says

For me, the best part of this book was the page before each new chapter where the author gave the name and basic description of different fears. The characters were annoying. The plot was predictable.

I'll end up using it in my second grade classroom to show students that even as an adult, sometimes we have to sound out l-o-n-g words (the different phobias).

Since that was my favorite part, I'll put those in here to save you the time from reading the rest of the book yourself...

Motephobia is the fear of moths.

Phasmophobia is the fear of ghosts.

Illyngophobia is the fear of vertigo or feeling dizzy when looking down.

Agyrophobia is the fear of crossing the street.

Ablutophobia is the fear of washing or bathing.

Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia is the fear of long words.

Didaskaleinophobia is the fear of going to school.
Optophobia is the fear opening one's eyes.
Cacophobia is the fear of ugliness.
Lachanophobia is the fear of vegetables.
Peladophobia is the fear of bald people.
Nomatophobia is the fear of names.
Ailurophobia is the fear of cats.
Logizomechanophobia is the fear of computers.
Osmophobia is the fear of smells.
Helminthophobia is the fear of being infested with worms.
Mastigophobia is the fear of punishment.
Eisoptrophobia is the fear of mirrors or of seeing oneself in a mirror.
Arachibutyrophobia is the fear of peanut butter sticking to the roof of the mouth.
Atychiphobia is the fear of failure.
Mnemophobia is the fear of memories.
Somniphobia is the fear of sleep.
Autophobia is the fear of being alone.
Chirophobia is the fear of hands.
Geliophobia is the fear of laughter.
Heliophobia is the fear of the sun.
Cynophobia is the fear of dogs.
Phobophobia is the fear of phobias.

Eslem ~periodiclibrary says

çocuk kitabı oldu?u için biraz daha e?lenceli olur sanm??d?m pek olmad?. ayr?ca arka kapaktaki tan?t?m da insanda yanl?? bir beklenti uyand?r?yor. umdu?um gibi ö?retmenleri, ö?rencileri olan bir korkular? yenmek üzere bir e?itim veren okulda geçseydi daha e?lenceli olurdu.
her bölüm ba??nda bir fobi?i tan?mlamas? ve karakterlerin zekice i?leni?ini be?endim ama bunlar da korku okulu'na gelecekteki s?n?f kitaplarımda olma ?erefini kazandıramad? ne yazık ki.

Paul Eckert says

School of Fear is the story of four kids trying to conquer their fears by enrolling in an exclusive, hush-hush summer program in Massachusetts called...the School of Fear. The only way to attend is by getting a recommendation from a therapist who is in the know about the school. Everyone who knows about it swears by its results.

The four kids in question are Theo, who is afraid of dying, Madeline who is afraid of spiders and insects, Lulu who is claustrophobic and afraid of heights, and Garrison, a jock who is afraid of water. All of the children are quite precocious and intelligent (with the exception of Garrison), yet harbor irrational fears that consume their lives.

At first the children and their fears were pretty funny. They are all smart enough to know better, but like

anyone with a phobia, they just don't care. Their fears put serious strain on each family, from Madeline who insists on everything being regularly fumigated to Theo, who makes his family check in every hour to make sure they're still alive. The kids are also from upper-middle to upper class upbringings, so it's obvious they're all a little spoiled as well. It's all hyperbolic fun until about halfway through the book, when you realize that there is not much else to these characters besides their crippling fears. Every joke, every line of dialogue revolves around each child constantly reiterating their fear, and always in the most unrevealing, topical sense. They are phobias go from funny and relatable to just annoying.

Even more annoying than the one-dimensional characters is the way a good plot was ruined. Kids go to a secret school at the top of a secluded mountain to conquer their fears? Cool. Turns out that the teacher/headmistress is a former beauty queen, and a bit batty to boot? Nice surprise. With each new day at the school, the children are exposed to some strange new lesson, normally revolving around beauty pageants. It's a nice twist, until it's obvious that the children are not learning anything, and the 'lessons' lack even the most remote connection to their fears. Three quarters of the way through, the big WTF moment happens, and it doesn't take too long before it's obvious what's really going on. Unfortunately, the reader must trudge through to the end to confirm their suspicions, and one wonders why these seemingly intelligent children never figured out their own situation.

This was a big disappointment, as the writing for most of the book was strong, funny, and with fine strokes of cynicism. Daneshavari had a good thing going here, if only she had spent a little more time coming up with a more original ending.

Cristina Boncea says

STORYLINE

Lulu, Madeline, Garrison și Theo sunt patru copii, cu vârste între 12 și 13 ani care suferă de următoarele fobii: Lulu este claustrofobă, lui Madeline îi e teamă de insecte, lui Garrison de apă iar lui Theo de moarte și în general de lucruri periculoase.

Ei ajung la Școala Frică în care o întâlnesc pe doamna Wellington, o femeie care consideră că viața este un concurs de frumusețe.

Cei patru ajung să o creadă nebună și abia așteaptă să scape de cursurile din groaznică clădire învechită și ciudată.

Un eveniment neașteptat are loc iar doamna Wellington moare lăsând totul moțtenire câinelui ei, Macaroan.

Căinele este răpit iar copiii trec prin diferite aventuri care îi ajută să-și înfrunte temerile pentru a-l aduce înapoi.

La sfârșit, află că doamna Wellington era în viață și acesta era modul ei nonconformist de a-i ajuta.

În același timp, cei patru sunt obligați să se întoarcă vara viitoare la Școala Frică, conform broșurii.

CE CRED EU

Mi-a plăcut foarte mult povestea, nu mă așteptam sub nici o formă la acest final... chiar mă întrebam câte lucruri se mai pot întâmpla în ultimele câteva pagini și cum se va rezolva problema testamentului.

Pe de altă parte, multe mistere au rămas nerezolvate cum ar fi ușile imaginare din castel, Schmidt ingrijitorul, copilul pe care nu l-a putut însuși doamna Wellington și capul fostului ei călător în biroul domnului Munchauser.

Sunt curioasă cum vor evolua lucrurile în volumele următoare pe care sigur vreau să le citesc.

PERSONAJE

Cel mai mult mi-a plăcut de Lulu pentru că e răzvrătită, cinică, frumoasă (cel puțin după criteriile doamnei Wellington) și sub toate astea, are și un suflet curat. Și în plus, are cea mai normală fobie dintre toate.

AUTORUL

A scris o carte foarte amuzantă și cam atât. Deși povestea are și o morală, cel mai mult îmi vor rămâne în minte replicile spirituale.

Robin says

Humorous, well written, twisty novel that left me wanting another semester!
