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The Devil And Winnie Flynn



Synopsis

Seventeen-year-old Winnie Flynn, a closet horror fan with a starkly realistic worldview, has never known her maternal aunt Mona: a high-profile reality TV producer. Winnie's mom allegedly committed suicide several months ago, and her father has checked out in the wake of the tragedy. When Mona recruits Winnie to spend a summer in their family's home state, working as a production assistant, Winnie figures that she has nothing to lose. Soon she's drawn into a creepy world of paranormal believers and nonbelievers alike - a world that just might hold the key to vital family secrets.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book itself was interesting and I enjoyed it, but there were some pages (including the last one!!) that I was unable to see on my kindle fire. It was very irritating. Definitely buy book version to avoid these problems.

See more of my reviews on The YA Kitten! Diversity: 0 "What Diversity? Racial-Ethnic: 0 QUILTBAG: 0 Disability: 0 Intersectionality: 0 The Devil and Winnie Flynn is one of those books I didn't know about until a good while after it came out. I like to think I stay on top of current and upcoming releases, so this doesn't happen often! In addition to finding an ARC in my local used bookstore, I discovered my library had gotten a copy of it. SWEET! Using my loophole that I can check out a book from the library and it can skip my TBR jar whether I already own the book or not, I dove right into this spooky little tale. Except it wasn't that spooky, just bad. As

a little girl, I watched Scariest Places on Earth and loved it even though it scared me so badly sometimes that I had to sleep with a nightlight on when I usually didn't. The reality show conceit of The Devil and Winnie Flynn is one of the few positives of the book. Whether the techniques the film crew uses to stage scenes are really used in shows like Ghost Adventures or not, it's genuinely interesting to see the filmmakers fake even the time of day by boarding up the windows during the day to make it seem as though some scenes are being filmed at night. The illustrations are also a high point of the book. They're a bit surreal but not enough so to freak readers out too badly or look just plain ugly. After a while, I came to appreciate the space they took up on each page too because that meant fewer words to read in order to get the book over with. Then I stopped having fun. I don't know whether technology defeated everyone who worked on this book or they really need some help, but there were so many typos and errors like misspelling "cannon fodder" as "ecanon fodder" that I noticed it for once in my life! Trust me, it ain't something I notice unless it happens repeatedly and egregiously. I actually checked the ARC against the hardcover and the ARC has fewer errors. For instance, a misspelling of La Llorona in the hardcover wasn't present in the ARC. (The above paragraph has no bearing on my rating of or feelings about the book, I just wanted to share it because dear lord) From the weak characters and lackluster mystery to the plodding pacing and horrid writing, the content itself is awful. As I read the book in early March, my Twitter feed essentially turned into a stream of especially bad quotes from The Devil and Winnie Flynn. Winnie is written as Not Like Other Girls and she nearly invokes that idea name when she says she isn't "one of Those Girls," a flashy primper like fellow Fantastic, Fearsome intern Amanda or attention-grabbing ghost hunter Casey. It also makes use of the g-word, a racial slur against Romani people, and uses the r-word uncritically to talk about Mrs. Kallikak, a fictional(?) descendant of the Jersey Devil. Rather than using "mentally ill" or "messed up" or even the still-ableist-but-less-so "crazy" or "insane," the r-word we can almost universally agree shouldn't be used anymore is the word choice instead. Even coming from two characters who are barely on the page, it isn't remarked on or even judged by Winnie. The epistolary form in which the story is told is clumsy as well. It's presented as one long letter Winnie writes to her friend back home, but it's easy to forget that until an unnecessary aside emerges and distracts from the story at hand. For instance, Winnie calls her love interest Seth her knight in shining armor over something and proceeds to tell her friend Lu she doesn't care if it's "unfeminist" because it's just a fact. Just! It's just so, so clumsy. That choice to go epistolary also makes the climactic

scenes extremely anticlimactic as someone summons the Jersey Devil only for the Devil to be quickly sealed away again. I am so disappointed. All I want is a good, spooky read and it's surprisingly hard to find! Maybe it's time I do a reread of *Daughter Unto Devils* by Amy Lukavics or seek out my favorite online horror stories. If you're attracted to the premise of *The Devil and Winnie Flynn*, I suggest you seek out the many stories of horror and paranormal happenings you can find online. Those events, whether fully true or largely fictionalized, will be better than this book.

This book was a great deal of fun, but I think it will be primarily of interest to folks who enjoy reality TV shows. If you like shows like *Ghost Hunters*, you'll love all the behind-the-scenes machinations you learn about here. Along with the Reality TV aspect, we have the mystery of the Jersey Devil, a tragic suicide, and a some paranormal eeriness...and, of course, a little Insta-love. This is, after all, YA. And it's YA with quirky girl and cute boy (with occasional angst and sappiness). The story is told in a series of letters/journal entries to a friend and it includes a lot of great illustrations. At first, I thought they should have been photos, but the author explains that the recipient of the letters/journal is a bit of a luddite - no email, handwritten notes, etc. It was a fun way to tell the story, though. This was a quick read that I flew through. I did wish there was a little more emphasis on the creepy factor and a little less on the insta-love, but there were some surprises in the end and the book paid off. A very good read!

Winnie Flynn doesn't believe in ghosts. And if she did there is only one ghost she would care to see, her mother. After finding her mother dead from an apparent suicide, she is introduced to her aunt Maggie, a high profile TV producer who wants her to spend the summer working as a production assistant on her current reality hit, *Fantastic, Fearsome*. The show is set in New Jersey, a place her mother never took her and never wanted to go to. New Jersey's famous devil is perfect for Maggie's show. There are secrets that Winnie is trying to figure out and the more she digs the less that she likes what she finds and those around her. She sees and hears things that make her think that the Devil might not be totally fake after all. Things that involve her and her family. Things that might explain why she's never met Aunt Maggie until now. Her family's history is entwined with the Devil's. If she is going to make it out alive she might have to start believing in what her aunt is telling her, and discover the secrets everyone else is trying to keep from her. This is not a novel I would typically pick up and read, but I have to say I did enjoy the story. Even though this is labeled as a teen novel, I wouldn't

recommend this for a young audience. The reason is not for the fear factor, not once was I scared by what I was reading. I was put off by the harsh language, especially towards the end. Several aspects of the story were hard for me to believe. Why would Winnie-Pooh's father be ok with sending her off for the summer with someone she had never met? And why would Winnie herself be ok with it? I can understand wanting a change after a tragedy but this wasn't very believable for me. Along with that, I wasn't very intrigued by very many of the characters. I did enjoy the dynamic between Winnie and Seth, they had the makings of a good couple and another good story. This is definitely a story for ghost lovers and those that enjoy the paranormal. Not my favorite book but I did enjoy it more than I thought I would. The back and forth between narrative style and script made it a more interesting and fast read. I wish the way it was written as a letter to Lu would have been explained better. What was their relationship? I never fully understood that aspect.

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