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The Secret Files Of Fairday Morrow



Synopsis

Fans of classic detective stories, *The Mysterious Benedict Society*, and the *Secret Series* will devour this illustrated middle-grade adventure that follows three curious sleuths as they investigate a mysterious, old house with some hidden secrets. Eleven-year-old Fairday Morrow is less than thrilled that her family is moving thousands of miles from civilization to the quiet country town of Ashpot, Connecticut, where she's absolutely certain she'll die of boredom. As if leaving New York City and her best friend, Lizzy, the only other member of the elite Detective Mystery Squad (DMS), weren't bad enough, Fairday is stuck living in the infamous Begonia House, a creepy old Victorian with dark passageways, a gigantic dead willow tree, and a mysterious past. Before she can even unpack, strange music coming from behind a padlocked door leads Fairday up a spiral staircase and into a secret room, where an ancient mirror, a brass key, and a strange picture of a red-haired lady are the first in a series of clues that takes the members of the Detective Mystery Squad on an amazing adventure. "The novel builds to an exciting climax that takes magic in stride and suggests that further mysteries await the DMS trio."-Publishers Weekly "This paranormal mystery will be of interest to young readers looking for something spooky but not violent or scary."-Booklist

Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 4 •Eleven-year-old Fairday Morrow and her family move from New York into the spooky, rundown Begonia House in the rural town of Ashpot, CT. While she misses her best friend and fellow Detective Mystery Squad member Lizzy, Fairday adapts fairly easily to her new school and becomes quickly intrigued by the mysterious estate she now inhabits, which was once home to a woman named Ruby Begonia, who vanished decades ago on the day of her wedding. Ruby's father died 20 years later without explanation. Soon learning that the house is haunted, Fairday enlists the help of a new friend from school named Marcus "Brocket the Rocket," and Lizzy, who is visiting Ashpot for the weekend. Together they discover the truth about the house and the Begonia family. Although the novel moves briskly and includes magic, action, and suspense, it also feels a bit standard. The influences of *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* are both mentioned within the novel are somewhat heavy-handed, as the mystery includes a pair of magical, bejeweled, red high-heeled sneakers and a mystical wardrobe that is a doorway to a parallel world. There is an underdeveloped subplot involving a group of bullies, and while Fairday and Lizzy's confidence in the face of their antagonists is admirable, it often comes across as didactic and unnecessary to the narrative. Muradov's illustrations are serviceable, and while they don't hinder the story, they don't add much, either. The mystery is neatly resolved, including an easy, magical way for Lizzy to visit Ashpot from New York on a regular basis, and the ending implies that there will be future books for the Detective Mystery Squad. VERDICT Although not particularly remarkable, this title is a decent offering for those looking for a middle grade mystery novel with a supernatural twist. •Laura J. Giunta, Garden City Public Library, NY

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Fairday Morrow moves from New York to Connecticut, to the creepy Begonia House. It has a horrible reputation, because kids at school are teasing her about the creepiness. With her fast wits and mouth, Fairday knows how to handle her classmates. Another thing she knows how to handle is a good mystery, which she's ready to solve. Odd noises and sights are popping up in the Begonia House. Things go missing and magical occurrences shake things up. The house has a history of a missing bride and a father who fell to his death from the balcony. Fairday, her New York friend

Lizzy, and her new friend Marcus make up the DMS, Detective Mystery Squad.

They're going to get to the bottom of all this strangeness before anyone else gets hurt or becomes missing. This is a delightful middle grade read. I loved the mystery and the magic, as well as Fairday's relationships with her friends. There are illustrations interspersed throughout that perfectly match the supernatural and historical aspects of the novel. The story takes place in modern times, but it gave me that feel-good sensation of reading something much older, like a classic from my own childhood. I highly recommend this.

It was a very good book! If there ever is a sequel to this book then what if there was another mystery to the house! IT WAS AMAZING

Moving to a different house in a new town and leaving behind dear friends is rough on anyone. It's especially tough for children, who also have to start a new school where they don't know anyone. In *THE SECRET FILES OF FAIRDAY MORROW*, a novel for middle grade readers, by Jessica Haight and Stephanie Robinson, Fairday Morrow faces such a situation. She's not very happy about moving, either. The house, known as Begonia House, is old and decrepit. Even though her parents are going to renovate the place, she just wants to go home. It doesn't take long, however, for Fairday (I love her name) to discover a room on the third floor of the house, and in that room there are mysteries to solve. Enter Lizzie, her friend from her former town who comes to visit for the weekend, and Marcus, a new boy she meets at school, and the DMS (Detective Mystery Squad) goes to work to solve the weird things happening at Begonia House. I laughed. I held my breath. I followed the DMS crew through every room of the house and every experience they had. The authors give each character a distinct personality. The description of the house is perfect and who doesn't love a haunted house? Well, maybe the ghosts or whatever's doing the haunting don't care for it so much. Take the lively characters, the spooky setting, and the suspense waiting to see if the DMS succeeds in their quest to solve the riddles of Begonia House, and you have a winner. I can picture young sleuths now, after reading this novel, doing some investigating of their own. The black-and-white illustrations by Roman Muradov add just the right touch to the story. Every school library and classroom, as well as public libraries, should have a copy of this book, and your own library too, of course. Highly recommended.###

The fresh story kept my interest from the start through the very last page. It is a real page turner and

a mystery for "kids" of all ages. I love the Begonia House - how clever! I hope there are more stories on the way to continue the adventures of Fairday and her friends.

This book was a great read! I am a speech and. Language pathologist and this has been a huge hit with all of my grade levels as a read together! The adventures of Fairday and the Begonia House are a guarantee to keep you on the edge of your seat. Well written!

Nice adventure and keep going!

Great book!! My kids and I love Fairday and the DMS!

Amazing middle grade book! Buy this book!!!!

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