



Lizzie

Dawn Ius

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Seventeen-year-old Lizzie Borden has never been kissed. Polite but painfully shy, Lizzie prefers to stay in the kitchen, where she can dream of becoming a chef and escape her reality. With tyrannical parents who force her to work at the family's B&B and her blackout episodes—a medical condition that has plagued her since her first menstrual cycle—Lizzie longs for a life of freedom, the time and space to just figure out who she is and what she wants.

Enter the effervescent, unpredictable Bridget Sullivan. Bridget has joined the B&B's staff as the new maid, and Lizzie is instantly drawn to her artistic style and free spirit—even her Star Wars obsession is kind of cute. The two of them forge bonds that quickly turn into something that's maybe more than friendship.

But when her parents try to restrain Lizzie from living the life she wants, it sparks something in her that she can't quite figure out. Her blackout episodes start getting worse, her instincts less and less reliable. Lizzie is angry, certainly, but she also feels like she's going mad...

Lizzie Details

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From Reader Review Lizzie for online ebook

Stacee says

I am 100% on board for a Lizzie Borden book and I was so excited to read this, sadly I was quite disappointed.

I read to 45% before I skipped to 80% and read the rest.

Lizzie was an interesting character. She's got a horrible family life and is trying to be what she needs to be to everyone. There's an unreliable narrator aspect to this story that was the main reason I kept going.

Plot wise, it was weird. I don't know if some of the problem was the formatting of the e-arc or an intentional attempt at mindfuckery, but it was a struggle. It felt extremely disjointed and for me, it didn't accentuate or add tension. And there's a weird repetition thing that keeps happening throughout. The swipe swipe swipe, blink blink blink, drop drop drops got really old really fast.

Overall, it had a lot of potential. I liked the move into modern times, but definitely wanted more out of it, especially at the end. However, this is a retelling subject I would love to see more of.

****Huge thanks to Simon Pulse for providing the arc free of charge****

Wendy says

I picked this up at the library to preview for my classes, because kids are always asking for more scary books. It wasn't truly scary to the end, and while Lizzie's voice is compelling and I felt terrible for her, I was frustrated by the vagueness surrounding her illness. There's also a twist that I anticipated from the first chapter, having read too many books with this particular twist.

ana says

did ryan and shane from buzzfeed unsolved write this book

Jennifer says

Very middle in the road for me. Review will come soon.

Gemma ? Books_McCoy says

I didn't really like this.

It was very slow and dragged out the story way too much in my opinion. It took so long to get to the actual

event and by that time I'd lost interest. The event itself and the trial was basically a footnote and was so rushed.

I figured out the plot twist and had to wait for over 200 pages for it to be revealed. I was bored and frustrated at the constant hints because it was so glaringly obvious.

The writing style was also something I didn't like. I really don't like the whole repeating words or 'lots of words that mean the same thing one after the other' writing device, and both of those were used a *lot* in this book. For example *swipe, swipe, swipe* is used everywhere and it was irritating. There was also *scratch, scratchy, scratch* used way more than was needed. The other device would be something like, and this is not a direct quote, *I wanted to hug, hold, squeeze her*. I don't mind this now and again but it felt like I saw this too much.

This is not the lesbian! Lizzie Borden I was looking for and felt like I was being promised. To started with it felt like instalove but the romance is part of the twist and once you know the twist, the whole relationship feels like nothing. You are never invested.

I've been looking forward to this for so long. It's January 15th and I'm already pretty sure this is going to be my disappointment of the year. *sigh*

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

sort of just figured out this is Not an actual gay Lizzie Borden book i was fooled i apologize for queerbaiting my goodreads audience

Kate says

I can't pass up a Lizzie Borden tale! Dawn Ius drags Lizzie into the present, makes her 18 and working as a cook for her family's Bed and Breakfast (which makes me chuckle, since the real Borden house is an actual B&B now). Lizzie is struggling with both the physical and mental abuse she endures from her father and stepmother, and a poorly treated medical condition (physical and mental). Her older sister Emma is off at college, and Lizzie is stuck making meat loaf and watching Emeril Largesse on her tablet (Bam!). Her life gets both better and worse with the arrival of a new maid. Bridget is a free spirit, and Lizzie is drawn to her, which causes her even more confusion because of her strict religious upbringing. The tension in the house is suffocating, and neither Lizzie nor the reader can tell what's real and what's fantasy. I liked the idea of modern Lizzie, but Lizzie's condition and the is-she-or-isn't-mentally-unwell wasn't as well fleshed out as I hoped it would be. But that said, I really liked meat loaf making Lizzie, and was rooting for her to go ahead and give her dad and step mom son whacks!

*Historically, I DO think Lizzie Borden killed her dad and step mom. I used to think it was unfair that she got away with it, partly because a woman was considered too frail to wield such deadly force), but the truth is, there's just not enough concrete evidence. I think it was fair to find her not guilty... but she totally did it.

Kelly says

[has a severe mental disorder, tied to her horrifying menstrual disorder, playing into the idea of female hysteria and encouraging this relationship with Bridget who does not exist (hide spoiler)]

Barb (Boxermommyreads) says

Anyone who has followed my blog for any length of time knows I have a small obsession with Lizzie Borden. So when I saw a new YA book coming out about her, I knew I'd have to grab it. A lot of us already know the tale of Lizzie and this one is basically the same. However, it's an updated version and Ius added some modern flair. For example, Lizzie wants nothing more desperately to be the next Emeril Lagasse and is always cooking and creating new dishes for her father and step-father's bed and breakfast. Also, while the relationship with her sister Em is explored, it isn't as much in the forefront as some of the other retellings I've read.

It's no real secret that many believe Lizzie went on in her life to have relationships with other women. And I know a lot of people were excited to see Ius openly explore Lizzie this. However, there is a twist involved and to be honest, I saw it coming early on in the book which was kind of a letdown. Also, considering we know Lizzie's parents end up dead (if I spoiled this, I'm sorry but I figure everyone who wants to read this book knows the song and the tale), it takes FOREVER for this to happen. Then once it does, it all resolves itself in the next 3 chapters.

Lizzie Borden clearly suffered from abuse and mental health issues. I don't doubt for a minute that she killed her parents but I think were it to occur now, she would be found not guilty by reason of insanity. Ius follows a lot of the actual facts of the incident, while also adding her own spin which makes it an entertaining read for a new generation.

PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says

I've been a Lizzie Borden buff since I saw the Elizabeth Montgomery movie when I was 11 back in 1975. I've read probably a dozen nonfiction books, watched the miniseries and movies, I even stayed in the Lizzie Borden Bed & Breakfast in Fall River, Massachusetts, in Lizzie's own bedroom. Here's a link to my Facebook photo album <https://www.facebook.com/amyfeld/medi...>

I couldn't wait to read Dawn Ius's LIZZIE a modern take on the true story of Lizzie Borden who was tried and found not guilty for the hatchet murders of her father and stepmother. Many thought Lizzie got away with murder because the all male jury couldn't imagine a woman committing such a brutal murder. Though found not guilty, Lizzie became persona non grata in Fall River. She was said to have an affair with New York actress Nance O'Neill.

In Ius's version, LIZZIE is mentally ill and repeatedly threatened with hospitalization. In the story took place in the late nineteenth century, when the murders happened, institutionalization could be a real threat on the say so of a male family member. In modern times, committing someone against her will is much more difficult. Psych hospitals do little more than triage.

Ius chose to make the real life maid Bridget a love interest for Lizzie, but she was actually a delusion. Other creative liberties included mensural dysphoria causing violent blackouts and Catholicism being an issue in the family. It's too bad the real life Bordens were likely Calvinists and they attended the Central Congregational Church, a form of Protestantism.

The murder trial should have been one of the highlights of the book, and Ius barely mentioned it.

LIZZIE is the most disappointing book I've read in a long time. Skip it. The real life version is much better. Even the lesbian storyline is a delusion.

Kali says

To start out, this is not based in the 1800s and is modernized. I can get past this in some cases, but if you can write a tale about the 1800s, take the opportunity presented to you. The actual Lizzie Borden lived during that time period, and what I know from actually selling these books is that writing anything based in her actual time period - sells better. This will not be one of my recommendations. I sell to teenagers and although I sincerely believe that they can get their hands on a copy of Fifty Shades of Grey, the sexual desires presented are one of the main focuses of this book. It seems deviant to say the least, making her relationship with the "hot young maid" one to be drooled over and fantasized about. It happens far too much in literature that young lesbians are a source of sexual enjoyment rather than a buildable relationship. The best parts of the story were shadowed by this cringe worthy relationship developing like "insta-love".

I believe the author also thought it would be "authentic" to keep having her characters make Star Wars references, especially the good-looking maid Bridget. Let's not forget how quirky it is to have a hot nerd in your storyline.

Even the goriest quotes in the book are overshadowed by Lizzie's infatuation with Bridget and her sexual behavior. They present religion pretty early into the story too, being it that even in real life Lizzie was a right hand to the pastor. This relatively demonized their relationship in a way - the adults only seeing it as a sin and Lizzie herself making it into some kind of fetish. Lesbians can have actual connections without sticking their tongues down each others throats, and I'm sick of authors like this making them into some kind of soft porn fetish.

Cringe-worthy writing aside, the menstrual condition Lizzie suffered was news to me. With my love for researching everything peculiar, Lizzie Borden has been a specimen under my microscope before and I may have overlooked anything that spoke of her passing out / blacking out as a result to having her monthly cycle. It would have made for a much more interesting story had it focused on her psychosis and not on her budding teenage relationship.

The darkness of the real tale of Lizzie Borden was sucked dry by this novel. I will admit to skipping to the end because I could not bear it anymore. The language was great and the dialogue was acceptable, but the plot was so CRINGEY LIKE STOP. Please read if you want to vomit just a little. I will not be sharing my copy with anyone but the dusty shelf it will go on.

Ari Tinius says

4.5 stars

Okay, I liked this book a lot! I loved the writing and just overall the general plot. It was interesting to see Lizzie Borden in a modern day world! My only problem with it tbh is sometimes the setting got really confusing??? Plus I felt the author kinda skimmed out on the ending?????? Which lowkey sucked, but I highly recommend this book!!!

Crys says

I really thought about giving this book 2 stars, but at the end the author gave me enough to make me say, "It was okay. Not great, but okay."

I think I went into this book expecting too much. I love reading re-tellings, and I really thought that's what I was going to get with this. I think I would've enjoyed it more in a not-so-modern setting. Maybe it's because I'm old fashioned about Lizzie Borden tales.

What worked for me: the development of the complicated relationship between Lizzie and her dad & step-mom; the ending.

What didn't work for me: the rest of it.

There was a lot of potential with this book, but it just did not work for me in the way I had hoped.

Amy Leigh says

This book just didn't do it for me. The writing was rudimentary and that was really the YA part of it. I had trouble discerning what was actually happening and that really bothered me. I was so excited when I saw this book was coming out because a modern day Lizzie Borden book sounds fantastic! but it wasn't anything like what I expected. It was more about her crush on the new maid and her fighting against her beliefs.

I think if this story had been told by several POVs with cohesive writing that flows and pulls everything together it would have been much more enjoyable. I really liked that a love story was added in but I wish it had been woven in to the historical parts better. The plot itself was predictable and I wish more elements of the historical event had been present, there were basics but not enough in my opinion. The gore is intense, more intense than expected for a YA novel. I'm really glad I checked this book out from the library instead of buying it.

Christina (Ensnoced in Lit) says

The subject matter of this book was interesting-- taking a YA horror slant on the tale of Lizzie Borden, which is why I picked it up in the first place. That said, it was an odd combination of historical fiction with present day that didn't quite work for me. I thought it was in the 1800s (when Lizzie really lived), because everything seemed so old fashioned. Then another character started talking about Star Wars, which was really weird for me, and took me out of the story every time this happened. I guessed the big twist in the first couple of chapters, so that detracted some. For what it was, it was otherwise well written and decently paced although it was probably longer than it had to be.
