



Look for Me by Moonlight

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When the mysterious Vincent Morthanos arrives to stay at her father's inn, 16-year-old Cynda is mesmerized. His charm and sensitivity are irresistible. His attentiveness is constant. Cynda's sure she's in love. Daring to hope that the stranger shares her feelings, Cynda is innocently blind to who he really is--or to the terrible danger of coming under his spell.

Look for Me by Moonlight Details

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From Reader Review Look for Me by Moonlight for online ebook

Tiffni says

I remember reading this over and over again in 5th grade. I was obsessed about it. I just recently picked it back up again about a year ago and fell in love with it all over again. It's an awesome read!

Nia Zanders says

This is a good book I like it because I love fantasy fiction with a little bit of romance and vampires. It was about a girl name Cynthia aka Cynda. She is staying with her dad and step mother, Susan, and her step brother Todd. During her visit Cynda stays in Underhill Inn which her father owns. While at the Inn Cynda hears word of ghost in the Inn. Not just any ghost, ghost of girls killed near by or in the Inn. Then a man named Vincent comes to stay in the Inn. Cynda is instantly attracted to Vincent. Everyone in the Inn likes Vincent except Todd. Cynda also meets Will, a family friend, who also likes her and she likes him. Will and Todd both warn Cynda about Vincent, Cynda agrees to meet with him every night at moonlight; inspired by Bess the girl from the Highwayman. The ghost Cynda has been hearing about soon come to see her. But never in the house. Cynda soon find out that the ghost are past lovers of Vincent. Cynda begins to worry about the events that occur that include Vincent.

The book is really interesting. It is not like any other vampire romance books I've read. It has a good twist in the climax. I would love to read the other Mary Downing Hahn books. My one complaint about the book is the end. It doesn't tell whether Vincent is dead, it states that his "spell" on them is lifted. For all I know he could have escaped before they locked the door.

Heather *Awkward Queen and Unicorn Twin* says

"You know what I want, too. You're willing to give it to me, aren't you? Night after night, you'll invite me to take it."

I first read this in middle school, after I'd read The Vampire Diaries and was obsessively searching for any movie or book that had anything to do with hot vampires. I'm pleased to have enjoyed it just as much now as I did all those years ago.

The characters aren't exactly likeable, but I didn't really need to like Cynda and Todd to understand and sympathize with them. It's the parents I have a beef with in this case. They run an inn and they are ridiculously lax. Oh, sure, just let your kids hang out with a random man and don't do anything to make sure he can't sneak into their rooms at night! Sure, they may have been under the spell of vampire manipulation, but still.

Vincent is very seductive, albeit evil. And yet no less seductive for it. I was surprised at how provocative some of his dialogue was. This is 90s YA, after all! But oh, the subtext in this book. The vampire is much

less terrifying than the darker, more realistic horrors this book implies.

This is a short, quick read as Hahn's work tends to be. But it's my favorite of hers, obviously, because vampires.

Dora says

Cynda is sixteen, and for her, the world is unfair. Like so many other teenage heroines of supernatural tales, she's frustrated by the boredom and isolation that comes when she moves in with her estranged father and his wife who run a remote inn, even an inn that's supposedly haunted. As such, her curiosity is piqued when a mysterious young man named Victor shows up at the inn one night and decides to stay awhile. Her five-year-old half-brother Todd hates him immediately, but Victor quickly wins over Cynda's parents, and seems to offer the sort of all-consuming romance every young girl dreams of. Of course, appearances can be deceiving, but by the time Cynda learns you should never give your heart away too quickly, it may be too late.

So, okay, yes, Mary Downing Hahn has given us a vampire love story, but remember; "Look For Me By Moonlight" first hit shelves in 1995, slightly before the real fervor of supernatural romance started to hit. Told in first-person by Cynda herself, the narrative does an excellent job of presenting a typical teenage girl; she's neither perfect nor overly obnoxious, she's just a teenager with average problems who wants someone to take her seriously and think about her first for a change. Her infatuation with Victor is interesting to watch; we know there's something slightly off about him, despite how charming he is, and it makes certain scenes very sinister indeed. There are scenes that are romantic, and yet there's an undercurrent of wrongness in them that Cynda is (occasionally deliberately) blind to.

And yet, despite this, it doesn't feel like it's preaching against teenage love, which is a mistake similar stories tend to make. Cynda's feelings are real; what she hasn't learned, and what the story is trying to teach her (and its readers) is that with love comes vulnerability and blindness, and it's all too easy for the wrong person to have hold of that power and manipulate it. The book doesn't want you to "wait 'til you're older", it just wants you to be cautious, and for that I could just about hug it.

Ultimately, the best thing I can say about this book is that it stuck with me for the fifteen-odd years since I first read it in junior high. While the writing isn't particularly electrifying, it crafts a wonderfully creepy and tense tale that is both spooky and bittersweet. Everything is wrapped up a bit too neatly at the end; at the time, Ms Hahn was basically THE writer of horror fiction for young adults, and as such all her books have a vague, "Made for TV Movie" vibe to them. But if you're hungry for a vampire story with real bite, you could do a lot worse than this satisfyingly unique tale.

Leigh Collazo says

More reviews at <http://readerpants.blogspot.com>.

READALIKES: *"The Highwayman"* (poem by Alfred Noyes); *The Old Willis Place* and many others by Mary Downing Hahn; anything by Lois Duncan (my personal favorite is *Ransom*)

RATING BREAKDOWN:

Overall: 4/5

Creativity: 4/5

Characters: 4/5

Engrossing: 4/5

Writing: 4/5

Appeal to teens: 5/5

Appropriate length to tell the story: 5/5

CONTENT:

Language: none

Sexuality: mild; large age gaps in the relationships; some kissing and staring at breasts through shirt

Violence: moderate; vampire feeds on willing and unwilling victims; murdered girls' ghosts haunt the inn; a violent death

Drugs/Alcohol: very mild; adults drink wine

STATUS IN MY LIBRARY: We have it, but it hasn't been very popular so far (maybe because of the dated cover). Only three students before me had checked it out since 2009. Now that I have read and enjoyed it, I will be recommending it to many.

WARNING: The reviews on this site are intended for librarians who need thorough book reviews in order to make informed purchasing decisions. As such, anything below this warning may contain mild spoilers. I try not to give away too much, but I do review the entire book.

WHAT I LIKED: I'm a little embarrassed to admit that after 3 years in the middle school library, this is my first Mary Downing Hahn book. I know, I know, my students would be shocked, especially since I recommend Hahn's books frequently and constantly hear from students who love her books.

Look for Me By Moonlight starts quickly and sets up multiple conflicts within the first 50 pages. There is a developing romance, a mysterious stranger, and a murdered girl's ghost, all against the backdrop of an insecure teen girl trying to fit into her father's new family. Cynda's half-brother's intense fear of the "wolf" and seemingly irrational hatred of Vincent adds to the suspense, as does the spooky and frigid backdrop of the inn itself.

Protagonist Cynda's character is complex, her motives understandable and believable. Though he irritates her plenty, Cynda feels both protective and jealous of her five-year old stepbrother, Todd. She desperately craves her father's attention, yet her subtle attempts to garner his attention are lost on all of them. Though Cynda likes the new family, she clearly feels isolated from all of them at the same time. She feels drawn to Vincent, yet at the same time feels something is wrong about the way he looks at her.

I love how easily Cynda falls into Vincent's trap; he plays on her insecurities to enchant and manipulate her, which may cause teen readers to spot that type of manipulation in their own lives. That Cynda ignores her own warning bells rings true to what people do in their own lives every day. How many people regret their own actions when they don't listen to their own better judgment? How many people fall into manipulative traps every day and regret it for the rest of their lives?

I picked up *Look For Me By Moonlight* mainly because of the title, which is a quotation from Alfred Noyes's

poem "The Highwayman." Since I first read it in seventh grade, "The Highwayman" has been my all-time favorite poem. I get tears in my eyes every time I read it or even think about it, so I know no story is ever going to live up to my nostalgia for "The Highwayman." That said, I love how Hahn masterfully encompasses the creepy setting of the poem without trying to copy its plot. While "The Highwayman" is a story of a tragic love triangle, *Look For Me By Moonlight* is more a story of predator and prey. So cool.

Look For Me By Moonlight won't be my last Mary Downing Hahn book. Hahn is a master at setting up a creepy scene and adding interesting, complex characters that have problems readers will relate to. The writing is simple enough for a reluctant middle school reader yet interesting enough to hold an adult reader's attention.

WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE:

BIG OL' SPOILER HERE--SCROLL DOWN A FEW LINES IF YOU ARE SURE YOU WANT TO CONTINUE!

(keep going...)

(you're almost there...)

There are several major "Ick" factors in this story:

Ick Factor #1-- Every time Vincent drank from little Todd, my stomach turned a little. Drink from Cynda all you want, pretty boy, she got herself into this mess and now needs to find a way out of it. I'm rooting for her, but it's her own fault. But Todd? Todd, who feared Vincent from the get-go, tried to warn everyone to no avail, sweet little baby FIVE YEAR OLD Todd, exposing his tender little neck for some nasty thing to drink from? That's just not right.

Ick Factor #2-- What is with Cynda's dad and his child bride? Let's do some math here. If Cynda was six when her dad left the family and is now sixteen, that would mean that her dad left ten years ago. In the story Cynda mentions that Susan is probably in her "late 20s." That would have made Susan only slightly older than Cynda is now when she met Cynda's dad, who must have been around thirty when he met her (he had a six-year old daughter and was married). He has a good 10-12 years on her, which isn't terrible if you are in your forties, but in this case, Susan was still a teenager dating a thirty-year old man. YUCK.

Ick Factor #3-- While Vincent "could not be older than thirty" and Cynda is only sixteen, Vincent desires (or pretends to desire) Cynda sexually. Cynda says Vincent's eyes "lingered on my lips and then moved to my breasts" (78), and the pair kisses passionately several times. GROSS. Then, later, Vincent talks about becoming Cynda and Todd's "father," and I actually threw up in my mouth a little bit. Vincent wants to be Cynda's father after he made out with her? It's just not right, and I felt icky reading about it. I wish Hahn had made Vincent ten years younger and desirous of Cynda as a bride rather than a daughter.

Jojobean says

This book was ok. It wasn't the greatest vampire story out there.

The story is about Cynda, who goes to Maine to stay with her father, stepmother and stepbrother in their inn while her mother and her mother's boyfriend go to Italy. During this time a stranger, Vincent, comes to the inn to stay for awhile. It turns out that Vincent is a vampire and has come to feed on Cynda.

This was a slow moving book. At times it was very boring. Cynda was a whiny little thing that annoyed me. She was always whining that her father didn't love her, that her stepmother always took advantage of her, that her brother got all her father's attention and that her mother was living it up in Italy without her. After awhile I was thinking "grow a pair". First off I have NO IDEA why Cynda would NOT want to go to Italy. I'd be all over that. I have been to Italy twice, once when I was 16 and this past summer (2012) and I absolutely LOVE everything about Italy. I would move there in a heartbeat if I had the chance. And Cynda REFUSED to go! That just blew me away. Second I have no idea why she would give up Italy to go to her father inn in Maine where it was winter and below zero degrees often. It was always cold and there were always snow storms.

Anyway When Cynda meets Vincent she falls instantly in love with him. He charms and complements her and pretends to understand her problems, which she eats up. They have a little romance before Vincent reveals what he is and takes her blood. It was weird how Cynda changed in this book. She became very weak, couldn't get out of bed most of the time and became very pale. She was always cold, the sun or light in general hurt her eyes, she stopped eating and began to want blood. All this happened and Vincent WASN'T trying to change her. This is a new take on vampire mythology and it was kinda weird.

Vincent is not the type of vampire who readers see filling up Y.A. books nowadays. Vincent is a monster. He is not loving, kind or brooding. He is a true vampire monster, who takes her blood when he wants it and loves being an evil creature. He feels no love for anyone and doesn't care what happens to people. He manipulates other to get what he wants. He is very powerful, strong and of course beautiful (that hasn't changed). He pretends to love Cynda to get her where he wants her. One bite and she is powerless to stop him. She belongs to him and he can take her blood any time he wants. He also goes after Cynda's brother Todd who is just 5 years old. Vincent drinks Todd's blood and Todd is under Vincent's power as well. Vincent really is a despicable monster. When I first read this book years ago, I hated Vincent. Now re-reading this book, I still don't like him but I don't hate him like I used to. I just think that its interesting to read a book with a different kind of vampire in it. Now all vampires are loving, sexy good guys, not monsters like vampires were in the old days. This book takes you back to those old days when vampires were evil and they liked being that way.

I liked Cynda's brother Todd. He is adorable and like any 5 year old; he wants to play, be read to and get his way. He immediately hates Vincent when he firsts sees him and calls him a bad man. Todd can tell that Vincent is evil and wants him out of the inn but no one listens to him. Then once Vincent bites him, Todd is under his spell and Todd loves him. I always feel sorry for Todd that he had to become involved in Vincent's spell. He was too little to have to face a trauma like that.

Susan was ok for a step mother. She was pregnant and did ask Cynda for help a lot. But she truly cared for Cynda and loved her. She though of Cynda as her daughter, which was sweet.

All in all a quick read that treats vampires as they were meant to be seen: as monsters.

This review is also posted on Spantalian's Book Reviews

Rachel says

A highly sensual story; after all, it is about teen crushes and vampires. The protagonist's broken home makes her perfect prey for a seemingly benevolent stranger. Ultimately, she must use her wits to save herself and her younger brother.

Katya says

To all the whiners complaining that this book wasn't anything like Twilight - get over it! It was written ten years before Twilight, and long before vampires became teenage heartthrobs. Throughout history, vampires have been evil and dangerous - even Angel, who began to turn the tide for vampires from scary monster to romantic hero, could be dangerous. Romances between teenage girls and ancient vampires don't end well. Period.

I first read this book in middle school, shortly after it was first published, and I loved it. Of course, what teenage girl doesn't relate to a heroine that's overlooked and misunderstood by her family? Moreover, I was chilled by the way Cynda's flirtation with Vincent took a turn for the worse, and at the edge of my seat waiting to find out what was going to happen to her and her little brother, both at the mercy of the vampire. And after all of these years, this book has stuck with me. It's creepy, thrilling and a great read for a cold, dark night.

Vampires don't sparkle and they don't want to live happily ever after with their teenage brides. That's how it should be, and this book hearkens back to the good old days, when they knew their place.

Duchessbookworm says

Still think about it over 4 years later. Creepy but captivating

Taylor Capaniro says

The genre was a mystery, and romance, and fiction. The audience is the reader themselves, I like the fact that Cynda became stronger at the end of the book she just needed to prove to everyone what Vincent was and what he does to the family and a good friend and Cynda as well with all the suffering he put her through.

In my opinion I thought the book was amazing I do wish it had something surprising at the end just thought it would end a little bit different then it did and I recommend people read it. I liked it because it keeps you on the edge of your seat and wanting to know what happens to the family, Cynda, Vincent, and others. My favorite character was Vincent I loved how he was described and well put together in this book, yes the characters felt very real to me because the details, the setting, and how the moods were with the weather. The story kept me guessing what would happen next to everyone and what didn't happen, My favorite part is where the first kiss is described. I laughed at some parts because one of the family members are just so funny and just says

what they feel. Yes I do wish the ending was different because it was nothing happen to them even tho they knew it did, I wished it ended where Vincent enters again and Mary Hahn makes a second book to keep it going.

To anyone who likes mystery, fiction, romance I recommend this book to just by review it stills sounds amazing. There are comparable books to this some are series but its only one thing that is the same in is book and the four series

Sakura Koneko says

I read this book after finding it in a school library.

Originally I found it very interesting and exciting, until I got near the end and it just started feeling like the telling of a young girl caught up with an older man who is abusive in a sense... it seemed to me more like the fact he was a vampire was added in to take notice away from a more nonfiction storyline that the book could tell.

Naomi says

Alright, this book at first reminded me of Twilight. A teenage girl with divorced parents, and she is going to live with her dad in a cold area and she meets a vampire. Difference: the dad is remarried to a much younger woman, the vampire is evil, and she also has a younger half-brother. It was not a good book, I just couldn't get into it. I would've liked it better if it didn't seem so jumpy? I believe that's the word I'm looking for. And I also only had a limited amount of time to read it. So yeah, it was kind of bad!

Alice Yates says

This book was very, very good, but REALLY creepy. It's a very very old take on vampires--nothing like the new Twilight obsession--it is about how vampires are supposed to be. In this, the vampire isn't a sparkly teenage boy--this vampire is a REAL vampire. He's very persuasive and extremely evil.

A great, quick read!

Kate Yancey says

I read this book and could not put it down. I always knew us girls would be sucked into the dark, handsome, and mysterious figures that come upon us. I'm one of those people who have dreams based on what they see, hear, smell, taste, feel, and remember. I had a dream that took me to every scene in this book. It was a true adventure. If only this book could be real ;).

Chio Duran says

I liked this book. Even though the plot was a little bit predictable and the characters were not developed in depth, the story was refreshing and entertaining.

Cynda is your average teenage girl who has problems with her parents and has to deal with family issues and loneliness. She is desperate for someone to listen to what she has to say. Then comes Vincent. I have to say that Vincent was the character that I liked the most. After all those romance books that have come out in the last few years, where the vampires are not "evil" anymore, is hard not to fixate on one who embodies the term. Vincent is a manipulative and seductive dark specimen who knows how to get what he wants.

I enjoyed the setting, which was an old inn situated in a dark and snowy place. Perfect Gothic establishment to introduce a vampire story. The ending for me was "MEH," but the fact that the story was good allows me to look the other way when it comes to disliking the whole book just for the ending. There is also a nice twist at one point in the plot that left me a little bit confused (in a great way).

Overall: the story was good and I love the fact that there are still vampire books out there that originally portrayed Nosferatu as real creatures of the night who do not have hearts or feelings.

Brie says

I gave this book the rating my goofy middle school self would've given it had that weird child had access to the internet as it is today.

This is a very dated book and everything is very predictable and the characters are flat and one-dimensional. But I remember having fond memories of loving this book, and don't want to penalize it for the fact that my standards have risen and Vincent is no longer a tall dark and dangerous dreamboat of horror.

Cynda was always whiny and annoying though. I wish I could smack her.

Susan says

Look For Me By Moonlight was not exactly what I expected. I thought I was getting into a YA paranormal romance type of novel, but there was really no romance to speak of. By the time Vincent began planting kisses on Cynda's naïve teenage lips and neck, it is perfectly obvious to the reader that he is bad news.

Vincent himself is an incredibly well-written "bad guy," complete with an atmosphere of danger and cruelty. Our heroine however, was weak, weak, WEAK! I kept waiting for Cynda to see Vincent for who he really was... then, I waited for her to do something about it. In the end, it was Will who really facilitated Vincent's demise. The other characters of the novel - Cynda's father, stepmother, her brother Todd, and even her new friend Will - are less cleanly drawn. These auxiliary characters do their part by fading into the background of the story, without really creating any discernible subplots to muddy up the main plot.

Overall, Look For Me By Moonlight was suspenseful and sufficiently creepy, but still a little disappointing. It was predictable and the ending fell flat - just plain unfulfilling after a pretty good build-up. I can't say I'd particularly recommend Look For Me By Moonlight to anyone. The story is pretty shallow - but if that's

what you're looking for, this book is for you. I need a little something more.

Aviva says

I remember being obsessed with this book in middle school. Obsessed. I also remember it having enough romance and passion and awesome twist-at-the-end-ness for me to reread it a bunch of times. So when I found a cheap copy in a used book store, I bought and read it in a day.

See, I wanted to enjoy this. I mean, it brought back such fond memories, right? And I remember Mary Downing Hahn as being a great author, so I wanted to enjoy the hell out of this book. Unfortunately it was just...utterly predictable. And not in a good way. Also, it was short. This book was published in 1995. Back when young adult books were much shorter and the character development wasn't NEARLY as involved. And it shows. Because the entire time I was reading this book, I was irritated with everybody from the main character to the cat. Nobody in this book comes off likable at all and Vincent is the biggest caricature of a villain I've since since the curly mustache guy tying the girl to the traintracks in the looney tunes cartoons. Also, the repeated references to the poem got old. Mainly because they felt incredibly tacked on and like Hahn needed a literary reason to write a vampire novel.

Kat says

I love Mary Downing Hahn. She is an incredible author. Look for Me by Moonlight is inspired by a poem called The Highwayman. In the poem an inn-keepers daughter is in love with a highwayman. An employee at the inn is jealous so he alerts the authorities that the highwayman is frequently at the inn. They come and tie up the daughter, but she manages to shoot herself and warn the highwayman that the soldiers are there. He comes back the next day and is killed himself. This poem is frequently brought up and quoted throughout the story. In this story, the main character's father is the owner of a B&B. Vincent, a handsome intellectual man, comes to stay at the B&B. Vincent has a secret, he is a vampire, and he is linked to the deaths of many young women throughout the years who has stayed at the inn. The girl has to save herself and her brother from the man who she has fallen in love with, and who stands to destroy them both.

skein says

I usually dislike the 'aha!' ending, where everything is thrown on its ear and the author crows about about how clever they are and how the stupid little reader was just so easily taken in (hello, Sarah Waters!) This isn't quite like that. This 'aha!' took a silly, mediocre story and turned it into ... something else entirely. (I hesitate to say "thrilling psychological horror" but that's kind of what it is.)

My biggest - my only - problem was the narrator. Supposedly sixteen years old, she talks and acts and thinks and understands like a much, much younger child - a girl or eight or nine. Given the author usually writes about the pre-teens & *especially* given the denouement, I have to wonder if the narrator's age was changed after the fact. (B. disagrees with me as she often does, but I say to you again: how many 16-year-olds actually *believe* in vampires? Okay, maybe a Rob Pattinson type would suspend disbelief - but what if the vampire is that totally unsexy 40 year old neighbor? Even the success of Twilight doesn't make *that* likely.)
