



Gallows Hill

By Lois Duncan

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When Sarah Zoltanne moves from sunny California to a small town in Missouri, she feels like she'll never fit in. Her mother is dating a jerk, the kids at her school despise her, and she misses her old home. So when a popular boy asks her to tell fortunes at a school fair, she jumps at the chance. But soon her crystal ball begins to swirl with strange visions and her outlandish predictions start to come true with startling accuracy. Now Sarah must confront a community that not only mistrusts her, but also fears her strange powers.

Gallows Hill is a spine-chilling thriller based on the story of the Salem witch trials.

This ebook features an illustrated biography of Lois Duncan including rare images and never-before-seen documents from the author's personal collection.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 7-9. Sarah, 17, has just moved from California to a small Missouri town so that her mother can be near her new boyfriend. The teen reluctantly agrees when handsome, popular Eric asks her to run a fortune-telling booth at the school's Halloween carnival. After her impressive performance, he convinces her to continue telling fortunes off campus. Then Sarah becomes unnerved by the startling visions about other students that she sees in the antique paperweight/crystal ball and begins to have terrifying nightmares. Her classmates, not knowing how to deal with Sarah's unsettling information, label her a witch. Her only friend is another misfit, Charlie. Because both of them are having dreams about the Salem witchcraft trials, Charlie develops a theory that they are living out the results of what happened in past lives in Salem; that many of Sarah's classmates may be former victims of her false accusations seeking revenge. Parts of the plot stretch credibility. That so many students could so easily become convinced that Sarah is a witch seems highly unlikely. Equally hard to accept is the idea that Sarah's mother has been drawn to the town so that Sarah can fulfill some sort of karmic destiny. Charlie's belief in reincarnation causes him to sound like a textbook on Eastern religions. Adult characters merely serve to move the story along. Sarah, however, is an insightful and perceptive character, and readers will identify with her anguish as she tries to deal with the cruelties inflicted on her. Unfortunately, the ending is abrupt and loose ends get tucked in too easily. Despite its weaknesses, this is still an exciting, suspenseful tale that will certainly be welcomed by Duncan's many fans. ?Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC
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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 6[^]-9. Sarah Zoltanne is new in town, dragged from California to Missouri by her mom, who is in love with a local teacher. Sarah is miserable, but after she plays a fortune-teller at a school event, popular Eric Garret enlists her to make fortune-telling a side business. When the fortunes start coming true, and Sarah begins having dreams about the Salem Witch Trials, reality becomes frightening and dangerous. This is a mish-mash that works best when it focuses on the effect Sarah's fortune-telling has on a parochial town, but the plot spins out of control when Sarah and the other kids turn out to be reincarnations of people from the witch trials. Despite the flaws (including a narrow portrait of "Christians" and the inaccurate information that most early Christians believed in reincarnation), the book has one important thing going for it--Duncan writes page-turners. Her well-known knack for mixing the sinister and the supernatural compensates for a lot--and it needs to here. *Ilene Cooper*

From Kirkus Reviews

A sloppy suspense novel--Duncan (Night Terrors, 1996, etc.) unsuccessfully charts a plot full of witchcraft, ESP, reincarnation, book-burning, and fortune-telling, as well as an utterly incredible chain of events. When Sarah's mother inexplicably falls in love with Ted, a tyrant, she gives up her job and home so they can move to his small town. Since he is separated from his wife, Sarah's mother is the "other woman" in a Peyton Placestyle community where it is nearly impossible for Sarah to make friends. When she poses as a fortune-teller at a school carnival, Sarah actually sees the future in her crystal ball, an ability that results in the widespread suspicion that she is a witch. With a heavy hand, Duncan draws parallels to the witchcraft trials of 17th-century Salem. When Sarah faces hanging at the hands of a drunken mob of kids, Charlie--son of a bookseller whose store was torched for selling "books that people didn't approve of"--saves her by convincing his classmates that they were all in Salem in a past life, and need to put it behind them. In addition to such implausible scenes, some subplots simply trail off, teenagers sound like adults, and too many characters are suddenly versed in witchcraft. Readers are repeatedly informed that the town is

``conservative" and churchgoers are uniformly hypocritical. Bleakly shallow. (further reading) (Fiction. 12+)
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jonathan Head:

The book Gallows Hill make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem together with your subject. If you can make looking at a book Gallows Hill to become your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about a few or all subjects. You are able to know everything if you like open and read a reserve Gallows Hill. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science reserve or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this publication?

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