



# The Secret Sea

*Barry Lyga*

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## The Secret Sea Barry Lyga

Zak Killian hears a voice. Could it be a guardian angel? A ghost? No, that's crazy. But sometimes the voice is so real...It warns him of danger—directs him to safety.

Then one day Zak is standing on the subway platform when the voice warns him to run. The tunnel starts to fill with water. His friends Moira and Khalid believe this is more than a premonition, and soon all three find themselves in an alternate universe that is both familiar and seriously strange. As Zak unravels the mystery behind the voice, he faces decisions that may mean the end of their world at home—if they can even get home!

## The Secret Sea Details

Date : Published August 23rd 2016 by Feiwel & Friends

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Author : Barry Lyga

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## **From Reader Review The Secret Sea for online ebook**

### **Cindy Mitchell \*Kiss the Book\* says**

Lyga, Barry The Secret Sea, 430 pgs. Feiwel and Friends, 2016. \$16.99. Language: PG (6 swears, 0 "F"); Mature Content: PG; Violence: PG.

Zak Killian is hearing voices, which he thinks may be his guardian angel. After he runs to save himself from a flooding subway station that isn't really flooding, his estranged parents worry not only about his strange behavior, but a heart condition Zak was born with. As the voices intensify, Zach and his two friends, Moira and Kahlid go on the run to find the source of the visions, literally plunging into an alternative universe. Zak faces danger in this new universe and has to decide which voices to trust because lives in both universes could be at risk through his actions.

The premise is interesting, and I liked the author's note at the back of the book explaining how he got his ideas. Zak and his friends seem a little too willing to go against their families and break laws just because of Zak's voices. Zak's feelings of grief, loss, and betrayal seem a bit over the top considering how little he knew of the source, and the book lagged in spots.

MS, HS - OPTIONAL. Michelle in the Middle  
<http://kissthebook.blogspot.com/2017/...>

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### **Denise Kawaii says**

The Secret Sea surprised me! It went so far beyond a boy discovering a ship hidden beneath where the World Trade Center towers used to be. There was an alternate universe, wild science (magic!), ghosts and more! I love the way the author tied in so many different topics into one amazing story.

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### **Skip says**

Really weak effort by Lyga, following his excellent trilogy. Lyga stitches together a news item about the discovery of an old ship at Ground Zero with a real medical condition, TTTS (twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome) to come up with a YA novel about three friends in Brooklyn, who manage to wander into an alternate universe where things are very different, especially for women. Occasionally interesting, but mostly preposterous and too much unexplained. Don't bother.

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### **Lucas Ballard says**

Book was really good but at same time wasn't the greatest it had parts that I couldn't set the book down and pulled me in but also had parts that made me barley wanna turn the page. All in all though it was a good book. I think my only real problem with the book was that they were younger than the average character of Barry lyga instead of being 18 or so they were about 13-14 which made it harder to relate

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## Billie says

This is that rare beast, the Middle Grade novel that has middle school-aged protagonists and is aimed at a middle-school audience. Lyga neither keeps his characters immature in order to appeal to a 9-to 11-year-old readership nor has them acting like high schoolers in order to satisfy some aspirational middle school fantasy. Zak, Moira, and Khalid are very firmly and clearly twelve or thirteen and their actions and decisions reflect that. Yes, they manage to get themselves out of tricky situations in really clever ways, but those escapes are never implausible given what we know of the characters of these characters. They also make a lot of mistakes and poor decisions because they let their emotions and impulses rule. This is especially true of Zak who almost makes a catastrophic mistake in pursuit of something he *wants* to be true.

Lyga also creates an alternate world which is both appealing and terrifying—it is technologically advanced (and has *magic!*), but is *The Handmaid's Tale*-level oppressive to women,. Lyga is clearly a feminist with a feminist agenda and gods bless him for it. While he never beats the reader over the head with the idea of equality, it is very clear and examined in ways that will, it is to be hoped, make kids take stock of their own attitudes and prejudices and maybe make some adjustments.

Several characters mention how they would be willing to give up the technology of this alternate world to live in a world where women weren't treated as property, but there was another question that was never addressed, and it's one that may be even more important and more difficult to answer. In the alternate Manhattan, the United States had abolished slavery more than a century before it happened here and there is true racial equality and harmony. So, if Dr. Bookman, for example, had to make a choice between his world with its racial harmony and advanced technology (and magic!) or our world with its striving for equality for all, but its large pockets of prejudice and intolerance, which would he choose?

Overall, this is a big, smart middle grade adventure novel that manages to thoroughly entertain its readers while also challenging them to think about bigger issues.

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## Margo Kelly says

Hmm. After reading Lyga's "I Hunt Killers" trilogy, I was surprised to read this one by him. I was expecting another thriller aimed at the YA audience, but *THE SECRET SEA* is actually a middle-grade novel with a 12-year-old protagonist. Plus, at 446 pages, it's extremely long for a middle-grade novel. However, if I'd gone into it with the correct mindset, that would have helped me, because it's certainly a great adventure.

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## Kaitlyn Raich says

For someone like me who has loved YA fiction for a long time, I've kind of stagnated on reading in this genre for a while. But *The Secret Sea* solves a lot of the problems I've noticed trending in YA fiction lately. How?

1) It has a diverse set of main characters. Two of the main trio are people of color--one is Hispanic and another has Middle Eastern heritage (I can't remember if his family is from Iran or Iraq so please excuse me

for that) and regularly mutters to himself in Farsi.

2) It does not contain the romantic plot of "everything changes when she meets such and such boy" or vice versa (seriously I cannot emphasize how tired I am of these plots pervading the genre).

3) It continuously points out societal issues without making them seem boring or overly complicated. The problems they point out are shown in ways that are similar to our own history and in my case at least, make the emotional connection to these issues in the book even stronger. And characters end up checking their own privileges multiple times, usually without prompting from anyone else.

4) Its main protagonist has a realistic medical condition. While I've been seeing more and more of other kinds of diversity in recent years, it's still hard to find books where a person with a disability is the main protagonist. What makes this even better is that it does not fall to ableist tropes that we see all too much with differently abled characters.

That being said, the plot is also breathtaking in itself. I could hardly bring myself to put this book down. I was always coming up with new questions as certain details were revealed. The world-building is something I'll probably admire for a long time, from the language changes, societal issues, technology, architecture, and even the clothing.

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### **Susan Gellert Ketcham says**

Couldn't get into the whole alternate history setting, which is a shame because I love Barry Lyga. The protagonist is younger, so the whole novel is a great leap from what he usually writes.

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### **Ayesha Ayyad says**

It gets slow in the middle, but do not give up. This book is such a great read! It has a different twist than your usual books.

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### **Erikka says**

Contrived, cliched, tedious, and preachy. And those might be its good points. The checklist-style diversity that I abhor was everywhere, the plot made no sense, the scientific gobbledygook was annoying, and it's really bad when you can't stand the main characters. It annoyed me that they constantly succeeded: there was no drama because there was no chance of them losing. This was a protagonist-driven book--nothing was at stake because the plot relied on them being preternaturally successful. It was annoyingly one-sided. I also felt the World Trade Center was exploited--it felt like readers were having their emotions toyed with. I also feel like this book has no audience--like I wouldn't know who to recommend it to if I wanted to. I appreciated the feminist message, but that's where my "preachy" comment applies: it was incredibly beat-you-about-the-head with the feminism. It could have been managed to greater effect with more subtlety. But, then again, middle grade audience--maybe the preachiness was needed?

I was mostly upset though because "I Hunt Killers" is one of my favorite series of all time. I know what

Lyga is capable of. He should steer clear of middle grade books and stick with teen--he's a freaking beast at writing teen books.

Thank you, NetGalley, for the arc.

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### **Stacey says**

It was intriguing following the three young people as they entered an alternative universe, similar to our world with some major changes. In the other world, there is a higher level technology and science and no racism. However, the dark side of that world is that girls and women are treated as second-class citizens. The women folk don't have the freedom that our world has.

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### **Yami says**

I finished Lyga's Bang couple of weeks ago and absolutely loved it but,

No,No,NO,NOoo

this can't be one of Lyga's, the writing is way weak and annoying, and not to mention repetitive paragraph syndrome.

the novel was going up and down, in some chapters I would be truly interested and enjoying it, when it become more harsher and not intended for kids, and then it flickers and dulls as if they remembered to make it PG again and Viola!!! it becomes weak again, I don't know what is going on, I almost read every thing by Lyga and loved all of it (Jasper Dent's is on my top 10 trilogy)

the idea of the plot was not bad, but the narrating was annoying, and Zak the main protagonist was the least fav. of mine him being a whiny, childish and under the spot light of being sick didn't win my hear. Moira and the frau idea was very intimidating but making repeating how smart she was through out the novel made her look dum especially when she was proven wrong.

as I said it has REALLY good parts, and I think if it was written to meet a little older audience like in the rest of his novels it would be waaay better.

I was never so happy to see the last page saying author's note.

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### **Heidi Pedersen says**

Well, I wanted to like this a lot. I liked it....ok. I'm always willing to suspend realistic solutions for a fantasy novel, but the group seemed to always find solutions without trying overly hard or being that creative.

They're in an alternate universe, with no way of communicating, and of course they get separated over and over, but somehow seem to just keep finding each other in "Manhattan", the alternate-NYC. It's still a massive city with a dense population and towering skyscrapers. So, how is it possible that they keep running into each other randomly but in the nick of time?

I did like the alternate universe thought, and why they got pulled into it....especially based on the real story of finding a boat buried deep down!

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### **Avery (ThePagemaster) says**

Was trying my best to finish this before 2017, but I was suddenly invited to a NYE party and couldn't.

But regardless of when I finished this, Barry Lyga won me over with his Jasper Dent Trilogy. It went against the grain of Young Adult with all the romance/love triangles, angst, and other cliches and gave us a genuine thriller. This one, even though it didn't match up to Jasper Dent, still had that mysterious tone that made me like Lyga in the first place.

I will say that my only gripe with this book is that the ending was slightly drawn out, then suddenly "The End". Also, if you are unfamiliar with the elementary theories of Multiverses or Alternate Universes, or metaphysics, this book will have you lost, to a degree, but it will explain things as the story goes along.

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### **ahasan706 says**

This is a good book about a kid named Zack who hears voices in his head. The voices tell him of danger and sometimes Zack does dangerous things without knowing it. The voices then warn him of something that didn't happen and he gets in trouble because of it. He then learns that the voices in his head are two people. One is good and one is bad. He has to find out which is the good one before they make him do something that can kill everyone. I give this book 4 out of 5 stars and recommend it.

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