



Dirty Laundry

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Winchester School of the Arts is "The Laundromat" because students kicked out of better schools go as "dirty laundry." Carli, gorgeous pigtailed actress, goes undercover to research her role. 'Fun', Fellini Udall Newport, embittered senior and graffiti artist is almost expelled — until his dad and money convince the headmaster to work off his crime as Carli's assistant.

When beautiful talented senior Darcy Novak vanishes, Carli and Fun discover each other's hidden talents, but villain sets them up. Can they save Darcy and themselves? Or will they wash out?

Dirty Laundry Details

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From Reader Review Dirty Laundry for online ebook

Myndi says

I found this book in a Little Free Library and decided to check it out. At first, I wasn't sure what to think...it's told in dual perspectives and jumps back and forth a lot at the beginning. But once I got into it, I was hooked. Fun and Carli alternately tell the tale of a missing classmate and their goal to be the ones to find her.

In addition to the mystery of the missing student, there's also the story of Carli and Fun, who are living with their own secrets. All of this is told in a boarding school setting that is very interesting.

I think teens will enjoy this story.

Sara says

2.5 stars. Fun is a teen boy at a boarding school, tasked by his Hollywood father to help "Sheila", a "new student" at the school - really, "Sheila" is an undercover actress named Carli looking to research an upcoming role. Right before Carli arrives, a student disappears, and Carli and Fun decide to take it upon themselves to solve the case, since no one else seems interested in doing so.

Most of this book was pretty average. Carli and Fun alternately narrate the story, which is also broken up into parts with brief summaries of what each chapter is about to cover. For good measure, there was also the text of the headmaster's speech, the transcript of a radio interview, and blog entries. The framing made it kind of odd, as the segments didn't seem to mesh together well.

I did enjoy the camaraderie between Carli and Fun, but the characters were pretty thin overall. I was mainly interested enough in the mystery to keep reading until the end. The actual solution to the main mystery (the student's disappearance) was on the weak side, but I really liked the little mysteries that were revealed along the way - mainly secrets other students were keeping. All these mysteries, however, didn't really take much of a form until almost halfway through the book, and even then, the majority of the story focused on their regular lives. There were also a number of odd plotlines along the way - suspicions that certain people might be the culprits, or doubting stories classmates told - that seemed to do no more than pad the book.

This book wasn't bad, but it didn't stand out either. It's not a book I'd recommend seeking out, but if you come across a copy, it's not the worst thing to read. At the very least, it kept me entertained for an hour or two.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Jaglvr for TeensReadToo.com

Carli Gemz is going undercover. She's off to the Winchester School of the Arts to get into character for her upcoming TV series, Private Nights. She will have the son of the creator, Fellini Udall Newport (aka FUN) at her disposal as her personal assistant.

Fun has no desire to be the slave to Carli, whom he has to refer to as Sheila Smith, her character's name. Being her assistant is part of the arrangement his father has made with Headmaster Stanton to keep Fun at Winchester. Fun should've been kicked out for his graffiti art around campus. Instead, his girlfriend, Charity, was expelled for getting caught in the male dorm. Life is not fair.

Senior year starts out with the news that Darcy Novak, the basic do-gooder of the senior class, has gone missing. Fun's roommate, Nails, used to date Darcy and may be a suspect in her disappearance. Also in question is Darcy's most recent boyfriend, Kirk Bishop. Kirk's family has donated enormous amounts of money to Winchester, and he is able to get away with just about anything.

When Fun and Carli meet, they actually form a bond and the two decide to investigate Darcy's disappearance, each for their own reasons. As they stumble through the first part of the school year, the mystery around Darcy grows. More of their acquaintances come under suspect, and the two no longer know who they can trust.

Told in alternating voices, Fun and Carli reveal their thoughts to the reader as they try to figure out what happened to Darcy. They both have their own issues to work through, but they come to rely on each other as they days pass and the mystery is no closer to being solved.

DIRTY LAUNDRY bounces back and forth between the two characters. At times it was hard to keep track of who was doing the talking, but overall, the story was intriguing. Mr. Ehrenhaft was able to keep the intrigue surrounding Darcy's disappearance cleverly hidden up until the final few pages.

Fun and Carli were both creative characters with quirky personalities, but it would be nice to see their characters develop even more in a follow-up story.

E. Anderson says

Carli Gemz (pronounced "games") is a teen actress who has just landed a role in a new TV show: Private Nights. Since she'll be playing a bitchy teen queen and a boarding school, Carli is being enrolled undercover at the Winchester School of the Arts, an East coast boarding school where all the freaks, geeks, and would-be criminals are sent after being kicked out of more prestigious academies. With a reputation for harboring the "dirty laundry" of the social elite, Carli knows that the few weeks she'll be spending as Sheila Smith will be pretty wild, but she never imagined that, together with her boss's son (and her new personal assistant), she'd wind up investigating the disappearance and possible murder of Winchester's favorite student, Darcy Novak. Fun, the aforementioned son of Carli's boss, is only still attending Winchester because of the money the school is getting from his dad for hosting Carli. He and his room-mate, Nails, would usually be up to no good, but with Carli on campus and the disappearance of Darcy, he has better things to do. Especially when it turns out that everyone is a suspect. Ehrenhaft's novel is part mystery part satire, at times dark and at other times sweet. The characters are completely three-dimensional, and while they will surprise you, their motives and methods are realistic within the context of the wacky world of Winchester. This is not the sort of book that one can put down easily.

Stephanie says

Dirty Laundry reminded me of Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist because of the writing style. Both styles were aimed towards the teens with all the slangs and whatnot and both were styles that I really disliked.

Both characters, Carli and Fun, did not have a lot of depth in their personalities and character-wise. They were both like 2D characters and I was not particularly fond of either one of them.

Sure, the plot itself was fairly interesting but because the writing style irked me, I wasn't able to thoroughly enjoy the storyline. I liked the idea of an actress going undercover to research her role and having an "undercover" assistant to guide her along the way. I hated how Carli kept comparing herself to Sheila, the role she was to play, and it wasn't until the second half of the book did she finally stop comparing every other page. I am also tired of the whole prep school theme that has been going on for who-knows-how-long and that's also probably why I disliked Dirty Laundry. I don't mind reading them but after a number of the same types of books...I mean, a girl's gotta have some choices, right?

The ending also was shot. Dirty Laundry definitely didn't have a very strong ending and it just basically made the whole book go down the toilet. So in case if you haven't noticed, I did not have such a high opinion on this book.

An Odd1 says

- switches sections by students, almost same voice, boring

Andrea says

Review at The Little Bookworm

Welcome to Winchester School of the Arts, a place where the dirty laundry of other boarding schools is sent, the kids who are too bad to go anywhere else.

Enter Carli Gemz ("games"), a beautiful girl sent by the producer of her new TV show to learn about boarding school and being bad.

Here's Fun (Fellini Udall Newport), the producer's son who is made to be Carli's assistant or else by his dad. Exit Darcy Novak, one of the good girls at Winchester. She's disappeared and the cops and school are a little lackadaisical about finding her.

Now Carli is involved in finding Darcy, partly out of curiosity, partly to help her get out of a shame spiral, which is frequently has since her life is so perfect and she is so talented. And Fun is involved since he liked Darcy well enough and has to assist Carli in whatever she does. Welcome to Winchester where it's all Fun and Games.

I liked this book. It was so funny and strange at the same time. Fun was a great character and his relationship to Carli was pretty good. There were a couple of things that threw me though. One was Carli's roommate, Miranda, and Fun's "crush" on her. It was a weird detail and didn't really gel with me. Another was Fun's roommate, Nails. He bothered me which I know he was suppose to but I wished more had been explained

about him.

I liked how they sort of accidentally solved the case. It was different from most mysteries where the "detective" intensely goes out looking for clues. The ending was a little wrapped up even for a mystery, but I'd like to see more from Carli and Fun.

Lela says

(Elective reading)

Summary: The Winchester School of the Arts is nicknamed "the laundromat" because of the reputation it has of taking in the screw-ups from the better boarding schools in the area. One of these pieces of dirty laundry is the cynical and trouble-making "Fun" Newport. The other is a young actress named Carli, studying for an upcoming gig she has about the boarding school party life. Fun is to be Carli's personal assistant as she learns. Problem: Darcy Novak, the most popular and put-together girl on campus, has gone missing. Together, Fun and Carli try to solve the mystery of her disappearance while not getting caught doing so.

Response: I have to be honest--this was pretty tragic. It didn't seem geared to high school students as much as it was geared to middle-school students. In all honesty, however, I don't think this book is very understandable to any public-school-going student. It is set at a boarding school, and unless you have lived in dorms before, you can't really get into the idea of how it is scary.

Of course, it isn't scary at all because it isn't written well. But one can tell that it is supposed to be tense.

This book is supposed to be a caper, but there are so many plot holes and issues that the reader (at least this reader) is insanely bored. We don't care enough about the characters to be as in depth in the story as we would have to be in order to feel like it was a mystery. When the reveal comes, it is so ridiculously anticlimactic and stupid that it was borderline comical, which is sad because Ehrenhaft tried very hard to be funny throughout the book. It didn't work.

It is a good thing I read a different Ehrenhaft novel before this one; I would have never given him another chance if I hadn't. In talking to him over email, however, he had warned me that this was "not [his] best work" and that I probably shouldn't expect much. All I can say is that I am glad he knows it.

Cyndi says

Pretty good book. Our heroine is an actress planning to prepare for her role as a teenage 'naughty' girl in a prep school. And there is my problem with the book. Her character often slipped into a six year old mindset. She was a squeaky clean Mary Jane who would do something benign so she would appear 'naughty.'

(Maybe I just hate that word. Seems like it should only be used by small children and porn stars)

Meanwhile our hero had earned his place as the 'bad boy' by writing graffiti on buildings. Nothing lurid just 'Fun loves Charity.' His name is Fun (don't ask) and his ex girlfriend is named Charity. Our heroine thought it meant he liked doing good deeds. ????

Even the mysterious disappearance of an off-book character didn't save it. But, I did like the plot, just needed better characters.

Litbitchbaby says

Dirty Laundry was one of those books I picked up on a whim. I was at the library, with a stack of suggested books and it caught my eye. After passing it for the third time I finally picked it up because it had a cute cover, the plot sounded interesting and I thought why not. If it sucks, I'll have one bad review for my blog to give it street cred.

I'm extremely happy I did because Dirty Laundry ended surprising me. The book revolves around two main characters, Carli and Fun. Carli is a C-list actress who has been cast as the lead in a new show about private school. She's sent off to Winchester School of the Arts in order to "get into character", using her characters names and observing the behavior of other students. That is where Fun comes in, he's the son of Carli's boss and has agreed to work as Carli's personal assistant in order to not be expelled for all the graffiti he's done on campus.

As for the school, Winchester is the place where all the bad apples end up after being expelled from other boarding schools. So it's an interesting array of characters and staff that Carli interacts with upon arriving at the school. Most of whom are focused on Darcy, one of the more stable students who had mysteriously disappeared at the start of the book and the surrounding investigation.

The narration in the book switches back and forth between Carli and Fun, along with the occasional police transcript, IM conversation or blog entry by Nails. It can be a bit jarring at first but after the first part of the book it gets into a good flow and works well.

The book also gets points because, despite a cast of unbalanced boarding school students, it stays mostly within the realm of reality and the ending is quirky but not over the top.

It's not a perfect book, Carli's shame spirals are overdone in the first part of the book and Fun's a bit to stand offish to really get into. That and the interaction between the two isn't explored to the extent that I hoped it would be. The few scenes they have together are awesome, but most of the book is spent with them in a group or separately.

Dirty Laundry isn't going to be everyone's cup of tea but it was one I strongly enjoyed.

Teen says

If I were to sum up my reading experience with Dirty Laundry in one word it would be : TIRESOME. A young actress, who often falls into "guilt spirals", attends a boarding school for misfits under a different name as research for her next TV series. The director of the TV series happens to have a son at the academy who, under duress, to be her assistant. The day before "Sheila Smith" arrives on campus a student disappears, and suspecting foul play "Sheila" and F.U.N. (yes the book is rife with witty character nicknames) set out to find her. I personally did not like the one to two sentence chapter summaries prior to each section of the book. Also I can't get over the line where Sheila says "All guys think about is sex" and F.U.N. acts as if it something he has never heard before. If the character was trying to convey sarcasm, this reader sure didn't

see it. I think this book was supposed to be similar in tone to Nick and Nora's Infinite Playlist, but it isn't anywhere close. CT/DLR

Sabrina says

not as great as i expected it to be but it was good

Hollie says

This review was first posted on Music, Books and Tea

I picked this up whilst on holiday for about \$3. I thought the premise was quite interesting, and figured that as it was published by Harper, it couldn't be that bad, right? I was kinda wrong. This book was alright at best. The plot was very weak, the characters weren't much better, and for such a short book, it took me far too long to read.

What worked for me: Although the plot was weak, I did still want to know what happened at the end, but other than that, there wasn't really much that worked for me with this book I'm afraid.

What didn't work for me: I didn't like the characters. I found Carli annoying, Fun tiresome and everyone else two dimensional. The plot was rather weak, and the ending was extremely anti-climatic. This just wasn't the fun read I expected it to be.

I'm actually rather disappointed with this book, and it was only whilst writing this review that I realised that. This book could have been far, far better, but unfortunately, it just wasn't.

Isel says

... Not my thing.

I was hoping I would enjoy it more since it has been on my to read list since I was in highschool lol.

I know I finished it pretty fast but it wasn't because I was enjoying it more like because it was a short book and I didn't want to stop because then I knew it would be a long while before I picked it up again.

I didn't follow it very well but I do know everyone was messed up (like waaaaay messed up). I definitely did not like any of the characters and you know maybe because it was a bit like a mystery book might be part of the reason this book is not for me, since I'm not really into mystery and all that, you know ?

Some parts were funny. Made me chuckle. In my head. Not out loud.

Paige Spell says

This book is a good read for a light hearted mystery. Undercover actress, Carli, is joined by a boy called FUN to solve a misery at Winchester, a boarding school known as the laundry mat. Students are sent to Winchester because they are trouble or on their last leg. The first day that Sheila Smith (Carli) and FUN attended the school a girl called Darcy Novak goes missing. Carli and FUN decide to investigate and find outmost really happened. This is a fast read, although it can be hard to get use to how it goes back and forth from Carli's perspective to FUN's. I recommend this book for a simple, exciting thriller.
