



Killing the Dead

Marcus Sedgwick

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Set in a girls' boarding school in Massachusetts a haunting and sinister story YA story for World Book Day from prize-winning author Marcus Sedgwick.

1963. Foxgrove School near Stockbridge, Massachusetts. One of the oldest and finest academies in the country - but what really goes on behind closed doors? Nathaniel Drake, the new young English teacher, Isobel Milewski, the quiet girl who loved to draw spirals, her fingers stained with green ink, Jack Lewis, who lent Isobel books - just words, just ink on paper, Margot Leya, the girl with those eyes - who are they, what part have they played in killing the dead?

Follow the dark, dark path
Into the dark, dark woods
To the dark, dark bridge
By the dark, dark water.
Linger.
Let the ghosts of heaven tell their story.

A stylish and creepy story for World Book Day from prize-winning author Marcus Sedgwick.

Killing the Dead Details

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Author : Marcus Sedgwick

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From Reader Review Killing the Dead for online ebook

Kimberley doruyter says

the story didn't really speak to me, but i did like the writing style.

Laura Elgie says

I bought this book randomly at my local ASDA, I read the synopsis and found it really intriguing. I'm so glad I bought this book, it was really good! A creepy mystery. I liked the different perspectives and I couldn't predict what was going to happen.

Michael says

This book was a well written short story (Part of World Book Day 2015) which had a good plot and the ending was excellent.

I like how each chapter begins with a character's name and how this was used to build the story and bind different aspects of the story from the perspective of different characters.

At the back of the book is an extract of Alan Gibbons 'Hate' which gave a nice introduction to his story.

Rita says

This book wasn't as creepy as I was hoping it to be but the ending was excellent. I really like how each chapter begins with a character's name and how this was used to piece the story together. The writing style was not really my favorite but it did give some character to the plot.

Berenike says

The dead never come back, do they?

A little novella about an all girls boarding school in the 1960s, which is still haunted by a girl who died there almost a year before.

I admit that I wanted to read this mostly because boarding schools and ghosts are two things that really speak to me, so I figured this would be perfect. But, as I once again found out too late, it's not really supposed to be a ghost story. At least not the kind of ghost that floats around at night and scares people.

The characters are for the most part a nice little collection of clichés – the quiet girl who reads a lot and doesn't have any friends, the group of Mean Girls and their leader, the young English teacher whose only goal is to sleep with the students – and they interact in exactly the way you'd expect them to.

But it's interesting to see the different ways in which most of them are still dealing with Isobel's death, even though nobody knew her all that well and the whole thing happened almost a year ago.

It's story that I feel like I've heard a thousand times before, but with enough weird little details that it doesn't become boring.

Writing ★★★★★? (if I forget about that one chapter where the author couldn't decide whether to use people's first or last names)

Characters ★★???

Plot ★★★★★??

Pacing ★★★★★?

Catie says

I haven't read *The Ghosts of Heaven*, so I may have missed about a million allusions and subtle messages. I still really enjoyed this, however. It was delightfully brief and creepy.

Sera says

Another reread before I go to sleep

Still don't understand what is happening in this story at all and I don't think I care to know either. Why did I reread this book? The cover is kinda cool and the title intrigued me, not sure why when I've already read this book but I gave it another chance and that's all that matters :)

Abbie says

Actual rating - 2.5

This wasn't awful, but I couldn't get interested in it, so I felt bored through most of it. I'm really glad it was only short!

Jackie Law says

Killing the Dead, by Marcus Sedgwick, is one of this year's World Book Day £1 books for young adults. Having read and enjoyed *The Ghosts of Heaven* I noted the spiral on the cover and was eager to get hold of a copy before bookshops sold out. These specially produced offerings are only available for a short time.

Set in an exclusive girls' boarding school in the nineteen-sixties the story explores the aftermath of a pupil's apparent suicide. Like the four stories in *The Ghosts of Heaven* it contains references to spirals and suggestions of superstition. The writing is taut with undercurrents of mystery and unanswered questions. The atmosphere evoked is spooky in places but always believable.

At just over 100 pages this book can be quickly read but is a complete and thought provoking tale. Within the confines of dormitory life what impact does one girl's actions have on others? What secrets do they keep? While teachers continue to believe that the beautiful and clever are good how can those who go unnoticed survive the casual cruelty inflicted by the entitled? The denouement brings home how lonely and difficult life can be for those who do not fit within society's view of that which one should admire and to which one should aspire.

This is the third book that I have read by the author and cements my admiration for his style of writing. He spins a compelling tale that is hard to put down.

"The most important person in this story is the one you will never meet. She is gone and yet she lingers, in the memories of those who knew her and lived with her. This is how the dead survive; they live in our memories, and some of the times that is a good thing and beautiful, and other times it is not good, and then the dead are like a virus in the blood, an infection of the mind. Then, although we might wish to get rid of them forever, we cannot. We might even wish to kill them, but that is a mighty and nigh impossible thing, for killing the dead is very hard to do."

Berit says

From reading other reviews it is my understanding this book was intentionally short. So, for what it was intended it was quite good. The character development was not extensive, but once again it was short. I found it dark, weird, and I would have liked it to be a bit longer. At the end I didn't quite understand The motivation behind their actions, other than just being cruel. I would really need to read something else by this author to have an opinion on his writing.

Helen says

This was a great story. I felt that it could have been expanded and more complex - I realise that would alter the target audience and purpose of this book.

Considering how short it was the characters were 3D, well developed and relatable. The plot was a little predictable, again because of the intention of the book.

Sedgwick dealt with death and the lingering after effects on those still living really well.

Set in a girls boarding school the year after a tragic death of a student. Strange events have the story unfolded to a new teacher that was not appointed when tragedy struck.

Bookfairy says

This deserves just under 3 stars, the slow build of the story does interest enough to keep reading, but almost

nothing seems to resolve. It's not always clear which character we're seeing, and there are several grammatical issues that were distracting for me. I guess it was short, so not much time wasted.

George (BuriedInBooks) says

WARNING- Contains graphic descriptions of suicide and teacher-student relationships.

A great little read for only £1!

I picked up *Killing the Dead* in WHSmith in the clearance section. I'm glad I did! The book is only 113 pages long and is packed with interesting characters and a very intriguing plot line.

Killing the Dead is a short story set in a exclusive private girls school where everyone is still coming to terms with a event that happened the previous year.

Killing The Dead is definitely for older readers because it contains tough topics such as suicide and teacher student relationships.

I did enjoy *Killing the Dead* so gave it a good four stars.

Thanks for reading!

Plum-crazy says

*Follow the dark, dark path
Into the dark, dark woods.
To the dark, dark bridge
By the dark, dark water.*

*Linger.
Let the ghosts of heaven tell their story*

An excellent creepy & haunting novella which, while not aimed at my age group, nevertheless made quite an impression on me (though to be completely honest I didn't particularly like the poem at the end.)

As it's aimed at children - albeit "older" readers, 13/14ish? I don't know - I was surprised at the sexual innuendo between the promiscuous Margot & her teacher - I guess kids today are more worldly than us that were 13 in the early 70's! Whatever, this is one older reader who will happily read more by this author :o)

Claudia says

1,5 stars
