

The disreputable history of Frankie Landau-Banks : a novel

Newest Most Favoritist Young Adult Author



The teenage female protagonists of E. Lockhart's novels are funny, smart, interesting, questioning and underneath it all resilient and strong. They don't always make the best initial choices, but are willing to learn and adjust as they go. These coming-of-age novels feature a romance (or two), but not at the cost of ignoring other similar and frequently troublesome themes of any young life - parents, school, friendships and finding your niche.

The Boyfriend List is the first in the Ruby Oliver series that also includes The Boy Book, The Treasure Map of Boys, and Real Live Boyfriends. In the beginning of the series, Ruby is struggling as a scholarship student at Tate Prep after her boyfriend dumps her for her best friend and a public humiliation that sends her to having anxiety attacks. Ruby is nothing if not a survivor - and through humor (often wonderfully sarcastic humor) figures out (more or less) how to survive.

In Fly on the Wall, Gretchen Yee is having trouble negotiating her arts school, where her comic book style receives mostly criticism. Not only does she not fit in with the rest of the traditional artsy crowd at school, her parents are getting a divorce. When she wishes to be a fly on the wall, she never expects her dream to come true. In the end it is Gretchen's choices after the Kafkaesque event - and not the event itself - that really change her life.

Sadye dreams of life on Broadway. In Dramarama, she and her best friend Demi get the opportunity to attend a prestigious theater summer camp - and of course the drama follows. Demi becomes the star and falls in love, while Sadye finds it difficult to just go with the flow. Sadye challenges the instructors and system after being unhappy at being cast in smaller roles. Despite her stubbornness and strong opinions the ending shows Sadye's true character. Musical references abound and a suggested movie list is included at the end.

Frankie starts dating the most popular senior at her boarding school - but doesn't feel comfortable being the typical sophomore arm candy. She wonders why Matthew's friends become her friends and his activities become her interests, but not the other way around. Her ambition to stir up the school, and its secret club might not be identifiable to every teenage girl, but how Frankie negotiates her relationship with Matthew and learns a thing or two about her self along the way make for both a fun and thought provoking read. The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks might be my favorite Lockhart novel. Frankie is truly one of a kind - in the most hard-headed lovable way. This book was also a finalist for both the National Book Award for Young People's Literature and the Michael L. Printz Award.

Most of these books have strong language and mature scenes, though usually in appropriate context. I would recommend this for many teen girls who are unsure of their place in the world. While serious issues are discussed, the humor and often blistering dialog make for some serious

fun too.

And while you are at it, check out [E. Lockhart's blog!](#)

Posted by sbowman on February 16, 2011

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