



Darby

Jonathon Scott Fuqua

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"Darby's first-person narrative is frank and immediate . . . expressing what it's like for an ordinary white kid who suddenly discovers evil — and courage — where she lives." — BOOKLIST

A Book Sense 76 Top Ten Pick

A National Council for the Social Studies Notable Trade Book for Young People

An International Reading Association Notable Book

"The root of this work stems from a series of oral history interviews the author conducted. . . . Darby symbolizes how one person, even a child, can make a difference." — KIRKUS REVIEWS

"Her voice, rich with southern idiom, rings true." — THE HORN BOOK

Darby Details

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Author : Jonathon Scott Fuqua

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From Reader Review Darby for online ebook

Alisandra says

What I like about this book is that it is in the time of 1926 where there was no equality and how racism we were back then. This book is interesting because the main character Darby went through a lot since her dad helps somebody with color. I would recommend this book to a person who likes the past behind history and how we were treated back then.

Tammy Wahl says

A read aloud for our Build Your Library grade 6 history curriculum. Definitely felt a little like a children's version of To Kill A Mockingbird.

Lauren says

This book was amazing. I picked it up as a book club book, with three other group members- finding that it was a gem. I have never read anything by Jonathon Scott Fuqua (now that is a good last name), but I was not disappointed by her skills. I loved almost everything about this text. The premise, the characters, the setting. It made me both emotional and thoughtful. It was quite sad, but in that sadness was beauty and hope. I'll start with the main character, Darby. Her narration made this story complete- as it was a different, inspiring look on the issues discussed in the text. I thought she was an interesting character, but I hated the way she seemed to fit into the stereotypical image of "how a girl should be" in parts. She was shy and quite dainty in a way, something that disappointed me. I love reading about strong, fierce role models for myself, although I am aware that girls can be emotional (I certainly am...;D). In addition, I love the setting of the book. It was described in such an uplifting way that I just want to go there!

Wowie! That was quite a bit to say, but I needed to say it. This book is amazing. I would recommend it to everyone in this entire world. Thanks, Jonathon Scott Fuqua.

Elijah Mae Pelayo says

I expected this book to be a bit more something because of its catchy tagline and nice preview. Apparently, I got disappointed. The book was a nice read and my time wasn't wasted but it's not the type of book I'd recommend to my friends. Anyway, here's one of the few parts I liked in the book:

"Thing is, I don't care if I ever gets married. It don't matter to me so much."

"You don't want kids?" Beth asked.

Evette shrugged. "Not so much."

"Why not?"

Evette stuck a finger through a big hole in her dress. Then she found another hole and even two more after that. "If...if I could have kids that was treated like white kids, I might want 'em okay. But black kids round here don't got much chance to do nothing and not much chance to own nothing either."

Beth asked, "What stuff don't you guys have?"

Evette lifted a finger that was stuck through one of the holes in her dress. She pointed off toward the tenant

house her daddy rented from my daddy. "We don't got a real home. We don't got good clothes. We don't got books at school. We don't got jewelry and cars and any land or money, and when daddy goes into town, he can't shop in the white stores and has to take off his hat when he passes white folk and say ma'am and sir to 'em even if they's real young."

"Is it terrible being a black girl?" Beth asked.

Evette looked down at the dirt. "It ain't so bad. It's just you don't ever get things you wants. But my daddy and mama, they say we should be real proud about our place and keep our self-respect. They say that's more important than having. That's what they say."

"Maybe."

We stayed quiet for a little while. Then Evette looked at me and Beth. "What's it like to be white girls?"

I thought about it, but I didn't have any answer. "It's not like anything. It's just the way I am."

"It's true," Beth said.

Evette kicked dirt with her raggy shoes. "That's 'cause y'all don't gotta think about it. You don't gotta know all the time you're a white girl. That's why I don't want no kids, 'cause they'd always know that they's black."

Emily says

First off I would like to say that I gave this book a 4 star rating isn't because I didn't like it that much but because it wasn't one of those books that you would go bonkers over and read it again, again, and again. The book was wonderful it was just that others were better. I hope you get what I'm saying. So anyway back to the real review. I just love the idea of the character Darby. I love her personality. It is so amazing. What I really love about this book is that the author tells it so well and you can really imagine what is going on and where everything is and how everything looks. This book is like one of those books when you feel like you are right there beside the character watching their every move. You can sometimes even feel yourself wanting to shout things like, "No don't do that!" or "I can't believe this is happening!" This is such a heart felt book because you can feel what is unfair and the shock and devastation that is going on. So you should read this book if you feel like your having a bad life. It makes you think about other people and their lives. Please read this book. It will and I say will change the way you look at things.

Dina says

Autographed

Amy says

What an unexpected book! One of you out there in Good Reads land posted this on your "to-read" list and I added to mine and had the chance to read it this week. It is a beautiful story! I loved it. This is a book that I wish I had when I was teaching US history in 5th grade. It does an eloquent job of describing some of the attitudes and challenges facing many rural communities in the early 1900's as they dealt with issues of race and discrimination. But most of all, it demonstrates the power for good that one person can have...however small a voice we think we have. It was a moving, well-written, powerful story!

Adyn Cohen says

I think this is a very good book for social issues and the book has many fetchers. and i think a lot of people will like this book.

Tenille Shade says

I purchased this book over a year ago while I was taking an online graduate course on multicultural literature. Unfortunately, I never got around to reading it until my 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Barnes, sent it to me in the mail for my birthday.

Darby's story of growing up in Marlboro, South Carolina during the 1920's was heartfelt and sincere. It took me a while to get into the story, but after a few chapters I was hooked. Jonathon Fuqua's use of colloquialisms and local vernacular made me feel like I was eavesdropping on the character's conversations. I loved the roles of the minor characters like her brother, McCall and her teacher, Miss Burstin.

The character that puzzled me the most was her mother. I recognize that her fears of ostracized by the community were a driving force, but I must admit I was disappointed that she blamed her daughter for a societal problem adults had created. Thankfully, Darby's father was a man of integrity who was willing to take a stand even if it meant putting his family and his career on the line.

Most reviewers compared this children's book to Harper Lee's classic, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I certainly see the resemblance, but I think a child being the heroine makes this story even more powerful. I found myself connecting the text to Andrew Clements book, *Extra Credit* and the Ruby Bridges story, *Through My Eyes*. Kids need to know that they have the power to change the world. These stories prove that small acts of courage often have a huge impact. I learned years ago that racism is an adult disease that we spread through children. Stories like this one help us recognize that there is a better way!

TeenFiction Teton County Library says

Teton County Library Call #: YA FUQUA
No rating

This book was described to me as "*To Kill a Mockingbird*," for younger readers. It does a great job of introducing readers to the injustices of racial prejudice, but ends on a much lighter note than the previously mentioned classic. In addition, the author makes a special note that he has chosen to leave out historical (and now considered perjorative) terms in a conscious effort to deter derogatory language for younger readers.

Taking place in South Carolina in the 1920's, the main character, Darby Carmichael, has two best friends: Beth, white, and the daughter of a prestigious lawyer, and Evette, black, and the daughter of share croppers on the Carmichael's property.

Through Evette, Darby learns that black people in the north have cars and houses - an idea she has never thought of before, as she has only seen black people who are poor. She begins to realize that life doesn't

seem fair for people with darker skin and she sets out to write a column for the local newspaper describing her newly enlightened views. The result is a town split apart by Darby's article-some threatening her family to keep their views to themselves (including the cross burning KKK, others proud of her for speaking her mind. A good read about the power of friendship, race, and self-confidence. A recommended read!

Mishal says

The book wasn't worth reading in my opinion

Diane says

In 1928 NC, Darby discovers writing about racial equality can really cause trouble

Charlyn says

Author Fugua bases this book on oral history interviews of folks living in Marlboro County, South Carolina. It is 1926 and Darby lives with an extended family on a large plantation now farmed by black tenant farmers. Her father runs a store in town where he allows people to sign for supplies for which they cannot pay. Although Darby lives in a majestic, large home, the paint is peeling on the outside and everyone in the family works to make ends meet. Darby has two best friends: schoolmate Beth is the daughter of the community's lawyer and she lives in a grand home in town; Evette lives on Darby's land in a shack and attends the school for blacks.

Evette proposes the idea of Darby becoming a journalist like Evette's aunt in New York. Darby composes a short article about the myth of toads causing warts and Mr. Salter, the editor of the local paper, includes it in the next issue. When Darby's blind Great-Uncle Harvey visits, she chooses to write about his heightened sense of smell and sound and his sightless life. However, when she shares the article with Evette, she edits the article, greatly improving the style and correcting Darby's spelling and grammar. Mr. Salter immediately recognizes the improved writing style and Darby gives credit to Evette. When Mr. Salter learns that Evette is a black girl, he chooses to leave off her last name to hide her identity.

Very quickly, the story becomes more complex. As Great-Uncle Harvey's hearing and smell improved after he lost his sight, Darby's new journalistic efforts and inquiries make her acutely conscious of the injustices and the prejudice around her. The simplicity and tranquility of life on the plantation with her family disappears when a black boy beaten by a neighbor dies and Mr. Salter publishes Darby's wish for a more peaceful co-existence between blacks and whites.

Readers will quickly learn how the Ku Klux Klan worked in the South and how the quality of life for blacks varied regionally. Darby's voice is strong and true throughout the book, always expressing the fears, the hopes, and the beliefs of a young girl. The book is compelling because of the strength and goodness of Darby and the people in her life and because of the malice and prejudice of others. Fuqua's writing is wonderful, bringing in delightful pieces of life from that time and using work-perfect imagery to describe it. It's a quiet book that packs a wallop.

Abby says

It was confusing but good

Alveera EVHS Khan says

Darby was extremely eye opening because it shows discrimination from an innocent child's eyes. I always think of racism as a horrible thing and wonder how white people in the early 1900s could have been so cruel to the African American workers. Now I realize why nobody took a stand. You can see Darby always assumed that discrimination is just the way it is because none of the African American people complained and nobody really questioned its existence. It was completely normal to her because she had grown up watching this happen. She only realized it after she talked about what she was seeing in the article she wrote in her local newspaper, causing an uproar in her town. Only then did she realize it was an issue and take a stand against it.

After reading this book, as a high-schooler, I realized that there are probably a lot of things going wrong in our American society that I am not questioning or taking a complete stand against just because it has always been there. Today, nobody really questions traditions because we never even think about it.

This book inspired me to question the obvious ideas that I have grown up with because, like Darby, I hope to realize social issues and change them to make the world a better place.
