

the seance by joan lowery nixon

The Seance by Joan Lowery Nixon is a gripping young adult novel that delves into themes of mystery, the supernatural, and the quest for truth. Nixon, a prolific author known for her engaging narratives, crafts a compelling story that captivates readers with its intriguing plot and relatable characters. The novel explores the consequences of dabbling in the unknown and the impact of unresolved emotions, making it a thought-provoking read for both teens and adults alike.

Overview of the Plot

"The Seance" is set against the backdrop of a small town, where the protagonist, a teenage girl named Kelly, finds herself grappling with her recent move and the emotional baggage that comes with it. The story unfolds as Kelly and her friends decide to hold a séance, a decision that spirals into an unexpected adventure filled with eerie occurrences and chilling revelations.

The plot is driven by several key events:

1. **The Move:** Kelly's family relocates to a new town, leaving her feeling isolated and longing for her old life.
2. **The Séance:** In an attempt to connect with the spirit world, Kelly and her friends conduct a séance, which becomes the catalyst for the unfolding mystery.
3. **Supernatural Events:** Following the séance, strange and unsettling occurrences begin to plague Kelly and her friends, blurring the lines between reality and the supernatural.
4. **Unraveling Truths:** As the story progresses, Kelly uncovers secrets about her new town and the history of the house they live in, leading to a climactic confrontation with the past.

Character Development

Joan Lowery Nixon skillfully develops her characters, making them relatable and multi-dimensional.

Kelly

Kelly is the central character, and her journey is one of self-discovery and courage. She embodies the struggles of adolescence, including the challenges of fitting into a new environment and the desire to belong. Throughout the

novel, Kelly evolves from a hesitant and insecure girl to a brave young woman willing to confront her fears and seek the truth.

Supporting Characters

- Megan: Kelly's best friend, who is enthusiastic about the séance and often encourages Kelly to step out of her comfort zone.
- Tom: A skeptical friend who questions the validity of the séance but ultimately supports the group in their quest for answers.
- Mrs. Hawthorne: An enigmatic neighbor who has a mysterious connection to the town's history and serves as a pivotal character in the unfolding events.

Each character contributes to the narrative, enriching the story with their unique perspectives and motivations.

Themes

"The Seance" explores several themes that resonate deeply with readers:

The Supernatural

The novel delves into the fascination with the supernatural, raising questions about what lies beyond the grave. Through the séance, Nixon examines the human desire to connect with the unknown and the consequences of such actions. The portrayal of ghostly encounters serves as a reminder that some mysteries are better left unexplored.

Friendship and Loyalty

The bonds of friendship are tested throughout the story. As Kelly and her friends navigate the challenges presented by their supernatural experiences, they learn the importance of loyalty and support. The group dynamic showcases how true friends stand by each other, especially when faced with fear and uncertainty.

Facing the Past

A significant theme in the novel is the importance of confronting one's past. Kelly's journey is not just about the supernatural events; it is also about her personal struggle to reconcile her feelings about her old life and her new beginning. The story illustrates how avoiding unresolved issues can lead

to greater turmoil.

Writing Style

Joan Lowery Nixon's writing style is engaging and accessible, making it suitable for a young adult audience. Her use of vivid imagery and descriptive language allows readers to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the story. Nixon's ability to build suspense keeps readers on the edge of their seats, eager to uncover the next twist in the plot.

Moreover, her dialogue is authentic, capturing the voices of teenagers effectively. The characters' interactions feel genuine, which enhances the relatability of their experiences and emotions.

Critical Reception

"The Seance" has received positive reviews from critics and readers alike. Many praise Nixon for her ability to weave a captivating tale that balances elements of mystery, horror, and self-discovery. The novel's exploration of teenage issues resonates with a broad audience, making it a staple in young adult literature.

Reviewers have highlighted:

- Engaging Plot: The suspenseful storyline keeps readers hooked from beginning to end.
- Relatable Characters: The characters' struggles with identity and friendship reflect the real-life challenges faced by many teens.
- Thought-Provoking Themes: The exploration of the supernatural and the importance of facing one's past invites readers to reflect on their own lives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, "The Seance" by Joan Lowery Nixon stands out as a compelling young adult novel that artfully combines elements of the supernatural with essential themes of friendship, loyalty, and personal growth. Through her well-developed characters and engaging writing style, Nixon invites readers to embark on a thrilling journey that challenges them to confront their fears and embrace the unknown.

As readers follow Kelly's adventures, they are reminded of the complexities of adolescence and the significance of facing the past to move forward. "The Seance" is not just a tale of ghostly encounters; it is a poignant

exploration of the human experience, making it a must-read for those who enjoy mystery and supernatural fiction.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'The Seance' by Joan Lowery Nixon?

The main theme of 'The Seance' revolves around the exploration of grief, loss, and the impact of the past on the present. It also delves into the supernatural and the consequences of attempting to communicate with the dead.

Who is the protagonist in 'The Seance' and what motivates her?

The protagonist is a young girl named 'Margo', who is motivated by her desire to connect with her deceased mother and uncover the truth behind her mysterious death.

How does Joan Lowery Nixon incorporate elements of suspense in 'The Seance'?

Joan Lowery Nixon uses suspense by gradually revealing information about the characters and their pasts, creating an atmosphere of tension and intrigue, especially during the seance scenes where the unknown looms large.

What role does the setting play in 'The Seance'?

The setting, often described as eerie and historical, enhances the mood of the story, contributing to the sense of mystery and the supernatural elements that are central to the plot.

What are some critical responses to 'The Seance'?

Critics often praise 'The Seance' for its engaging plot and well-developed characters, highlighting Nixon's ability to weave together suspenseful storytelling with emotional depth.

Is 'The Seance' suitable for young adult readers?

Yes, 'The Seance' is suitable for young adult readers, as it addresses themes relevant to adolescents, such as coping with loss and the search for identity, while also providing an engaging supernatural narrative.

What message does 'The Seance' convey about the afterlife?

The novel suggests that the afterlife is a complex and mysterious realm, and it raises questions about the consequences of trying to reach out to the dead, ultimately portraying a cautionary tale about unresolved grief.

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