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Posted on 06 April 2019 By Jennifer Miller

## [Download Epub] ? The Year of the Gadfly ? Weplayit.co

I m a little sad and a little angry that someone spent so much time writing this book and ended up with such a turd Character motivations make no sense, with the occasional

exception of Iris she's so tiny But with perky tits Jonah why is everyone named like they attend a Park Slope daycare why would Jonah come back to the school, given his role in the you know what And why would the board of directors approve a huge salary several times the usual for a troublemaking ex student They said in the book PhD teachers are not that unusual at the school Hazel, we are told, is charismatic and larger than life, but the author will be damned if she'll show us anything other than Hazel acting like a creepy jerk OK, I guess I didn't hate Lily, but she deserves a better book The accident takes place in December or June, depending on which chapter you're reading either that, or the writing is terrible, and I'm not willing to forgive either The mystery is not that challenging The pacing is off by the time Iris tiny discovers that Justin and Jonah were brothers, the reader is like, Duh, we knew that 100 pages ago Oh, and tiny, tiny Iris likes to speak with the ghost of Edward R Murrow, because why the hell not What I really want to say is, don't read this. I've promised myself that I will stop finishing books that I dislike This seems like a redo of Special Topics in Calamity Physics, and I've maxed out on my East Coast prep for this year with Seating Arrangements I already think this book is ridiculous Back to the library it goes [Download Epub] ? The Year of the Gadfly ? Do You Know What It Took For Socrates Enemies To Make Him Stop Pursuing The Truth Hemlock Storied, Fiercely Competitive Mariana Academy Was Founded With A Serious Honor Code Its Reputation Has Been Unsullied For Decades Now A Long Dormant Secret Society, Prismo S Party, Threatens Its Placid Halls With Vigilante Justice, Exposing Students And Teachers Alike For Even The Most Minor Infraction Iris Dupont, A Budding Journalist Whose Only Confidant Is The Chain Smoking Specter Of Edward R Murrow, Feels Sure She Can Break Into The Ranks Of The Devil S Advocate, The Party S Underground Newspaper, And There Uncover The Source Of Its Blackmail Schemes And Vilifying Rumors Some Involve The School S New Science Teacher, Who Also Seems To Be Investigating The Party Others Point To An Albino Student Who Left School Abruptly Ten Years Before, Never To Return And Everything Connects To A Rare Book Called Marvelous Species But The Truth Comes With Its Own Dangers, And Iris Is Torn Between Her Allegiances, Her Reporter S Instinct, And Her Own Troubled Past The Year Of The Gadfly Is An Exhilarating Journey Of Double Crosses, Deeply Buried Secrets, And The Lifelong Reverberations Of Losing Someone You Love Following In The Tradition Of Classic School Novels Such As A Separate Peace, Prep, And The Secret History, It Reminds Us How These Years Haunt Our Lives Forever When I was in high school back in the dark ages of the 1950s, the pranks we played varied from the timeworn to the troublesome, but nobody ever got hurt For instance, several dozen of us set alarm clocks to go off in our lockers during class time. That was a hoot But it didn't match the inventiveness of the prank we visited upon our unpopular school librarian, Mrs Fanny Bright yes, that was her name, I kid you not during several of the last weeks of the term, up until the day the library was to close for inventory, at least 100 of us steadily checked out as many as possible of the biggest, heaviest books we could locate and returned them all on

the afternoon of the last day the library was open The scene of pandemonium in the library that afternoon was a delicious treat for our adolescent minds. I should have been expelled for masterminding that incident, but the powers that were eventually decided it wouldn't look good to expel the valedictorian. Apparently, times have changed over the past half century and, if Jennifer Miller's suspenseful and often hilarious novel, *The Year of the Gadfly*, can be trusted At the Mariana Academy, the snooty New England prep school at the center of her story, student pranks can be lethal Whether student or faculty, everyone is fair game for the diabolical tricks that a small clique of pranksters unleashes on the unwary. The tale revolves around two intriguing characters Jonah Kaplan, who has just joined the Mariana faculty to teach freshman and sophomore science despite a lingering reputation as the school's resident hell raiser during his student days there and an exceptionally bright 14 year old girl named Iris Dupont, a would be journalist whose only friend is the spectral presence of Edward R Murrow, with whom she engages in impassioned dialogue about truth and journalistic ethics That is, until Iris develops a passionate attraction to Mr Kaplan But this is no hackneyed tale of a teenage crush on an older man If you pick up this book, prepare yourself for a wild ride *The Year of the Gadfly* mashes up a coming of age tale with a tragic mystery story with a deft send up of elite prep schools It's one of a kind, and a great pleasure to read. *The Year of the Gadfly* is Jennifer Miller's first novel She also wrote an award winning work of nonfiction, *Inheriting the Holy Land An American's Search for Hope in the Middle East*. If I had to sum this book up in just one word, it would be FUN When I think about it, I imagine everything in the book taking place in super bright Technicolor, but also having a kind of retro sheen it has a distinctive 80s 90s feel, which I think made it a particularly enjoyable experience to me because I grew up reading the YA novels of that time It is an adult book but it's also something of a love letter to that particular type of YA think *Point Horror Point Crime* and, one of my personal favourite series that probably nobody else remembers, *The Mystery Club* that now seems rather quaint It certainly has dark themes but it's a very easy read and has a lightness of touch that stops any of the bad things that happen from actually seeming at all horrifying It would make a good film Things I liked The setting Obviously It's a private school with a strange history, full of privileged, competitive kids behaving exactly as you would expect them to, except this school has a weird, zealous emphasis on equality and a rather liberal interpretation of whatever its curriculum is supposed to be It's instantly captivating The plot is a proper, old fashioned mystery The kind where everyone has terrible secrets and has done dark deeds and all the characters are a little eccentric and possibly mad I mean, there's a secret society that publishes newsletters exposing staff and pupils misdemeanours And nobody knows who they are How could you not want to know about that Iris is a really engaging heroine Once I got past a bit of initial annoyance at her precociousness, I was completely rooting for her to get to the bottom of the mystery and succeed in her aspirations to be a prize winning journalist I even loved her imagined conversations with Edward R Murrow, to the point that I

was annoyed when her love interest was introduced because I knew she'd be speaking to him instead. Although I liked Iris a lot, I was glad the other narratives, Jonah and Lily, had been included because, if there hadn't been at least one adult voice, this would have felt too light to be classified as anything other than YA. That said, it still reminded me of all the best things about the YA books I read when I was a near-teenager: young teen. It's occasionally schlocky, silly, and even slightly surreal, but all the better for that. *Reservations* had the opening is too fast-moving. There's no sense of Iris adjusting to Mariana and no real suggestion of how she feels about being uprooted and thrown into an unfamiliar environment, nor does it seem like any of her new classmates react to her at all. While I enjoyed the often quirky description, the book sometimes felt like it was a little overwritten. Iris and Jonah's narratives are too similar, stylistically speaking, to be believable as individual voices. Some of the details stretch the truth too far, even for a YA-like novel, for example, view spoiler: the cameras being all over the school and yet remaining undetected, even when incriminating photographs taken from mysterious angles had been published and seen by all the staff and pupils. hide spoiler. 3.5 stars. Inventive, darkly charming, well-written, and absolutely preposterous. Miller creates some fascinating characters and develops them quite well as she weaves together the lives of several students past and present at a Massachusetts prep school. She took it a little too far for it to be a convincing portrayal, but I enjoyed entering the strange world of science geeks, an albino outcast, and an aspiring journalist who has imaginary conversations with Edward R. Murrow. If you have a fondness for the fictional prep school milieu, you'll happily take the bait on this one. This is a difficult book for me to evaluate, because there is no way I'm going to enjoy reading about the bullying and psychological torture of young kids. For that matter, I am ill-disposed from the very beginning to like reading about private academies for privileged kids. There are some aspects to the plot that intrigued me though, and I wanted to see how they played out. It seems like there are only two types of students at Mariana Preparatory Academy in Nye, Massachusetts: incredibly cruel, or incredibly stupid. The former prey on the latter, as you might expect. The faculty isn't much better, but to describe them we can add a third category: ineffectual. The story is told from three points of view. Iris Dupont, 15, a new student at Mariana, wants to be a reporter. Her hero is Edward R. Murrow, and she frequently conducts conversations with him in her head. She and her family are residing at the temporarily empty house of the former Mariana headmaster who is away in London. Iris is sleeping in the former bedroom of the daughter, Lily, who provides the second point of view. Lily is an albino who attended Mariana at the same time as one of Iris's teachers, Jonah Kaplan. Jonah tells the story from the third point of view. Jonah's twin brother, Justin, used to be Lily's boyfriend. One additional main character has a large role in the story but no point of view of her own, and that is Hazel Greenburg, a contemporary of Lily, Jonah, and Justin, who is important to all of the other characters. Mariana's environment is intense: the students are under pressure from their parents to perform academically so they can get into

the best schools They also are subject to the usual adolescent stress to belong, to fit in, and to be popular Fueled by the influence of a few unbalanced individuals, they come to take all of this tension out on each other Miller is showing us an extreme ecosystem, which is the focus of Jonah Kaplan s curriculum in science class As the author explains Extremophile is a scientific category, which literary means extreme loving The name applies to microscopic organisms that thrive in places inhospitable to life I think that s a pretty apt summary of teenage life And yet, as Mr Kaplan explains in class, these organisms cannot survive in a normal environment They are trapped, just as the students are trapped in the prep school with its distorted survival mechanisms Some survive by attacking those who are weaker some react to the isolation and despair by capitulation to the mutant social system and some even choose suicide Iris wants to believe she is better than the others, but she, too, adapts to her new habitat Even Edward R Murrow, Iris is finally forced to admit, harbored a complexity and darkness at odds with his public image.

Discussion One of the recurring discussions in the book is over whether those who give in to the bullying or entrapment by the stronger students are culpable As one victim thinks to himself You are gullible and disgusting you brought all of this on yourself It is interesting that every single one of the victims has a similar reaction. The bullies justify their behavior in a similar way People act within their nature The victims didn t have to participate but they did The collaborators in bullying too have excuses What were we supposed to do We trusted that person, who changed our lives, pulled us out of our pitiful, weak existences At the end of the book, most of the bullies have not learned anything, nor have the collaborators This is perhaps the scariest message of the book Maybe they couldn t live with themselves if they thought they were wrong But maybe whatever made them act like that in the first place is so strong that they are impermeable to self doubt. I m not sure how Iris comes out of this She knows she had become lost in a moral maze but she is still so lonely and in search of connection that it s not clear the choice she makes at the end of the book is any wiser.

Evaluation The author did a fairly good job of keeping my interest in spite of my dislike of the subject matter and virtually all of the characters I can t honestly say I had fun reading it it is a pretty nightmarish story But I wouldn t hesitate to recommend it for a book club there are plenty of issues in this provocative book to keep any discussion group happy. Flail city ahead I loved this book From the first page, I was totally taken with Iris, one of our heroes, a 14 year old aspiring journalist whose best friend is Edward R Morrow Yes, I saw so so much of teenaged self in her After her best friend kills herself and Iris mother catches her chatting with Morrow, Iris and her family move toward western Massachusetts, and Iris is sent to the elite private school, Mariana Academy The other voices in this novel were as compelling as Iris Dr Jonah Kaplan, Iris science teacher and a former Mariana student himself and Lily Morgan, a classmate of Jonah s, daughter of Mariana s former headmaster All three characters have faced terrible tragedy and loss in their life Iris attempt to emulate Morrow causes her to discover secrets about Mariana than even she wanted. But that description sounds super

light and trite, and this novel wasn't This book was darkly fun, and deeply sad, and very twisted, and I loved every page Jonah is my age, and watching him reflect on being an outcast at the school he now teaches at was fascinating and discomfoting Iris is precocious and ambitious and out of her emotional depths I remember that from my high school years Darting through the story is the themes of bullying and belonging, popular versus unpopular, students against teachers What I thought would be a clear cut coming of age story set in a snooty private New England school a la Old School or A Separate Peace was complicated in a post Columbine world with the internet, cameras, and webcams, what remains private or public is matter of whim, accident, or mercy Iris struggles with journalistic integrity as she fights with Morrow, but she's 14 and arguing with a construct of her mind Jonah wants to improve the lives of his students without getting embroiled in the school's internal drama and he has his own ghosts and desires to deal with. Miller's writing is fantastic Iris is hilarious, kept me snortling in bed funny and I raced through this book, both for the mystery and because I wanted I wanted to bathe in the characters And I was reminded of why I could never, ever be a high school teacher Props to them, cuz wow In short, this is a fantastically fun novel and you should read it I can't wait for Miller's next novel. I wanted to like this a lot than I did, but unrequited teenage love is not an adequate justification for any of the events that take place in this book that are subsequently blamed on unrequited teenage love Most notably, when high school aged Hazel convinces a pretentious art student to make a movie wherein the albino girlfriend of the object of her unreturned affection is drugged, filmed saying she's using the guy for sex because that's what her character should be saying, and has her pubic hair dyed black once she's unconscious Not surprisingly, Hazel grows up to be the type of adult who sexually manipulates teenage boys, slaps fourteen year olds in the face, and feels comfortable telling men how, in her opinion, they should be grieving for their dead twin brothers Much intriguing is the concurrent story of Iris Dupont, fourteen year old prep school student who has a passion for reporting talks to an invisible Edward R Murrow in times of trouble Iris also has a best friend who committed suicide at some point before the book began, but to her great disservice Dalia is of a plot device than anything This is Iris's great tragedy, which she feels aligns her with the unorthodox science teacher who was once a student at the same prep school, is the brother of the dead twin, and pined for Hazel when they were all kids The writing is nice, everyone's separate parts hang together well, the characters are pretty okay, even though all the adults seem inexplicably distressed that teenagers are basically herd animals who will do whatever just because anyone who's popular or an accepted authority tells them to to which I say, No kidding, but by the end I was over it All the plot twists hang on people being such tremendous jerks there's absolutely no repercussions for the awful things they do to each other, besides that one guy who wasn't even that bad who dies in a car accident Hazel gets kicked out of the Historical Society building that's all I ask you, where's the assault charge And I also find it ridiculous that

anyone would ever get some fabulous internship at the Boston Globe at the age of fourteen. Bucolic New England setting with winding backroads, high powered academically competitive prep school, and identity challenged adolescents is the stuff of YEAR OF THE GADFLY It's a day school, not a boarding school, so the parental pressure is unrelenting as well Miller develops her story through two interlinked time lines The present is 2012 It is narrated alternately in the first person by Iris and Jonah Iris has transferred to the Mariana Academy and is entering her sophomore year Despite her youth, she has high ambitions of becoming a top tier investigative journalist Her idolization of Edward R Murrow takes the form of imaginary conversations with the man, whom she revamps as her spiritual mentor Her family has initiated the move at the prompting of her therapist Jonah Kaplan was once a student at Mariana He went on to earn a Ph.D in microbiology and is scheduled to begin research funded by a modest grant in entomology in the spring In the interim, he has returned to Mariana as a teacher, determined to divert his students to the elusive pursuit of knowledge and not just grades He is also motivated by a personal makeover project Like Iris, his story hints of a troubled past The makeover is a naive endeavor, Justin concludes I'd been deluded, thinking I could return to Mariana, and not encounter my past at every turn, but I had always imagined my adult self and my boyhood as a double helix twisted threads that traveled in a spiral but never actually made contact Returning had tangled the strands together.<sup>108</sup> The second timeline takes place a scant twelve years earlier In 1999 Jonah Kaplan was a student along with his brother Justin, the headmaster's daughter Lily, and an intense classics major named Hazel Each in his own way is an outsider Lily is an albino, Jonah and Justin are both socially awkward and wrestle with sibling rivalry issues, and Hazel is a close friend to both of them These events are told from Lily's point of view through third person narrative, as well as Jonah's as flashbacks. Two mysteries are presented to hold the reader's interest The first concerns the truth about what happened 12 years ago The second concerns the identity and intentions of an underground student organization which styles itself as an anti establishment avenger bent on exposing hypocrisy However, its actions include staging flash mobs, cyber bullying, vandalism, and making surreptitious surveillance tapes Miller captures the painful ambivalence of adolescence perfectly Iris considers the development of her acquaintanceship with another student named Peter I was starting to think there were two Peter McCaffreys one of them awkward, the other confident But there were multiple versions of me, too The brazen girl, the shy girl, the good girl, and the grieving girl Could all of these personalities exist in an integrated whole, or would one ultimately take over And what if the wrong identity asserted itself?<sup>271</sup> She might have gone on to add the multiplicity of conjured identities so easily summoned in this formative stage Who hasn't wanted to change their clothes, their body, their interests, their style, in order to fit in with some random clique that represented a version of adulthood or sophistication or talent Those elements are poignantly expressed in Lily's story The attractions in this adolescent world feel like imprinting than relationships

Miller's narrative of Lily's story is especially strong. Unfortunately, these elements do not begin to coalesce until the final third of the book. The development of Iris's character felt unconvincing. She is quick to assure the reader that she realizes her conversations with Murrow are imaginary. However, that reassurance erases the incipient tension of a psychological thriller. The conceit soon wears thin, and her constant self-editing of cliché feels like affectation. Ethical paradoxes are touched upon obliquely and from a vantage point of safety. Dialogue is another problem. It is a difficult task to straddle profound insights articulated with clarity and the shorthand patois of adolescent conversation. One way around this is through introspective glimpses. Sometimes, Miller applies this technique brilliantly. Iris reflects on the effects of grief, including her own. Hazel talked about grief like it was a carnivorous parasite, destroying the person you'd been before it infected you.<sup>234</sup> Jonah's internal dialogues, however, felt indistinguishable from Iris's. Perhaps because of the scant age divide of only 12 years, a large part of him still felt very adolescent. This was a strong coming-of-age book that promised but failed to deliver. I wanted .

"Part *Dead Poets Society*, part *Heathers*.  
Entirely addictive." — **GLAMOUR**

The  
Year  
of the  
Gadfly

A NOVEL

**JENNIFER  
MILLER**

## New Post

The Pull Out Method  
Resurrecting Cybele  
The Participants  
The Hunted  
Holes  
Knight of the Purple Ribbon  
Cruel Beauty  
The Titan's Curse  
The Final Reckoning  
The Great Hunt  
To Darkness Fled  
SilverFin  
The Oaken Throne  
Return of the Guardian-King  
Mattimeo

## Recent Post

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The Last Battle  
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The Last Olympian  
The Maze Runner  
The Queen of Attolia  
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The Black Cauldron  
The Devil Wears Prada  
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire  
If on a Winter's Night a Traveler  
Rebecca

The Tale of Despereaux  
Fahrenheit 451  
The Princess Bride  
To Say Nothing of the Dog  
Great Expectations  
Animal Farm / 1984  
Crime and Punishment  
The Return of the King  
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The Final Empire  
Lord Brocktree  
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The Pull Out Method