



Black

Fleur Ferris

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Ebony Marshall is in her final year of high school. Five months, two weeks and four days . . . She can't wait to leave the town where she's known only as 'Black'. Because of her name, of course. But for another reason, too.

Everyone says Black Marshall is cursed.

Three of her best friends have died in tragic accidents. After Oscar, the whispers started. Now she's used to being on her own. It's easier that way.

But when her date for the formal ends up in intensive care, something in quiet little Dainsfield starts to stir. Old secrets are revealed and terrifying new dangers emerge.

If only Black could put all the pieces together, she could work out who her real enemies are. Should she run for her life, or stay and fight?

Black Details

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From Reader Review Black for online ebook

Rachael says

I love to be entertained, compelled to turn pages, kept guessing, caught by surprise and intrigued by a story. Fleur Ferris accomplishes all of this with Black. Ebony Marshall is fascinating character, living under the shadow of a 'curse' or at least the shadow of suspicion, speculation, superstition, mistrust and fear.

Things I loved:

*Ebony's resilience, her coping strategy, her determination to get on with life despite the gossip and fear surrounding her life. We meet her at the stage where she is ready to confront the snide commentary on her 'bad luck'. She's unapologetic, sarcastic, blunt, angry. All qualities I love in a protagonist, especially the angry part. (I just love angry young women. I'm not sure why - probably because it's an emotion traditionally attributed to men, like its somehow unbecoming for women to be angry while it is expected and celebrated in men) There are a couple of moments in the story where Ebony is overcome by rage and she lets loose in a way I find immensely satisfying. I think it taps into my over developed enthusiasm for street-justice, lol, even though I just know it's sure to have completely dreadful consequences, which of course it does. It doesn't lessen my satisfaction in that moment.

*superstition: one of the most compelling aspects of the story and its core thematic drive is around the issue of belief. The Whisperers, the Pure Apostles, blind devotion and wild theology drive them to extreme acts. I found Ebony's response to their madness so believable (and entertaining.) Her survival instinct to use their beliefs against them had me laughing in triumph, I found myself thinking: yes! That's exactly what I would do to get out of that situation! (Heaven forbid I ever need to, lol)

*demons & exorcisms: having watched the Exorcist at an age that was probably far too young to avoid horrific psychological scarring (Ack!!) there's still a part of me that wants to hide under my blankets and cry for mum at the subject matter but the big girl part of me which has been fed on 11 seasons of Supernatural, & a 1990's diet of Buffy the Vampire Slayer laps up this wildness. Now what the Whispers lack is Sam & Dean's pragmatic salt the bones and burn it approach ... but then again they also lack a demon. What they do have is sky high religious fervor and a bunch of insane methods for purging the devil, featuring among other techniques, vast quantities of plastic wrap! I kid you not. As outlandish as that may sound, The author informed me that the backstory to Black is inspired by ACTUAL EVENTS that occurred in small town Australia and in several other cases she researched! She sent me one article which I read with my jaw hanging open. Holy Toledo Batman.

This story whips along in Fleur Ferris' trademark no-messing-around-plunge-you-straight-into-the-action-style. I was gripped and entertained throughout.

Sophie says

Super addictive, I read this in one sitting. The descriptions were haunting and eerie throughout, and I loved that nothing felt cliché (in terms of suspense/mystery/romance), it was very authentic.

Sandeep ? says

1/5 Stars

I still can't believe I had actually finished reading this book. It was just so boring. How did I even get through the whole thing?

What had made me pick up this book was the plot. I was so intrigued and then disappointed after finishing.

One thing that had really annoyed me was the stupid and unnecessary love triangle. Like WHY?

Another thing was the writing style, I found it bland and simple.

This book was just a waste of time. Would not recommend!

Kristy ? The Reader Dragon says

Holy shit, this book was **SO. DAMN. GOOD.** For such a quick read, this novel is so dark! (*and I'm not just referencing the title*).

Ebony 'Black' Marshall in an outcast. She's only young, but has experienced so much grief and heartache. On three separate occasions, she's lost three friends. First was Jess, her best friend since kindergarten, who was hit by a car whilst crossing the road after school. Next was Black's first boyfriend, Louis, who fell to his death from the roof where they shared their first kiss. And most recently was her boyfriend Oscar, who died in a car accident.

As a result of these events, Black is thought to be cursed, turning her once-endearing nickname into a foreboding brand of malevolence. Father Ratchet and his religious cult - The Pure Apostles - believe that Black is possessed by the devil, and that it's their duty to exorcise the demon before it grows too strong. In an effort to prevent the town from suffering another tragic loss, the anonymous group of Whisperers monitor Black's every move, waiting for the perfect moment to strike. And that moment is coming...

When the new boy in school, Aiden Sweet, ends up in intensive care after taking a liking to Black, it's not long before the campaign of the Pure Apostles starts to become aggressive.

With danger lurking around every corner, and in a town full of potential enemies, Black turns to the only person she can trust: her colleague and only friend, Ed. And it's not long before the pair begin to uncover the truth, and secrets her parents have kept from her begin to unravel. Secrets that might hold the answer to everything.

Like holy shitballs, this novel is really disturbing. It honestly gives me goosebumps to think that there are probably actual people out there just like The Whisperers of The Pure Apostles. They could be your local grocer. They could be your neighbour. **THEY COULD BE YOU.** (*wut?*) No but seriously, the fact that there are probably people out there taking matters into their own hands to cleanse some poor victim of a possession is honestly really horrifying because they probably don't care about the welfare of the host.

I love love LOVE that you have no clue as to whether or not Black is actually cursed or possessed, or if The Whisperers were just a bunch of delusional CRAaziES. This was one of the big reasons that I absolutely ate this book up. I absolutely l o v e paranormal horror, so I just had to know if this was indeed

one or not. **AND GUESS WHAT???** (lol read it to find out for yourself! seriously. in the words of our lord and saviour shia labeouf: JUST DO IT)

Also, a really quick shoutout to Ebony for being an amazing character! Not only has she suffered immeasurable amounts of heartache, but she's also had to put up with the taunts and torment from her fellow peers and townsfolk, all because she's been unfortunate enough to have lost her friends in random freak accidents. Despite all of this though, she still keeps her head held high, and I greatly admire her resilience.

Aiden, on the other hand, I didn't feel much for. I understand that he was needed to kickstart the whole story, but the relationship that he shared with Black felt a little too forced and rushed. A little too insta-love, if you ask me. Like I honestly cringed a bit whilst reading the first couple of pages (you'll understand once you read it). Buuuut in saying that, you'll get past it really quick, and you'll probably forget that it ever happened.

Besides the insta-love, I do have one other complaint: **it wrapped up too quickly.** As the end of the book was nearing, there were these really intense scenes. **Like holy crap, I couldn't bear to put the book down.** But then everything was sort of resolved in about the blink of an eye. I would have loved those intense moments to have lasted just a little bit longer.

Black is a disturbing, unsettling, riveting, and most importantly AMAZING novel that will keep you up way past your bedtime and long into the night. It's the novel that every fan of Young Adult thriller needs in their life!

Ashlee Lyon says

Omg this book was absolutely riveting, just could not put it down. Totally different subject matter to Risk (which I also really enjoyed) but no less captivating. Fleur Ferris is such a talented writer and now she really needs to hurry up and finish her next book

Danielle says

Such a thrilling and easy read! I didn't want to put it down because I just wanted to know what was happening!

I haven't read anything like this but now definitely want to try more!

Full review up on my blog:
[https://thechroniclesofdanielle.wordpress...](https://thechroniclesofdanielle.wordpress.com/)

Kelly (Diva Booknerd) says

Fleur Ferris is spectacular. Black was a brilliant blend of a contemporary, mystery and exploring small town prejudice and one girl's fight to live. Ebony Marshall's young life has experienced devastating grief, but yet the seventeen year old is still able to hold her head high despite now being a social pariah. Once affectionately known as Black, now it holds negative connotations after losing multiple friends in devastating

accidents. Her only friend is her work colleague Ed, only a few years Ebony's senior and someone who has never judged her as others have, as a curse and plight on the small community of Dainsfield.

What endeared me to Ebony was her determination and resilience. She's been subjected to the taunts of her peers and given a wide berth by the community since losing her small group of friends at such a tender age, labelled as a curse and unable to grieve for all she had lost. Ebony refuses to be bullied or belittled, especially against those who the Pure Apostles have convinced Ebony is a threat to their children and community. It's after Ebony begins to develop a relationship with new student Aiden when the Whisperers begin an aggressive campaign against the teen, when an accident sees Aiden's life hanging by a thread and the small town of Dainsfield begins to unravel.

The Pure Apostles are a religious cult, with a history devoted to exorcising demons. Ebony has been labelled as a threat since conception and as the secrets of Dainsfield threaten to erupt, Ebony will need to fight or risk becoming yet another urban legend. The Whisperers were undeniably alarming, following the teachings of Father Ratchet who is the driving force behind the curse of Black Marshall. Ebony is watched, monitored all by a group who remains anonymous, leaving the reader unaware of which characters belong to the unhinged congregation. Ebony's storyline may be fictional, but all too similar to cases all over the world where religious leaders have faith cleansed parishioners in similar circumstances, giving Black's storyline an eerie and unsettling emotive.

Although incredibly disturbing, Black was completely riveting. I was unable to tear myself away from Ebony's narrative and the town of Dainsfield brought to life. Fleur Ferris is a remarkable storyteller, sharp, accomplished and confident. I loved the unpredictability. It left me feeling unsettled and reading long into the night. Absolutely compelling and I loved every moment.

<http://www.divabooknerd.com/2016/07/b...>

Carol - Reading Writing and Riesling says

4 1/2 stars a great YA read.

My View:

The perfect Teen/ YA read. This could be small town anywhere; the narrow minded attitudes, the suspicions, a haunted house, a curse, fear, gossip, "in groups", outcasts. There are dramas, "accidents", exorcism and a little bit of romance thrown in for good measure – and of course a happy ending.

Fleur Ferris writes yet another novel that to me, reads like a film! Congratulations on another engaging read Fleur.

Lauren says

Wow. It's been a while since I've devoured a book quite so quickly and had one that got under my skin as much as Black! This book is a rollercoaster and a page turner with characters who quickly feel like your best friends! I think I'm going to have to go back now and re-read this again slower to let it sink in!

Ryan Buckby says

actual rating: 4.5

shut the windows, lock the doors, you don't know who's coming.

I love fleur's books and writing style and yes i do talk to the author occasionally talk to the author on social media and no this review was not just a 4.5 because of that i generally really enjoyed her book as i enjoyed her debut novel 'Risk'.

Ebony Marshall or 'Black' is her nickname has been given this curse by people because bad things always happen to people that Ebony gets close with. I liked how the 'curse' that Ebony supposedly had was dealt and written about in the book, like who seriously makes up this fake and random curse and puts it on a teenage girl so she lives out her life in fear and not wanting to get close to anyone in fear of what it might do to that person. In comes Aiden who on a dare is put up to the task of asking out Ebony to the formal, at first i thought this was extremely insensitive and rude to do that but something about the Aiden character had me second guessing his motives and i was correct because the two ended up having a really close friendship which i enjoyed seeing being played out throughout the book.

the Pure Apostles who was formed by Father Ratchet that was introduced in the book is where things started to get really weird. A religious nut forms a group and brainwashes a group of people who hold secret meetings that no one outside the group is allowed to attend. What gets me the most is that there are groups out there that actually do this and its kind of scary to think that there are people who are brainwashed into thinking what they're doing is the right thing. Is it a bad thing that i was glad when i found out Father Ratchet was killed? i absolutely hated him and what he put Ebony through.

I also liked the Ed and Ebony relationship in the book i feel like these two characters matched more than Ebony and Aiden, i only say this because ed and ebony had more time to build a friendship first then end up being together, which is why im glad she ended up choosing Ed.

I can't wait to see what book Fleur comes out with next i love her books and writing style and quickly becoming one of my favourite australian authors. If you want to check out Fleur's debut novel its called 'Risk' which i highly recommend you read to help familiarise you with Fleur's writing style.

Jeann (Happy Indulgence) says

Having read many YA thrillers, the bar is set quite high for me. Black approaches the thriller genre in a unique way, presenting a girl who is presumed to be cursed by the rest of the town. It really captures the small town feel, where rumours can spiral out of control and everyone knows your business. There's also an uneasiness of Black's alleged curse that is captured throughout its pages.

However, I struggled with the romance in the novel, and the love triangle that appears which seemingly detracted from the mystery. Aidan is a newcomer to the town and asks Black to the dance, and all of a sudden an insta-love occurs which happens within the first few pages. The start of the novel is heavily

focused on this romance, but surprisingly gives way to revealing more about Black's past and the events which have lead to her alienation. I enjoyed this aspect of the story much more, and didn't see some of the twists coming.

Black is struggling with being alienated from the small town and their rumours, and the frustration that comes with everyone keeping secrets from her. I didn't really get a good feel for any of the other characters, as they weren't developed enough for my liking. There's also a love triangle which I felt was unnecessary to the storyline, given how quickly the focus shifts from each love interest.

I do feel like the novel is targeted toward the younger YA audience and was prepared for this having read Risk, Fleur's first book. The writing is quite simplistic which also leads me to this conclusion.

As a thriller, everything is a bit too easily resolved with not enough excitement. But as a quick read, Black really captures the feel of a small town gone wrong.

I received a review copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Librariasaurus says

They say Black Marshall is cursed....

Full disclosure: Whilst I have semi-regular contact with the author via social media channels, I bought and paid for this book of my own accord and my review is without influence.

I had NO IDEA Fleur Ferris would choose this topic for her second book! Gutsy effort and I have to say, she has well and truly conquered that second novel mountain.

Black Marshall is the outcast in a small country town, there may or may not be a secret sect watching her every move, but why? what's so important about her? What aren't her parents telling her?

I spent the days I read this book waiting for work to end so I could get back to reading it, I just needed to know what happened. Young adult suspense can be REALLY hit and miss, but here folks, we have a hit. I know I'll be telling everyone I know to get their own copy and make this woman some money!

I didn't hate a single character, except for the obvious ones, and one I thought I hated turned out to be one I had the most sympathy for.

The setting is great and I couldn't imagine the same story being told as effectively if it had been set anywhere other than the small country town that Ferris writes so well.

I also loved the genuine touches, small towns have underage drinking and it's a problem but it doesn't get hidden in Black, it's just a part of life. Small towns have people who can be overly devoted to their respective faiths and small towns can be both a refuge and a prison.

Black Marshall is a strong character and I adore her. And Ed?! AND Aiden?! Holy gorgeous Batman! Two lovely boys who would have and did go the extra mile for Black when everyone else seemed to run a mile in the other direction just to get away from her.

The A's were a great addition as well, it's not often people stand up for one and other anymore and it's so great to see this kind of friendship in a young adult novel where so many others are full of backstabbing and boyfriend stealing.

There is a definite darkness to this book and that is perhaps what I loved most about it, the tie in to one of the few Australian urban legends I had actually heard of and been taunted with by older cousins who grew up in a similar small border town with a tiny population was a light bulb moment for me, absolutely brilliant.

I can't say enough how much I implore people to read *Black*, and to also then read *Risk*, or vice versa! #LoveOzYa and show it by reading Fleur Ferris.

Holy wow I loved this book.

Zyra says

sadly not for me :(i just cant seem to find it interesting enough. everything feels like its stretched or forced.

rachel says

If you know me at all, you know how much I adore mysteries and thrillers. I have since I was a kid, and since last year, I've also found a new fascination with cults. Ferris' *Black* promised to deliver on both of these fronts, and umm, didn't really achieve that. At all.

From the very first page, I had a problem with the writing style. It was just so juvenile! The descriptions were slightly repetitive and very basic. It was hard to pick up the detail of the settings or the character's descriptions. I have no idea what anyone looked like, apart from Ebony's ironic black hair. We were often told things, instead of being shown, especially regarding character's emotions. Backstories were dumped at us, and the dialogue was stilted and forced. Ferris' attempt at witty banter made me cringe. Her use of slang was slightly off - she was trying too hard to sound like a teenager - and it came off as cheesy. The amount of times Ebony giggled when she was talking to a male character was... it was too much.

The characters themselves didn't help. I couldn't have cared less about any of them. I never hated the 'villains' or felt sympathy for Ged or Ebony's mother. Every character was flat and boring, even Ebony's classmates felt unrealistic. Our protagonist, Ebony, was as bland as boiled rice and such a Special Snowflakes. Oh God, she had the whole "pretty but didn't know it" thing going on so everyone was 'unintentionally' falling in love with her. It was nauseating in the worst possible way. Both of the romantic interests - of course, there's a love triangle - were similarly underdeveloped. Both Ed and Aiden's relationship with Ebony were forced. I never felt that they had a true connection. It didn't help that they all had the personalities of wet paper bags.

But what was most disappointed was how the plot was just so ridiculous and bland. (I apologise for overusing that word, but it honestly sums up every aspect of this book.) I wasn't that it was predictable, though it largely is, it was just that it offered nothing new. I've read this story before, and I've seen it done better. It wasn't thrilling in the slightest. It honestly made more sleepy than anything. This may have been a result of the bland and unengaging writing, but there wasn't really a mystery to be investigating... It lacked

urgency. I never really felt like Ebony had a real, important reason for caring about this random lady's death. Sure, the death of her friends was a little suspicious but in the end, their deaths didn't actually have anything to do with anything, so I still don't see why she was even involved in all of this? Maybe if we had understood the character's motivations more than I would have enjoyed the book more? It seems to me that if Ebony's parents had moved straight away - after the weird incident - literally none of this would have happened...

Overall?

I don't think this book brought anything new to the table. It was boring and flat. The characters were duller than I could have imagined, and the plot put me to sleep. I'm not sure Ferris' writing style is for me, but I'm hoping her debut will be more enjoyable. I would only recommend this book if you were a die-hard fan of the similarly abysmal, *The Cellar*.

Trisha says

I loved this right up to the very last bit.
