



If You Go Down to the Woods

Seth C. Adams

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GET READY FOR THE MOST POWERFUL AND EMOTIONAL DEBUT THRILLER OF 2018!

Perfect for fans of *It* by Stephen King, *The Chalk Man* by C. J. Tudor and the TV show *Stranger Things*.

We were so young when it all happened. Just 13-years-old, making the most of the long, hot, lazy days of summer, thinking we had the world at our feet. That was us – me, Fat Bobby, Jim and Tara – the four members of the Outsiders' Club.

The day we found a burnt-out car in the woods was the day everything changed. Cold, hard cash in the front seat, and a body in the trunk... it started out as a mystery we were desperate to solve.

Then, the Collector arrived. He knew we had found his secret. And suddenly, our summer of innocence turned into the stuff of nightmares.

Nothing would ever be the same again...

If You Go Down to the Woods Details

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Author : Seth C. Adams

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From Reader Review If You Go Down to the Woods for online ebook

Pauline says

If You Go Down To The Woods by Seth C Adams a book about a group of young teenagers who become friends and start the Outsiders club. The group encounter bullies and get into situations out of their control. This has far reaching consequences for each of them. This book is full of nostalgia and has some creepy qualities. It reminded me of Stand By Me and the beginning reminded me of IT by Stephen King. I enjoyed this book. I would like to thank NetGalley and Harper Impulse and Killer Reads for my e-copy in exchange for an honest review.

Kyra Leseberg (Roots & Reads) says

Thirteen year old Joey's family has moved from SoCal to small town Payne, Arizona. He befriends a group of outcasts that summer; Bobby, Jim, and Tara; and together they form The Outsiders Club. They spend their time getting into scrapes with dangerous local bullies and eventually embark on an adventure way beyond their wildest dreams when they discover an old Buick parked in the woods. Inside they find millions of dollars and a dead body, long decomposed.

It doesn't take long for a shady character known as The Collector to arrive for the money, but The Outsiders are in over their heads and a dangerous game begins.

The story (both writing and plot) is obviously influenced by the work of Ray Bradbury and Stephen King and while it is a highly entertaining read, it's not very original, heavily relying on the nostalgia of the aforementioned writers. I struggled to figure out the time period because it reminds me so much of The Body (also known by the film name Stand By Me) and The Goonies, which are both 1980's, but there are references in this novel to the internet and more recent events.

The formula of the well-known 1980s misfit adventure filled with danger is back in action in If You Go Down to the Woods. Readers can expect an entertaining story like the classic films I mentioned. I felt like this was written with the intention of paying homage to the author's major influences and with that spirit in mind, I enjoyed the novel.

Thanks to Harper Impulse/Killer Reads and NetGalley for providing me with a copy in exchange for my honest review.

For more full reviews, visit www.rootsandreads.wordpress.com

Liz Barnsley says

I read this in one sitting today as it is utterly compelling. The descriptive sense of it captures so much emotion in a "nostalgia for childhood" way although I wouldn't want to live through the summer this group of friends, The Outsiders, live through. I was entirely caught up in their story and suffered through a lot of angst in the telling - Seth C Adams makes you care about his characters and layers them well to make you feel it right in your heart when bad things happen.

I did love this very much for it's writing, the premise of the story and for the most part the execution. This is a writer to watch. However it wasn't without it's issues - perhaps it is a little over reaching in the saga, there's a little too much going on that starts to feel more unlikely. Perhaps less is more, for example I didn't think the kids needed *quite* so much going on, I can't say much without spoilers but one thing or the other or that one, not ALL the things. Also the kids read older than they were actually stated as being which at many points didn't ring true especially in their decision making - and sometimes the "bad guys" veered off into caricature and there was a horror movie staple scene near the final resolution that I really felt was too over the top. My honest feeling is that pared back on the event situations, raising the age of the kids just a little, allowing that beautiful writing to shine through rather than distract with so much going on, would have made this a 5* and then some read for me.

Even having said all that I see such a huge talent here. The author made me feel every moment of this one and even when I had to suspend that disbelief I was still right in there. There were some wonderfully done scenes (Joey and Tara at the fair, Joey and his sister's love/hate interactions to name some) some beautifully layered characters and that nostalgic sense of the friendships we make when we are young was spot on and brilliantly done as were the differing parental relationships. There were shades of King in here, that way of immersing the reader into the world and making them laugh and cry and hate and love and all those things right alongside those they are reading about so mostly it was excellent stuff.

If You Go Down To The Woods stole my Sunday afternoon and I gave it up gladly. I can't wait to see what this author brings us next - it is true it is an emotional and powerful debut - with the few caveats I made this is an easy 4* for me and I'm adding Seth C Adams to my watch list for future releases with no hesitation at all.

Recommended.

Juli says

Joe moves to Payne, Arizona at 13. It ends up being a summer he will remember for the rest of his life. His new friends, forming The Outsiders Club, the car they find abandoned in the woods, a serial killer.... Definitely an eventful summer.

There is some language in this book that might be very offensive to most people. But....let's be truthful here...there is no middle school or group of tweens/teens where at least some (or even all) of those words don't get used during a fight or disagreement. At times, those words are used in normal conversation even. In fact, I've heard those terms (and worse) used in the lyrics of songs that kids listen to. Wanting a more diverse and kind world is a great thing to strive for....but there is no magic wand you can wave and take hurtful words kids hurl at each other out of the mix. Fat kids are going to be called fat and be subjected to hurtful things. Kids are mean. Wanting them to not be that way doesn't take that magically away and leave middle school and those final years before adulthood a kind, nurturing, happy place and time. It has never been a perfect, happy place for anybody.....but it's a learning time, a place of lessons and memories that last a life time. Good and bad. And the strongest, best friendships, too. To rate down a book because it uses terms that kids actually use saying "It's 2018" and a book shouldn't use those words.....that's akin to censorship and it's asking authors to make books based on a fake, cleansed picture of the world. Now....did the story get just a bit over-the-top and trope-y with a few of the characters like the racist, corrupt, disgusting sheriff ? Yes. But,

do teen boys hear and say words like retarded, fat, gay, n*****, b*tch, and the like on a daily basis? Yes, they do. Do nerdy kids or those branded as "losers" or fringe get picked on and targeted? Yes, they do. Wanting a kinder planet is unfortunately never going to take those words out of the English language and out of the arsenal that kids use against each other. Does it make those words the right thing to say? NEVER. But authors can't create stories based on a cleansed world that doesn't exist. Nothing good will come from that. Does that mean we have to accept and like words and actions like that? Of course not. But in writing a story about bullies and a group of kids outside the normal social circles, those words are realistic. If I sat in the center of my son's middle school at lunch time, I guarantee I would hear every single one of those words coming from kids in reference to other kids. It's unfortunate.....but realistic. That being said....I think calling a character N***** Jim is going over the line. Really? I can tolerate that in Tom Sawyer because it's from another time. But in this book it was a cringe-worthy moment that pulled me out of the story. One step too far.

In fact, I felt this book went just that step too far several times. Events occurred that went just a step past reality towards melodramatic and bad trope. Actions and characters went just a step past believable towards ridiculous. The sheriff. The Collector. The bullies. Mobsters. Some portions of the story felt like a bad 1980's movie script.

I don't like it when books are marketed as "like Stephen King" or "for lovers of" some bestseller or popular author. Nobody can pull off Stephen King plots but Stephen King. It was nothing like It or The Chalk Man. This book is just not up to that level of writing or story-telling. Is the story enjoyable? Most of it is. But at certain places, it failed....and failed hard.

All in all, this story was okay. I would read another book by this author. I think he needs to find his own voice and not strive to emulate his favorite authors. I'm giving it 3 stars based on the portions of the story I liked. The first half of the book was stronger than the last half.

I voluntarily read an advance readers copy of this book from Harper Impulse/Killer Reads via NetGalley. All opinions expressed are entirely my own.

Ken says

A highly enjoyable coming of age crime thriller that pays homage to Stephen King's 'The Losers Club'.

Thirteen year old Joey and he's family move to Payne, Arizona. Where he soon becomes friends with Fat Bobby, Jim and Tara - this group of misfits soon refer to themselves as the Outsiders Club.

Whilst exploring in the woods they discover a burnt out car with tons of money in the front seat and a body in the trunk.

Soon after a shady guy known as The Collector comes for the money, which in-turn plunges the whole group into danger.

Riding on the success of Stranger Things and IT, this novel's strength is the dynamics between the young group of friends.

I really liked the manner in which they were introduced.

The story was fun and fast paced. But I really liked was the fact that it was a straight forward crime thriller

rather than trying to introduce any supernatural elements which these type of stories tend to have.

Highly gripping last few chapters, I really enjoyed reading this!

Ingstje says

I read somewhere that this novel is perfect for fans of IT and TV Show Stranger Things. I haven't read or watched either so I can't comment on this but as a reference point for myself, I'd say that this novel is a mix of The Goonies meets Pulp Fiction. I can see both parts clearly before my eyes. I know it sounds like a strange combination but the novel did start out as a young adult novel, suited for younger readers even more perhaps, and then morphed in the end into a much darker read with quite a violent plotline. I was really lulled into a secure and safe feeling because yes there were plenty of threats and angst that the main character Joey feels but hey he's a young kid and he apparently pees his pants when he's afraid,.. so it's not so strange perhaps that I kind of went into complete shock with the turn of events in the end!

What I really did like though was the writing in this novel, the author has a very pleasant style, and I enjoyed the author's (or Joey's) way of telling the story. He's sharing a story about that one summer in his life, a summer that starts with great friendships being made, of falling in love for the first time all sweet and innocent, but then a sequence of small decisions made him grow up a lot faster than he wanted to. The novel started off very strongly and I was certain I had a five star read in my hands but my excitement died down a little... maybe it was meant to be really suspenseful and threatening when this bunch of kids encountered the Collector but I didn't really feel the adrenaline pumping, yet in the end the author certainly made up for that and my heart rate must have been the equivalent of running a marathon because I was really scared then for Joey and the rest.

Another thing that really made me want to keep on reading were actually the members of the Outsiders' Club, a very diverse bunch of kids. There's a black kid who knows how to shoot a gun, a fat kid who's used to bullying, and a beautiful tomboy girl who isn't scared of anything. I loved their personalities and seeing their friendship develop but the one that really stole my heart was Bandit, Joey's dog. Bandit goes everywhere with him and I held my heart that he wouldn't die from the moment I read about him and yes, it's a sin I know but I skipped to the end to see if I could still see his name written there... I'd have been devastated to see him die. There were almost human qualities attributed to him, he understands Joey so well and he was such a lovely character!

I don't want to give the impression that this was a bad read but I think I'd have rated it a lot higher if the author had chosen a more linear style of writing, going all the way dark or not. I don't know if everybody will feel this way because I might be more difficult than some when it comes to crossing genres but this is my personal opinion. I also would have liked more background and more explaining on what was actually the greatest mystery of all: the car and the body in the car. There's a lot (if not all) left unexplained and I wasn't entirely satisfied that this intriguing part of the story was left unexplored.

Long story short: the title should definitely have been Don't Go Down To The Woods!

Mandy White says

I am not completely sure about this book. It was totally unbelievable for kids of that age to behave in the ways these kids did. It was a great story but I felt like the kids should have been older.

The called themselves The Outsiders Club.. a group of kids who really didn't fit in in the small town of Payne Arizona. There is Joey, Bobby Jimmy and Tara... who are 13-16. They find an abandoned car in the woods one day... and the The Collector arrives to claim back the contents of that car. A series of crazy scenes and encounters between the characters then start.

It was a good story, I just struggled to see young kids acting the way that they did. Thanks to Killer Reads and NetGalley for a copy of this book to read in exchange for my honest opinions

Lisa Cleveland says

Not a bad tale, but it was sorely lacking heart. The kids never jelled for me as best friends, or really even good friends. The whole story strained the bounds of belief, but that's also one of the best things about coming of age tales...the weirdness. The holy crap, this shit is not happening moments! What brings it all together is the reader believing that these kids would die for their friends. Come hell or high water, they'd do whatever it takes. I loved the dog though. This isn't a book that I'd recommend. Not if you love the friendships in other coming of age tales by the likes of Stephen King, Dan Simmons, McCammon, etc..This book doesn't come close to those relationships.

Dylan says

1 star.

The racial and homophobic slurs, and terrible representation towards a black and a fat character, have made me hate it.

This book takes place in the 70s/80s, so these types or wordings were normalized back then, but this is a 2018 release. It's understandable wanting to be realistic, but you can write a historical piece without the CONSTANT use of slurs and microaggressions. STRANGER THINGS and IT (the movie, the book was about as offensive as this, but they had the brains to use other wordings BECAUSE ITS 2018) did it (which is what this book is CONSTANTLY being compared to, which makes sense because this is IT, but done worse), so why couldn't they with this book?

Thank you to Netgalley for sending this to me for review, but I will never recommend this book to a single soul.

Ella Star says

This is the night. These are the times.

This was a solid 3 star read for me. I was definitely expecting a paranormal element which wasn't present in the book at all, and it surprised me a little.

The main thing I struggled with was the narrator. A young boy, Joey was just so typical of guys his age, and I struggled to connect with his character. I found him incredibly annoying, strangely unlikeable and honestly quite annoying, which made me feel a little detached from the story.

Besides the narrator, I also struggled to find some parts of the story believable. It was just a little farfetched and could honestly be so easily resolved by involving a grown-up or the police. I also really wanted to just slap these kids and stop them from being so dumb. I mean, some of their decisions were truly questionable.

Overall I quite liked the 'feel' of the book, it was very atmospheric and I could easily transport myself into the minds of these children and the environment they lived in, so for that I can commend the author.

While I was slightly disappointed by this book, I would be interested in reading more from the author. I hope his other narrators are more likeable.

Would recommend for: fans of Stephen King for sure!

Joanne Freitas says

Tanta publicidade sobre este livro e não correspondeu, de todo, às expectativas. Demorou demasiado a desenrolar a ação e teve uma introdução das personagens demasiado longa que se tornou aborrecido.

Carrie says

Alright I have to admit my reason for picking this one up is it being advertised as for fans of It by Stephen King and The Chalk Man by C. J. Tudor. For once the advertising from the publisher is actually pretty spot on instead of the usual why in the world are they comparing this to that book feeling I get. This one will immediately remind you of the titles they've listed.

The book starts as Joe is remembering the summer he was thirteen and his parents decided on a move to the small town of Payne, Arizona. At that age the move was a new adventure to Joe and shortly after moving he meets Fat Bobby being tortured by some bullies and so the beginning of the Outsiders club. Joe, Bobby, Tara and Jim bond together and begin their summer adventure.

Eventually while exploring in the woods a car is found locked up and hidden. Of course curiosity gets the better and when finally able to get inside they find a fortune in cash. Now we know that this is a too good to be true scenario and of course the next thing for the Outsiders is a major order of danger coming their way.

As I said this one has major vibes of the books they compared it too so if you are a fan of a nostalgic coming of age with a dangerous twist type of read then this one will probably be for you. While I enjoyed this one much as I had the others before it my only thought though was is it terribly original. Sure these kids get into their own mess of troubles over their summer but one can't help but to compare so in the end I decided to rate this one at 3.5 stars.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.com/>

Dave says

I received this book from Netgalley and am providing an honest review below.

This book seems at first heavily inspired by Stephen King's The Body (filmed as Stand By Me). The action is moved to Arizona, a group of misfits band together, deal with bullies in a way that raises the ante dramatically from The Body, find an abandoned car in the woods loaded with a body in the trunk and millions of dollars in the backseat, and soon deal with a mysterious killer called The Collector. Seth Adams writing is engaging, and the first half of the book nicely straddles the line between YA and adult thriller, but then the book goes completely off the tracks and becomes a blood splattered thriller fueled by inane decisions by the 13 year-old narrator, which lost me as a 58 year-old crime fiction reader.

While the book lost me, I'll still give it 3 stars for the writing and that it might work for teen readers.

Sarah Joint says

Based on the length, I expected to blow through this book in one or two sittings, but it actually took me a few days to get through it. Comparisons to It by Stephen King and The Chalk Man by C.J. Tudor are accurate when it comes to the story, but I found this one lacking. I might have felt more suspense if the main character, Joey, didn't drive me absolutely batty. I know, he's thirteen. And I know thirteen year old boys aren't known for being the least annoying creatures on the planet. But I have read plenty of stories with characters of a similar age where they came across as likable and still realistic enough. This was not one of them. Most of the other characters are fine. I also have no problem with foul language, as I have a mouth like a sailor myself. This does not include racial slurs (mostly used by "bad guys" but so often it was jarring) or using the word "retarded" a dozen or so times as an insult, both of which feature a lot in this story. I know that people use those words, and I know kids especially tend to. I just don't think it added anything and in fact detracted from the story for me. I didn't need more reasons to dislike the main character, but his use of "retarded" gave them to me. I hate to rate books low, and the language is not even the main reason but I just didn't enjoy this one.

Just thirteen years old, Joey and his older sister have been forced to move with their family because of their father's job. It's not long before Joey connects with new friends, and not long before he makes some new enemies. Pulled to a mysterious glinting light in the woods, he and his new group of outsiders discover an old abandoned car that looks like it's been sitting in one place for years and years. It's locked. Of course, they are convinced they have to open it. Inside, they find more money than they've ever seen in their lives, more money than most people will... and in the trunk, something most people would hope never to see: a decaying body that's been laying alone and forgotten for a long time. But someone knows they've found his secret: a mysterious man called The Collector, who will make sure this is a summer they'll never forget.

I received a copy of this book from Net Galley, Harper Impulse, and Killer Reads, thank you! My review is honest and unbiased.

Linda Strong says

One summer in the life of Joe, Bobby, Jim, and Tara ..and later Sara, will remain with them forever. They named themselves the Outsiders' Club.

Not much to do in this small town in Arizona, Joe spies something and convinces his new friends to go exploring. And what a find! A Buick ... on a back road. The car obviously had been there forever and a day. Locked, covered with forest growth, was a mystery that had them all excited.

When they finally got a door open, what they find is a fortune in cash.. all neatly bundled, all just sitting there for the taking. But it was what they found in the trunk that had them scared. And when the man known as The Collector came along, the kids were absolutely terrified.

They would all have nightmares for a very long time.....

Think STAND BY ME, Stephen King's IT, THE CLIENT this book brought these all to mind. It contained elements of all these movies. It was still a good read .. just not terribly original.

The characters were alright, but my favorite of all is Bandit, the 4-legged Outsider that saved the day time and time again. It's a short read, but entertaining all the same.

Many thanks to the author / Harper Impulse - Killer reads / Netgalley for the advanced digital copy of this adventure. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.
