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The Bad Beginning: Or, Orphans! (A Series Of Unfortunate Events, Book 1)



Synopsis

NOW A NETFLIX ORIGINAL SERIES Are you made fainthearted by death? Does fire unnerve you? Is a villain something that might crop up in future nightmares of yours? Are you thrilled by nefarious plots? Is cold porridge upsetting to you? Vicious threats? Hooks? Uncomfortable clothing? It is likely that your answers will reveal *A Series of Unfortunate Events* to be ill-suited for your personal use. A librarian, bookseller, or acquaintance should be able to suggest books more appropriate for your fragile temperament. But to the rarest of readers we say, "Proceed, but cautiously."

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1010 (What's this?)

Series: *A Series of Unfortunate Events* (Book 1)

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; Reprint edition (May 8, 2007)

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Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.4 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 1,862 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,568 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in *Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Orphans & Foster Homes* #33 in *Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Siblings* #75 in *Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > TV, Movie, Video Game Adaptations*

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

Make no mistake. The Bad Beginning begins badly for the three Baudelaire children, and then gets worse. Their misfortunes begin one gray day on Briny Beach when Mr. Poe tells them that their parents perished in a fire that destroyed their whole house. "It is useless for me to describe to you how terrible Violet, Klaus, and even Sunny felt in the time that followed," laments the personable (occasionally pedantic) narrator, who tells the story as if his readers are gathered around an armchair on pillows. But of course what follows is dreadful. The children thought it was bad when the well-meaning Poes bought them grotesque-colored clothing that itched. But when they are

ushered to the dilapidated doorstep of the miserable, thin, unshaven, shiny-eyed, money-grubbing Count Olaf, they know that they--and their family fortune--are in real trouble. Still, they could never have anticipated how much trouble. While it's true that the events that unfold in Lemony Snicket's novels are bleak, and things never turn out as you'd hope, these delightful, funny, linguistically playful books are reminiscent of Roald Dahl (remember James and the Giant Peach and his horrid spinster aunts), Charles Dickens (the orphaned Pip in *Great Expectations* without the mysterious benefactor), and Edward Gorey (*The Gashlycrumb Tinies*). There is no question that young readers will want to read the continuing unlucky adventures of the Baudelaire children in *The Reptile Room* and *The Wide Window*. (Ages 9 and older) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

British actor Tim Curry, whose reputation for playing dastardly villain types precedes him, is terrific in this adaptation of the intentionally over-the-top, slightly scary tale of the Baudelaire orphans. As narrator/author Snicket, Curry relates the sad saga with pity and enlightenment sparked by dashes of humor. When the Baudelaire children, Violet, Klaus and baby Sunny, learn that their parents have perished in a fire at the family mansion, the children's rocky course is set for misery and misadventure (enough to fill the projected 13 volumes of this clever book series). The executor of the Baudelaire parents' will and keeper of the family fortune, Mr. Poe, arranges for the orphans to live with a guardian, a creepy distant relative named Count Olaf. Nasty in more ways than one, Count Olaf mistreats the children, leading them to quickly discover that he only wants their money. After they unravel one of the count's more awful schemes, the children are eventually delivered from the situation, leading neatly into a sequel. Curry plays Olaf with an appropriately spooky whispering hiss and deserves extra kudos for his convincing portrayal of Poe's racking, sometimes phlegmy cough. As a bonus, the tape contains a hilarious interview between historian, critic and author Leonard S. Marcus and Daniel Handler (suspected to be the mysterious Lemony Snicket himself). An entertaining song called "Scream and Run Away," about Count Olaf, fittingly closes the proceedings. Ages 9-up. Copyright 2001 Cahnners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Sad, witty, amazing and a tragedy. What more could you ask for? I have really enjoyed this book. Lemony's book is a must read. It has all the qualities of a bestselling book. What's more it will soon become a Netflix original series. Violet is an amazing peice of work. Smart and strategic, she could invent her way out of everything! Klaus is the brains of the children. His knowledge of just about

everything will be very useful later on ;). Sunny is a interesting character. The youngest of the three siblings, she is often the first target for Count Olafs schemes. She is a brilliant invention. Now Olaf is a different person entirely. Cunning, cruel and ambitious, he will stop at nothing to get the giant fortune in the bank. Though if you are the sweet and sappy type DO NOT READ!!!! - C.C Summers

As a 12 year old girl who read this book at age 9 and has since read the series twice I would recommend this book to anyone. If you are a parent trying to get their kid to read this is the perfect book, since it has a movie, after the kids watch they will be willing to read the books even more. I do have to admit some of the situations may be a little harsh for younger children and seeing as there are 13 books they might find it too long. The Baudelaires Siblings. Violet, Klaus and Sunny live a happy life with their two parents in the Baudelaire Mansion, but one gloomy day their banker Mr. Poe informs them there has been a terrible fire that has taken their parents life. The Baudelaires now orphans move with their closest relative (in location not family bloodline) Count Olaf a wicked man with greedy intentions, getting the Baudelaire fortune. Lemony Snicket's mysterious ways and beautiful writing show in this book, as we take a plunge in the Baudelaires unfortunate life and the turmoil they go through living with Count Olaf.

Horrid, as I'm sure you know, is a word that here means awful. The brains of the unfortunate Baudelaire children are incredible and the fact that these books show children using the power they have to save themselves and their loved ones is something very important to me. And seeing a girl like Violet, a girl who is so like the other girls of her age, using her incredible talent for science is just marvelous. And these books never once sugar coat anything (unlike the film). And to those of you who are wanting to read the books after watching the film, the letter never comes. I'm re-reading these books, and I won't spoil them for you. But nothing is black and white except the print on the pages. Nothing is as simple as we'd like to make it out to be. Very few are wholly evil, and very few are wholly good. Not everyone makes it out alive and unscathed, and you don't always receive closure. But that is life. And life will always have a Series of Unfortunate Events.

I listened to this book on the ride to work with my children. It only took a couple trips but it was amazing!!! What a wonderful book. I loved how it defined bigger words for children. My almost four year old loved it just as much as my nine year old. Highly recommend this book even to adults!

It is a great series to read as a family for those with kids at a fifth grade reading level or higher.

Particularly with the Netflix series out watching that first even got my reluctant reader in the house interested. Parents be aware that it does feature unfortunate events, as the title clearly states, but this parent feels that the children's never give up attitudes and constructive ways of dealing with their loss(es) is a good lesson which really cannot be conveyed without hardship and that this is a lesson best learned early and carefully when possible. I would prefer my kids understand from a fictional characters example that a good attitude and positive outlets for negative emotions are the best course of action before he/she experiences similar loss themselves so that my kids can better deal with the loss whether I am there to help or in the event that I'm not for whatever reason. The way Mr. Snicket explains some higher level vocabulary and certain concepts such as dramatic irony (in book 2) is also a plus as is his tongue in cheek humor. He writes on a fifth grade level but, kinda like Spongebob, he puts some tidbits for adult brains in there too that you won't be embarrassed about when your child gets older and figures it out.

Great books for kids 7-13 and I honestly would read them again in my late 20s. This particular book was one of the best and most memorable, perhaps it is because it got me hooked. This book is easily top 5 in the entire series.

If you like a good story at someone else's expense, you've come to the right place. Enjoy reading the book you sadist.

I recently read A Series of Unfortunate Events #1 expressly because it appeared on the "100 Books" list. I assembled my own list, btw, of 100 works consisting only of fiction, from Books > 100 Books to Read in a Lifetime > Customer Favorites: Kindle. I had not read any of the Lemony Snicket stories before, undoubtedly because I'm just too darn old; it's novel aimed at children, and I was already 20 years old by the time the author (Daniel Handler, a.k.a. Lemony Snicket) was born. I may be old, but I still enjoy good fiction, no matter its intended audience. A Series of Unfortunate Events is an excellent story, with a very unusual approach, especially in children's lit -- a less-than-happy ending, presaged by the author on the very first page. It's full of interesting characters, bizarre situations, and a plot that moves along nicely. It's a tale well told, and I enjoyed it greatly. I'm sure kids would love it and want to read the sequels, which are legion. I will give this to my granddaughters when they're old enough; I'm sure they will love it, too.

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