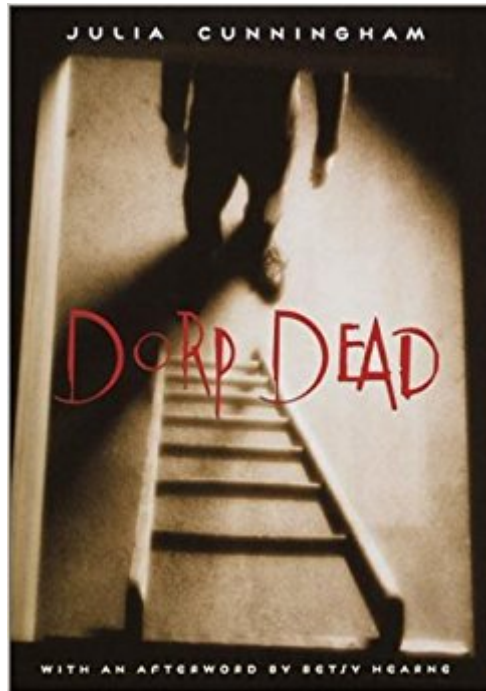




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Dorp Dead



Synopsis

A reissue of the novel that dramatically changed children's literature in the 20th century. Julia Cunningham's ground-breaking novel, first published in 1965 and unavailable in any edition for a decade, is reissued for a whole new generation of readers to call their own.

"Here . . . is the story of a boy who discovers himself, who basically comes to grips with that most contemporary of problems, the isolation of the individual. It is told within the near-classic framework of the story of the orphan who survives and escapes maltreatment to find love, but it is told in frank, literate terms in the lingo of today's youngsters. And it has, as an additional dimension, a touch of the Gothic tale, a tinge of terror and a shade of romanticism." (The New York Herald Tribune)

Book Information

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Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

"Youngsters . . . will like this spine-tingling horror story and its hero who can't spell." —School Library Journal, Starred "Enthralling. . . One of the year's best juveniles." —The New York Times

A reissue of the novel that dramatically changed children's literature in the 20th century. Julia Cunningham's ground-breaking novel, first published in 1965 and unavailable in any edition for a

decade, is reissued for a whole new generation of readers to call their own. ?Here . . . is the story of a boy who discovers himself, who basically comes to grips with that most contemporary of problems, the isolation of the individual. It is told within the near-classic framework of the story of the orphan who survives and escapes maltreatment to find love, but it is told in frank, literate terms in the lingo of today?s youngsters. And it has, as an additional dimension, a touch of the Gothic tale, a tinge of terror and a shade of romanticism.? (The New York Herald Tribune)

I read Julia Cunningham's classic 45 years ago and never forgot this slim, atmospheric book or its unique title. I bought the book for a reluctant reader, who has loved it and persuaded others to read it, as well. So I decided on a re-read these many decades later. *Dorp Dead* remains just as interesting, just as mysterious, just as chilling as it was when it was first released. And it has inspired me to seek out other Cunningham novels, including her National Book Award finalist *The Treasure Is the Rose*. A quick and riveting read that's highly, highly recommended for readers of any age.

i read this book many years ago, as a child. it was gripping and stayed in my mind, forever. i liked the protagonist! i was exstatic to see that i could buy it for my own collection!

Dorp Dead was well known and considered controversial when it was published in the mid 60's. This beautifully written, slim volume is set in a mysterious, surreal world and like many children's stories features a young orphan as the protagonist. This boy, Gilly, is apprenticed to a very strange, solitary man who wants to trap Gilly in his own carefully ordered world. Gilly ultimately escapes the "caged" world of his master and finds his own way but not without some scenes of suspense and horror. The creepy tone of the book is somewhat relieved by the book's "happy ending." The title of the book becomes clear with it's closing words.

Absolutely creepy book! Go for the earliest edition, it has more illustrations. Great kid's book!

When I was in I believe the sixth grade the teacher begin reading this gripping, fascinating book to the class. We all enjoyed it and looked forward to each day's reading. Then about halfway through the book the teacher sadly explained that there would be no more "*Dorp Dead*" as one of the parents had complained it was "too weird". My first experience with censorship! To make things worse, the same parent had demanded that the book be removed from the school library, so we

couldn't finish it on our own. This was in 1971. I forgot about "Drop Dead" for many years until I was visiting a friend and saw her son just finishing the book. He was impressed! Suddenly I was gripped with a desire to know how the book had ended and asked to borrow the book. I'm glad I did. Anything this original and intriguing should not be yanked from readers by the whining of one parent, or a committee of them. I still resent that I was not allowed to experience the book at a time when it would have been more age appropriate and could have been truly enjoyed and discussed along with my peers.

At age 11, this was the very last book I read from the "children's" library. Scary and compelling story. Fantastic illustrations, and not too childish for someone soon to move on to adult fiction (or I guess now-a-days its called Young Adult Fiction). Drop Dead is about a boy who is not perfect. For one thing, he can't even spell "drop" and so scribbles "dorp dead" as an insult. A hero who can't spell? That's what fascinated me about this book when I first read it in its first printing (about 1966). At the time I read it, I was a very poor reader and speller: Dyslexia hadn't been "invented" yet and I had been simply labeled as "slow". But secretly I loved to read (which I could only do privately by running my finger along the lines of the page... something my teachers forbid). So I related to the lonely boy who was considered stupid and not worth the trouble. I recommend this for what appear to be "slow" children. Perhaps they are not so slow after all and may someday make their livings by writing professionally, as I have been fortunate to do. (So you see, this is not only a review, but also a sincere thank you note to the author.)

I read this book first when I was twelve and it is by far one of my favorite books. It is definitely geared at young adults, but it also tends to be very dark. The premise is a young boy who is incredibly brilliant but hides his talents. He lives in an orphanage near a secret tower which he uses as his secure castle. He becomes adopted by a man imprisoned by his orderly attitude and lack of affection. There are many twists in the book which makes you keep reading. The greatest part of the book though are the characters which could be seen as weak, such as a simple hunter who carries an unloaded gun. This man is a metaphor for Gilly, the young boy, himself. He has potential and protection with his talents but keeps them to himself, which is as useless as an unloaded gun. This is again, an excellent book with deep metaphors and morals.

Gilly Ground lives a dreary life in an orphanage, until one day, he is sent to live with the mysterious ladder maker Mr. Kobalt. But when Gilly learns his master's plans for him, he knows he must escape.

from this strange man. DORP DEAD takes place in a fascinating world, deftly blending realism with surreality. The book's setting is referred to as "the village", (yes, this was written before the M. Night Shamalan film) and is impossible to describe as either fantasy or fiction. This is a fast-paced, chilling read that would make a perfect read-a-loud for Halloween. Highly recommended. RATING: A

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