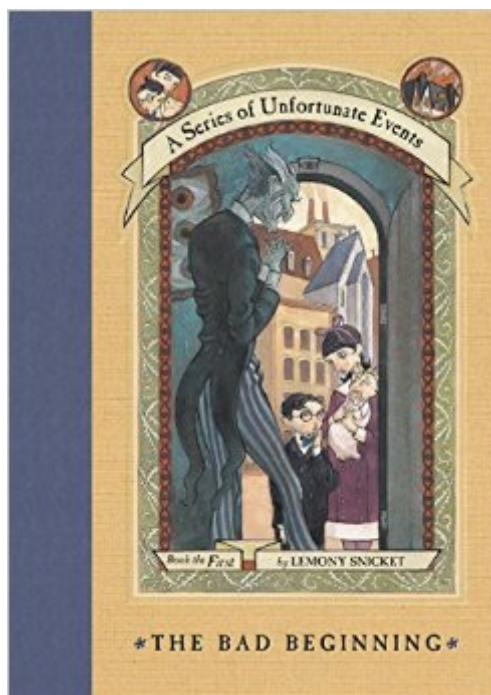


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The Bad Beginning (A Series Of Unfortunate Events #1)



Synopsis

SOON TO BE A NETFLIX ORIGINAL SERIES Violet, Klaus, and Sunny Baudelaire are intelligent children. They are charming, and resourceful, and have pleasant facial features. Unfortunately, they are exceptionally unlucky. In the first two books alone, the three youngsters encounter a greedy and repulsive villain, itchy clothing, a disastrous fire, a plot to steal their fortune, a lumpy bed, a deadly serpent, a large brass reading lamp, a long knife, and a terrible odor. In the tradition of great storytellers, from Dickens to Dahl, comes an exquisitely dark comedy that is both literary and irreverent, hilarious and deftly crafted. Never before has a tale of three likeable and unfortunate children been quite so enchanting, or quite so uproariously unhappy.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1010L (What's this?)

Series: A Series of Unfortunate Events (Book 1)

Hardcover: 162 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins (August 25, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 006075589X

ISBN-13: 978-0060755898

ASIN: 0064407667

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.7 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1,765 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #30,258 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #79 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Orphans & Foster Homes](#) #248 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Siblings](#) #1735 in [Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

I went back and forth about whether I should get this book to read with my 7 year old second grader. I kept telling myself I should wait till she was older, but found the book at a good price, so I bought it. I worried it would be too depressing and scary for her, but it did not turn out that way at all. The book is written from a narrators point of view, so the personal feelings of the characters are never fully

exposed and explored. You know that the three orphans are sad about their parents death, but the book doesn't wallow in their grief and make it painful to read. If you can imagine Vincent Price reading the book, that tends to make it a little more lighthearted. The bad guy of the book, Count Olaf, is an awful brute who is outright cruel to the children at times, but again the book doesn't have the children suffering without end. Instead it makes them more resilient to foil the Counts plans and triumph over him. My daughter was EAGER to read these books. That was the best thing about it all. We have tried classics, Pippi Longstocking, Island of the Blue Dolphins, Charlottes Web, but as great as they are, they lack The Bad Beginnings level of excitement, mystery and wondering what will happen next. I enjoyed the book myself and will continue to read the rest of the series, in hopes they are as entertaining as this one. I can see if you have a very sensitive child, this would not be the book for them until they are older. Some kids my daughters age are scared of Harry Potter movies, so this book would be too much for them. If your youngster isn't living in a sheltered world where everything is wonderful and bad things don't happen, and they can understand the difference between a made up story and a real one, then they just might enjoy this new type of childrens adventure stories.

If you like the part of Harry Potter when he's living under the stairs of the Dursley household, before the happy bit where he gets accepted to Wizard school, then you'll enjoy these books. The Baudelaire orphans are nice and smart. But boy are they unlucky. The book opens with the Baudelaire parents dying in a fire and the orphans having to find a relative to look after them. Although there is a huge family fortune, they can't get it until Violet, the oldest at 14, turns 18. But this doesn't stop the dastardly (and there isn't really any other word to describe him) Count Olaf, a horrible and distant relative, and his nasty henchmen/women/things from trying to get their hands (or hooks) on it. And as far as Olaf is concerned, the Baudelaires are expendable, a word which here means "not needed after Count Olaf gets his hands on the money". Just one word of warning--when the author says if you like cheerful books or happy endings, stop reading now, he means it. But if you like miserable scary books with unhappy endings, keep reading! And you'll learn lots of horrible words with depressing or unfortunate meanings as well.

I'm in 5th grade and I thought the book is great. It felt like I was in the book and I was Baudelaire child. I read the book in one whole day because I couldn't stop. The next day I read the sequel. I recommend this book to all.

I came to this series as a result of an interview with the author that I read in Publishers Weekly. Intrigued, I ordered the first three books. I loved them. They are purportedly children's books but the author has a wicked sense of humor, and includes references that only adults would recognize. (For example, two of the three children are named Sunny and Klaus. Gee, that makes me think about some real-life wicked goings-on.) Aside from everything else, these children actually come alive; they're inventive, clever and resourceful. They also suffer at the hands of their wonderfully conceived evil uncle Count Olaf. I've passed these books along to a number of children who gobbled them up as avidly as I did--which proves that a good book knows no age barriers. This series is pure pleasure.

If you are the type of person who blames everyone but yourself for the evils of the world, by all means DON'T read these books. However, if you have a healthy sense of reality and humor (or want to raise children who will!) then read and enjoy these delightful tales. Lemony Snicket writes for all those kids who know that adults aren't always on their side. His stories are funny, a little creepy and always interesting. The Baudelaire children are the best of what boy and girl heroes in books should be and the adults, well, the adults might just be portrayed a little too accurately for some grown-ups to handle. As most children know, adults don't always do what's right, aren't always to be trusted and don't always believe what a child tells them. Reading some of the negative reviews here, some adults would prefer that children not know this. Silly grown-ups, your children already know far more than you understand. My daughter and I have read book the first and are rapidly demolishing book the second. They are smart books the way Roald Dahl books are smart. The author explains a lot of words or phrases, but not, in my opinion, in a "dumbing down" way. Many of the explanations are useful even for adults who know what the words already mean... for example, the explanation of "literal" vs. "figurative" in book the first. Enjoy the books and read them along with your kids. You'll be amazed at how much this writing stikes a chord with them!

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