



Heck: Where the Bad Kids Go

By Dale E. Basye

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WHEN MILTON AND Marlo Fauster die in a marshmallow bear explosion, they get sent straight to Heck, an otherworldly reform school. Milton can understand why his kleptomaniac sister is here, but Milton is—or *was*—a model citizen. Has a mistake been made? Not according to Bea “Elsa” Bubb, the Principal of Darkness. She doesn’t make mistakes. She personally sees to it that Heck—whether it be home-ec class with Lizzie Borden, ethics with Richard Nixon, or gym with Blackbeard the Pirate—is especially, well, *heckish* for the Fausters. Will Milton and Marlo find a way to escape? Or are they stuck here for all eternity, or until they turn 18, whichever comes first?

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6–8—Quintessential good-kid Milton Fauster knows all about his sister Marlo's life of petty crime. So, when they are both killed in a freak marshmallow explosion, he isn't surprised that she doesn't qualify for Heaven, but he's shocked to find that he isn't going there either. They end up in Heck, an unearthly reform school that isn't quite Hell, but certainly not a place anyone would want to stay in "for all eternity—or until they turn 18, whichever comes first." Principal Bea "Elsa" Bubb figures that there is something irregular about Milton's soul contract and keeps a close eye on him. Milton, meanwhile, plans to escape. During a dreary class, he meets Virgil, who has a map of the Nine Circles of Heck. Unfortunately, the only way out is through the sewer pipes, literally "down the toilet." The torments of the darned are described in vivid and often grotesque detail. Errant toddlers nap in gingerbread coffins while Boogypeople read them Edgar Allan Poe. Milton and company make two graphically described voyages through the underworld plumbing. There are numerous classical and historical allusions, many of which will sail over the heads of the intended audience. ("I have an ax to grind with you," snarls home-economics teacher Lizzie Borden, after giving the celery 40 whacks.) In the end, the clever, if somewhat disturbing premise is overwhelmed by slow pacing and relentless descriptions of garbage, sewage, and other heckishly unpleasant things.—*Elaine E. Knight, Lincoln Elementary Schools, IL*

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From Booklist

Welcome to Grizzly Mall: Home of the State's Second-Largest Bear-Themed Marshmallow Statue! Such is the Kansas-fed, white-bread suburb 13-year-old Marlo Faustus longs to escape. And escape she does, with her unwitting, innocent younger brother, Milton, when said sculpture explodes, and they arrive, newly deceased, in Heck—where the bad kids go. Puns and allusions abound, enough to sate the corniest appetite, even if many will slide right by the reader: the kids' limbo is ruled by one Bea Elsa Bubb, Principal of Darkness, and faculty include Mr. Nixon (ethics), Lizzie Borden (home ec), and Mr. Dior (fashion, though his sole offense appears to be that he is effete). Beneath the jocular surface, though, Marlo and Milton work through a complex sibling relationship on their quest for escape. Can they put aside their differences to elude the Boogypeople and hall demonitors free the jarred blobs of lost souls, hatch a getaway, and stay together? Heck if I know. Grades 3–6. --Thom Barthelmess

Review

Starred Review, Publishers Weekly, June 30, 2008:

"The author's umpteen clever allusions...make this book truly sparkle."

Review, The Wall Street Journal, July 26-27, 2008:

"Parents and readers . . . are in for a treat with Dale E. Basye's very funny debut novel."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Margaret Honig:

Book is usually written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can learn everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. As it is known to us that book is important matter to bring us around

the world. Beside that you can your reading expertise was fluently. A publication Heck: Where the Bad Kids Go will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel much more confidence if you can know about every thing. But some of you think this open or reading the book make you bored. It is not necessarily make you fun. Why they could be thought like that? Have you looking for best book or acceptable book with you?

Sena Meyer:

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Helene Anderson:

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Jose Rivera:

What is your hobby? Have you heard that question when you got pupils? We believe that that question was given by teacher for their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everybody has different hobby. Therefore you know that little person just like reading or as studying become their hobby. You have to know that reading is very important as well as book as to be the point. Book is important thing to increase you knowledge, except your teacher or lecturer. You see good news or update concerning something by book. Many kinds of books that can you choose to adopt be your object. One of them is actually Heck: Where the Bad Kids Go.

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