



## **Drawn Away**

*Holly Bennett*

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One minute Jack's in math class. The next, he's on a dark, cobblestoned, empty street. Empty, that is, except for a skinny girl wrapped in a threadbare shawl. "Matches, mister?" she asks, and just like that, Jack's life collides with one of Hans Christian Andersen's grimmest tales. And just when he has almost convinced himself it was just a weird dream, it happens again.

Suddenly, Jack's ideas about what is "real" or "possible" no longer apply. While he and his new girlfriend, Lucy, struggle to understand who or what the Match Girl is, they come to realize they must also find a way to keep Jack away from her. The Match Girl is not just a sad, lonely soul; she's dangerous. And each time Jack is drawn into her gray, solitary world, she becomes stronger, more alive...and more attached to Jack.

She wants to keep Jack for her very own, even if that means he will die.

## Drawn Away Details

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Author : Holly Bennett

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## From Reader Review Drawn Away for online ebook

### Cierra says

I have to admit it--I first picked Drawn Away up because the cover typogrpahy is just so darn beautiful. I didn't know if I'd actually like the book. Guess I got lucky! The premise was interesting and the story kept me hooked through the end. A YA with likable characters, Drawn Away made me feel for all sides--not just the lead. Nice job, Holly Bennett! 4.5/5

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### Misti says

Jack, a seventeen-year-old diabetic, has just moved to a new town, but apart from starting a new school and monitoring his condition, now he's also having weird visions of a Victorian waif, the Little Match Girl, who seems to want something from him. Jack and his new friend Lucy must discover why Jack is having these visions, and how to stop them before Jack is pulled into the Little Match Girl's world forever.

The plot was fairly good and the characters were interesting, but the writing was utilitarian. If you're a big Hans Christian Andersen fan, this might be worth a read, but it's not one I'd recommend across the board.

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### Betty L. says

Loved it! The ties to the "fairy tale" are well done; not just a modern rewrite.

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### Amber says

\*Please note: I received a ARC of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review. This has not affected my opinion of the book in any way and what follows is my honest opinion of this story and the way it was written. Thanks!

I was very much looking forward to Drawn Away. It has a stunning cover and an interesting concept. Unfortunately, this book was not for me.

I found Klara, Jack, and Lucy all a bit flat as characters. They were written with variety and individual backgrounds and hobbies - Lucy had her year as a homeless teen whereas Jack had his diabetes. Klara was the little Match Girl, and we more or less know her story. However, they did not feel deep. It may have been the length of the chapters (some only a page), but I felt like we really never scratched beneath the surface of any of the characters. All their thoughts and motivations were stated in dialogue. I also found that there were excessive details about irrelevant characters, such as Jack's mother and Lucy's uncle.

Bennett does a decent job writing her scenery and world. The most vivid scenes in this book, for myself,

were the scene where Lucy sees the little Match Girl floating over the river, and while Jack is at the Halloween Party. The alley where the little Match Girl lives is also quite vivid.

Conceptually speaking, there is nothing wrong with this story - however, I feel like the description of this book was not the clearest. I expected more of a crossover story, where Jack finds himself transported to the fairytale. Closer to the plot, this is the story about a pair of teenagers (Lucy was a complete surprise once I started reading) who see a villainous apparition bent on hijacking one of them to be her friend forever. Personally, I would not have even gone with the Hans Christian Andersen angle - I think this would fit better as paranormal YA fiction than a fairytale retelling.

That said, in its own, it's a perfectly good story, just not at all what I was expecting.

Bennett's writing style was not for me. More often than not, it seemed much more rushed and flat than others in its genre. If it was intended for middle grade - ages 8-12 - I think that is would have been better. It would mean that the two characters would be better written a bit younger, but I do think the story would have fit better in that demographic. It is a bit too simple for high school and up, and I'm not sure it will be competitive in that market.

A personal pet peeve - Bennett uses a lot of specific pop culture references. Everything from bands to television shows, this dates the book very quickly. It also isolates certain cultures. The book takes place in Canada, and as such I'm close enough that I understood most of them, but a lot of these references would isolate people elsewhere in the world. As I read an ARC, perhaps some of these specifics changed, but I believe it's always better to use a generalization than a specific (i.e. "zombie show" vs. "The Walking Dead") to make it relatable to the maximum amount of people.

Bennett spends a bit of time campaigning for diabetes awareness in this book, which is fine, but we're never quite certain if it's part of the story or just part of the character's life... until it is. According to her Goodreads profile, Bennett works with diabetes spends time working with the Diabetes Research Foundation. I think her work and experience with the foundation definitely drove the direction of this book, which is fine and I think the awareness is great, but at times it seemed like it may derail the plot.

As I said at the beginning of this review, this book was simply not for me. I found my mind wandering often as I read, and I have to admit I skimmed a few pages near the end. I think it could do well in the right audience, but I just wasn't that audience.

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### **Becca Brown says**

This book was great! It was a quick, easy read and I enjoyed it. The tie-ins from the past added to the story and were really what helped bring the story to life in a way that was interesting. The main story was sweet, but some parts of the book I had to reread because I had forgotten what happened or I had skimmed a bit cause some parts were a little slow. But overall I loved the characters and the story was really fun to read!

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### **Sherry Guice says**

This is an Orca book that retells and weaves the story of "The Little Match Girl." The book is short and edgy

enough to appeal to reluctant readers--even high school.

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### **Katy says**

\*I received an ARC of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Well, I kind of loved this book.

The story was a combination of good ol'fashion contemporary YA and the fairy tale, The Match Girl. I loved the way the author blended a touch of history into the modern part of the story. We learn a little backstory about the Match Girl from Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale.

The writing was simple, which I liked. Not every YA needs to read like a Diablo Cody screenplay. The story was unique. I've never read anything quite like it. The Match Girl's story (as written by H.C.A) is a sad one, but the life and backstory that the author wrote for her (and her mother) was heartbreakingly. More so, perhaps, because countless children lived lives just like hers.

I loved that there is a bit of everything in this book, it has romance, mystery, fantasy, even a bit of suspense. Something for everyone.

The only thing that didn't really work for me was the internal dialogue of Jack and Lucy. Their thoughts see-sawed between what a normal seventeen year old would think and then \*poof\* they would sound like they were forty. It was just plain weird to read a high schooler thinking to himself that he needed to urinate. All in all, a really fun book. I would definitely recommend it to anyone that loves fairy tales.

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### **River says**

If you never read Hans Christian Andersen's The Little Match Girl, it goes something like this: A poor little girl out in the street attempts to sell matches out in the cold. Everyone ignores this child. She is freezing and eventually attempts to light the matches to keep herself warm. It does not work. She dies.

Okay there's a little more to it than that, but I'm trying to make a point here.

It's kind of a creepy story.

Holly Bennett imagines the fairy tale is based on a real little girl named Klara in the paranormal YA "Drawn Away." Seventeen year old Jack is in math class one second, and the next he finds himself in a dark and misty street in another time, where the only other person is an eerie and mysterious scrawny little girl with large blue eyes. She doesn't seem to be terribly lucid, and she tries to sell Jack some matches.

Jack is back in math class again. He brushes it off, but these episodes continue to occur, and Match Girl becomes more lucid, and gains a fixation with Jack. She wants him to stay where she is.

Enter Lucy, a schoolmate with a checkered past who has a strained relationship with her mother, and an interesting connection to Jack's little problem.

Drawn Away is a quick, easy read. Though I wouldn't exactly call the book a fairy tale retelling, fans of such a genre will enjoy this one. Intertwined throughout the novel is the theme of family and healing with regards to Lucy and her mother, making her story just as important and endearing as Jack's. The old letters and diaries the two teens find both transport and compel, and while we never truly find out why Jack gets lured to Klara in the first place, the story wraps up in a satisfying conclusion.

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### **Lexi says**

Really creepy story. Learned a lot of things I didn't know about the Canadian public high school system. Good readalike for *Far Far Away*.

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### **Briana says**

This was okay. I'm a big fan of Hans Christian Anderson so when I saw that a lesser known story of his was turned into a retelling I had to try it. Unfortunately it fell a little flat. Jack and Lucy's romance seemed a little boring and time passed weirdly in the book. I loved the perspective from the Match Girl, but thought everything about her backstory was drawn out and slightly unnecessary. Some parts overall were better than others but if you like fairy tail retellings I'd recommend it.

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### **Ms. Jackson says**

The male protagonist, Jack, shows a lot of self-control in the book. He has Type 1 Diabetes, and he has to monitor his blood sugar and insulin quite a bit. His attention to this during the course of the storyline and how he works to maintain a healthy level demonstrates this strength.

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### **Gina says**

A very on the edge of your seat book. I love how the story of the Match Girl by Hans Christian Anderson is developed into the story. It is fast paced and very enjoyable. Good creepy book.

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### **Courtney Giraldo says**

Drawn Away, was provided to me for free in exchange for an honest review from Librarything.

A senior in highschool, Jack and his family are new in town. While sitting in math class, Jack suddenly becomes transported to another time and place. To an antiquated town with a waif of a girl selling matches on the street corner. Although spooked at first by the realistic feeling of the encounter, Jack, a type one diabetic, shrugs off the strange occurrence as a low blood sugar episode and soon doesn't think much of it. Until it happens again....and again. Each time the match girl becomes more animated and fearsome. With the help of his new friend (and love interest Lucy) the two race against the clock to figure out who this match girl is, how their lives are connected, and how to stop her dangerous obsession with Jack, before he is drawn away into her world forever.

I have to say, this was a really unique twist on the classic Hans Christian Anderson tale. While a short read, it was packed with an interesting plot and relatable characters. I found it refreshing and unique to have a main character someone who lives with a chronic illness, even more so to have that illness play a major role

in the story line and serve as a point of conflict. Learning the backstory of the match girl and how her life from the past is inexplicably intertwined with the main characters from the present was interesting and fun to follow. The conflict resolution was a tad rushed to me, but overall I enjoyed the read and was happy with the ending. Of note, while the books target age is listed as 12 and up, I would say it isn't quite appropriate for the middle school crowd given some strong language and sexual situations.

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