



The Gorgon in the Gully

Melina Marchetta

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Beyond the basketball courts and classrooms of St Raph's is a gully where everything disappears forever. Danny Griggs has heard stories about a creature that lives down there. So why does he volunteer to face the Gorgon when he's been petrified of everything all his life?

A gentle story about overcoming fear and looking at things from all angles, from best-selling author Melina Marchetta.

The Gorgon in the Gully Details

Date : Published September 27th 2010 by Penguin Australia/Puffin (first published September 22nd 2010)

ISBN : 9780143305613

Author : Melina Marchetta

Format : Paperback 132 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Realistic Fiction, Contemporary, Fiction, Young Adult, Adventure, Juvenile

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From Reader Review *The Gorgon in the Gully* for online ebook

Brittany (finally graduated and can once again read for fun) says

What a super cute wonderful lovely book! I don't usually read books for this age group, but when I saw it was Melina Marchetta I knew I had to get my hands on it.

So the book follows the story of Danny Griggs (brother of swoon-worthy cadet Jonah Griggs who just happens to be fighting a territory war in Jellicoe) during year 4 and Danny has his own battle to face. After losing his footie team's good luck charm he must face the Gorgon of the Gully in order to get it back.

I have to say the work these kids put into the production just to get Danny down into that gully was quite comical. These kids are organized! While reading I just knew it wasn't going to end well, and surprise surprise when it didn't.

But as with all Melina Marchetta books, even those for younger readers, the book isn't really about facing the Gorgon. It has more to do with facing your fears and finding those special friendships. The ones that are worth fighting for and have the potential to last a lifetime. And once again she writes it beautifully.

A HUGE thank you to Carmel for sending me this lovely book all the way from Australia. I appreciate it more than I can say, and she started a Melina around the World group so her book (only released in Australia) is now travelling the world thanks to her and Catie. Well done friends. Well done!

Alexa says

My review can also be found on my blog Collections.

Melina Marchetta is my favorite author EVER. I will read anything she writes. When I found out that she was releasing a children's book, I knew I wanted to read it. And when I found it was about Danny Griggs, the little brother of Jonah Griggs (my favorite male character of all time) from *Jellicoe Road* (my favorite book in the entire world), I knew I had to get my hands on a copy! Sadly, Australian books are hard to come by and shipping is pretty expensive to the US, so I thought it would be awhile before I ever got a chance to read it. But then a miracle... FishpondWorld.com! Three weeks after ordering it I finally received it in the mail. I read it as soon as I could, and it was worth the wait! I just loved it!

There's a legend about an evil monster called the Gorgon that lives in the gully at the St. Raph's schoolyard. If any ball happens to fall in the gully, it's lost forever because no one will ever dare risk facing the Gorgon. But after Danny Griggs accidentally hits a classmate's soccer ball (the lucky soccer ball signed by Harry Kewell that will help them win the grand final!) into the gully and gets called a *gutless wonder* by the school bully, Danny decides he's going to stop being afraid and venture into the gully. With the help of his friends and his older brother Jonah, Danny hatches a plan to retrieve the ball from the gully and along the way learns to overcome his fears and the importance of friendships.

The Gorgon in the Gully had the humor and friendships Melina Marchetta is awesome at, but in a much more innocent form (the characters are little kids, of course!). It was such a cute read. I mean, c'mon, mini-Melina

Marchetta characters? So adorable! All the characters were great, and Danny was my favorite! He's a sweetie, and I loved how he wanted to be courageous even though he was terrified. I do think he's a whole lot braver than he gives himself credit for. I loved the relationships Danny had with his friends and how he made new friends, and I also loved reading his interactions with his mother, Jonah, and Jack, his mother's boyfriend. Danny was really such a nice character to read about. :)

This story actually takes place during the same time as *Jellicoe Road*, so I think you'll appreciate it even more if you're a *Jellicoe Road* fan. *Especially* if you love Jonah Griggs. He was in this a lot more than I expected. And yes, I had a HUGE stupid grin on my face ever single time he was mentioned. I didn't believe it was possible, but I love him even more now!

Really, I could go on and on, but since this is a short story, I don't want to end up spoiling everything. This is a book about friendships and overcoming fears, and it's definitely a great read for children. I also recommended it to Melina Marchetta fans, who need a quick Melina Marchetta fix before the next book release! :D

Lisa says

First read: August 2015

SO MUCH CUTE OH MY GOD??? I LOVE LOVE LOVE

Reread: February 2018

- Still super great. Danny Griggs is my baby alongside Luca Spinelli and Anabel Mackee. Made me wish we had a book on Luca and/or Anabel at this age.

- I loved all the Jonah mentions; I believe that Gorgon occurred at the same time as Jellicoe, as Jonah was out bush in this story. Also, props to Jonah being the best brother in the world, finding a spot with cell coverage so he could call Danny every night. EVERY. NIGHT. Also don't forget that Jonah kept a photo of himself and Taylor in his drawer.

- Louise Griggs is a super woman and a Character. I LOVE HER. I love Danny's relationship with her. I love how she spends quality time with Danny every night before bed, and giving him advice, and being super patient with him. I love her so much.

- I love Danny's character growth, his whole relationship with Simon especially. Simon is also my baby, I'm adopting him, I'll protect him with my lyfe.

My reading thread on Twitter: [HERE](#).

Carmel says

Well what a sweet book Melina Marchettahas written for Puffin Books 70 yrs celebration. This book came to my attention by one of the many Melina fans on YA Fiction for Adults Goodreads group and I'm very happy

to say this was the start of an amazing challenge "Melina around the world challenge", the sharing of a fictional story, a childrens book with a wonderful positive message about facing your fears, putting ignorance aside, making new friends and becoming a better person & these are just kids! Hmm, how us adults could learn a few things!!

The main character Danny Griggs of *The Gorgon in the Gully* is the brother of Melina's wonderful character Jonah Griggs from her amazing *On the Jellicoe Road*. She has masterfully tied in Jonah's character, playing the revered big brother of Danny with such a delightful touch. This is a very quick read but an enjoyable one, made me laugh and I loved the Aussie references that the author has weaved through the book. I recommend it for young & old!

Nalnac says

I have decided that for all my reviews for Marchetta I will just say :It's 'Melina Marchetta' baby! , and that should just suffice for you to know that it is a 5 stars book.

Because Marchetta IS the **5-golden-stars** writer of my heart.

Even when she writes kids stories.

(And after reading this, I am pretty sure I could love ANYTHING Marchetta writes..even if it was the wether forecast or the grocery shopping list!)

Sam (10 y/o) and Reuben (9 y/o) have already done a pretty great review for *The Gorgon in the Gully*, that you can all read here. (Thanks Nomes)

So let me just add, that this book only confirms, what an amazing storyteller she is.

The story of Danny who tries to overcome his fears is very educational, even for an adult like me.

And to add to the awesomeness of it all..there is ~~one of my biggest 'book-boy-crush' ever~~

Jonah Griggs in it!

This is a book that any Melina Marchetta's fan should have on his/her book shelf (next to *On the Jellicoe Road*).

And if you are not a fan already: WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR??!!

Ari says

How do you make 27 years old people buy a book for kids? Put Jonah Griggs in it and we are all sold :D

PS: I'll just pretend that I'm buying it for my future kids, LOL

Isamlq says

Exactly what has Melina Marchetta's books reduced me to endure? The greatest time suck otherwise known as philpost. Almost a month ago, some awesome people decided to put The Gorgon in the Gully on tour. Being the Melina Marchetta fan that I am, I did not hesitate to sign up: First up, Carmel Fauth sourcing it out (awesome lady...*woot*) Then Catie (another awesome lady for taking charge.) Then ME!!!! Yay! But one week, two weeks, three weeks later with the book nowhere in sight, I was starting to feel guilty for joining: I had unwittingly frustrated the hopes of fellow Marchetta fans by the hold up. What's worse, I was getting impatient (understatement of the year!) Now, imagine my DELIGHT when this was delivered:

(YAY!)

The Gorgon in the Gully was a sweet read. It felt good reading about Jonah again. And I suppose this sentiment has been said time and time again, but I must needs repeat it: **Melina Marchetta can do no wrong!** The story is simple. I couldn't help but smile. So simple in fact that it can be described in just a couple of words: friends and growing up. And being afraid. Danny Griggs has tons of things he's afraid of. What's heartwarming about it is what ~~he does~~ they all do about those.

(Me + Anything by Marchetta = One Happy Isa)

Emily May says

This is just a really cute, feel-good children's book with a nice message about fear and how to overcome it. A definite must for Marchetta fans!

Alienor ✕ French Frowner ✕ says

What happened when I read the blurb, *a story in two Acts*

ACT ONE, several months ago : *Look at the cover. Look at the shelves. Don't look at the blurb carefully.*
Well I love Marchetta but it's a middle-grade book. I'll take a rain check.

ACT TWO, 5 MINUTES AGO : *Read the blurb carefully, because apparently, I'm less dumb now.* Danny GRIGGS? *frowns* Danny **GRIGGS** ? As in **JONAH Griggs** ? And Jonah is in it?

checks on Amazon

checks on EVERY FUCKING WEBSITE

cries

Read Emily's review

Breathes

buys it on <http://www.fishpond.co.nz/> (yes, as in New Zealand, so 11931 miles away from France, not that I checked or something)

Now I wait. But JONAH! Sigh. I'm such a fangirl, I can't even.

Nomes says

The Gorgon in The Gully is Melina Marchetta's 2010 debut for middle readers.

I bought this book for ~~me~~ my boys, Sam and Reuben.

Here they are ^ (taken down the road from our place):

Sam on the left is 10 years (grade 4) and Reuben on the right is 9 (grade 3)

Danny Griggs, our protagonist, is in grade 4 and he's an Australian boy, so right from the start my boys related. Even though it is perfect independent reading level for both Sam and Reubs, this is one we saved for me reading out loud to them at bedtime.

Reviews from my boys

Sam: The Gorgon in the Gully is awesome and funny. I hope a sequel comes out because I would like to read it. My favourite character was Jonah Griggs because he was a cool big brother and he buys Danny stuff off ebay. My favourite part was the end because I didn't know what was going to happen.

Reuben: I reckon it's pretty funny how it actually says what a Gorgon is on the internet. Even though they probably don't even exist. I like it how they thought it was a real Gorgon in the gully but ... [had to edit him out, a tiny bit spoilery!]. I like how they were always making strategies and planning things. Akbar was funny but my favourite character is Danny because he is the one who is brave enough to go down in the gully even though he is scared of a lot of stuff.

From me: The Gorgon in The Gully is classic Melina Marchetta. It's not only charming, funny and intriguing but it is full of heart. I love how Marchetta brings a cast of characters together. She has a gift for taking random, at-odds characters and creating community. Not only community amongst her characters, but they come to life for me as a reader and I feel like I belong in the community too. I love her dialogue, which bounces off each character so well.

Above all, the characters are so endearing.. It's a brave and smiley story, I think it would charm any child. It's especially perfect for boys, I am amazed (although I shouldn't be) just how Marchetta writes as if she is

inside a ten year old boys head. Danny was captivating, what a charmer! (He is going to be a heart breaker when he grows up).

As for reading it to my kids: They loved it (one more chapter, Mum!). They laughed out loud. So. Much. (particularly Reuben, he kept laughing at lines that I didn't think were supposed to be funny, LOL.) They loved the culture references, from Indiana Jones to Beast Quest, and the inclusion of cricket and soccer and playground antics. It oozes Aussieness from the reference (meat pies) to the way the kids hack out on each other to show affection. The humour builds right through to the climax, with running jokes and clever motifs. It was fun to read out-loud (I owned Akbar's Mum;s Indian accent ;)) and it was so awesome to read word-for-word Aussie slang/terms the whole way through (often when I read imported MG, I switch words like cafeteria to canteen, etc).

For fans of On The Jellicoe Road: The Gorgon in the Gully takes place at the same time as On The Jellicoe Road. This is a story about Jonah Griggs little brother, Danny. Jonah appears in the story more than I had imagined (yay!)

Danny waited for his brother Jonah to ring. Jonah was at a camp out bush for the next six weeks. There wasn't much phone coverage where Jonah was, but Danny's brother managed to find a spot every night to call. No matter what.

'What's up mate?'

Danny loved it when his brother called him that because Jonah was his bestest friend in the world even though he was nine years older than Danny. (p 14)

LOL @ the phone coverage! There's some gorgeous little snatches in there for Jellicoe fans (here's one teaser):

That night he (Danny) asked Jonah if he could take \$9.49 out of Jonah's secret stash that only Danny and his mum and jack knew about. Jonah kept it in his sock drawer next to a photograph of Jonah and a girl with sad eyes, taken in one of those railway station booths. (p30)

Oh, I got very nostalgic for Jellicoe while reading this book. The above quote just about broke my heart (as I swooned a little) thinking about Jonah and Taylor again. As for Jonah as a big brother, he is fiercely protective towards Danny, cheering the little guy on. I loved seeing Jonah from Danny's perspective, his hero, tough and smart and pretty much invincible. I was also very touched by the conversation between Jonah and Danny on pages 97 - 100.

Any fan of Melina Marchetta (or Jonah Griggs) would love this book.

Alyssa says

[drown her like Taylor did her Sylvester (hide spoiler)]

Catie says

I think that the best literature for children always contains a sort of *understanding*. Children respond to simple stories and themes, yes, but their minds are really just as complex as an adult's. They live in the same world that we do and have to shoulder the same challenges and face the same fears. This is a sweet story for ages 7-10 with a lot of heart and just a hint of fairy tale. It also contains that nearly subliminal hint of the intense and painful, which gives it a real authenticity.

Danny Griggs (younger brother of Jonah) is afraid of everything. He's afraid of clowns and monsters under his bed. He's afraid that his friends don't really like him at all. He's afraid of his teacher's disappointment. The kids in his class, who have separated into well-defined cliques, are *all* afraid of the huge slathering Gorgon that lives in the gully behind the recess yard. When Danny's less than stellar soccer skills allow the autographed, charmed soccer ball to disappear into the gully, he decides to be brave for once and go after it. It turns out that the scheme is going to require much more than Danny's bravery – his classmates will have to come together and overlook their differences and he'll have to learn to trust and rely on his friends.

Jellicoe Road lovers will appreciate the cameos from Jonah Griggs, and will have a deeper understanding of Danny's experience – like, what has led him to be so afraid all the time? Why are his mother and brother so protective of him? Once again, Melina Marchetta gave me chills.

Aly (Fantasy4eva) says

[(hide spoiler)]

Kim *Mo Chridhe* says

Review to follow.

****July 25 edit****

THIS greeted me in the mailbox today!

Why am I reading children's lit?

1. It's MM. Duh. (Not M/M, perverts!)
2. The main character, Danny, is Jonah Griggs' brother, which makes him awesome by default.
3. A Jonah sighting is expected. *squeeeeee!*

I can't wait to read this! =)

Arlene says

Beautiful and inspiring

There was this time when I looked at a picture and thought it was a man with horns, but when I stepped up to study it I could see it was actually a butterfly with wings standing up straight. That's what happens when you stop looking at things from far away. My advice... look at whatever you're scared of from a different angle. Look at it up really close...

I've come to expect nothing short of magical and flawless from Melina Marchetta and **The Gorgon in the Gully** is no exception to the greatness she is able to produce. I loved this children's tale that was filled with awe-inspiring wisdom and characters truly worth my time and attention.

In this story Danny Griggs is forced to face one of the many fears that paralyze him on a daily basis. He accidentally kicks a lucky soccer (I'm American... we call it soccer :P) ball down the gully where a mystical gorgon is said to live. His timing couldn't be worse because it's right before the big game and the team needs that ball to ensure their victory. What ensues is a ton of planning, strategizing and collaborating on Danny's part because sometimes it takes a team to accomplish a mission.

This book really represents what Marchetta is masterful at. She weaves a tale that not only includes a cast that commands your attention, but she seamlessly enraptures you with a story that leaves you walking away with valuable lessons about fear, friendships, personal strength and the importance of family. I loved every page of this book. What a treat that I'm so grateful my Booker friend was kind enough to share with me. Shear perfection!
