



Come Fall

A.C.E. Bauer

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Lu Zimmer's best friend moved away last summer. Salman Page is the new kid in school. Blos Pease takes everything literally. Three kids who are on the fringe of the middle school social order find each other and warily begin to bond, but suddenly things start going wrong. Salman becomes the object of the school bully's torment, and Lu's pregnant mother has some unexpected complications. Is something conspiring against them?

In fact, through no fault of their own, Salman and Lu have become pawns in a game of jealous one-upmanship between Oberon and Titania, the king and queen of Faery, with the mischievous Puck trying to keep the peace.

Taken from Titania's mention of a foundling in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, A. C. E. Bauer spins an original tale about magical intervention in the least magical of settings: a public middle school.

From the Hardcover edition.

Come Fall Details

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Author : A.C.E. Bauer

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From Reader Review Come Fall for online ebook

LeAnne says

Strong early teen characters. Interesting as they are, I don't think the story would have held my attention without the intermittent scenes with Oberon and Titania from Puck's POV and the air of mystery they added. There simply wasn't much of a story problem among the human characters. No driving goals other than to lie low and not be noticed by bullies. The writing is strong. The greatest value to me is the character with Aspergers presented as completely open and honest, a loyal friend who saves the day.

Beth says

I found this book browsing the Teen section of my public library, liked the cover and blurb, and thoroughly enjoyed it. I liked the five very different characters and how they came together in a middle school setting. Salman Page is a foster child who has been moved often. Now 14, he's learned to keep his head down and not get involved. Lu Zimmer is a wallflower whose best friend has just moved away. But she's excited to be a D.B., a designated buddy, at her Junior High, helping a new, younger student feel welcomed. She is assigned to Salman. Blos Peacse (what a name!) needs everything to be just so - structured and timely. He has Asperger's syndrome and no friends. Puck, the Faerie messenger, is caught between the King & Queen, required to serve both, but fearful of angering either one. Bird, a crow, brings them all together.

Salman, Lu and Blos become a trio of misfits at school and over time become fast friends. I like Salman because, despite his difficult life, he makes the best of things and is truly kind. He welcomes Blos as a friend immediately because he knows he's honest and solid in the real world. It takes Lu longer to accept and return Blos' friendship, but she is good to him.

Bauer inserts 3 essays that Salman write for his English class. He reveals himself in them. At the end, Lu writes a news article for the school paper about being a D.B. and Blos photographs Lu and Salman for the article.

A thoughtful, at times dreamy read. It is based loosely on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Salman Page is broadened from a page boy who was a point of discord between the King & Queen of Faery, but who never appeared in the play. Bauer always wondered what happened to these boys, so she created the character and wrote the story around him.

Kelly Danahy says

This book was not what I expected (mainly my fault for not researching properly, I know). It is a middle grade book but the tone of it and the dialogue sounds *much* younger. There were a few stereotypes/unoriginal characters/situations but for the most part was enjoyable. I had to skim to finish but again I am not part of that age group and it wasn't my cup of tea.

There were parts of the book that I applauded for being different. The main character is dark-skinned (orphaned so his exact race is unclear), a girl character with glasses that is smart but not by any means a

brainiac and who the main character is unapologetic about liking, and a boy character that is allowed to be a part of the group despite being a bit slow and anal about things.

So, overall, there are flaws to this book, but I probably would have rated it higher if I had read it when I was younger and if the tone was in line with the age of the characters. Otherwise, good story, good book.

Aprilj328 says

Three outsiders in middle school become friends but everything seems to be going wrong no matter how hard they try to make things right. Is it just fate or is there something else causing all this trouble. Titania, Oberon, and Puck seem to be involved in making trouble for our three friends. Knowledge of a Midsummer's Night Dream needed to fully appreciate the story. MS/HS Crows; Fairies; Foster Homes; Crows

Addison Children's Services says

I enjoyed the story of three misfit middle-schoolers coming together, learning to trust one another, and forming strong bonds. I was confused by the side story with the fairies from "A Midsummer Night's Dream" squabbling over the boy, Salman, and his fate. The tale is told in rotating points of view - each of the three children and Puck, the fairy. The implication, I guess, is that when things go wrong (or right), it might be fairies messing with us. The book reminded me a little of "View From Saturday" in that it took quite a while to figure out what was going on and how the characters fit together. Perhaps it wouldn't have been as literary without the fairy references, but I think I would have enjoyed it better.

Heather says

The three children and the story of their growing friendship was really good. Unfortunately, the Puck/Titania/Oberon scenes were a bit baffling and didn't really add to the story. Most children or teens who read this book will not be familiar with *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and will be even more baffled than I was. I really liked the kids, though, and I liked Crow's presence in the story.

ranya says

I gave this book a two star rating, which I really don't usually do

First off:

I liked the idea of the book but there wasn't enough fairy and magicalness to it.

Second:

I don't think the fairies were very well intertwined with the plot at all- did not like that

There were definitely other things because as soon as Salman became a man, he is sent off. I mean, what about Lu and Blos? They had become a close trio friends and I had thought that that was a horrid ending (in my opinion)

Bayla says

2.5 stars

What happens to the page boy that Titania and Oberon fight over in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*? That, says A.C.E Bauer in the acknowledgments to this book, is what this book was written to explore. Told in alternating voices of Puck, Salman (the boy), and his friends Lu-Ellen and Blos, this is a story of being different and of friendship. Blos is somewhere on the autism spectrum, so takes the world at face value, Lu is shy, without many friends, and Salman is different, alone. Together, they're more than all of that - they are friends.

Though I enjoyed parts of this book, some of it felt a little unfinished. I didn't think the Puck parts were developed enough - that side of the story should either have been expanded or cut altogether. I also was not very happy with the end, of which I will say no more.

Reading Vacation says

REVIEW

Poor Puck. Just like in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Puck is torn between pleasing Oberon and pleasing Titania. In Shakespeare's play, Puck is squeezing love flower juice in the wrong person's eyes, he's turning a worker's head into a donkey head, and generally causing mischief for everyone. In *Come Fall*, Puck is both trying to protect Salman and trying to cause him misfortune. All of this is on the instructions of Oberon and Titania.

Each character has a very distinct voice. Salman is aloof, Blos doesn't get sarcasm, Lu is a good friend, Oberon is jealous, Titania is sneaky, and Puck is naughty. Together, they make for an interesting cast of characters.

I liked that the story was set in a middle school. Now that may be because I am in middle school myself, but I think there is more to it. The middle school characters are open-minded about everything and they do not necessarily have romance on their minds.

Overall, I enjoyed this book that shows Shakespeare in a whole new light.

RATING

4 Plot

5 Characters

4 Attention Grabbing

4 Girlie Meter

4 Ending

21 TOTAL

5 STARS

Anita says

Largely slice-of-life, but in a genre-blurry sort of way - the author writes growing friendships between schoolchildren who might as well be in a realistic fiction setting, but with a hint of "it could be magic" in life, and cut-scenes of loosely related argumentative plot-maneuvering by fairy-court royalty ala Shakespeare.

Part of me wishes that the magic had been more in the heart of the plot - that somewhere along the way things had split wide open and made the links between the settings more apparent, changing the school-days story into fantastic-realism-fantasy and tightening the plot arc. It seems a little disjointed to me, like someone started to write two stories and then chose almost at the last minute to link the two, and I wanted their to be more of a connection, and have the foreshadowing lead somewhere.

At the same time, though I did really like the book. I liked the character viewpoints and the touches of visual description, and the feeling that there was more still to be told - and I guess even the looseness of the connected strands in the setting could be interesting in the Watsonian - the worldbuilding hint about the power of names, and the thought that this is a world so much like ours, but where things which seem like coincidences could turn out to have secretly been fairy meddling.

Maggie V says

I started this story with the expectation that this is the continuation of the boy Titania is obsessed with in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer's Night Dream" but it turned out to be more about Salman (yes, the boy in the play) discovering that friendship can be a good thing, and Lu and Blos (his eventual friends) becoming friends with Salman and each other. I was disappointed that there wasn't more magic, fairies, or adventure, but as a story about friendship the book worked.

Turrean says

The author has a cool premise--developing a character around the changeling boy who is the focus of the disagreement between Oberon and Titania in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. The story recounts the gentle growth of a bond between three middle school outsiders: a boy with Aspergers, a girl whose best friend has moved away, and a boy at his eleventh different school in one year. The characters are sympathetic, the school setting is realistic (strange to say, in a book inspired by a fairy tale!), and the writing is a pleasure to read. But the fantasy elements are so subtle, you might blink and miss them. Had I been a middle school reader looking for a fantasy, I would probably have felt a bit cheated. In a way, the Shakespearean backstory merely provides a reason for the characters' problems; magic it has little to do with the story's resolution. Most middle schoolers will be unfamiliar with Titania and Oberon anyway--drop out the bits told from Puck's point-of-view, and you have a good, strong realistic story.

Alba says

This was a great story of true friendship. However, I was a bit disappointed at the way it ended. It felt abrupt and I wanted a bit more.

Heather says

I loved this book! Each character has a unique voice with depth, feeling, motivation, and believability. Suspending belief for Puck is easy to do especially if you are familiar with Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Bauer does a great job of showing us Puck's innate mischievousness and his torn loyalties between Oberon and Titania. However, it is the book's central characters that drop into your heart and keep you turning pages. The book revolves around Lu, Blos, and Salman and the friendship that develops between the three. All three start the book alone and all three fight in their own unique ways to connect to the people around them.

Brandy Painter says

Originally posted here.

Oberon, Titania, Puck. These were the reasons I was interested in reading *Come Fall* by A.C.E. Bauer. Take characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and have them messing in the lives of middle schoolers? I'm so there. And I enjoyed the book as I expected, but not for the reasons I thought I would.

The story in *Come Fall* is told in third person limited, but the limited perspective switches from chapter to chapter between the three kids. Puck's chapters are in first person from his point of view. This is one of those books that does not necessarily deliver on the Faery meddling promise so much. If you took out the six chapters Puck narrates this book becomes nothing more than a contemporary fiction novel about three middle school students who are outsiders. Even in the brief encounters with Faery we only get background information that explains why things are happening to the protagonists. The Faery world and the real world never actually meet. With the exception of some remarkable encounters with a crow the children never encounter anything that hints at the other worldly. If I had been in a different mood when I read it this might have annoyed me. However, I liked Bauer's writing and the characters of Salman and Lu enough that it didn't. I do wonder how a child reader who was looking for a fantasy read would feel about the more subtle use of the magical elements here, especially as they would be most likely be unfamiliar with the source material for the Faery characters.
