



The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency: The Mysterious Case of the Golden Egg

Ernie Lindsey

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The sudden and unexpected arrival of a mysterious package interrupts Hat Tintersmoot's twelfth birthday. Where did it come from? Who left it? Once she discovers that the small cardboard box is a gift from her Grandpa Gordon, the mystery deepens...considering the fact that he passed away three years ago. The handwritten note reads, "Inside this box is an impossible mystery that only the purest of hearts can ever hope to uncover. Solve it, and you will discover the answer to one of the greatest secrets ever." It's another perfect job for the owner of The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency. With the help of a new best friend, and her first official employee, Hat must uncover the truth behind five nearly impossible clues in order to find the answer. The Mysterious Case of the Golden Egg is a heartwarming tale full of riddles, puzzles, and thoughtful messages about life, love, and happiness.

The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency: The Mysterious Case of the Golden Egg Details

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From Reader Review The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency: The Mysterious Case of the Golden Egg for online ebook

Marie Davies says

Review to come!

Randy says

Halcyone Acasia Tintersmoot, Hat to her friends, is the owner and sole employee of The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency. She also just happened to turn twelve. She's wanted to be a private eye for years as she absorbed the wonderful stories her grandfather told for years. Her father had been bored with the business and went in another direction.

On the day of her twelfth birthday, a package from her grandfather is found on the front porch. Really strange as he'd passed away when hat was only nine. No idea who'd left it either.

A letter inside told that it was a difficult case that she might be ready to solve.

There was a box inside with the word Game on it. Inside that was another box labeled riddle, followed by a third with puzzle, and the last with anagram. Inside that one was a golden egg with symbols around the middle and a note with two words, hint: doughnut.

The original letter promised that, when she solved it, however long that would take, she would know one of the most valuable things in the universe.

So Hat sets out to solve the Mysterious Case of The Golden Egg. Along the way she makes a new friend, the cute boy on the bus, thus solving another mysterious case. Frank has a photographic memory, or photography memory as he keeps calling it. He becomes the second employee of the agency and the pair work over the summer to solve the various things thrown at them.

Had quite a good time with this one. A young adult novel, I think I barely fit into that category. At least mentally. (heh!)

Look forward to more in this promising series

Dana says

A fantastic YA mystery novel that actually had me trying to solve the clues with young Hat, and almost had me in tears at times. I hope he revisits Hat and Frank in the future because I think that there is so much more they can do together.

Andréa says

I really wasn't sure how this book would be -- the cover, while well-done, is generic enough that it doesn't give much idea as to what the book will be like, and "The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency" sounds hokey enough that I was prepared for this book to be cheesy, corny, or over-the-top.

In the end, it wasn't any of that.

The plot reminds me a bit of *The Westing Game*, although less complex, and I could definitely imagine Hat and Turtle Wexler being friends. The story is actually quite touching and teaches Hat (and the reader) a good deal about life.

I'm disappointed that the situation with Frank wasn't more resolved (as an adult, it's heartbreaking to read about a child's unhappy, most likely unsafe, living conditions and not be able to do anything about it), but I was relieved at least to read in the author's note at the end that "Frank will be fine!" I was actually expecting a totally different conclusion to the mystery, one that would have provided some semblance of security for Frank. (view spoiler)

Hopefully, in book #2 (because I am assuming there will be a book #2), we'll be provided a little more closure / happiness on the Frank front.

Note: I received a digital copy of this book through NetGalley.

T Parkman says

Cute story! Even though the some elements of the overall mystery are a bit far-fetched, the characters, their situations, and their reactions are realistic. Lately, it seems that there are less and less main characters who come from truly happy homes with two parents and siblings with little drama in their lives, so I appreciate that the author allowed his main character Hat to have that in her life. I also love Hat's struggle to understand her friend's not-happy home life and the fact that there was not an unrealistic "happy" ending to his situation.

Diana says

Picked up this book on a whim, and boy I'm glad I did! Even though it is targeted for young readers (my best guess would be Tweens aged 8 to 13 or so) the author has written many adult mysteries and suspense novels and his deft hand with a tale shows through. Hat Tintersmoot is a fun character and I hope to read many more books as her adventures progress.

Emily Leathers says

The writing style just isn't compelling. But after getting off to a very slow start, I gradually found myself enjoying "The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency: The Mysterious Case of the Golden Egg" more and more (up to a level of 'it was fine, and I finished it').

A plucky girl, interesting puzzles I could solve along with the character, and an interesting sideplot giving insight into the child neglect of a friend of the protagonist.

As a member of a volunteer program that works with youth in foster care, I found the neglect plotline to be particularly interesting. I think it's valuable to see that behaviour brought to light in literature, especially how the child is affected (in this case can't interact normally with his peers). I do wish better reporting behaviour on the part of the adults in the story had been modeled.

There were a couple of things that irked me. The first was just how often Hat got discouraged. "I'm going to be the best detective ever" wasn't paired with a drive to do the work necessary to make that come true. The second was how often a clue was solved because of the work of an adult instead of Hat doing the work herself.

Overall an okay read (once I got into it), but I'm still not sure what the intended lesson of the book was.

I also wish the puzzles had been a little more "play along at home"-able. Several of them required access to the local phone book, which readers clearly didn't have. But most I figured out before the protagonist and that was satisfying.

Eustacia Tan says

This is such a cute middle-school detective book! It's not like the five-findouters, which was safe although they got into some pretty precarious situations, it's not one of those gritty type of stories. It's a bit more complicated than that.

Hat (full name Halcyone Acasia Tintersmoot), receives a golden egg from a grandfather for her 12th birthday, three years after he died. The mystery would be to solve the mystery of the golden egg. So in that sense, there's no sense of danger to the book - it's more like solving a series of riddles. Helping her is her new friend Frank, who has a photographic memory.

Yet, there's something darker. Hat's new friend and assistant Frank, comes from a broken home. His dad is in jail, and his mom is probably an alcoholic and abusive. Hat doesn't recognise this, but her dad other adults do and I'm pretty sure older readers will. If you're going to talk danger, then there is the very real danger of Frank getting seriously injured by his mother (she slaps him in the book when angry, so there's the possibility that things will get worse before they get better).

I think that bringing in the possibility of child abuse into an otherwise safe world makes this book much more realistic. This world that Hat lives in isn't some safe fictional world where bad things are clearly defined - bad people are near her. She doesn't explicitly recognise this (although she definitely doesn't like his mom), but it's something that hit me.

To bring some balance to the book, Hat has an extremely loving family. She's expected to be responsible, her parents love her, they trust her, I have a feeling that she's going to grow up happily, in uneventfully. But I'd rather take the happy ending than one full of pain.

I'm looking forward to reading more of this series - I'd like to see what happens as Hat and Frank grow up.

Disclaimer: I got a free copy of this book from the publishers via NetGalley in exchange for a free and honest review.

This review was first posted at Inside the mind of a Bibliophile

Suzy Wilson says

Aimed at the tween set, this little novel reminds us what life looks like through the eyes of a child. Interesting and fun, but with traces of realism and grit, the Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency is a fabulous read for the 8to 13 year old in your life who likes a bit of diversion, wordplay and mystery. Loved it. Can't wait for the next one.

Al says

Twelve year-old Halcyone Acasia Tintersmoot, known as “Hat” (her initials and the thing you wear on your head). She has this nickname for the obvious reason that her real name is a mouthful. She’s the owner of “The Marshmallow Hammer Detective Agency.” You won’t find it in the phone book, but it is as real as it gets, at least to Hat. Although this is the first book in the series, Hat mentions other cases she’s worked on and sometimes solved. “The Case of the Disappearing Toothbrush,” is one. You’ve probably worked a case like that one yourself. “The Mysterious Case of the Cute Boy on the School Bus” is an open case that Hat manages to solve while working on the current case.

When I read and review children’s books, I’ll sometimes draft The Princess, my now eleven year-old granddaughter, to assist. Our process is for her to read a book first, then tell me what she thought, with likes, dislikes, and a letter grade, just like a report card. I’ll then read the book so I can add my impressions while watching for the things The Princess has mentioned. I think The Mysterious Case of the Golden Egg received the most accolades of any book we’ve done this with. Her report to me started with “I liked this a lot” and ended with, “I’d give it a grade of A plus, plus, plus ...” I finally told her I got the idea so she’d stop with the pluses.

The mystery to be solved was set up by Hat’s grandfather, who died three years earlier. Before he died, which he knew was coming, he’d arranged for Hat to receive the first clue on her twelfth birthday. Grandpa Gordon was a private detective and liked to talk to Hat about his cases, which was Hat’s inspiration to become a detective. One of the comments The Princess made was that the mystery wasn’t like some, where you found out the solution, and felt cheated that the clues weren’t there to solve it while reading. She felt the clues were tough, but also liked that many of them she was able to figure out. The mystery hit the right balance for the age the book is aimed for. The Princess also thought the book would be fun to read aloud to younger kids and although it would be an easy read for an adult, she thought “even a grownup would like it.”

The Princess was right. I was surprised at how much I liked this book. The clues were fun to try and figure out, and not too easy, even for someone several times older than the target reader. As Hat works her way through the clues she meets and helps several of her Grandpa’s friends (an aspect of the book The Princess also thought important enough to mention) and in doing so learns a lot of life lessons that Grandpa knew he wouldn’t be around to teach her in person. The Princess and I both hope the author continues this series. It’s off to a great start.

**Originally written for "Books and Pals" book blog. May have received a free review copy. **

Bethany Huang says

I'm only a teenager, but reading this makes me realize that it takes a great amount of introspection to be able to write from the view of a child when you're not one anymore. That said, this book didn't let me down. The clues Hat are given to figure out what the symbols on the golden egg say seemed so difficult that when I attempted to solve them, I failed. But the clues fit so well because even though they seemed difficult, they were actually made with simple little codes that made me slap my forehead and say, "how didn't I know that one?"

Every character in this book is so lovable and integrated perfectly into the story, which adds the perfect family dynamic to this middle grade novel. Reading this was kind of like reliving my childhood- everything was there, from feeling as if you're the one playing with your parents, the admiration you feel for your role model that directly influences your life, and even the little crushes kids have on each other.

I've been looking for a book to give to my little brother for Christmas since he's kind of outgrowing the Geronimo Stilton series and this is perfect. It's so well written and entertaining that since he's developed my habit of reading his favorite books at the dinner table, within a week it'll already have food stains all over it.

Not to mention I'd trade places with Hat any day, especially since I don't mind having a golden egg.

Finish the review here: <http://tinyurl.com/leamg6b>

Cats of Ulthar says

A delightful first-person narrative as told by a self-styled "private detective," age 12, with the flavour of early 20th century Hardy Boys or Nancy Drew. A pleasure to read, for young readers or adults; I anticipate sequels.

Daniel says

The author, Ernie Lindsey, describes this as a book for Middle Grade/Young Adult. I'd go more with Middle Grade, or what is sometimes called tweens. A twelve-year-old girl named Hat considers herself a detective. A grandfather who died three years earlier (and really was a detective) has sent her a birthday present of a golden egg with symbols engraved on it, and a note to let her know there is a mystery to solve.

In the end, she must work out the meaning of five "clues" that will point her to where the next clue is. I enjoyed the clues. Some I could work out for myself, and some point to places in her town which I, of course, could have no fore-knowledge of. I couldn't, therefore, figure out the final meaning of most clues until Hat stumbles across the building indicated, and figures the clue out for herself.

The most dangerous thing Hat and her friend Frank will face is Frank's smoking, drinking, ill-tempered mother. This is very different from a lot of the books popular with 10-12 year olds. I'm thinking of Harry

Potter, The Mysterious Benedict Society, The 39 Clues and others. Old grandpa that I am, I enjoyed all of the books just mentioned more than this book. Winerip's Adam Canfield books have more danger and suspense in them than this one.

I also find that what momentum the story has is often interrupted by details and ruminations that hold no interest for me, and interrupt the flow of the main story. An example: Hat's first clue is four words: game, riddle, puzzle and anagram. She asks her Dad what "anagram" means. "Do you want me to tell you, or does the private investigator want to figure it out herself?" he says. So she spends the next few paragraphs looking around her room and scrabbling among the dust bunnies under her bed looking for her dictionary. Finally, she has Dad just tell her what it means. I knew what the word meant all along, and any kid who doesn't will quickly look it up online. So let's get on with solving the clue. All this stalls the story needlessly.

Like Grisham's Theodore Boone, Hat makes a friend with a very troubled home life. Much as she feels for Frank, she can do little to help him. This dramatic turn might well be the best part of the book. The final solution to her puzzle, by comparison, is rather a dud.

I think a child who is only a year or two beyond Fancy Nancy and Amelia Bedelia books might enjoy this more than I did. I give it three out of five stars.

Heatherly Hardin says

When Hat's deceased grandfather somehow leaves a mystery package on her doorstep for her 12th birthday, an absolutely delightful adventure ensues. As Hat works to solve the mystery, we meet delightful characters (in her family, as well as beyond). The journey to solve the mystery and uncover the deeper meaning of life will entertain students in grades 3-6.

Sally Schmidt says

I received this book for free from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

This book was intended for a slightly younger audience than I expected, but I really liked it and thought it was both adorable and well thought-out at the same time. For me, this book fell somewhere in between Encyclopedia Brown and the classic Nancy Drew/Hardy Boys mysteries. It was longer than the former, but at an overall younger level than the latter. I thought Hat (cute nickname) was an effective protagonist and I liked that she wasn't afraid to ask for help, although she was very determined to solve her "mystery." I also really enjoyed how Hat was neither a complete tomboy nor a complete girly-girl, it made her a very relatable character with more than one dimension.

I would definitely recommend this book to my younger cousins (approx. the 10-12 age range) and I think it's a great book for libraries! I also think this would translate well into a series.
