

Scaredy Bat and the Frozen Vampires: A Vampire Detective Story

Marina J. Bowman

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Featuring a young vampire detective and her loyal friends, Scaredy Bat and the Frozen Vampires is a lighthearted mystery novel.

In Marina J. Bowman's fantastical mystery novel *Scaredy Bat and the Frozen Vampires*, a bighearted heroine learns about acceptance and bravery.

Ellie knows that she was made to be a detective. The only problem is that solving mysteries can be scary, and Ellie is scared of just about everything. The fact that she turns into a bat whenever she gets scared—part of her vampire heritage—doesn't help either. Still, when a royal wedding goes awry, Ellie and her friends face their fears to save the Fang and Flesh Peace Treaty and restore vampire-human harmony.

The book features a colorful cast of both humans and vampires. Ellie is a delightful lead, eager to save the day. She is kind, encouraging her newfound friends Tink and Fez that they too can be detectives even as she wrestles with her own doubts. Tink is eager to prove himself and help his foster mom run the wedding. Fez loves food and is always up for a laugh. Ellie's best friend Jessica, also a vampire, is brave and fiery, and helps Ellie to be brave: she convinces Ellie to crawl through a dark vent to melt the ice that's trapping the wedding guests. This bravery is a major theme of the book, and the story takes care to make it clear that courage is not the absence of fear but perseverance despite it.

Acceptance is another important theme. Since the Fang and Flesh Peace Treaty was signed long ago, vampires and humans have lived in peace and even fallen in love, as with Ellie's parents. While the two species still often stay separate, both human and vampire children accept each other with ease. The children's compassion and respect for one another is refreshing, and their determination to stop those who are trying to destroy it is inspiring.

The packed narrative includes a bevy of twists, each of which holds interest. The black-and-white illustrations are charming and cartoonish, conveying Ellie's emotions well throughout. And the story is appended by educational resources, including information on arachnophobia, suspect lists for note-taking while reading, and observation quizzes.

Introducing a young vampire detective and her loyal friends, *Scaredy Bat and the Frozen Vampires* is a lighthearted mystery novel about overcoming fear to save the day.

VIVIAN TURNBULL (August 8, 2022)

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