



When reading **Ghost Scouts**, it helps if you take yourself out of yourself. And I probably mean that in every sense. Don't be solid humanoid, Jane Doe. Be a wispy spirit of Jane Doe with no solid grip on reality, partly due to your ghost fingers, but mostly down to your absolute lack of understanding of what the hell is going on. Ready? Great. Oh, and also try to adopt a southern drawl, or more specifically a Louisiana/Cajun accent. For instance, don't pronounce Y'ALL as yorl, say y'ARL. Maybe I'm not doing it quite right, but the further away from Royal Doulton, croquet and the Chelsea Flower Show the better.

Now, before you enter Hullobaloo at Camp Croak, I would seriously advise you read the first in the series, [Welcome to Camp Croak](#), or you may be a little confused about the characters, and why Lexie is completely cool sharing her summer days with a werewolf, zombie, skeleton and three-headed camp guide. Heads up: it's a summer camp for characters with a dark side. But don't think for a moment that this book is dark. It's a total ray of sunshine. Let me explain...

While this story is ladled full of mischief and magic and rotten tricks, it's friendship that shines through – comradery, love and loyalty between misunderstood characters. And that's going to be needed in abundance when Lexie's grandma doesn't turn up for visitor's day at Camp Croak, because there's no way 'Gram' would miss it unless there was darkness at work... Hint: there's darkness at work.

This story zips along, dragging you by the feet as you scratch your head and laugh your lips off. Because, this is *seriously* funny. From Gram's suspicious note to her granddaughter – 'don't write back to

me; you are very boring' (which had my stomach aching) – to wonderful phrases such as 'she had the icy composure of an overlooked watermelon' - to observations such as 'the English can't go twenty-four hours without tea or they explode' - to the titles (oh the titles!) such as *You Scream, I Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream Because The World Is Broken...* Genius! And I haven't even mentioned the illustrations. Mad-cap and characterful. Like a fever dream in pencil.

In a booky world where many publishers are playing it solid and safe, author/illustrator Taylor Dolan is a breath of fresh air. It's nothing like I've ever read. Occasionally, I felt like a child shouting 'wait, wait, read that bit again!', and that can only be good, because wildness is precious; wrapping your head around the unfamiliar is crucial; new experiences are vital. It's all essential to grow creativity and expand the imagination. I would give this series five stars out of five and say to you, go and crack open your kid's head (in a good way) and give the contents a stir. Y'all will thank me for it.

REVIEWED BY SNORT
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