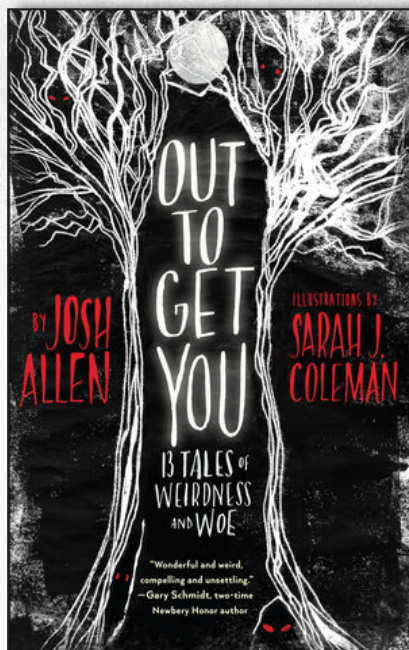


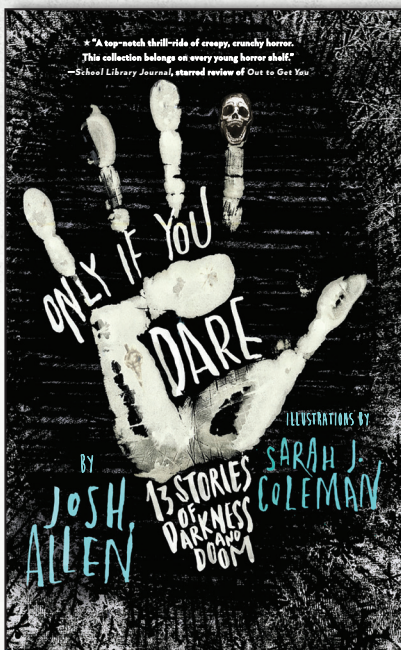
# HOLIDAY HOUSE BOOK CLUB GUIDE



Thirteen chilling short stories to keep you up at night—but only if you dare.



*Out to Get You:*  
13 Tales of Weirdness and Woe  
HC: 9780823443666 · PB: 9780823447480  
e-Book: 9780823443949



*Only If You Dare:*  
13 Stories of Darkness and Doom  
HC: 9780823449064 · PB: 9780823454570  
e-Book: 9780823450664



*Once They See You:*  
13 Stories to Shiver and Shock  
HC: 9780823456321 · e-Book: 9780823459278

## PRAISE FOR THE SPOOKY COLLECTION

### *Out to Get You*

★ “A top-notch thrill-ride of creepy, crunchy horror. This collection belongs on every young horror shelf!”

—*School Library Journal*, Starred Review

★ “This haunting anthology will plunge young horror enthusiasts into their darkest dreams. . . . Allen expertly weaves intricate, relatable details from the tween experience with elements of the supernatural to present readers with a baker’s dozen of chilling tales” —*Booklist*, Starred Review

A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

An ILA-CBC Children’s Choice

### *Only If You Dare*

★ “A chilling anthology of memorable scares.”

—*School Library Journal*, Starred Review

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### For the Series

- How do you define horror? In what ways might horror mean different things to different people?
- What do you typically expect from horror fiction? Look at each table of contents and state a possible horror plot for a chapter of choice.



- Discuss the setting of each story. In which of the stories does the setting contribute to the horror or unexplained events?
- Horror fiction startles, shocks, and sometimes repulses the reader. Which of the thirteen stories are the most startling? Discuss the ending of each story. Which is the most shocking? What is the meaning of repulsive? Debate which stories are the most repulsive. How does this add to the horror of the story?

### *For Only If You Dare*

- Sometimes there isn't a lot of space to develop character in a short story. Consider each of the protagonists in the thirteen stories and discuss what you know about them. Which of these characters create horror, and which are the victims of horror? Debate whether or not there is an antagonist in each story. There a clear antagonist in "My Hand, Right There"? How might Finn Lewis be both the protagonist and the antagonist in his story?
- How does Mr. Fernsby in "The Substitute" present himself as someone to be feared? What are some mistakes he makes that might contribute to this?
- What about the scrabble letters in "Scrabbled"?
- Explain how the cell phone in "Hi, Jenny." creates fear.
- The doll in "One More Piece" gives Mitchell the creeps, and Jingles the Jester causes Luna nightmares in "Wake Up!" How do they attempt to deal with these eerie creatures?
- Some of the settings aren't unique and could take place at any home or school. What is unique about the setting of "Crazy Playz"? How does this setting help define the plot?
- Compare and contrast the role of setting in "The Snowman Who Wouldn't Melt" and "We All Scream for Ice Cream."
- A cliffhanger is an abrupt ending to the story and is often used to create suspense. How do cliffhangers contribute to the experience of reading each story? In which of the stories is there a secondary character that is left puzzled by what they see?
- Which of the stories has the most gruesome ending?
- Discuss how the illustrations in the book influence the feeling one gets from reading the stories.

### *For Once They See You*

- What is the difference in meaning between "shiver" and "shock"? Which of the stories cause you to shiver? Which create shock? Cite specific scenes to support your thoughts.
- In "Night Things," Ethan has a certain ritual for turning out the light when he goes to bed. Explain why he changes his ritual when he turns eleven. Define "ominous." How do the illustrations create the ominous mood of the story? Compare and contrast "Night Things" and "Hiding." How are they appropriate first and last stories of the book?
- Describe Austin Moulton in "Fortune." Why does he feel invisible? Explain why he feels that he suffers from the "The Middle Child's Curse."
- Kara, the main character in "Two Truths and a Lie," is a new student. Explain the game that Ms. Nielsen has the class play to get to know Kara. How does she manage to get the attention of her classmates? Readers learn that she is right-handed at the end of this story. What is significant about this fact?



- In “El Diablo,” Grady discovers a brand-new, unlocked bicycle on Main Street. Why is “El Diablo” an appropriate name for the bicycle? Explain how the bicycle shows back up on Second Avenue for Desiree to discover. Debate whether she takes a ride.
- Describe Mrs. Botticelli in “Sweat, Tears, Blood.” Compare the piano in this story to the bicycle in “El Diablo.”
- Preston Singleton, the main character in “The Only One Who Hasn’t Changed” notices how his classmates change between fifth and sixth grade. How do these changes seem weird to him? Discuss the significance of the diagram of the brain on the cover of the science textbook. What does Preston think is coming for him? Contrast the classroom setting in “The Only One Who Hasn’t Changed” with that in “The Emperor of Thumbtacks.” What is the role of thumbtacks in the story?
- In “You are What You Eat,” Mia loves Toasty-Tarts for breakfast. Explain her brother’s warning about eating too many of them. What happens when she tries to break the Toasty-Tart habit? Discuss the meaning of the last sentence, “So neither face screamed for long” (p. 101).
- Madeline Rose takes Tyson Schlegelmilch to a haunted barn in “Don’t Be Scared of Ghosts.” At what point does he realize her motive? Compare Tyson’s fear in the barn to Milton’s fear when he sleeps over at Cody’s in “Everything in Arizona Wants to Eat You.” Contrast the ending to each story.
- Emree purchases a used Vampire Queen costume for the school’s Halloween party in “The Opposite of Cute.” How do her friends react to her outfit? Why is she so determined to win a category other than “Cutest Costume”? What does she discover about her costume that the other students can’t see?
- In “Perfect,” Eve is jealous of Alana for being perfect at everything. Explain what happens when Eve is the perfect one. Consider the ending of the story and discuss Eve’s fate.



Guide created by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.

## ABOUT THE CREATORS



**Josh Allen** checks under his bed before switching off the light each night. During the day, he teaches creative writing and literature at Brigham Young University–Idaho. His debut book for young readers, *Out to Get You*, received two starred reviews and was a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard selection. His second book, *Only If You Dare*, was called “a must-buy for middle grade collections” in a starred review from *School Library Journal*. *Once They See You* is the latest book in his spooky collection. He lives in Idaho with his family. Learn more at [JoshAllenWriter.com](http://JoshAllenWriter.com).



**Sarah J. Coleman** was an early pioneer of hand lettering and has illustrated covers for many renowned books, including the 50th anniversary edition of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Newbery Honor winner *Wolf Hollow*. She is also the illustrator of the spooky story collections *Out to Get You*, *Only If You Dare*, and *Once They See You* by Josh Allen. Her design clients range from Coca-Cola and Starbucks to the *New York Times*. She lives in the UK. Visit Sarah at [InkyMole.com](http://InkyMole.com).

