



Wait Till Helen Comes: A Ghost Story

By Mary Downing Hahn

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Twelve-year-old Molly and her ten-year-old brother, Michael, have never liked their seven-year-old stepsister, Heather. Ever since their parents got married, she's made Molly and Michael's life miserable. Now their parents have moved them all to the country to live in a house that used to be a church, with a cemetery in the backyard. If that's not bad enough, Heather starts talking to a ghost named Helen and warning Molly and Michael that Helen is coming for them. Molly feels certain Heather is in some kind of danger, but every time she tries to help, Heather twists things around to get her into trouble. It seems as if things can't get any worse.

But they do—when Helen comes.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-7 Ghost story fans have a spooky treat in store with Hahn's eerie new novel. Molly, the 12-year-old narrator, and her brother Michael dislike their bratty 5-year-old stepsister Heather and resent the family move to an isolated converted church in the country. The adjourning graveyard frightens Molly, but Heather seems drawn to it. Molly discovers that the ghost of a child (Helen) who died in a fire a century ago wants to lure Heather to her doom. Molly determines to save her stepsister. In so doing, she learns that Heather's strange behavior stems from her feelings of guilt at having accidentally caused her mother's death by playing near a stove and starting a fire. Eventually, Molly wrests Heather from Helen's arms as the ghost attempts to drown them. The girls discover the skeletons of Helen's parents, and their burial finally puts to rest Helen's spirit. This is a powerful, convincing, and frightening tale. The details of everyday life quickly give way to terror. The pace never slackens. Characterization is strong, and descriptive passages set a mood of suspense. There should be a heavy demand from readers who are not "faint at heart." Judy Greenfield, Rye Free Reading Room, N.Y.

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Review

* "A ghost story par excellence in which a difficult seven-year-old is drawn into a frightening relationship with the ghost of a dead child."

—*Booklist, starred review*

"Genuinely scary, complete with dark secrets from the past, unsettled graves, and a very real ghost."

—*The Bulletin*

"An unusually scary, well-crafted ghost fantasy."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

About the Author

MARY DOWNING HAHN, a former children's librarian, is the award-winning author of many popular ghost stories, including *Wait Till Helen Comes*, which is being adapted for film. An avid reader, traveler, and all-around arts lover, Ms. Hahn lives in Columbia, Maryland, with her cat, Oscar. Visit her online at www.marydowninghahnbooks.com.

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Cindy Martin:

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