



# Hysteria

*Megan Miranda*

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Mallory killed her boyfriend, Brian. She can't remember the details of that night but everyone knows it was self-defense, so she isn't charged. But Mallory still feels Brian's presence in her life. Is it all in her head? Or is it something more? In desperate need of a fresh start, Mallory is sent to Monroe, a fancy prep school where no one knows her . . . or anything about her past. But the feeling follows her, as do her secrets. Then, one of her new classmates turns up dead. As suspicion falls on Mallory, she must find a way to remember the details of both deadly nights so she can prove her innocence-to herself and others.

In another riveting tale of life and death, Megan Miranda's masterful storytelling brings readers along for a ride to the edge of sanity and back again.

## **Hysteria Details**

Date : Published February 5th 2013 by Walker Childrens

ISBN : 9780802723109

Author : Megan Miranda

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Genre : Young Adult, Mystery, Thriller, Contemporary, Romance

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## From Reader Review *Hysteria* for online ebook

### Jen (The Starry-Eyed Revue) says

I kind of loved Megan Miranda's debut novel *Fracture* when I read it early last year, so I had pretty high hopes for *Hysteria*, despite seeing a lot of mixed reviews for it. But I know what resonates with me as a reader, and I rarely go wrong with psychological thrillers, so I maintained those high expectations. I just knew that I would enjoy this novel, and I'm not at all surprised that I was right. That's the price you pay for being an insufferable know-it-all...you can't surprise yourself anymore. =)

The author has a background in science, and it shows in both *Fracture* and *Hysteria*, in the way she presents the story in a slightly clinical manner. I can see why that would be off-putting for some readers, but I love it. Science and the paranormal weave together in this story to create a narrative that is both emotionally gripping yet able to confound the reader into suspecting everyone. I also love the use of flashbacks and half-dreams throughout the story to impart secrets or otherwise hidden knowledge. While some aspects of the mystery were easy to speculate upon, others remained elusive till the bitter end.

So, normally I need to really feel a connection to the main characters in order to truly enjoy a novel, but in this case -- and with *Fracture*, if I really think about it -- the mystery itself was the aspect I was most drawn to, and since it encompassed a big percentage of the storyline, it made the fact that I wasn't completely enthralled with the characters a little easier. That's not to say that the characters weren't likeable or relatable; they simply won't go down as my favorite characters or anything. And that's okay with me.

The relationships in the book balance out the characters in such a way that I was able to overlook a lot of character flaws. Like the fact that given a chance, Mallory would rather run than face her problems. Every single time. *She did a lot of running in this story.* But her friendship with Colleen put us back on even footing. Because even though Mallory wasn't ready to meet her own problems head-on, she would do anything for her best friend, including fighting Colleen's battles if need be...and vice-versa. The fact that there was such a strong, solid friendship at the center of this story really compensated for any of the shortcomings it might have had.

There's a bit of romance in this book. Nothing earth-shattering, and no love triangles, but we do get to witness two (three?) very different relationships in Mallory's life...all within the last six months. These relationships are all equally important to the story. It isn't all about the murdered boyfriend but rather about the repercussions. It's about the memories, the ability to determine reality from the imagined. It's about the friendships and relationships that survive and the ones that don't.

*Hysteria* is a stark look at how one night, one choice, can change the course of your life. Full of heartbreak, betrayal, and guilt, it's a slightly gritty contemporary with a paranormal vibe, and if you enjoyed *Fracture*, I can almost guarantee you'll like this book, as well. In fact, I can't think of a reason why I *wouldn't* recommend this novel to someone.

*Thanks to Bloomsbury & Netgalley for providing a copy for review.*

This review can also be found at The Starry-Eyed Revue.

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### **~Tina~ says**

Sixteen year old Mallory Murphy killed her boyfriend but can't remember what really happened that night. Mallory's parents worried about all the gossips and threats decided to give her a fresh start, in New Hampshire at a boarding school that her father once went to. Monroe Academy.

Thinking that her problems might be past her, Mallory starts to feel the boom of an eerie presence that wont seem to let her go. Someone or something wont let her forget that night making Mallory feel like she's losing her mind. When a boy turns up dead at the academy, Mallory is accused, but she doesn't remember that night either.

Could it be possible that Mallory may have done it again?

**Hysteria** is a gripping psychological thriller that plays with your mind and pulls at your heart from the very first page on. Megan Miranda was born to write for this element. She has such an amazing flare for bringing mysteries to life in sharp, clever and crisp ways.

While I was reading this it almost felt like I was in a dream. I wasn't sure what was real and what wasn't. I think that's my favorite part about reading thriller type books. The unknown and just sitting back and trying to figure out what's going on within the minds of these characters. Miranda knows how to take you there. I loved all the memory flashbacks, it's the glue that really held this story together. It kept going back to that faithful night piece by piece till the reader gets every shred of emotion to add to the devastating conclusion.

I was really impressed with how well these characters were developed. Miranda does a fantastic job of making certain characters feel unhinged in both dialog and personality traits.

Mallory is the kind of character that you're willing to go that extra mile with. She's brave and bold but she's also shattered and confused. Trauma has a way of getting under your very skin to the point of hysteria. At one point I was even questioning her sanity. Miranda does an amazing job making the reader second guess everything they think they know, but still want to believe in them at the same time.

Colleen is the kind of best friend that everyone should have. Her never ending faithfulness brought a smile to my face. But I think it was Reid that really owned me. I love the how protective and loyal he was and I adored the way he always seemed to believe in her when no one else seemed to.

The story line was a whirlwind of emotions and creepytastic scenes where my paranoia was even getting the best of me. I kept looking over my shoulder to make sure no one was there. Spooky stuff my friends. There was also very little to no romance in this book, but the moments we did get still made me smile.

I really loved the ending to this book as well. We have two story lines that entwine, the one is the mystery of Mallory's missing memories of the night she killed her boyfriend and the other is a boy who was killed at the academy. I liked the fact that the stories complimented each other instead of causing it to feel overwhelming or distracting. It was very well done.

Bottom line, I had a really great time with this book. The plot was thrilling and suspenseful, the characters were captivating, dark and real while the writing was pulse pounding and exciting. I don't read many mystery-thrillers but the way Megan Miranda writes makes me want to be a fan of this genre. Looking forward to seeing what she comes up with next!

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### **Melanie (TBR and Beyond) says**

Meh, it wasn't HORRIBLE but it was pretty damn lackluster. I wasn't expecting much but I was bored

through-out most of this one. I likely won't even do a review - I finished it last night and can barely remember it now lol

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### **Haley ~ YA-Aholic says**

Mallory doesn't remember what happened the night she killed her boyfriend Brian. The evidence shows it was in self-defense, but still her once loved town now hates her. To get away from everything, and get away from everyone that knows of her crime her parents send her away to her father's old prep school, Monroe. Mallory just wishes none of this had happened, but to escape the memories of Brian and the glares from people in her town she agrees to go.

Since Brian's death Mallory has been losing her mind, she's hearing things, things that she shouldn't be. When a student at Monroe is murdered, everyone looks to Mallory. Now Mallory must find out what is going on at Monroe to clear her name, or possibly find out that the monster has been her all along.

Megan Miranda has done it again! Being a huge fan of Megan Miranda's book Fracture I was immensely excited to pick up her novel Hysteria. While Hysteria didn't quite live up to the expectations Fracture had set for it, it was still an enjoyable read that was well worth the hours I invested into it! The problems I had while reading Hysteria were how unlikable most of the characters were (including the main character Mallory) and how some moments throughout Hysteria felt very repetitive. Besides those two flaws, Hysteria was a great creepy, eerie, roller coaster of a read packed with plenty of mystery!

Now while most of the time I did not enjoy Mallory as a character, she was still so interesting to read from! I couldn't imagine what she was going through, she couldn't remember the night she killed Brian, most people in her town hate her now, her own mother is scared of her (mother hides the knife block), she's being sent to private school, there was just so much going on in her life! There was some parts where I felt bad for Mallory, but I constantly felt conflicted whenever I felt bad for her. She killed someone, and even if the court says it was self-defense, the fact that Mallory herself worries she is guilty makes it hard as a reader to feel bad for her. I have never read a book that made me question how I feel about the main character so much, and that made this all the more of an enjoyable read. In this case the character that will steal the readers heart is most likely going to be Reid, Mallory's love interest at Monroe, he is such a caring and helpful character that it was hard not to fall in love with him!

Overall if you're looking for a YA read that gives you chills, has a great mystery, and plenty of twists and turns, then I highly recommend picking up Hysteria by Megan Miranda.

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### **Zemira (Kylo Ren fangirl) Warner says**

This whole book was a moment of great frustration. Since I didn't have any (high) expectations I thought everything would be fine. I would get a creepy mystery about some dead dude. The girl would try and figure out who actually did kill him and everyone would apologize to her because they all thought she was the one who killed him. But by the end of the book the whole murder wasn't even THAT important because she had to solve another murder and fight with mean girls.

The main character kept on digging her grave throughout the whole book. Her parents ship her off to this boarding school which sounds fantastic if you ask me. By fantastic I mean, if I was a sane person not accused of stabbing my boyfriend. She should ship her ass to a looney bin till she sorted out her problems. Not send her into a place where she can get it on with everyone, since this wasn't an all-girls boarding school.

There were too many YA stereotypes in this book I couldn't ignore. First of there was a bunch of mean girl and the main mean girl, Krista was of course blond and somewhat slutty looking. Then there was a guy she knew before and a new cocky/obnoxious ladies-man. Acting like a bunch of brats, not just the 'bad' characters. I could deal with all of this if any of them had any real personality. But there wasn't anything new about them. They were just like every other typical annoying kid.

**You can find this review and much more over at [YA Fanatic](#).**

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### **Katherine says**

***"We stopped checking for monsters under the bed when we realized they were inside of us."***

**Setting:** Massachusetts and New Hampshire; 2013

**Cover Thoughts:** First of all, if you read the story, the cover makes absolutely no sense. It makes no sense even when you look at it without knowing what the story is about. It looks more like a bad Pablo Picasso painting than an actual book cover.

**Plot:** Mallory killed her boyfriend, Brian. She can't remember the details of that night but everyone knows it was self-defense, so she isn't charged. But Mallory still feels Brian's presence in her life. Is it all in her head? Or is it something more? In desperate need of a fresh start, Mallory is sent to Monroe, a fancy prep school where no one knows her . . . or anything about her past. But the feeling follows her, as do her secrets. Then, one of her new classmates turns up dead. As suspicion falls on Mallory, she must find a way to remember the details of both deadly nights so she can prove her innocence-to herself and others.

***"We have a bit of a situation, being that my daughter killed a boy-specifically her boyfriend- in our kitchen, and people are really none too pleased about that here, you see."***

This book was a CHORE to get through. I normally love books with unreliable narrators and mysteries you shouldn't be able to figure out until the very end. What I DON'T love in mystery books, however, is when the author feels the need to drag it on... and on... and on... and on. I think the author even forgot she was writing this book and just kept writing until her editor told her she had to stop. I agree with what a lot of other viewers say when they said that this book had a promising premise, but absolutely horrible execution. It started out OK enough, but then it went downhill about as quickly as a landslide. And that one event that happened towards the ending had me yelling in rage (sorry, to all the neighborhood cats and dogs I scared while in the moment. I can't help it that the book had a stupid moment. You can send your therapy bills to the author).

### **Characters:**

***"'Sometimes, I think I can feel him,' I said. 'Hear him, even. I mean, I do. I do feel him. I do***

*hear him. Like he's right here... ”*

Mallory Murphy finds herself in perhaps the stickiest situation ever after she killed her boyfriend in self-defense and no one believes her. She's then shipped off to the stereotypical YA boarding school full of mean girls and creeps to get away from her town populated by mean girls and creeps (she and Colleen are the only normal people in her town, apparently). Right away, the reader can sense that something's not quite right with good ole' Mallory, even though she says everything's fine. You never know if the horrible things that are happening to her are at the hands of someone else or herself.

*”And that was just like Colleen. She didn't send cryptic messages, saying anything but what she meant. If she loved you she said I love you. If she hated you she said I hate you. She said what she meant. And she did what she wanted.”*

If there was one character I could honestly say I liked, it was Colleen. The best buddy who will do absolutely anything for you no questions asked. She tells it like it is, talks the talk and walks the walk. Basically, you'll want to be her best friend by the end of it, and wonder why on earth she doesn't use more of her fabulous advice on er bestie. I mean, seriously....

#### **Pros:**

*”Because it was here.  
Boom. Boom. Boom.  
My whole head throbbed with it.  
The beating of his hideous heart.”*

In the beginning, I thought the prose was brilliant. Not because it was anything original or new, but the way it flowed across the page and how easy it was to read... at first. As you can probably guess by the said review, this went downhill quickly. Over time the prose became dull and repetitive.

**Cons:** Pretty much everything, to be honest. Again, the premise could have been brilliant, but the way it was written made absolutely no sense and was terribly dull. It was boring, tiring, and confusing at the same time. Every time I looked at this book, I groaned inwardly. So I knew this would probably be a two star review.

But then, something happened towards the end; we finally know why the heck Mallory killed Brian (after dragging it on for an entire damn eternity). And it made me RAGE. (view spoiler)

And the whole “Jason was murdered” plot was completely ridiculous, the motive laughable, and it just goes to show you that teenage girls are the most terrifying species on the face of this planet. Thank god I'm planning to teach elementary school; I wouldn't have made it as a high school teacher. There's only so much sass I can take. Plus the whole “gay lovers” storyline came out of nowhere. It honestly just felt like the author was saying to herself, “Oh shit, I gotta add more diversity to this to please the masses, so I'll just add this plot line to make people happy.” If you're going to go that route, do it RIGHT. Make the couple have chemistry. Don't just plop them in the story and hope for the best.

**Love Triangle?:** Get ready for this people, but there are actually TWO love triangles in this book revolving around the same girl. Complete overkill, if you ask me. The first one (also the main one), I Dylan and Brian, who happen to be brothers. No, really.

*"I didn't know Brian at first. First, there was Dylan. My lab partner in chemistry, and something else, something lingering under the surface, waiting to bubble over."*

Oh, of course, we have the good brother and the bad brother, fighting over the same special snowflake. I can totally envision this going well. Dylan is the supposed sweet, golden boy who is lab partners with Mallory in chemistry (cause they have PERFECT CHEMISTRY together, get it? I'm hilarious, I know). If only he didn't have a girlfriend, everything would be great. Except he does. Which leads to Mallory making the moves on Brian, Dylan's older brother.

*"I liked Brian. I liked Brian in the way that girls like boys when they see them surfing. And the way girls like boys slinging their arms over them in front of their friends. And I liked the way he reminded me of Dylan, only he was Dylan times two. More outspoken, easier to read. And best of all, he didn't already have a girlfriend."*

Brian, the badass who gets drunk and is bad news from the get go. But unlike his little bro, he doesn't have a girlfriend, so that makes it totally cool. Except for the fact that Dylan quickly becomes jealous that Brian is now dating her perfect chemistry partner. **DUDE, YOU HAVE A GIRLFRIEND. YOU CAN'T HAVE BOTH.** You're already on my bad side, and you're making it worse.

The second love triangle is at the boarding school, but it doesn't play that big of a role. Might as well mention it anyways though. Reid (aka Golden Retriever) vs. Mallory vs. Jason (aka Stereotypical YA jerk).

**Instalove?:**Surprisingly, no.

**A Little Romance?:**Mallory Murphy is one of those YA special snowflakes where no matter how bonkers she is, all the guys are still attracted to her (must be dem milkshakes). First, we had Dylan, and you all know my feelings about that little prick. Then, there was Brian, and we all know how well that went. Once at the boarding school, what do you know, there are TWO MORE GUYS who are attracted to her. Good grief, does she have this special scent that sends all the boys running or something? We have Jason (Dead Body #2, so I'd be safe to say that it didn't go well). And then we have Reid.

Reid, the puppy dog who seems to follow his master friend Mallory everywhere. They're like the human versions of Bo Peep and her Sheep. No matter how many bat-shit crazy things she's done in the past, he's still willing to stick with her, even if she's cuckoo. If I were him, I'd be running, not walking, the other way. Scratch that, I wouldn't be running, I'd be running and then climbing up the nearest tree. But NO, he sees those special snowflake qualities about her and he MUST let her know that he's head over heels with her. Look, dude, I'm all in favor of giving people a second chance here and there, but there's a line that needs to be drawn when it comes to this kind of behavior, and the line has been drawn with Mallory.

Now that I think of it, this may actually be the prequel for *Gone Girl*, considering how closely similar the characters are to Nick and Amy.

**Conclusion:**Ladies and gentleman; my bad reading streak continues. If you're expecting a YA mind-fuck, you're in for one, just not the one you expected. You'll be mind-fucked by how mind-numbingly boring this book is, and characters that are so stupid that you're IQ will drop. It could have been so much more, especially with the good writing in the beginning. But it quickly went downhill, which is such a shame considering how good this book could have been.

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### **Andreea says**

Thanks to Netgalley.com and Bloomsbury Publishing Plc for sending me this e-book.

I was somehow disappointed with this book, not because it wasn't good, but because I expected so much more from it. Seeing the cover and reading the description, I thought *Hysteria* was going to be a little bit creepy and full of suspense. Unfortunately, for the most part it was another "girl goes to another school, encounters some mean girls and falls in love with a nice boy" story. Don't get me wrong, there were some suspenseful scenes and some mysteries that needed to be solved, but for me those weren't enough. I think the plot should have been more focused on those aspects than on the teenage drama or romance.

Mallory is a 16-year-old girl who killed her boyfriend-Brian. Though she can't remember what exactly happened, the evidence points to self-defense, so she is cleared from the accusations. Since her parents think that she is in danger because Brian's mother is stalking her, they decide to send Mallory to a boarding school (I don't really understand what they were thinking: that once she gets there she will forget everything and have a happy life?). Unfortunately her life doesn't become easier. Everyone knows about the incident and is judging her, she is still haunted by the event and on top of that she thinks that someone is after her. Mallory has a sleeping disorder, every night she has the same nightmare and in the morning she finds bruises on her body. Even though she knows this is wrong, she never tells anyone about it, and she refuses to seek help. At the boarding school she also meets an old friend, Reid, who eventually becomes her boyfriend.

I liked the fact that we don't know from the beginning why Mallory decided to kill Brian. Throughout the story there are some flashbacks about her past and little snippets that help us understand what happened that night. Then, there are the nightmares and the marks that appear every morning on her body. I am still a little bit confused about how she got them, but those two elements were actually what kept me interested in *Hysteria* and made me finish reading it in a few hours. Even though those were my favourite parts of the book, I still think they could have been more developed and that the author should have written more about the psychological aspect of the book instead of romance or teenage drama. I wanted the book to be more dark and more focused on Mallory's struggle to fight Brian's memory. Also, I found some things a little bit predictable (I am mostly talking about the person who was stalking the main character at the boarding school).

All in all, I think *Hysteria* was better in premise than execution, but I still recommend it. It is a good teen thriller.

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### **Heather says**

(This review can also be found on my blog The (Mis)Adventures of a Twenty-Something Year Old Girl).

I am a HUGE fan of Megan Miranda. I love the way she writes, and I love the plot of her stories. When I saw *Hysteria* by her, I knew I had to read this book! I must say that she didn't disappoint me.

Mallory killed her ex-boyfriend in self defense, so she claims, but she can't really remember what happened that night. Mallory's parents ship her off to a boarding school to get her away from everything that happened

back at home. However, she can't help but feel that her ex-boyfriend's ghost has followed her. She can hear his heartbeat. She has the impression of a hand indented on her shoulder from where she's being grabbed by his ghost. Not long after Mallory arrives, another pupil is found dead in her room. Mallory claims she was sleeping and can't remember anything. Could she have possibly done it? Is Mallory a killer?

The title of this book called out to me. *Hysteria* is a brilliant title for this book, and it suits the story rather well.

How wicked does the cover to *Hysteria* look!?! The cover was another aspect that made me want to read this book. Whilst the cover doesn't really let you know too much about what's going on with the story, the design is still amazing!

I loved how the setting of this book mostly took place at some old boarding school surrounded by a forest. Yes, it is a bit cliched, but it worked well for this book.

The pacing was fantastic. There was never a dull moment in this book. I kept on reading without ever wanting to put this book down. It is very action packed and thrilling!

As for the dialogue, I felt it was fantastic. I imagined it to be exactly how older teens would speak. Be warned that there are a few swear words, but they aren't overly used just for the sake of swearing. The dialogue is smooth and never once feels forced.

The characters of this story were developed quite well. I loved how Mallory seemed very down to Earth, yet was always trying to get her memories back. She just felt very real. Reid was fantastic! I loved the way he wanted to protect Mallory. Colleen was my favourite character. I loved her free spirited attitude towards everything!

Overall, I thought this story was very well executed. There weren't really any major plot twists, I thought, but the story itself was really great!! This had me on the edge of my seat...well my bed as I was laying down reading it.

I'd recommend this book to everyone aged 15+ as it's such a good book!

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## Rose says

**Initial reaction:** You know those times when you start off really liking a book but then as you go along it feels like a balloon that deflates as time goes on, which by the end it's no longer floating but barely tracing the ground? That's what this book did to me. Man, I sincerely thought I'd come out of this reading experience singing the praises of this book because it actually started off intriguing enough. It really did. Yet it became more ridiculous and formulaic as time went on and by the time it went towards the ending, I wanted to throw the book at several characters and events for tugging with my suspension of disbelief. That's not to say that this novel didn't have good moments and places in its writing, but on the whole? What a disappointment.

## Full review:

Oh, "*Hysteria*" - words cannot convey the level of disappointment I felt in finishing you, especially considering you had such a great premise and potential to make this a meaningful, eerie, and ultimately

captivating read. Instead, you settled for the familiar, the cliched, the completely and utterly silly elements of shock value to lend to a muddled conclusion regarding characters that were difficult to care about in the first place.

Yeah, to say I'm disappointed with Megan Miranda's latest effort is to note a significant understatement. I don't say this to be crass or catty, but I think there was so much potential here, especially with the strong way this novel came out running in the very beginning. I think at some point, the fatigue or length of the narrative started to show its respective wear and pattered out to a lackluster ending that did nothing with the surge of emotions and respective players and events that it could've handled much more in the duration of the novel. To see it stumble so far down from where it started really disappointed me, and while I was willing to speak for its respective strengths in the beginning, by the end, I kept wondering what the heck happened to make it fall so hard and fast as it did.

I'm getting ahead of myself slightly, so I'll take a moment to briefly recap: Mallory is a young woman who killed her boyfriend and she is quite haunted by this factor. That's perhaps enough for you to run out and pick up this work in some measures, no? (As well as that cover, which I personally thought was a nice touch to the mood of the novel.) Because that premise in itself makes you wonder two things: 1. Why/How did Mallory kill her boyfriend? and 2. What is she experiencing in her life in light of that factor?

"Hysteria" establishes itself as a bit of a mystery/psychological drama, and there are parts in this work that assert and accent itself beautifully. I was really taken by the level of emotional detachment Mallory experiences in spurts because it felt realistic, even palpable in points for her level of fear, isolation, and uncertainty. She's not the most likable character, mind you, and her emotional filter is not going to be one that many readers latch onto readily, but for the most part, I thought Miranda started off with her rather well. There were times when I had to suspend my disbelief at certain turns and players in the story (example: Jason, who comes across as kind of this clingy jerk that you're not sure is supposed to be a love interest, but tends to hang around Mallory even when he realizes she's a murderer).

There were very potent images of psychological turmoil and questioning/bargaining on Mallory's part through this novel, and the writing conveys an eeriness that suggested to me that Miranda knows how to evoke those emotions well. But somewhere along the journey of this novel, that sentiment became very lost and haphazardly drawn - lending to rather stark cliches (your typical bitch slamming, slut shaming, girl-on-girl hate parade) and some emotional turns that just didn't make much sense. I personally didn't mind the trading storylines of Mallory discovering what happened on the night she murdered her former boyfriend and why (considering the emotional blockage she had), but the buildup did not match the emotional payoff or coming to terms. It felt very shallow and underdeveloped once it was revealed. Also, I didn't find the parties affected by the death to be as fully realized or full of heart as they could've been. Then there was another twist of fates in the book where, while I thought it was a potent thing to have Mallory facing another death in the school environment where she is and be in the criminal crosshairs again, the resolution for that particular measure came so quick and underdeveloped that I wanted to throw up my hands and say "How could you screw that up so badly?" There were parts of it that did have me on my toes, but as far as the emotional payoff was concerned? It didn't connect nearly as much as it could've, and I had problems with the rather quick resolution and lacking development there.

The characters I have a very mixed reaction to. I did want to care for Mallory's respective experiences, and there were times when I sympathized with her in some of the more direct encounters and haunted thoughts. But my investment in her quickly soured when she started acting in ways that didn't make sense to what was put in front of her and just how insufferable she comes across in points. I didn't really see her family's reactions or many of her circle of friends reactions as palpable after a time either. It felt very contrived for

drama and after a certain point I wanted to throw the book at all of them. Reid was a character I actually liked for a time and was probably the closest to Mallory that I actually sympathized with for a time, but even after a while, his reactions to certain things didn't add up for me and I felt disappointed by it.

"Hysteria" really dropped the ball more in the line of its progression to the end, which wasn't surprising for me considering Miranda did seem to struggle in the palpable aspects of her previous work "Fracture" (which I would argue was a better effort for grief, while this examined more of a fear frame on a psychological level) as it approached the end. I guess in the aftermath of reading both, I consider it a point of construction to make that Miranda's endings could be less harried and necessitate more detailing in order to give the works more of a rounding out.

Still, I think "Hysteria" may strike some well with the intrigue and its ability to keep one guessing up until the very end, and the writing/descriptions in spurts can be eerie and beautifully drawn, but the payoff isn't nearly as strong as it could've been, with characters that were never fully realized, and I was very disappointed with that.

Overall score: 2/5

Note: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley, from the publisher Walker Childrens/Bloomsbury.

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### **Nafiza says**

So in case you didn't know, I love *Fracture* by Megan Miranda. I thought it was brilliant and when I heard that there is going to be a sequel, I did a happy, nerdy dance. I picked up a copy of the ARC of *Hysteria* from ALA and I am part of the blog tour. Hopefully, I will remember to list the tour stops at the end of the review but just ask me in case I don't.

Anyway, moving on to the novel.

To be completely honest with you, I am still a bit uncertain about how I feel. This book is compulsively readable – Miranda's prose still has the ability to suck me in and keep me reading. The novel is relatively short and I managed to finish it in three hours. But then again, I read inordinately fast where aesthetic reading is concerned. Heh. The pacing of the novel is very fast, perhaps too fast, and I think there were moments when the novel would have benefited from a slower pace and a bit more detail.

Mallory has killed her boyfriend. That much we know. The details of the night are purposefully left blank and it is only as the novel progresses that we become aware that there is more to the story. (Obviously.) The thing is, the more I found out about Mallory, the more I disliked her. Or rather, if not an active dislike, I felt indifferent to her. It became difficult for me to sympathize and/or even empathize with her. There are two distinct narratives taking place. The whole boyfriend killing and the boarding school drama. There are characters introduced but their motivations remain blurry. They are not as individuated as I would have liked.

Why Mallory is sent away from her parents when she needs them most gave me pause. Why isn't she seeing a shrink – would the court not make that mandatory? Wouldn't that be good parenting? I mean, I was convinced by Mallory's perceptions of her parent's rejection – that was well done but I still think the premise would have made more sense had there been a longer period of time between the boyfriend killing and the

boarding school attending.

The romance doesn't impress me too much here which is too bad because Decker from *Fracture* was kind of awesome. I think the problem here is that there were too many boys. The narrative began reaching for a crucial problem but then would falter and introduce another factor. It also seemed ridiculous to me that Mallory would make the moves on a guy at his father's funeral and then be hurt when she is pushed away. I mean, come on now, his dad had just died! There were more things on his mind that a relationship, ya know? The ending is also a tad confused and seems a bit cobbled together though this just may be because I was reading the ARC copy. I wasn't satisfied by the whole resolution to the boyfriend killing mystery either – it just seemed a bit antic-climactic after all the building up it had received.

I think the best thing about this novel was the friendship between Mallory and her best friend. It was heartwarming and satisfied all my yearnings for true portrayal of sisterhood in YA novels. There was actual friendship and the best friend wasn't used as a willing ear to hear the many problems of the protagonist and I appreciated that.

In conclusion, this is a mixed bag of nuts, you guys. Some of you may appreciate it more than others. I was entertained by this novel but I cannot in good conscience say I was swept away by it. I think you'll have to make up your own mind about this one as I am truly conflicted about my own feelings. However, I can safely assert that Miranda's writing style is fresh and engaging and I can't wait to see what she comes up with next (other than the sequel to *Fracture*!).

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### **Sophie Jordan says**

LOVED Fracture! Megan Miranda instantly became an auto buy for me. CANNOT wait to read this book!

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### **Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says**

I don't believe I've ever seen such an interesting premise so thoroughly destroyed. For the second time (the first being *Fracture*, of course), Megan Miranda had a fantastic idea and just didn't follow through. When I requested this book, I was pretty sure I would be getting a psychological thriller of some sort, possibly with paranormal elements. But a thriller should be thrilling, right? Yeah, *Hysteria*... not so much.

*So I let him whisper in my ear and put his hands on my hips. And I listened to him list all the ways in which I was slowly killing him. None of which turned out to be the actual way that I killed him.*

Mallory is a murderer. When her boyfriend Brian broke into her house drunk, she stabbed him and left him to die. The court ruled it as self-defense, but Mallory doesn't really remember much of it, and no one else was there to tell her exactly what happened. Ever since the funeral, which she didn't attend, Brian's mother keeps stalking her and her own parents lock their bedroom at night.

Mallory simply has no time to relax. When she's with other people, she must deal with the looks and whispers. When she's alone, something is always there, a shadow of some sort that keeps her awake and trembling at night. There are some authors who can create an eerie atmosphere with seeming ease, but Megan Miranda is not one of them. None of the things that were happening to Mallory got to me, nothing

touched me at all.

To be quite honest, I don't even know how to explain this mess. The first few chapters promised an unreliable narrator (my favorite), an eerie atmosphere and a mysterious, unpredictable plot. Sixty pages in, I had an unlikable heroine in a boarding school, completely surrounded by mean girls and with the full attention of a gorgeous boy. This book was a lot of things, but mysterious it wasn't, and it certainly wasn't unpredictable.

In the end, killing her boyfriend was the least of Mallory's problems. She was allowed to attend school just months later, despite obvious psychological trauma. And it wasn't just any school, it was a *boarding* school, where teenagers sleep around each other. AND she managed to steal a knife. Am I the only one who thinks this isn't likely AT ALL? Yeah, thought so.

Romance... \*sigh\*. Romance was my favorite thing about this book, and even that was slightly ridiculous. Mallory and Reid knew each other before she arrived at the boarding school. Their dads were friends, so when Reid's dad died, Mallory was there at the funeral. She tried to kiss him then, and he stepped away. (Imagine that, he refused to make out on his father's funeral, the nerve of him!) Two years later, Mallory still resents him for it and refuses to be nice to him. Reid is the most popular boy in school, he *knows* Mallory just stabbed her boyfriend to death, and **still** he insists on following her around like a lost puppy.

As a general rule, I try to find something nice to say about each and every book I bother to review, but Megan Miranda didn't make that job easy at all. The best I can say is that I finished it, which I suppose isn't much. I strongly recommend that you at least sample this one before buying it.

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### **Trisha says**

*"Secrets weren't a currency. They were a burden. A heavy, dangerous burden."*

I'm so disappointed. I had read the synopsis and saw the shelved genres and had made some assumptions about what kind of story I was getting. And, oddly, this wasn't that one at all.

I have to shelve this as something akin to a silly horror story. Where there is gore and murder and blood and....elements that aren't always what they appear.

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### **Jenni Arndt says**

Hysteria was a novel that caught my eye the moment I saw the cover reveal. I loved the font treatment, the popping use of the color red and the eerie feel that it conveys so well. Once I started reading the novel I was quick to realize that the eerie feel was going to be a running theme between the cover and the text which was

so great. But as the story wore on my failure to connect with the characters on a deep level kept it from reaching amazing status and left it as simply an enjoyable read.

The short, fragmented thoughts Miranda uses to convey emotions is definitely effective. It's not flowery, it's simple and to the point which is something that I always find myself appreciating. While the clipped style can be a bit disjointing at first, I always find myself sucked in and a fan of the style once I get going. It's a bit reminiscent of how I felt from *Teeth* by Hannah Moskowitz, or *Cryer's Cross* by Lisa McMann. There's a lot of mystery to this novel and we are spoon fed little details slowly, very slowly. We know that Mallory has killed her boyfriend Brian in her house and that it was deemed self defense in her own home but we don't know exactly what led up to the murder. The way we got little glimpses of what happened that day and the days before was awesome! I really liked when I saw we were getting a flashback and I think Miranda used them very well in this case.

As for the characters, I really wish that I had connected with them a bit more. I was definitely intrigued by Mallory. Her psychosis is up for question here and it had me second guessing everything that happened around her wondering if it was simply her hysteria manifesting itself. But I failed to really feel for her. I felt like we didn't get to know enough about her outside of what she was experiencing after the murder. I would have liked to have gotten a better glimpse at how the event had changed her so that I could feel how jarring it was for her personality. The one thing we do get to know about her from before the event doesn't exactly make her out to be a good person, but I would have liked more of that, good decisions or bad. I have to say that my favorite character was her best friend, Colleen. She was incredibly supportive and understanding of what Mallory goes through.

The mystery is what really sucks you into *Hysteria*. Not only do we slowly unveil what happened to lead Mallory to where her life is today but we also travel with her to a boarding school where the students all seem to have their own agenda and Mallory learns that she can't ever really escape her past. This was definitely a book that I had a lot of fun reading & that I thought about a lot when I put it down but I would have liked a little more substance to the characters. If you're looking for a good mystery to pass your time, this could be the one for you!

**An Advanced Readers Copy was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.**

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You can read all of my reviews at Alluring Reads.

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### **Emily May says**

Gave up.

Even though I had some problems with *Fracture*, it was creepy and entertaining, unlike this which was just boring (I read to chapter 5, page 70).

Also, we are introduced immediately to two (I'm assuming, because of the way they are portrayed) potential love interests (good guy she's known forever vs cocky bad boy she's just met). Then, of course, there's the use of bitchy, pretty blonde girl - whose t-shirt is indecently tight - to make our protagonist look better...

Right now I honestly don't care what happened to her boyfriend and who murdered who. Dull and disappointing.

