



2020

These Shallow Graves

Emma Patton

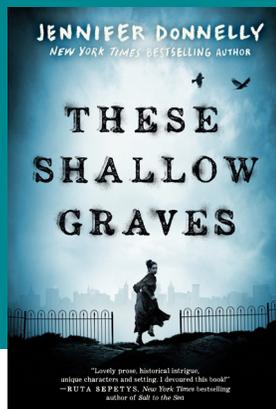
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Patton, Emma (2020) "These Shallow Graves," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 41: Iss. 2, Article 27.

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Book Review

These Shallow Graves

Author

Jennifer Donnelly

Reviewer

Emma Patton

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

Pages

512

Year

2016

ISBN

9780385737661

Publisher

Ember

Jo Montfort seems to have everything she could ever want. She belongs to a wealthy family, attends a finishing school for high-society girls, and maintains a high reputation as a respectable young woman with promising marriage prospects. The only problem is that she has a dream of becoming a reporter and writing about the really important, unseen issues of the city. For a woman in her station, this is unheard of. That is, until her father dies. Though his death is originally ruled to be a suicide, some of the evidence suggests that there could be something more going on. Jo and an up and coming reporter from a poor family, Eddie Gallagher, band together to challenge the facts and discover the truth. After spending time with Eddie, Jo's eyes open to the possibility that the people who live below her station could be just as intriguing as those she's used to.

These Shallow Graves is a fun read. Though the subject matter makes it dark in some ways, in other ways it is a lighthearted book in which no questions are left unanswered at the end. This book takes place in New York City in the Victorian Era, but it is definitely more fictional than historical. Author Jennifer Donnelly chooses the aspects of this time period that contribute to the romanticism and intrigue of the story, but it is by no means a comprehensive look at this time period. Many books in this same genre feature sexual relationships as a major plot point. This is one area where These Shallow Graves differs. Though prostitution is mentioned, as well as secret affairs, no great detail is given on these subjects. Jo is a strong character who places truth and her own values above the wealth she was born into. Though she is sheltered at the beginning of the book, she ultimately follows what she knows to be true and becomes a dynamic character.

*Contains mild language, mild sexual content, and mild violence.