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# Mercury



## Synopsis

August 31, 5:15 PM, French Hill, Nova Scotia: A girl named Tara is running. She runs through her nice neighborhood and up a road to the burned ruins of what was once a beautiful house--her family's house. August 31, 1859, French Hill, Nova Scotia: A girl named Josey is picking blackberries with her friend Connie. As the girls gossip, a handsome stranger knocks on the door of Josey's house. His name is Asa, and with his coming, Josey's life--and later in time, Tara's as well--is about to change forever. Because there is treasure in the woods that belong to Josey's family. Gold--an untold fortune. Asa has a secret way of finding it, and his partnership with Josey's father could make them all rich. But there is darkness in the woods, and in Asa. And in the present day, Tara, Josey's descendent, is about to discover the truth about what really happened in the family's past. Eisner award winner Hope Larson weaves together history, romance, and a touch of her trademark magical realism in this remarkable graphic novel of how the past haunts a teenage girl's present.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: GN370L (What's this?)

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers (April 6, 2010)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #371,960 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 inÂ Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Canada #31 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Canada #216 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Moving

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Hope Larson's newest graphic novel is an absolute joy. It tells the parallel stories of two teenaged girls, Josey (1859) & Tara (2009), living in Nova Scotia. Tara is in fact descended from Josey; and Tara's former home, which has since burned down, was once Josey's home. Their stories, while

very different in tone, are beautifully intertwined, with a touch of magic realism -- an old-fashioned tragedy for Josey, and a coming of age for Tara. I don't want to give away too much of the plot, which unfolds very naturally, so that tossed-off comments in Tara's time illuminate Josey's past. What's history for Tara also foreshadows what's to come for Josey & her family, as they host a handsome young stranger in their home, who promises a treasure of gold waiting to be found ... but for Josey, the promise is one of love & marriage, as well. The art is especially lovely & evocative. Larson uses a flowing, organic line that practically quivers on the page, imparting a certain dreamlike quality to the story. She has a delightful habit of adding tiny labels to details in a panel, avoiding the trap of mannered cuteness & adding a genuinely tender, magical touch. Yet the feeling of an everyday world, one we all know, is never lost. The story comes first, and the stylistic flourishes always serve the story. This is marketed for younger readers, but it's that rare thing: a real all-ages book, one that can be enjoyed by adults as much as teens. Tara's & Josey's emotions ring true, whether a younger reader is experiencing them for the first time, or an older reader is remembering them from childhood. As much as I've loved her earlier work, starting with "Salamander Dream," I eagerly look forward to what she creates next! Highly recommended!

I had high hopes for Hope Larson as I looked for graphic novels for my grand nieces and nephews this past Christmas. To me, this was probably the best of the Larson novels I found, but I just couldn't follow the story. I'll keep it at home and see if any of the young relatives who visit like it better than I did.

The drawing is so expressive...I think that's one of the aspects I liked most about this novel. Larson's expert illustrations really allowed me to connect with the characters and I happily rooted for Josey and Tara. I became so attached to the characters that I was quite sad when the book ended...I wanted to know more about what happened to these two young girls. There's an element of ghosts or spirits in the book and mystical occurrences which I always find to be lots of fun. I also loved the interplay between the past and the present. The author flipped back and forth between the two stories very frequently, which normally annoys me, but worked perfectly for this book. Overall, I'd recommend this to those who like graphic novels, elements of the supernatural, and historical fiction - a quick fun read!

Set in Nova Scotia, this graphic novel offers a compelling split narrative united by setting and family. In 1859, Josey's family welcomes a stranger into their home who shows them that their homestead

contains gold and promises them riches. In present day, Tara's old house has burned down and her family has split up. Rumors of gold will spell out tragedy for one girl, and perhaps offer salvation for another. The contrasts between the stories, and the question of gold, gives Mercury a good amount of tension. The historical story is taut with hints of supernatural and tinged with superstition--ghosts, visions, curses. Josey is hopeful and willfully ignores the subtle warnings. Meanwhile, Tara's story plays out against a very normal, almost banal modern backdrop. She's already lost a lot of hope for the future, but she is continually drawn to the rumors of her family's past and what happened in 1859, and the necklace that unites the two stories. Larson doesn't answer all of the readers' questions about the story, but the climax certainly delivers on all that it promises. Mercury is subtly creepy and memorable.

Nice to see that comics aimed at younger readers can be this good. Top notch art, compelling story and plenty of stuff for both teens and adults to like. The characters are charming, and really look forward to checking out more Hope Larsen books

About a year ago, I had the pleasure of purchasing and reading another one of Larson's graphic novels, "Gray Horses." I fell madly in love it, and this second work of art was not a disappointment. This book is intriguing, engaging, and exceptionally beautiful. I plan on re-reading it over and over again.

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