

Rainbow! Volume 1

AUTHOR

SUNNY FUNKHOUSER

ILLUSTRATOR

ANGEL (AKA GLOOM)

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower to Mid Secondary



SYNOPSIS

For as long as she can remember, Chelsea Grant has tried everything she can think of to distance herself from the disastrous damage her father does to her social life. It's not easy to shake her reputation as Ghost Girl when Dad keeps advertising his business as a 'paranormal removal expert' in big, bold, loud letters all over New Orleans!

This year, Chelsea's all grown up, attending one of the most prestigious high schools in the city, and she's finally made friends with the popular crowd. Things are looking up—until a night on the town backfires spectacularly, landing her in hot water at home. Her punishment Working for her dad at Paranormal Removal Services. All. Summer.

Worst of all, her new job reveals an unexpected secret she has to keep: While Dad hunts ghosts with his own DIY tech, Chelsea can actually see them. And when she meets Oliver, a friendly spirit, at the fancy mansion her dad is getting a handsome fee to exorcise, she realises she has to save his after-life, even if it risks everything her father's worked for.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sunny Funkhouser AKA Sunny (they/them), is a neurodivergent, queer creator who has been writing ever since they were a teenager. Sunny is autistic with ADHD and likes to collect dolls, make reborn dolls, crochet, act and sew. They love learning how to do things creatively. An avid table-top gamer, Sunny is a big fan of Dungeons & Dragons and Magic the Gathering. Musical theater is their other love aside from writing and Gloomy. They're also an ENFP for people that like that sort of thing.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Angel AKA Gloomy has been making comics since they were 10, starting with a lovingly crafted Sailor Moon rip-off. Despite the soft magical girl influence in their work, their favourite genre is horror. Besides drawing, Gloomy loves to bake and garden (in theory, if they could only keep things alive), as well as collect merchandise from whatever is currently suiting their fancy, typically cutesy things like Ghibli or Sanrio. Opposite Sunny, they're as introverted as they come, but consider themselves friendly anyway. They're also obsessed with bagels.

STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class, discuss the book cover and title. Some things to include in your discussion could be:
 - What can you see happening in the cover art for this novel?

- What do you think the different aspects of the cover artwork might symbolise?
- What genre do you think this book is?
- Who do you think might be the main characters in this story?
- Who do you think the intended readership of this book could be?
- What do you think is likely to happen in this book?
- Having read the first few pages, what do we already know about Boo, and how she feels about herself? Why is a positive self-image and self-confidence so important to our well being?
- How did you expect Boo's boss at work to react to the accident with the plates? How did she actually react? Do you think that this makes her a good boss or a bad one? How is Boo's future work likely to be affected by the way her boss treated her today?
- Draw and colour a picture of a class full of monstrous teenagers, the way Boo imagines her own maths class to be.
- Having read the first chapter, as a class, discuss what you think has been happening to Boo.
 - Which events and actions by others do you think are real, and which are part of her imagination?
 - Why do you think that Boo spends so much time imagining that she is living in a different world?
 - Why do you think that Boo keeps seeing Mimi when she is not actually there?
 - Why did Boo drop the coffee when she was taking it to Mimi in the diner?
 - What could or should Boo have done when she dropped the coffee instead of running away?
- Why does Boo's mother appear to always fall asleep on the couch? Look carefully at the illustrations for clues as to what is happening.
- What effect do you think not having any family support has on Boo?
- How does Boo feel after apologising to Clarice for running away? How can we tell this from the artwork?
- When Mimi and Boo finally talk, what sort of person does Mimi show herself to be, and how does she do this? List at least three different things from the text—either actions, statements or combinations of the two—that provide evidence of Mimi's character.
- What is the symbolism of the butterfly that appears at various points throughout the novel?
- In many ways Clarice plays far more of a positive parental role in Boo's life than her actual mother does. In pairs or small groups, discuss all the different things that Clarice says and does, that provide Boo with the sort of positive parental-type support that she doesn't get from her own mother. Make a list of at least five different incidents where Clarice has clearly helped or supported Boo in a positive, compassionate and understanding way.
- What is the biggest problem that Boo faces in her life, and is there anything that she can do to change things?
- Why is it so important for both individuals and society that addiction be treated as a health concern rather than a legal issue?
- The effect that her mother's actions have on Boo is a stark reminder that we are all part of society, and nothing we ever choose to do or not do will affect only ourselves—there will always be someone else that it impacts. What happens when Boo's mother focuses only on her own choices, and neglects to consider their impact on Boo?
- Mimi and Boo both struggle with their relationships with their mothers, but for very different reasons. In pairs or small groups, discuss the different ways in which Mimi and Boo's mothers behave towards them, and compare and contrast the effect it has on Mimi and Boo respectively.
- What can we learn about how to treat others from the way that Mimi and Boo both react to their mothers very different, but equally problematic, parenting styles?
- What advice would you give Boo to help her differentiate between the mother that she loves, and her mother's unacceptable behaviour?
- What do you think Boo's mother is going to say or do when she walks into the cafe at the end of the novel?
- Who are all the different people in Boo's life who have offered support to her, and asked her if she needs help? Why do you think that she continues to insist that she is fine and refuses to tell anyone what is going on in her life?
- As we can see with Boo, alcoholism and addiction have a massive impact not just on the individual struggling with it, but also on all members of their families. Often the affected family members try to struggle on without support, just as Boo is doing. From the outside it is much easier to see that the children, partners, and siblings of alcoholics and drug addicts also need and deserve help. In small groups research online for organisations in your local area that can

help and support people like Boo, who are living with a family member who suffers from addiction. Use your findings to help you create a useful pamphlet and accompanying poster. Your pamphlet and poster combo should:

- Share the fact that these services exist.
- Reassure readers that people don't need to go without help.
- Encourage people to seek support, assistance, or just an understanding person to talk to.
- Inform people of who to contact and how to contact them if you have a close family member who is struggling with addiction.

Once you have completed your poster, display it somewhere public in your school for everyone to see. Attach your pamphlets to the poster, or in a holder nearby, so that anyone who wants to contact one of your listed organisations will have the information they need.

AUTHOR OF NOTES

RAE CARLYLE