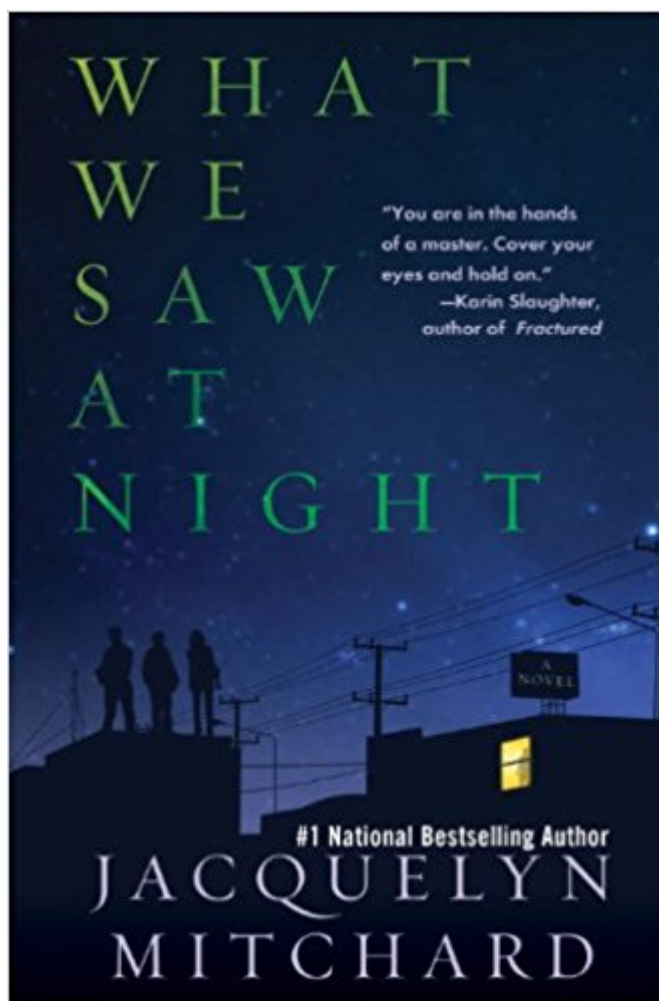


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What We Saw At Night



Synopsis

Allie Kim suffers from Xeroderma Pigmentosum: a fatal allergy to sunlight that confines her and her two best friends, Rob and Juliet, to the night. When freewheeling Juliet takes up Parkour—the stunt-sport of scaling and leaping off tall buildings—Allie and Rob have no choice but to join her, if only to protect her. Though potentially deadly, Parkour after dark makes Allie feel truly alive, and for the first time equal to the “daytimers.” On a random summer night, the trio catches a glimpse of what appears to be murder. Allie alone takes it upon herself to investigate, and the truth comes at an unthinkable price. Navigating the shadowy world of specialized XP care, extreme sports, and forbidden love, Allie ultimately uncovers a secret that upends everything she believes about the people she trusts the most.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sixteen-year-olds Allie, Rob, and Juliet are the tres compadres. They live in Iron Mountain, Minnesota, where there is a medical center researching the disease that they all have: xeroderma pigmentosum, a severe allergy to the sun. Night is their day. Juliet, the most fearless of the trio, gets them into parkour, an extreme sport that involves scaling structures and leaping off tall buildings. But while out doing stunt dives, Allie thinks she sees a woman being murdered, and a whole new dangerous world is opened, one that keeps Allie—and readers—guessing until . . . well, even after the book’s close, since this turns out to be the beginning of a trilogy. This is

problematic because the convoluted plot, which moves in fits and starts, seems to demand some sort of conclusion, at least one that could lead into the next title. Instead, this is more of a cliff-hanger. What does work here is Allie's narrator voice, honest and real, and the fascinating looks at both parkour and a disease so unconventional it turns the lives of patients and their families upside down. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Mitchard's well-known name should be enough to draw a crowd for this one. Grades 8-12. --Ilene Cooper

Spring 2013 Kids' Indie Next Pick "Allie's...voice [is] honest and real...fascinating looks at both Parkour and a disease so unconventional that it turns the lives of patients and families upside down." •Booklist, High Demand Review "Dangerously addictive, breathtakingly beautiful, terminally awesome." •Lauren Myracle, New York Times bestselling author of Shine "A thrilling ride through the darkness... Dark, suspenseful and quietly beautiful." •Melissa Walker, author of Small Town Sinners "The plot is intricately woven, with twists at every turn. Mitchard's exemplary writing takes a masterful detour into young adult territory." •Karin Slaughter, New York Times bestselling author of Criminal "What We Saw at Night is an engaging blend of real-world drama involving a life-and-death illness and a whodunit thriller. Imagine John Green's recent *The Fault in Our Stars* in a mashup with a Nancy Drew mystery. Plus some roof jumping and wall scaling." •Pittsburgh Post-Gazette "The fast pace is set from the beginning with Juliet's dazzling jump across the buildings... recommended for readers who enjoy a unique twist on realistic fiction." •VOYA Magazine "Atmospheric, melancholy... breathtaking." •Publishers Weekly "This latest from Mitchard is quickly paced and intricately plotted, with flares of humor cobbled into the dialogue. The suspense will keep [readers] engrossed." •Kirkus "An interesting page-turner the cliff-hanger ending will have most readers waiting for the next installment." •School Library Journal "Allie seizes control of her life, complete with the risks it contains... although the pace of the book accelerates and dangers press close whatever's ahead, Allie can face it." •Beth Kanell, Kingdom Books Bookstore "WHAT WE SAW AT NIGHT is a well-crafted, well-paced crime thriller about friendship, disability, first love and the choices we make about how to spend our short time on this earth." •TeenReads.com "What We Saw At Night is a very unique book in many ways. I loved the writing, the mystery, the suspense, and the characters. There is nothing

formulaic about it at all, which was also refreshing. — One Day YA Praise for Jacquelyn Mitchard — “Will make you thankful...will make you think...will make you feel.” — Oprah Winfrey — “Keeps you reading to the last page.” — Jodi Picoult — “Dangerous and Powerful.” — Booklist — “[Mitchard] writes with grace and authority.” — Publishers Weekly Praise for *The Deep End of the Ocean* — “[A] wrenching first novel, flies in the face of everything movies and your better class of talk shows say about bad things that happen to good people . . . wonderfully written.” — The New York Times Book Review — Praise for *All We Know of Heaven*: — “Riveting, compassionate and psychologically nuanced . . . utterly gripping.” — Publishers Weekly, Starred Review — Praise for *Now You See Her*: — “Chick lit for the teen set that rewards the reader.” — USA Today

What We Saw At Night Have you ever worked, or been out, when the rest of the world is asleep? For the teenagers in Jacquelyn Mitchard’s new ground-breaking young adult novel about coping not only with the typical coming-of-age difficulties but also coming-of-age with a rare genetic disease, life is and must always be lived in the dark. Because daylight means death. But that’s not all it is--it’s also a coming-of-age mystery novel. Because at night, when they are alive, and the only time they’re able to be outside without being covered from head to toe to prevent their skin from blistering and developing cancer, they see what the “daytimers” do at night. The teens are, essentially, relegated to the lives of vampires. But they’re just teenagers, who like all teenagers believe themselves older and more capable of handling life--even in the dark--than their age would suggest. Mitchard, whose first novel, *The Deep End of the Ocean*, was also the first book recommended by Oprah Winfrey, has done it again. I hate reviews that tell the story, or give the plot, or worse, wind up with the reviewer telling a story. So I’ll spare you those things. But take it from me, nobody alive can write a novel--for young adults, teens, children or adults--like Mitchard. Her descriptions, even in a teenage voice, are enough to know here is a novel about unusual young people, regarded as “freaks” by even adults outside their necessary world, who dare to live not only vicariously, but fully for as long as they possibly can. Have you ever seen lightning in the dark on a lake? Have you ever heard it described as “crippled old fingers”? What Mitchard does well, better than most writers I’ve ever read living today, is develop characters. She writes like Daniel Day Lewis acts: her characters’ voices ring true, contemporary, and you can’t help but feel like you’re right there with them the entire book. In *What We Saw At Night*, the teenagers Allie, Juliet and Rob own

their "other" ness. Each of them comes by it honestly--they have Xeroderma Pigmentosum, what they refer to as XP--they are deathly allergic to sunlight. Now. Don't all teenagers feel like "freaks" much of the time? They aren't as "cool," as "attractive," "smart," or as "interesting" as other teenagers? Nerds may have newfound pride in the fact they grow up to become Bill Gates or Steve Jobs, or even Mark Zuckerberg. But that pride rarely exists in the teen age world--a world in which if you're the slightest bit "different," you're an outcast, a freak, a loser. Mitchard's characters come alive on the page before your very eyes. Whether it's Juliet's long blonde hair, or Rob's aching love for her, or Allie's unrequited love for Rob, in a few sentences you're right there with them. You have become an observer of their world, where and how and when they live. Which can only be at night. "Juliet lived like she was dying. Some XP people do. Others just hide in the dark and wait." They text. They watch things on YouTube. And they train and practice Parkour--a French method of training to be able to move fast past obstacles, or over or under them, without being hurt. Like jumping between rooftops at night. What would you do if you were a teen ager condemned to live in the dark, or die in sunlight? I won't tell you more. Except read this book. I don't care how old you are. You'll be glad you did. Personally, I can't wait to see it come out as a movie.

This is an unusual and gripping book that is a mystery, but is so much more. Even though it is YA, it is smart and I never felt that the book was dumbed down for a teen audience. The characters are original, and unusual. I read it in one sitting, and I didn't mind the cliffhanger because the journey to that point was so enjoyable. Mitchard is a skilled storyteller. The use of science (the characters' medical condition) is original, and works well. (It reminds me of her novel *Second Nature*, which also featured an unusual character with unique challenges and medical problems.) The complicated premise only adds to the enjoyment of the book. When can I get the next one?

What We Saw At Night, is a brilliant piece of writing. Fresh and exciting. The author introduces the reader to the characters but doesn't cram them down our throats. I love the pace of the book, as once we know the characters Mrs. Mitchard quickly moves to the plot, where we discover the heroine caught up in a dire situation unable to convince even her closest friends and family of what she has seen. The handicap under which she works is a genius stroke of imagination. Bravo Mrs. Mitchard, I'm looking forward to reading more of your work.

I didn't realize the book was geared toward young adults. Story was not believable and some of the characters were not developed. Biggest disappointment was that the story was left unresolved. The

mystery not revealed. Must mean a sequel. I'm not interested.

She is a great writer but I will never buy another of her books. To STOP in the middle of the story is not nice! I did buy the following book to find out what happened, but it is the last book of hers that I will purchase.

Was not clear tha this was a Teen book. Very disjointed and murky. Am donating it to my local library

Jacquelyn Mitchard is best known for her 1999 best seller THE DEEP END OF THE OCEAN, a gripping story about kidnapping and loss. Her latest novel, WHAT WE SAW AT NIGHT, is part murder mystery, part love story, part coming-of-age tale, aimed at the YA market.

Seventeen-year-old Allie Kim and her friends Juliet and Rob suffer from Xeroderma Pigmentosum (XP), a genetic disorder that keeps them prisoners of the night - any exposure to sunlight could kill them. So Allie, Juliet, and Rob spend their nights together, exploring the world that exists when all the "Daytimers" (those free to go out during the day) are asleep. When Juliet suggests they start training for Parkour, a dangerous but exhilarating sport in which participants defy gravity and leap tall buildings at a single bound, Allie and Rob are all for it. But during one of their jumps, Allie sees what might very well be a murder. And after that, nothing is ever the same again. Mitchard is a good writer, and Allie is a great character. She's real and believable and very, very interesting. The challenges she has faced living with XP are both fascinating and poignant, and her relationships with best friend Juliet and true love Rob make for a very compelling story. There's plenty of mystery in this novel - it's suggested right from the start that Juliet knows more than she's saying about the supposed murder, as well as the supposed murderer. And when something terrifying happens when Allie and Rob are jumping buildings alone, we begin to suspect that it isn't exactly an accident. So I liked WHAT WE SAW AT NIGHT. I couldn't put it down. Mitchard had me from the first page, and I couldn't wait to find out what was really going on. Because a lot was really going on! But let me warn you - this is not a stand-alone novel. It's the first of a series - probably a trilogy (aren't they all?) - and as such there is no ending. Now, I'm not saying there are some loose ends hanging around, making way for the next book. No, these aren't loose ends - there are no ends at all! In fact, WHAT WE SAW AT NIGHT ends with a cliffhanger. It ends right in the middle of yet another mysterious threat to Allie. It ends almost in mid-sentence. And it was downright infuriating!! I'm not a fan of this obsession with trilogies that has gripped the publishing industry of late. And I'm especially

not a fan of books that leave the reader with little or no resolution. A good novel - whether it's the first of a series or a stand-alone book - needs some sense of resolution, even as it's setting things in motion for the next book. This one doesn't do that. It doesn't even come close. I got to the last page, fully expecting another chapter (since there were still about twelve pages remaining in the book). But lo and behold, what Mitchard has given us are twelve pages of WHAT WE LOST IN THE DARK, the apparent sequel to WHAT WE SAW AT NIGHT. I shouldn't have been surprised. But I was. And I wanted to throw the book across the room! Really. Do I recommend this? Sure. It's a good novel - up until that ridiculous final chapter. But just be prepared to be frustrated when you get to the end. It's a lousy way to end a novel, no matter how many sequels are being planned. Authors owe their readers more than that. And it's the one thing I'll always remember about WHAT WE SAW AT NIGHT -- that awful "ending," and how let down I felt. Not good, Ms. Mitchard. And not fair.

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