

THE PROMISED NEVERLAND

by Kaiu Shirai

Published 2016

Rating (0 stars is the absolute worst, 10 stars is the BEST BOOK EVER)



Genre(s):

☐

Contemporary/Realistic

☐

Action/adventure

☐

Science Fiction

☐

Fantasy

☐

Romance

☒

Horror

☐

Mystery

☐

Nonfiction

☐

Historical fiction

☒

Other: Manga

The Promised Neverland, written by Shirai Kaiu, takes place in an orphanage and follows Emma, a cheerful and caring girl who treats the other children as her family. In this volume, Emma and her two intelligent, strategic friends: Ray and Norman — discover that the orphanage is not what it appears to be. Instead of a safe home, it is actually a farm that raises children as food for the monsters outside. After learning the truth, the three begin planning an escape, but their caretaker, Mom, is constantly watching them and trying to uncover who is plotting to run away. The tight circumstances make it impossible to escape with every child, yet Emma refuses to abandon anyone, insisting that she won't leave her family behind.

For me, this volume was a fantastic read. I usually get bored at some point while reading, but the suspense in The Promised Neverland kept me on the edge of my seat the entire time. Honestly, I think this is one of the strongest first volumes in manga — it sets up the world and characters perfectly, especially Emma. Her actions throughout the story clearly show how deeply she loves the other children in the orphanage. I also like the irony at the center of the plot: the place that appears to be a safe haven is actually a cage. And the symbolism is equally as powerful — the fence and wall represent confinement, while the bunny doll left behind symbolizes the loss of innocence. Overall, this volume is an amazing introduction for this story.

Based on what I've seen, I'd recommend this manga to anyone who enjoys stories that seem warm and comforting on the surface but turn unexpectedly dark underneath, as well as readers who liked Maze Runner-style tension and high-stakes escape narratives.

By Scarp C, 9th grade, enjoys reading contemporary & dystopian