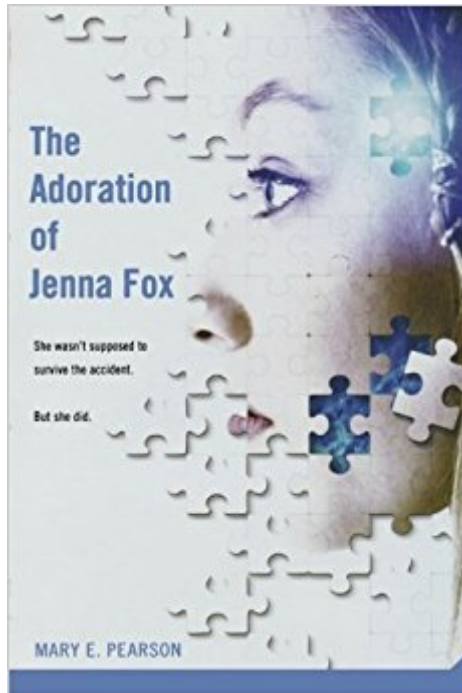




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The Adoration Of Jenna Fox (The Jenna Fox Chronicles)



Synopsis

Who is Jenna Fox? Seventeen-year-old Jenna has been told that is her name. She has just awoken from a coma, they tell her, and she is still recovering from a terrible accident in which she was involved a year ago. But what happened before that? Jenna doesn't remember her life. Or does she? And are the memories really hers? This fascinating novel represents a stunning new direction for acclaimed author Mary Pearson. Set in a near future America, it takes readers on an unforgettable journey through questions of bio-medical ethics and the nature of humanity. Mary Pearson's vividly drawn characters and masterful writing soar to a new level of sophistication. The Adoration of Jenna Fox is a 2009 Bank Street - Best Children's Book of the Year.

Book Information

Series: The Jenna Fox Chronicles (Book 1)

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (September 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312594410

ISBN-13: 978-0312594411

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 235 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #17,204 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #175 in [Books > Teens >](#)

[Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Dystopian](#) #1022 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction](#)

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 8 Up
Seventeen-year-old Jenna Fox awakens after more than a year in a coma to find herself in a life—and a body—that she doesn't quite recognize. Her parents tell her that she's been in an accident, but much of her past identity and current situation remain a mystery to her: Why has her family abruptly moved from Boston to California, leaving all of her personal belongings behind? Why does her grandmother react to her with such antipathy? Why have her parents instructed her to make sure not to tell anyone about the circumstances of their move? And why can Jenna recite whole passages of Thoreau's *Walden*, but remember next to nothing of her own past? As she watches family videos of her childhood, strange memories begin to surface, and she slowly realizes that a terrible secret is being kept from her.

Pearson has constructed a gripping, believable vision of a future dystopia. She explores issues surrounding scientific ethics, the power of science, and the nature of the soul with grace, poetry, and an apt sense of drama and suspense. Some of the supporting characters are a bit underdeveloped, but Jenna herself is complex, interesting, and very real. This is a beautiful blend of science fiction, medical thriller, and teen-relationship novel that melds into a seamless whole that will please fans of all three genres.

—Meredith Robbins, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis High School, New York City

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The ethics of bioengineering in the not-so-distant future drives this story. Jenna, 17, severely injured in a car crash, is saved by her heartbroken father, a scientist who illegally uses the latest medical technology to help her. Only 10 per cent of her original brain is saved, but Dad has programmed her by uploading the high-school curriculum. She could live two years, or 200. Is she a monster or a miracle? Why have her parents hidden her away? The science (including allusions to the dangerous overuse of antibiotics) and the science fiction are fascinating, but what will hold readers most are the moral issues of betrayal, loyalty, sacrifice, and survival. Jenna realizes it is her parents' love that makes them break the law to save her at any cost. The teen's first-person, present-tense narrative is fast and immediate as Jenna makes new friends and confronts the complicated choices she must make now. Grades 8-12.

--Hazel Rochman --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Spoiler-free review. I liked this book. I liked Jenna, and her very unique circumstances. As a lot of 17-year olds consider making big changes in their lives after high school, Jenna's story could have been pedestrian, but because of her unusual situation, we get to think a lot about what makes a person and how choices shape identity (and vice versa.) Jenna is a strong, interesting character, and it's a relief to have her story contain more than just who she'll choose for a boyfriend. Readers will never find themselves in Jenna's situation, but we can relate to her choices (and her parents' choices, too.) A good book for classroom discussions. Appropriate for readers 12 and up. (Younger students would understand the book, and there aren't any gratuitous violence or sex scenes, but I don't think the questions of identity will be as interesting to students under 12.)

This was another recommendation from , probably associated with my love of dystopian fiction. It's a YA book but the story is very deep and the questions it asks equally so. For the YA audience, I'd

recommend a parent read it first so that a discussion can be attended to when the questions pop up. Our story revolves around Jenna, a teenaged girl who wakes after a year long coma after a horrific accident. She awakes in a new town, new house and with parents and a grandmother who behave in ways she isn't quite comfortable with. Like many people with brain damage who awake, she is left having to learn a few things again and she feels disconnected from the life she lived before the accident. She's aware that something in her has changed in fundamental ways. She processes things more analytically for a while, hears things and feels like her body isn't really her own. Still, she muddles through, begins school and tries to resume the life she almost lost. And of course, since this is sci-fi, we find out there's a good reason she doesn't feel connected or quite herself. To tell you why would give away the entire book, though, so I won't do that. This book is rather short, as others have commented on, and some of the fleshing out of characters suffers due to this. But in this case, I think it was the only way to have the important points stand out. Still, I would have liked to connect more with the ancillary characters like the grandmother and the parents more. And I think it would have been more fun to explore the medical conundrum and the morality of that kind of intervention, but the way it is written allows for more offline discussion of it. So that aspect is both a negative and a positive. Overall, this is an appealing book for the thinking YA or adult reader. Very few mis-steps and a clean, fast moving story. Highly recommended for those who like a medical slant to their dystopian tales.

To say Jenna Fox is different might be the understatement of the year. She has five times the brain capacity of every other human being on the planet; she can quote entire passages of Thoreau without even blinking an eyelash; and her limbs move a bit out of sync with reality. But like every other teenager known to man, all she wants to do is fit in and to live a normal life. To say *THE ADORATION OF JENNA FOX* isn't your typical novel doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of where this novel actually takes the reader. It bounces back and forth between the present and the videotapes of the past, moving out of sync and not really linear; it doesn't have chapters so much as it has sections or breaks; and it combines genres making classification a difficult task to say the least. But I like different about as much as teenagers like fitting in, and I found this novel to be a surprisingly pleasurable read. The voice certainly enraptured me and managed to capture my attention from the get-go, as I started out of the gate at a trot and kept up the pace all the way to the end. As for the end, it wasn't what I expected, and I certainly won't spoil it for you here, but I will say it fit rather well with the rest of this adorable, enjoyable read.

Robert Downs
Author of *Falling Immortality*: Casey Holden, Private Investigator

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