

Fever 1793

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In the book “Fever 1793”, the main character is a girl named Matilda Cook. The year is 1793, and Matilda is living with her mother, Lucille Cook, and the coffeehouse cook, Eliza. Her father died two years ago after falling from a ladder. Matilda’s family also owns a coffeehouse. One day, when Matilda wakes up, she realizes that Polly, the serving girl at the coffeehouse, is late. Matilda’s mother decides to investigate and finds out that Polly is dead because of a fever. Her mother explains that there have been many cases of fever in Philadelphia (where they live). While Matilda is working on her chores, her grandfather comes to the coffeehouse. Matilda hears people at the coffeehouse saying that there have been many cases of yellow fever everywhere. As a result, Matilda’s mother is thinking about sending Matilda to the Ludingtons at Gwynedd, but Matilda and her grandfather are able to persuade Matilda’s mom to let Matilda stay. While talking to a boy named Nathaniel Benson, she notices that a bell is ringing to show that someone has died as a result of the fever, and every time the bell rings represents each year of that person’s life. A few days later, Matilda and her family receive an invitation from Pernilla Ogilvie for afternoon tea. Matilda is at first reluctant to go, but she eventually decides to go to the Ogilvie mansion for afternoon tea. However, while having tea, Pernilla Ogilvie’s oldest daughter, Colette, catches the fever. The next day, Matilda hears that several hundred people have died as a result of yellow fever. Unfortunately, Matilda realizes that her mother is very sick. However, after Mr. Rowley comes to their house to examine her mother, he tells everyone that Matilda’s mother does not have yellow fever. However, a few hours later, Matilda’s mother becomes very ill. Matilda tries to take care of her, but her mother wanted her out of the room. Dr. Kerr, an educated doctor, says that Mr. Rowley was lying and that her mother actually did have the yellow fever. He decides to bleed Matilda’s mother to help her. A few minutes later, Matilda’s mother wakes up and makes Matilda leave the room. Dr. Kerr then advises that Matilda should be sent out to the city to avoid catching the yellow fever. As a result, a wagon comes to their home to take Matilda and her grandfather to the city to avoid catching the fever.

On the way to the city, a few members of the city council check to see if anyone in the wagon has yellow fever. However, after the doctor examines Matilda’s grandfather, he says that he is infected with yellow fever and must be sent back to the city. As a result, Matilda and her grandfather are forced to be sent back to Philadelphia. On the way back, Matilda and her grandfather decide to rest near a chestnut tree. Matilda decides to look for food and water for her grandfather. The next day, she looks for some more food, but she eventually collapses. She wakes up later in a hospital called Bush Hill and realizes that she has yellow fever. After a few days at Bush Hill, she is cured of the disease and leaves the hospital. The clerk tells her that they will send her to the orphan house, but after realizing that she has a grandfather, he changes his mind. Matilda and her grandfather decide to go back to the coffeehouse afterward. When they get to their house, they realize that the house is a mess. For the next few days, Matilda recovers from the yellow fever. However, one day, she realizes that two men are in her house. She and her

grandfather react by fighting the two men. However, the men hurt her grandfather so much that he dies, which upsets Matilda. After saying a prayer for her grandfather before burying him, Matilda decides to try to find her mother. She attempts to put an advertisement on the newspaper, but she is unable to do so. She then comes across a young girl who also lost her family due to the fever. The girl introduces herself as Nell. A short time later, Matilda and Nell reunite with the coffeehouse cook, Eliza. All three of them decide to go to Eliza's brother Joseph's house. Eliza suggests that Matilda sends Nell to the orphan house, which is something that Matilda doesn't want to do. Luckily, Matilda is relieved when the orphan house decides not to take Nell. The next day, Matilda decides to help Eliza with her work of caring for fever victims. However, when they come back to Eliza's brother Joseph's house, she realizes that Joseph's children and Nell have been infected with the fever. Matilda decides to take them to the coffeehouse to help. For the next few days, Eliza and Matilda try their best to take care of Joseph's children and Nell. One day, Matilda wakes up and realizes that there is frost outside. Knowing that frost will stop yellow fever, Matilda becomes extremely happy and tells Eliza, who is also happy by the news. Within days, businesses start re-opening, especially the coffeehouse that Matilda's family owns. George Washington, the president, even comes to Philadelphia to celebrate the end of the yellow fever outbreak. Right after Washington comes to Philadelphia, Matilda is reunited with her mother.

There were a lot of things that I liked about this book. I liked how even though this book was fictional, this book was based on a real-life event, or the Yellow fever outbreak in the late 1700's. The book also shows what many people did during the late 1700's to fight the Yellow fever outbreak. I would recommend this book to ages 10+ because of the book being interesting to read but also a little bit confusing. I would definitely recommend this book to someone else.

Recommended Titles:

Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson

Thank You, Sarah by Laurie Halse Anderson

Number The Stars by Lois Lowry