



TEEN SERVICES COMMUNITY SERVICE TEEN BOOK REVIEW

S.O.S. By J. Fallenstein Reviewed by Joshua Radford

Name: Joshua Radford

Grade: 12

Book Title: S.O.S.

Author: J. Fallenstein

Number of Pages: 93

Rating (on a scale of 1-5): 3/5

Character List:

- **Tyrell** – A curious and innocent boy, Tyrell gets himself caught in a heap of trouble when he gets too involved in the mystery of a seemingly haunted textile house mystery.
- **Marie Schneider** – The mysterious heiress to Schneider Wearables is an old woman who gets involved alongside Tyrell. Her true motivations are left for the reader to discover. She is a confusing and seemingly bitter woman surrounded by rumors and tales that make her an interesting addition to the film's creepy aspects.
- **Tyrell's Mom** – Tyrell's mom is an anxious and protective mother due to her husband and son's near deaths. She serves as one of Tyrell's main obstacles throughout the book, but is really only out to help Tyrell and make sure he is safe. One could say she is quite the conflicting conflict.
- **Helga** – Helga is a textile worker and German immigrant who was a best friend to Miss Schneider as a child. According to Schneider, she moved away and left her lonely and confused. She will return, though, but perhaps not in the way anyone expected.

Review:

This short but to the point book depicts a young boy, Tyrell, a victim of a near-drowning experience along with his father that leaves them both recovering from hypothermia. While he's home resting, he attempts to hide his failed test under a floorboard and discovers a German letter likely tied to the generic abandoned Schneider Wearables Factory down the street from his refurbished cottage home. His curiosity is peaked when he sees a mysterious blinking light from the 3rd floor of the factory calling "S.O.S." He is driven to find out how his letter and the mysterious textile fire of 1911 are connected to the ghostly signals he is receiving, all while eluding his protective mother and someone in the Schneider mansion who might be watching him.

While this book attempts to pass itself off as a horror book, multiple factors, including its length and the amounts of its story that are dedicated to plot development, leave little to be called scary at all. The book takes very few opportunities to create any atmosphere or produce more than one or two scary scenes. Fallestein's story would serve better in the historical fiction category, given that it ties itself to many themes of labor laws and the exploitation of immigrant workers. Even with that foundation, there manages to even be filler to pan the already incredibly short length of the book with the addition of an irrelevant backstory about hypothermia that has no impact on the plot whatsoever. But,

where is the good? Well, the premise is fairly interesting along with the ideas of history and mystery that it connects itself. It keeps you consistently entertained, which is more than can be said for many horror stories. Like I said, this book does better as something other than an actual horror story.

In the end, if you're looking for an easy read that has a moderately intriguing historically significant story with a couple scary elements thrown in, this book will serve you well. Ultimately, there's not much to lose in reading this book, while it falls short of much of its intentions.