

## Lovereading4kids Reader reviews of **Skeleton Tree** by Kim Ventrella

Below are the complete reviews, written by the Lovereading4kids members.



**Erica Motoc, age 11**

*This book is for the brave reader, the bold reader. Only the strongest of readers can read this and ONLY if you are up for the challenge. The book 'Skeleton Tree' by Kim Ventrella made me absolutely cry after the devastating-but happy- ending! It's an amazing book and I couldn't recommend it more! It ticks all the boxes: drama, creepiness, great word structure and not forgetting happy endings!*

**Join Stanly, Miren, Princy and Jaxon on a jaw-dropping, heart-breaking adventure of a lifetime.** When Miren starts suffering from a fatal lung disease and everyone's hopes are down, will she make it through? Not to mention the unusual bone sticking out in their back garden. What will happen and what will it do? Well, get a copy of the book to join the gang and have an unforgettable time! This book honestly was one of the most unusual and best books I read, and, trust me, there've been some weird ones! It's just the way Kim Ventrella sets the pictures and the way she makes things flow to the mind, I loved it! When I was supposed to be doing study, instead, I was having one of the best times reading 'Skeleton Tree' so, get the book, have a read, and I bet you'll love it! **If spooky is for you, then this is a match made in LoveReading4kids!**

**Toby Little, age 9**

***This book is very emotional - I cried for a really long time when I finished it, and I don't normally cry about books.***

*There is something odd growing in Stanly's garden. Bit by bit, bone by bone, a skeleton grows out of the ground. The grown-ups can't see it, but Stanly's sister Miren can. She calls it Princy, because, according to her, Princy wears a gold hat and has a black cape. When Miren gets really sick, Princy is the only one who can make her smile. Stanly thinks Princy is bad news, and his sister is getting sicker and sicker. But Princy makes her happy. Is he bad or good? This book is very emotional - I cried for a really long time when I finished it, and I don't normally cry about books. I had a chat with my Mum, because I was very angry at Princy. Together, we worked out that the book is about hope, or maybe about how death is sometimes harder for the people left behind, than for the person dying. It is hard to say what my favourite bit was, because it was so sad, but **it made me feel very strongly, and that is what a good book does.***

[www.fantasticbooksandwheretofindthem.fun](http://www.fantasticbooksandwheretofindthem.fun)

**Lewis Briggs, age 11**

***This is a great, intelligently written, book full of excitement and humour, but be prepared for the sad ending!***

*Exciting and intriguing, humorous and moving, once I read the first page I couldn't top. The ending was quite sad but the story was full of a mixture of hilarity and grief. The way the book worked was intelligent. My favourite part was when Miren had her birthday party on Halloween and Stanly thinks he's seen Princy, but you have to read it to find out what happens! If rate this book 7/10.*

**Issie Ford, age 10**

***Meet a walking skeleton, a sickly girl, a worried brother, a stressed mum, and Mrs Francine, the best Borsch maker ever!***

*This is a sad and dramatic book that's a real page-turner! One day a bone pokes through the earth and Stanly and Miren's lives will never be the same again. Their friendship with Princy (the skeleton tree) helps Miren who is very ill. Mrs Francine is my favourite character as she always sees the positive side of things, and tells everyone memorable stories of her childhood in Kyrgyzstan, and makes Borsch. I also like Miren, because she is funny and she bounces back from*

her illnesses. Something dreadful happens to her at the end of the book, but no spoilers! I also like Stanly and I felt sorry for him because his life is hard and he misses his dad who left.

**Jessica Cobbin, age 10**

***This is an amazing book and I would recommend it to people who like family stories and adventure stories.*** It made me feel tearful because one of the main characters dies but I kept on reading because I needed to know what happens next. This is a brilliant book.

**Amina, age 11**

***This story is heart warming, sad and mysterious.*** Kim Ventrella made the story come alive. It felt real. I also loved how it was about halloween so it's an extra bonus to be published around halloween.

***I loved this book,*** it was so mysterious but it was also sad at the end. I loved the way the Kim Ventrella made it seem like it was happening to me that the skeleton was in my back garden. I laughed with Miren at the skeleton. Got scared with Jaxon. Angry with Stanley and (spoiler alert!!!!!!).....

**Isaac East, age 11**

***'Skeleton Tree' is an amazing story for soft hearted readers. I would rate it 10 out of 10.***

*Skeleton Tree is an amazing story for soft hearted readers. 'Skeleton Tree' is a fiction book based on a girl who is very sick and a skeleton is growing in her garden. It is written from her older brothers point of view. As the start of the book when the skeleton starts growing her bother (Stanly) wants to make them famous from it but it is not so easy as he poor sister gets sicker as the skeleton grows. The reason I liked this book was because it was both happy and sad at the same town. It wasn't hard to read and the story grips you so you want to read just one more page no matter where you are. This is a very moving book. I would recommend this book to children aged 10 - 13 because it has an element of reality tied in with a bit of fantasy. It sis not action and adventure but an amazing read with a lovely plot.*

**Nuha, age 10 - Ickniel Primary School**

*'Skeleton Tree' is based on a boy, Stanly Stanwright, who finds a bone in his back garden. Eventually, the bone grows into a skeleton that does things that you wouldn't expect.*

*When Stanly finds a century – old bone in his back garden, he seizes the opportunity to find his dad. How is this linked? Well, there is an archaeology competition where the prize is to bring one guest along with you to go an archaeology centre. He wishes he could go with is dad, who's been missing for ten months. Also, he must take care of his younger sister, Miren, who has got a terminal illness. She only finds peace when playing with a skeleton named Princy – the same skeleton that was once a bone. However, Stanly's not so sure, with a picture of Princy and a scythe at his feet... **I would recommend this book to children who are ten and over, especially ones who are intrigued by Hallowe'en.***

**Harsh Budhdeo, age 10**

*Brilliant compilation, **had me hooked from the start.** Very capturing story from start to finish. The book 'Skeleton Tree' was an interesting story about a boy named Stanly who finds a skeleton in his back garden. This skeleton grows. Somehow the skeleton is the only thing that makes Miren, Stanly's little sister, happy. Though Stanly doesn't think that. I like the structure that has been used. Also, I like the author's description about Miren. Kim made me get an image of the skeleton with the outstanding description. Kim made Princy, the skeleton, have a nice character but Stanley thinks Princy is the Grim Reaper. **I do recommend this brilliant story to other children and adults.***

**Bella, age 10**

*I just had to read this book as quick as possible to find out what would happen.*

***I really enjoyed reading the 'Skeleton Tree' because I was desperate to know more and find out what would happen.** Me and my mum tried to guess what would happen next in the book and got really close. This book made me have a mix of feeling because it was sad and funny. I would recommend this book for children my age (10) and above, some younger children might find this book to sad. It also might be sad for people who have recently lost someone. I would rate this book 4 out of 5 because I thought it had some really good ideas and I loved Princey.*

**Rosie Watch, Teacher**

***A memorable read and a set of beautifully portrayed and very realistic characters.***

*On reading the synopsis I thought the story would deal more positively with death and therefore be appropriate for the young age group recommended. However, although the book was sensitively written I felt the concept quite disturbing and not at all comforting or whimsical. The characters on the other hand were well developed and truly believable. I think we all need a Ms. Francine in our lives. Her care of the children was beautifully portrayed, the most memorable quote being how some people 'love with their whole heart' whilst others 'keep love tied to the end of a long stick'. There are so many separate messages here, how we deal with death, how children and adults cope with loss and how an absent parent can have so many knock on effects. I think take all this on board requires quite a mature reader although the language in the book is not complex. Definitely a thought provoking read with a sad and memorable story line.*

**Josh, age 10**

***'Skeleton Tree' is an amazing book about a skeleton that grows in Stanly, a young boy's, garden.***

*At first Stanly seems to think the skeleton is bad but Stanly realised that the skeleton seems to makes his younger sister feel better. The book has a sad ending but over all I would rate this book 6 to 10.*

**Stanley, age 10**

***Lovely book, showing how a child deals with grief and family problems, filled with fun, adventure, and emotion. I couldn't put it down, a tear jerker but an amazing book that I will recommend to all.***

*'The Skeleton Tree' is an amazing book! At the beginning its quite mysterious as you don't know what the bone belongs to. It begins to grow and it then becomes obvious that it is a human skeleton. Stanly's sister Miren is ill and Stanly does everything he can to make her happy, including letting her be his assistant when he decides to excavate the bones. He wants to enter a competition with the finding he made to hopefully win \$10,000 to help pay for his sister's medical bills. The book is filled with funny moments. The bond between the characters*

*and stanly are awesome , especially the loving bond between him and Miren. It is a very emotional book and did make me cry , but the author has been able to show how a child may deal with grief and family problems really well. (especially love the brain zombie) I loved this book I couldn't put it down, I was drawn in from page 1 and it didn't disappoint.*

**Punam Shah, age 11**

***This book is all about sadness and love. Sometimes children see what adults can't.*** *Bones don't grow in gardens. When Stanly Stanwright finds a bone in the back of his garden, he is determined to keep it a secret. Miren (his younger sister) has become really ill and they both want their dad to come back home. The bone starts to grow and produces a full skeleton, but only some people can see it. Stanly sends the picture of the skeleton to a competition. By doing this he hopes that his father will return home and their lives would go back to normal. As Miren's conditions worsen, the skeleton makes her happy and she names him Princy. Stanly's friend has found out information about the skeleton that worries him a lot. They think that the skeleton is killing her; when actually he is making her forget about her illness. When Miren dies, Stanly's mum can finally see the skeleton and she has realises what the skeleton has done for her. I enjoyed this book as it was something different. Who knew bones could grow in gardens? I think the whole idea of the story was good and told in a sensitive way. During the ending it was emotional and it made me realise that people cope with loss in different ways. Overall this book was an enjoyable read.*

**Ashley Patt, Yr 7 - Great Torrington School**

***This book was amazing and I give it a 5 star. I love the mystery and secrecy about it,*** *and I also love the bond between Miren and the skeleton. I think it it a passionate bond but the way how something to deadly is lying at its feet makes it so "is the skeleton going to murder?" **I loved this so much.** Thanks for giving me the chance to read it.*

**Lucy Eyre, age 9**

***I really loved the book. I give it five stars. I think it was great. Although it scared the socks off my feet. I loved it.***

**Alexander Bisland, age 12**

***This book keeps you on the edge of your seat because you want to find out the connection between the skeleton & the other characters. I recommend it to 11+ yr olds who like mystery, thriller & emotional books.***

*This book is about a boy called Stanly. Stanly's sister is called Miren and she is very sick. She has a rare lung condition where her lungs fill up with fluid. Mum is usually at work so Ms Francine looks after them both. She is from Kyrgyzstan and tells them lots of stories about her life. Mum and Dad are divorced and Stanly really misses his dad. So, when he discovers a skeleton growing in his garden and he comes across a "Discoverer's Competition", he is sure it will help him see his dad again. So, together with his friend Jaxon, they start to do some digging!*

*Who or what is this skeleton and what does he want?*

*Does Stanly see his dad again?*

*What happens to Miren?*

*What happens to the skeleton?*

*You'll have to read the book to find out!*

*This book keeps you on the edge of your seat because you want to find out the connection between the skeleton and the other characters.*

*I recommend this book to 11+ readers who like mystery and thriller books. This book is also a bit sad and emotional. I give it 5\**

[www.bisland.co.uk](http://www.bisland.co.uk)

**Richie Upchurch, age 10**

*This is a story about a boy called Stanly who lives with his mum, his little sister Miren, and their wise old childminder Ms Francine. Miren has been ill for a long time.*

*One day after some rain, he finds a finger bone growing in his garden, which grows into a skeleton. Stanly uses it to enter a photo competition because if he wins he thinks his dad will visit to share the prize. When the skeleton grows, Miren gets sicker. Miren loves the skeleton though because he makes her laugh, and she calls him Princy. Stanly needs to work out whether Princy is making her sick or better. The only person he can ask is Ms Francine.*

*My favourite character is the skeleton because he is mysterious and misunderstood. I also like Ms Francine because she is kind and wise. The dad isn't very nice. **This is a sad story because Stanly and his family have a horrible time, but it's good too because it's exciting, scary, and it shows how people look after each other. I won't forget this story, and I'll share it with my friends.***

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**Hannah Burbridge, age 10 - Redmaids High Junior School.**

*To be honest I am not a very keen reader, but one night when my mum said, "Go to sleep now," I could not stop reading this book! It is quite a sad story and a little bit scary at times. The main characters are Mom, Stanley and his ill, little sister Miren. There was also Uncle Morris, Ms Francine and Jackson (Stanley's best friend). The skeleton starts off as a bony finger pointing up out of the ground, and then gradually gets bigger and bigger. Then one day it starts doing things like juggling. This always made Miren feel better when she was feeling down or ill. She also named it Princy. Princy was always there for her, even at the hospital. Ms Francine claimed she could see it too and so did one of the nurses. I don't really know whether it was just in the kid's imagination to help them deal with their problems or whether the grown ups really could see it too.*

*Overall I thought that it was a fantastic book and I would really recommend it to anyone ages 8-12. **If you buy this book you probably will not want to put it down. I have to admit that 'The Skeleton Tree' is the best book I have ever read.***

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