

Booklist Review

Books For Youth - Fiction - General Fiction



A Semi-Definitive List of Worst Nightmares.

Sutherland, Krystal (author).

Sept. 2017. 368p. Putnam, hardcover, \$17.99
([9780399546594](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9780399546594)). Grades 9-12.

REVIEW. First published September 6, 2017
(Booklist Online).

Esther Solar's family is not just strange, they're cursed. Ever since Grandpa Reg met Death and was told he'd die by drowning, the Solars have believed they're fated to die from their greatest fear. For Esther's mother, it's bad luck; her agoraphobic father won't leave the basement; and her twin brother is petrified of the dark. To learn what her own curse will be, Esther keeps a "semi-definitive list" of all her fears, not knowing which will be her demise. When she is reacquainted with her third-grade crush, Jonah, he sets out to help Esther conquer those fears one by one, but her developing feelings for him may prove Esther's most daunting obstacle yet. Dark, magical, and humorous, this is a quirky and cohesive novel about fear, depression, and obsession with death. Emotions run rampant alongside countless pop culture references, and the layered characters will resonate with readers. Teens grappling with their own fears, depression, or thoughts of suicide will feel not so alone with this compassionately offbeat book.

— *Jeanne Fredriksen*



Booklist Editors Recommend

Titles similar to *A Semi-Definitive List of Worst Nightmares*

- *All the Forever Things*
- *The F-It List*