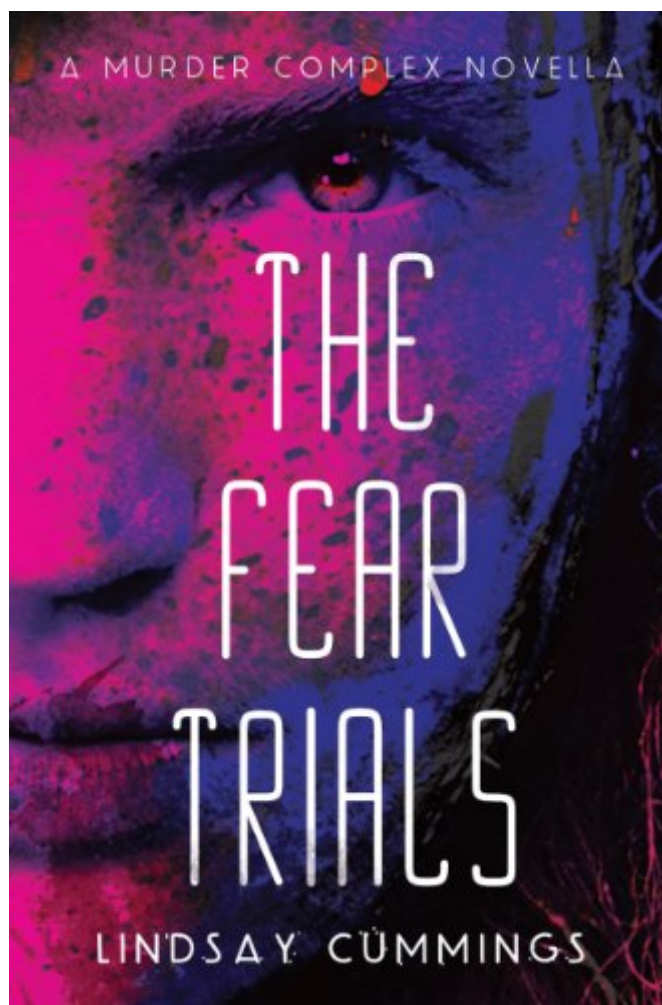


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The Fear Trials (Murder Complex Novella)



Synopsis

Meadow Woodson has been trained to survive. This is a prequel to *The Murder Complex*, by Lindsay Cummings, and it is set in a blood-soaked world where the murder rate is higher than the birth rate. For fans of Moira Young's *Dust Lands* series, *La Femme Nikita*, and the movie *Hanna*. Meadow Woodson's father calls it *The Fear Trials*, and it is a rite of passage in their family. Meadow is up against her brother Koi. The *Fear Trials* will both harden her and make her brave. If Meadow wins, she will get a weapon of her own and the right to leave the Woodsons' houseboat without her father or mother at her side. Set in the violent, complex, and mysterious world of *The Murder Complex*, and introducing Meadow Woodson—a teenage girl trained to survive no matter what the cost—and her family, who are together for the last time on their houseboat in the Florida Everglades. Epic Reads Impulse is a digital imprint with new releases each month.

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Customer Reviews

The Murder Complex is one of my most anticipated reads of the year so I was beyond thrilled when it was announced that a prequel novella would be released just days before Lindsay Cummings's debut. The Fear Trials is spectacular. In The Fear Trials, we follow Meadow during the most intensive part of her training for the real world. A world in which they live in where the murder rate is higher than the birth rate and every single day and night, it's kill or be killed. Talk about an intriguing concept! The Fear Trials is the ultimate test put on by her father who will go and does go so far as to make sure his daughters and son hate him if it means they'll live. Meadow's ability to move through fear is tested. Her brother, Koi's ability to move past failure is tested. Their father puts on a brave face, a stern face to remind his children that tomorrow, even the rest of today is not promised. Their mother is detached in her own way as well. Everyone struggles with their reality differently, offering strengths and weaknesses to the family. Watching those strengths and weaknesses come to the surface, watching these strengths and weaknesses be tested, it's such a thrill!! I love that Meadow desires so much to keep her humanity. She longs so badly for love, for peace, for friendship, for so many things. Not only does she fear what she'll turn into as a murderer, but she learns the hard way why it's so important in this life to sacrifice so many of the things that she longs for. First, she rises to the occasion to save herself and when that isn't enough for her, she must fight to save the life of the person she loves most. This novella, in such a short amount of time tackles expectations and consequences, failures and strengths, dreams and desires and what's worth fighting for, the courage it takes to fight to survive, the danger that comes with action and inaction, and so much more. Meadow has so many choices to make, some under extreme pain, most through fear, so much of that is intertwined. Meadow witnesses and experiences firsthand what it means to live or die because of a moment of hesitation, because of a moment of passing over control. She's been learning to become a survivor for her family but when put to the test, there are just some things Meadow has to face before truly seeing the severity of the situation. Before truly understanding that her life is worth so much more than she can ever comprehend. So is she willing to fight? That is the ultimate question. Boy was it fun and intense and nerve-racking finding out the answer!! I loved how well crafted every single character was. I felt for each and every one of them. The relationships were three dimensional as well and really pulled at my heart strings. I was blown away by all of the themes brought up in the story and how well they were interwoven into the story. This is a story about survival. Not what it means to survive but what it takes to want to survive and that was a refreshing story to read. The writing is beautiful. The story is fast paced and so fluid. The world is so easily visualized in my mind. I also must mention that I absolutely love the way each chapter begins and ends. It's not easy to have a killer first line and a killer last line in every chapter but Lindsay

nails it. And finally. That ending?! Wow. I was already extremely excited for The Murder Complex but I want it in my hands right this very second after that! Release day can't come soon enough! Bravo.

Disclaimer - trying to write a review by the pool while entertaining a six year old isn't advisable but hopefully, the resulting outcome is both informative and meaningful! Lindsay Cumming's prequel to The Murder Complex is reminiscent of Suzanne Collins' The Hunger Games and Veronica Roth's Divergent but stands on its own merit. Gritty, intense and fast paced, the young protagonist Meadow lives in dystopian hell. She undertakes what her father calls The Fear Trials, a rite of passage with only one objective -- survival. As her family's only hope to secure a job, feed and protect them from the brutal human elements of the Shallows, Meadow is reluctant to undergo the intense and often over the top training her father forces on her. That is until she stares death in the face and realizes that she has two choices, kill or be killed. It is then Meadow learns the true objective of the trials and appreciates the only life lesson that will keep her alive. She also undergoes transformation, realizing she is after all, the fearless warrior she fought turning into but was destined to become. Meadow is surprised at the sense of empowerment and even pleasure she experiences defeating her enemies. Lindsay's writing is swift and full of intense imagery that leaves an impression. She juxtaposes action with emotion, empathy with brutal fearlessness, and takes the reader on an adrenaline-fueled journey that leaves the reader emotionally drained but still wanting more. I am looking forward to The Murder Complex - bring it on! Grab the prequel - it's a must read!

The Fear Trials is a short novella that goes along with The Murder Complex. This is told from Meadows point of view. It's before the Murder Complex Meadows mother is still alive and her father is trying to train both Meadow and Kio. It is definitely worth the read if you enjoyed both The Murder Complex and the Death Code. 5 stars

Ms. Cummings has an amazing talent. The Fear Trials is one of the most chilling, unsettling novels I've read in a long, long time. And since I started reading SF about 55 years ago, that covers a lot of books. Ms. Cummings doesn't write like a 22-year-old. She writes like she's been a Marine for 22 years. She also has a unique ability to place the reader immediately into her future, murderous world. That's rare. From the first pages you know you are in a different, very disturbing future, a future as chilling as the goosebumps on your skin.. Usually futuristic novels take time to become real to you. Sometimes they never do. But from the first gritty lines the reader is in a world he would

like immediately to leave. But Ms. Cummings prose won't let him. There is only one thing more frightening than walking into Ms. Cumming's world. That's closing the book. You have to go to the next page. There's raw power in the prose. The author hasn't sketched out the background of her society, which I look forward to in her next novels. All in all, a remarkable performance.

I have been hearing about this series coming out for a while now, and knowing the genre it is, I've been looking forward to reading it. I downloaded the Fear Trials around lunch time, and now that it's finished I am dying to read more. Lindsay does a great job at painting the picture of the story. The world you step into in The Fear Trials is not like ours today. The relationship that Meadow has with her mother is so bittersweet, and the fear and anxiety that her father brings makes the reader feel the same things that Lindsay describes in her writing. I immediately felt the sadness and disappointment for the characters when Koi came home as well. I CANNOT WAIT to pick up a copy of the murder complex and read it. It's coming out just in time for summer! Author Lindsay Cummings has created a new world for us to slip into and new characters to love like family. What a treat we're in for in her trilogy series!

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