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# Backward Glass



## Synopsis

Help me make it not happen, Kenny. Help me stop him. When Kenny Maxwell moves into his family's new yet falling apart Victorian home in 1977, he makes a shocking discovery in the carriage house. Buried inside the wall is a baby's mummified body wrapped in old newspaper, along with a handwritten plea for help. Soon after his gruesome finding, a beautiful girl named Luka introduces Kenny to the backward glass, a mirror that allows him to travel in time. Through it, he meets other mirror kids from past and future decades. But the more Kenny learns about the mirror, the more he realizes that Prince Harming, a dangerous urban legend who kidnaps and kills children, is hunting him. Somehow he must use the backward glass to confront his destiny, save the baby, and stop Prince Harming before time runs out. Praise: Intricate, lusciously creepy paranormal mystery. Kirkus Reviews (starred review) ""Debut novelist Lomax handles the plot's complexities with skill."" PUBLISHERS WEEKLY ""This debut novel will leave readers eager for more."" BOOKLIST ""Get ready to slide down into the past with David Lomax's Backward Glass. It's cold on the way down, hot on the way up into the future, and it is always, always riveting, no matter which direction in time he takes his courageous and intelligent teenagers. I'd read this again and again. Actually, the future me has already done so, I can assure you."" CHRISTOPHER BARZAK, AUTHOR OF ONE FOR SORROW

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## Customer Reviews

In 1977, 15-year-old Kenny is helping his father renovate an old carriage house when they find, hidden in a wall, a dead infant wrapped in a newspaper from decades ago and accompanied by a note written to Kenny, pleading with him to prevent the baby's death. But how? Soon Kenny discovers his ability to move one decade forward and back in time through an antique mirror. This magical object and an urban legend frame Lomax's time-travel murder mystery, though the best features are the characters, one each decade, who respond to being selected as a mirror kid, each in his or her own way. The kids' relationships, foisted upon them, are complicated by their different places in time. The complex plotting, directed by clearly defined rules of time travel, unfolds carefully and with great suspense and danger as Kenny struggles to make things right, despite the understanding that he meddles with history at great personal risk. This debut novel will leave readers eager for more, and the ending hints that they might get it. Grades 7-10. --Heather Booth

"Intricate, lusciously creepy paranormal mystery." --Kirkus Reviews (starred review)"This debut novel will leave readers eager for more." --Booklist"Debut novelist Lomax handles the plot's complexities with skill." --Publishers Weekly"Get ready to slide down into the past with David Lomax's Backward Glass. It's cold on the way down, hot on the way up into the future, and it is always, always riveting, no matter which direction in time he takes his courageous and intelligent teenagers. I'd read this again and again. Actually, the future me has already done so, I can assure you." --Christopher Barzak, author of One for Sorrow-Intricate, lusciously creepy paranormal mystery.- --Kirkus Reviews (starred review)-This debut novel will leave readers eager for more.- --Booklist-Debut novelist Lomax handles the plot's complexities with skill.- --Publishers Weekly-Get ready to slide down into the past with David Lomax's Backward Glass. It's cold on the way down, hot on the way up into the future, and it is always, always riveting, no matter which direction in time he takes his courageous and intelligent teenagers. I'd read this again and again. Actually, the future me has already done so, I can assure you.- --Christopher Barzak, author of One for Sorrow

I strongly recommend this. Just as I thought I had it figured out it took another twist. I recommended it to several family members after reading it and they all loved it too. If you want something different from the norm, interesting with plenty of surprises then this book is for you!

I love time-travel stories, but it's been a while since one has truly surprised me. There are only so many turns they can have. Or so it seemed until Lomax invented a whole trunkful of new ones, producing maybe the twistiest time-travel story I've read. A great time-travel story, a great story.

Boy discovers he can time travel with the help of a mirror. Boy discovers rules of the mirror, limiting what he can do. Boy discovers mysterious message telling him to save a baby--and then finds a dead baby hidden in the wall of the house he just moved into. There are a lot of time travel calculations, to-ing and fro-ing from time period to time period (but all constrained within the area of the house) and action galore. Because of the vast time covered, as well as some constraints of the plot where the boy has to spend a long time trapped away from everybody that made the emotional development somewhat unsatisfying for me, but all in all a good tale. Cool parts include an important-to-the-plot Star Wars reference, slow reveals of the boy's life related to the time traveling, a cool 17th Century Scottish dude, and truly eerie, creepy children's rhymes.

First of all, A+ for originality in concept. Between the mirrors and keys and Prince Harming and John Wald and the "auby one", it was like an entirely new world was oozing from my Kindle screen. Remarkable world building, and a difficult concept explained very well! As for plot, I only have a standing ovation for David after keeping such an intricate and very-easy-to-screw-up-if-you-get-one-tiny-thing-wrong plot all in line. Seriously, the subplots and alternate timelines and parallel worlds would have tripped me up within three pages if I tried to write them, but David manages to balance all of them and wrap them up so perfectly at the end that I had a huge Chesire grin on my face when I reached the final page. And the foreshadowing was done just perfectly - I figured a few things out, but never too soon in the story. Plus, just when I thought I had it figured out, there was another twist that left me scrambling to find out where I had gone wrong! Honestly, as much as I gush about the rest of the book, it's the characters that really take the cake. The best part about them was how real and tangible they were. Despite finding a time traveling mirror, none of them become swaggering idiots, believing themselves to be superheroes. Kenny, the protagonist and narrator, recognizes this, and states it right out that he's no hero - he's just a teenager trying to figure it all out. Luka, while precocious and probably the most Alpha out of the entire cast, has her moments of vulnerability. There are so many kids from each decade, but all of them play a key role in the story and have stark differences in their personality. I never confused any of the characters with each other, because they were so well-developed and three-dimensional that there was no way they would allow me to mix them up. This is on my list of top 5 best books I've

read so far in 2013, and I HIGHLY recommend it to everyone!

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales  
**Quick & Dirty:** One mirror, every ten years a kid is picked, but not older than 17, and time traveling begins.  
**Opening Sentence:** "Here's what you need to know: You're my son and you're something like negative twenty-two, because that's how long it will be before you're born."  
**The Review:** Kenny is 14 when his parents buy this old house that is a total fixer upper, and while cleaning out the place and checking everything out he stumbles across a dead baby and a note with several names on it, including his. He also finds some other notes and carvings that lead him to believe he can travel through the mirror, but he isn't interested in testing that theory until the night he meets Luka. The girl from 1987, and she explains the rules he wrote. Every ten years the mirror picks a kid and they can go backward, when they return home they can pull the kid from the past forward and after midnight you can always get home. Once the mirror chooses you, you can always travel through the mirror no matter your age. Soon Kenny, Luka, Jimmy and the others begin a journey to save the dead baby, and try to stop Prince Harming. Along the way Kenny ends up trapped in the past with Peggy and Lilly, and they begin figuring out the connections between them and who the baby is. Kenny also begins to work out making doorstops that allow them to travel 30 years back instead of just ten, and that keys allow for longer jumps forwards and backwards. He also finds out that sometimes no matter how hard you try to help, you just can't undo things and sometimes it's your messing around that causes problems. Will Kenny be able to save the baby and figure out who Prince Harming is so he can stop him from hurting his new friends? This book was a total gem, and I was more than a little sad when I found that it's not part of any series or trilogy. I was sucked in and reading from the moment Kenny started figuring everything out. I had to know what was going to happen. I will say in some places if you aren't paying attention you can get confused because as with anything concerning time travel, it can get crazy if you aren't really reading. That being said, I loved the world building and I loved the discovery process, and the connections. It was so amazing to see how this mirror picked kids randomly, but along the way you find it isn't that random. The mystery itself wasn't that hard to figure out once the story gets going, but the suspense of confirming it really keeps you invested, and wrapping your head around who Prince Harming is totally feels like a reward at the end. I enjoyed every minute of this book and can only wish there was more. Seriously, I do wish for more, not because the end wasn't satisfying, but because it was just that good.  
**Notable Scenes:** "If I went out there, and nothing happened, my ticket into the story I had been living

in my head would turn out to be a forgery I had made myself. The last thing I heard in 1987 before I shoved my face into iced molasses sounded like a slap. In every decade we could, there seemed to be nothing more than rumors and legends. You™I go down the backward glass. It didn™t even register at first that he had shot me. I guessed he made a pretty decent wise old man, though I had been hoping for a little more wisdom about the way the force worked and how to handle a light saber.

FTC Advisory: Flux provided me with a copy of Backward Glass. No goody bags, sponsorships, material connections, or bribes were exchanged for my review.

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