

TWISTED



Based on the Award Winning

Twisted Book Series

by Wil Mara.



LOGLINE.

From the mind of bestselling, award-winning author Wil Mara comes an anthology series aimed at tweens and teens that will not only scare them but make them look at life a little differently — perhaps even a little *twistedly*.



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Our Lead Cast.

Casting Opportunities

School sucks as it is, but when a teacher gives out a new writing assignment on a Friday at 2:00, well...that's enough to make any high schooler go cray-cray, especially —



GINGER ALLEN, (Peyton Elizabeth Lee)

A smart but rather lazy fourteen-year-old who only wanted to spend the weekend eating pizza, chilling out on her computer, maybe do her nails (if it doesn't interrupt her nap time, that is). But now she has to come up a whole story and write it? Ugh! Thankfully her three best friends are there to help.



CECE MICHAELS, (Raquel Justice)

African American and also fourteen, she's by far the smartest in the group and is not afraid to make sure you know it. She a born leader and has no fear about...well, anything. She thinks she can knock this writing assignment out of the park, no problem.



LUCAS KIM, (Karan Brar)

Lucas is the athlete ...and the "Cute One". He has the greatest smile, the greatest eyes, the greatest body — and CeCe has had a crush on him forever. Lucas is aware of this, too, and he's just not sure out how to tell her that he's not really into girls. Maybe he can find a way to express his frustration through the story he needs to come up with.



RICARDO SHAPIRO, (Mauricio Lara)

Ricardo is an interesting case — a neurotic Hispanic, Jewish boy. Then again, you'd be neurotic, too, if you were a Hispanic, Jewish boy. His imagination is all over the place, which is perfect.



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tone & structure.

Each episode will take the viewer into a story from the 'Twisted' series as if through the imagination of one of our four lead kids.

There will also be an introductory element that shows how the story idea came to them. And those kids will embody the characters in each story.

Twisted aims to give the viewers Twilight Zone vibes with echoes of Stranger Things focusing on stories that are relevant to younger audiences.

For example...



The Girl Who Grew Nasty Things.

Episode #1 Synopsis

As the four of them walk across their school campus, they pass a plant Ginger thinks is just about the ugliest thing she's ever seen. That then sparks an idea for CeCe, who begins thinking about a story called THE GIRL WHO GROWS NASTY THINGS...

We see our cast in a tale about mean girl, Maddie Dragonette (CeCe) who doesn't like people. Not one little bit. The more cheerful someone seems to be, the angrier she gets — yes, she's that person. The only living things whose company she can stand are the bizarre plants that grow in the greenhouse left behind by her late grandmother, who shared Maddie's loathing of the world. And Maddie has been using her grandmother's journal to create all sorts of nasty things that she then uses on others in order to get what she wants. When her school starts casting for a Halloween play, she gets excited because she's always fancied herself an actress, and she wants to land the starring role of Ruby.

Unfortunately, her skills are well below the level of her ambitions, and she doesn't get the part. Instead, it goes to Christie Walker (Ginger) — one of the tirelessly chipper girls that Maddie despises. No problem, Maddie thinks...a little something from my greenhouse will take care of her. And it does. Christie becomes mysteriously ill and withdraws from the play. But then the dramateacher, gives the part to someone else. Furious, Maddie brews up something to make that girl sick as well. All along, Maddie is also receiving acting lessons from the handsome Connor Anderson (Lucas), who is unaware of her deviousness and actually seems to like her. But in the end, Maddie's treachery is discovered by the school, and a heartbroken Connor tries to get her to see the error of her ways. Unfortunately, Maddie makes the wrong choice with her last chance at redemption and ends up the final victim of the nasty things she so lovingly created.

The End.



The Other.

Episode #2 Synopsis

Later that night, as Ricardo sits at his desk, he stares at a photo of his family. Then an idea for his story pops into his head. He jumps on FaceTime with the others and tells them about a story he calls THE OTHER —

Thirteen-year-old Alex Anderson (Ricardo) comes home from school excited to start on a project about his family's history. He soon comes across a big trunk tucked in the back of an attic closet, and inside he finds a photo album with pictures of his mom and dad at Disneyland. He has no memory of any such trip, so he figures they went before he was born. Then he finds a photo of the two of them with him. When he removes it and turns it over, he receives the greatest shock of his life—the date written in his mom's unmistakable print is roughly two years before he was even born. Then visiting his grandmother, he discovers his mom and dad used to live on the other side of the country in Oregon. After he returns home, he does a Google search and discovers an obituary stating that David was their first son, who died following a mysterious, fever-driven illness. Alex goes back to the attic and finds the trunk has a false bottom. It is then he finally learns the incredible truth that he is a clone—and while discovering this, both his parents walk in and see what he's doing. Over the next days, Alex's mom experiences a meltdown of epic proportions.

Alex begins acting out strange behaviors of his own and comes to realize David's spirit is gradually inhabiting his body. But he soon realizes that David is, in fact, trying to save the family by addressing the core of his mom's rage and sadness—the fact that she always blamed herself for David's death. But David helps Alex gather the evidence to prove this was not the case. In the climactic scene, David's ghostly form steps out of Alex's body and has one final conversation with his parents. He shows them that the illness had nothing to do with either of them and could not have been avoided under any circumstances. In the aftermath, the family's bonds become stronger than ever—and, in a quiet moment alone, Alex realizes his 'brother' remains within him and will be there forever.

The End.



Going Viral.

Episode #3 Synopsis

The next morning, Ginger is hanging out with CeCe and Lucas, and they see something on Facebook about the previous year's coronavirus outbreak. That makes Ginger remember the horrible way she saw so many people behaving, and this forms a story in her mind called GOING VIRAL —

Madeline Flores (Ginger) has been appalled by some of the behavior she's witnessed in her hometown ever since the coronavirus outbreak. In a time when everyone should be working together, they seem to be doing exactly the opposite. They are yelling at each other in the street. Calling each other names online. Pointing fingers, placing blame. And perhaps worst of all, they are fighting one another for everyday items like canned goods, bottled water, and paper products. When her own family starts to run low on some of these things, she goes with her mom to the supermarket early one morning to get more. When they discover that many of the shelves remain empty, they visit other stores in the area, but without any luck.

Later that day, Madeline decides to take a walk around her neighborhood in order to de-stress. When she comes to a lot that had always been occupied by an old, boarded-up building, she sees instead a shiny new market open for business. When she goes inside, she finds the shelves overflowing with all the goods her family needs. What's even more amazing is that everything appears to be free! She loads a few bags with only the most critical supplies. After she leaves the store she runs into a friend who asks where she found everything. It is then that Madeline realizes no one else can see the market except her. (When she returns home, she tells her parents she went to their normal store and just got lucky.)

As the days go by and people in her town become more desperate, she thinks about going back to the market to help them. But then she starts to worry that she won't have enough for her own family. Soon she is seeing and hearing about horrible things happening in her neighborhood, including people becoming violent and even breaking into each other's homes. But even then, she rationalizes her ongoing refusal to assist them. When she goes back to the market a few days later, she sees the same friend from the previous week — a young girl from a family with little money—lingering near the market's entrance.

Fearful that the girl has discovered it for herself, Madeline goes to attack her. It is then that she realizes she has become one of the very same people she's been vilifying all along. This is when she decides to begin distributing all the supplies until everyone has what they need.

The End.

House of a Million Rooms.

Season Finale



The four friends continue sharing their made-up stories with each other throughout the season...

Then, in the season finale, they realize the potential for the scariest story of all is right there in their hometown. From there they decide to check out an abandoned house in the woods that their parents have warned them never to visit. Lucas and Ginger nervously enter together and quickly understand their parents' warnings — every time they enter a room, the one behind them changes, making it seemingly impossible for them to get back out. **Thus begins HOUSE OF A MILLION ROOMS...**

Our heroes don't escape until they discover the story of the house's last occupant — a mysterious girl who lived there shortly after fleeing the Salem Witch Trials. With the help of Ricardo and CeCe on the outside, they work together to free the girl's still-suffering spirit while also discovering the unpleasant fact that parents have dirty secrets, too.





**Even More Books &
Stories** in the Series.

Where Did My Family Go?:

Michael Cooper wakes one morning to a horrifying reality...his family isn't the same as when he went to sleep the night before. For that matter, neither is anything else. What's worse, everyone thinks he's lost his mind and that everything's just fine.

The Time Trap:

Delilah Bremmer wants to return to the happier times before her parents divorced. Then, through an incredible set of circumstances, she discovers a gateway to those perfect days. But are they as perfect as she remembers?

The Videomaniac:

At a local flea market, thirteen-year-old Brian Hart meets an eerie old man who gives him computer software that can predict future major league sporting games. But is the power to see the future really as beneficial as Brian believes?

Pool of Deathly Blue:

Mason and Madison Page are twins who were lucky enough to be born into a family with unbelievable wealth. But when they dive into their backyard pool one summer afternoon and come up in a very different place, they soon begin to wonder if their luck has finally run out.



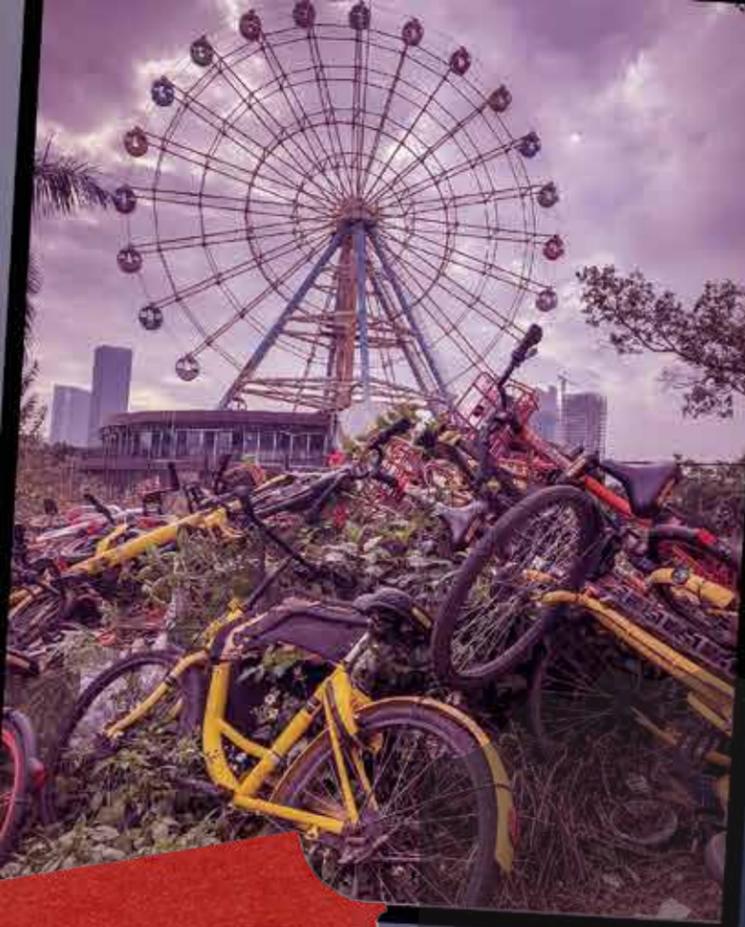
DESIGN.

The design for Twisted will take advantage of the varying storylines to give each episode a fresh take on a branded look for the series. Borrowing design lessons from efficient and playful series like Goosebumps or Are You Afraid of the Dark, our look will emulate the eerie, off-kilter feeling of The X-Files, The Twilight Zone, and even American Horror Story.

All the design departments will be able to be a part of the creative process as the source material is already published and they can help us shape the story concepts to help create a visual aesthetic that can help induce anxiety and provide catharsis when called for.

Twisted will fit the pattern of keeping stories contained within a few hero sets and locations each episode, but within that pattern every shot will be framed specifically to contain the depth and scale of our high concept inspirations. Little tricks like unnatural symmetry or over exaggerated unbalance in the set decoration give the audience unconscious visual cues that something is amiss. The settings and locations will change story to story, but the color pallet will always use tones and textures that keep the look feeling timeless and the show evergreen. This unity will allow episodes from season to season to be run and re-run along side the newest stories.





FRANCHISE POTENTIAL.

So much of the world is known. But so much of our planet, our galaxy and our universe is unknown.

Exploring that unknown, only constrained by our own imaginations, is ripe for an unlimited source of stories. And the ability to tell those stories can take many forms, whether it be in an episode of television, both live action and cartoon, or a longer form feature film.

Beyond just viewable content and the pre-existing book series, the Twisted world is ripe for merchandising with video games, board games, card games, coloring books, with potential for much more.



WIL MARA

Author Bio & Accolades

Wil has worked as an author for over 33 years and currently has more than 275 books in print. He has written both fiction and nonfiction, for children and adults. His books have won multiple awards, reached bestseller lists (e.g., his 2013 novel *Frame 232*, reached the # 1 spot on Amazon.com and made the New York Times list), earned excellent reviews, and been translated into more than a dozen languages. 2005's *Wave* won the New Jersey Notable Book Award, and 2012's *The Gemini Virus* remained on Amazon's list of 'Ten Bestseller Medical Thrillers' for 14 consecutive weeks.

Much of his work for children has been nonfiction for the school-library market. He also ghostwrote five of the popular 'Boxcar Children' mysteries. And starting in 2019, Rosen Publishing released the first of his new 'Twisted' series, which has been described as "Twilight Zones for kids." It became the most pre-ordered fiction series in the company's history. The first 'Twisted' book, *The Videomaniac*, was released on January 1 and sold through its first printing in less than a month. The second, *House of a Million Rooms*, was released on March 1 and, just a few weeks later, was chosen as a Main Selection Title by the Junior Library Guild.

Wil was also an editor, administrator, and executive inside the industry for over 20 years, working for such houses as Scholastic, McGraw-Hill, Macmillan, and Prentice-Hall until turning to fulltime writing in 2005. He is an associate member of the NJASL and an executive member of the Board of Directors for the New Jersey Center for the Book, which is an affiliate of the US Library of Congress. He is also the vice president of the Literacy Alliance of New Jersey, the host of the 'Voice of American Libraries' podcast, and the 2019 recipient of the Literary Lion of New Jersey Award, whose past winners include Gus Friedrich, Dean Emeritus of Rutgers University, and Joyce Carol Oates, National Book Award winner and Pulitzer Prize finalist.



WRITING SCARY, SPOOKY STUFF FOR KIDS.



The Twisted book series has a specific goal when dealing with worlds that might be deemed too scary or too weird for young audiences. To quote the series author "We don't write down to kids, we write directly to them." Wil Mara's book series strikes the perfect balance of age appropriate material that still feels edgy and fun to younger readers.

Wil has made a conscious effort through the years to hold onto that part of himself (in spite of the many relentless societal efforts to the contrary) that remembers what it's like to be a kid in a visceral and immediate way. That's why the books resonate. Through his own children and these vivid memories, Wil is uniquely connected to his audience.

Everyone involved with Twisted still fantasizes and daydreams cool, weird, and neat ideas... still with the naive audacity ... of believing it can be done.



WHY US. WHY NOW.

Kids love spooky...and creepy...and far-out...and anything else that carries them beyond the boundaries of everyday life. They can't get enough of stories like these. And the more ordinary the characters - the more relatable, the more recognizable - the more they become attached.

Kids love all fiction that utilizes the familiar...their friends, their families, their schools...the world view is much more insular, much closer to home... smaller, but much more personal and specific to everyday life.

The characters in "Twisted," are put in anxiety inducing situations that they must decipher solutions and escapes with only each other to rely upon.

Traditional science fiction, horror, thriller stories give audiences moments of catharsis. A way to explore our fears and stressors. Younger audiences experience similar anxieties, especially in our current cultural and social climate, but the perspective is more internal. There's an opportunity to tackle a myriad of issues from a younger vantage that everyone can relate to from experiences both past and, for our target audience, sometimes painfully present.

The kids in our lives need the catharsis and escapism that ghost stories and mysteries of the paranormal provide. When done well, these stories speak to a cultural moment. We're in one that's so fractious right now that no matter how much kids are protected from it, they feel it. Our own children, our own nephews and nieces, are longing for that relief even more than we sought it when we watched E.T. try and get home, the X-Men discovering their powers and strength, or The Goonies finding that pirate's treasure.