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## Danloria: The Secret Forest of Germania by Gloria D Gonsalves

Stan loves to go for walks in the forest of Danloria, located in the seven hills of Germania. He goes with his father almost every day. One particular day, Stan's father is ill in bed and can't take him out. And that's when Fern appears. Stan notices the plant waving to him and can't help but investigate. Fern has an invitation for Stan. He wants to take him to the secret parts of the forest, to a party. Stan has a fabulous time, meeting all the plants and finding out about the various ways in which they benefit humanity. The following spring, Stan is racking his brains to think of the perfect gift for his mother's fortieth birthday party when Fern appears again. More friends of the forest supply presents more wonderful than Stan could ever have dreamed of. A firm friendship ensues.


And then, one day, Stan himself falls sick. The doctors don't seem to be able to cure him and Stan's parents are desperate. Looking for his friend, Fern discovers what's going on and sends out messages throughout the kingdoms of plants - to Asilandia, Afrilandia, California, and Englandia, everywhere. Can his friends from the natural world help Stan to get better?


Aww. This story really is rather gorgeous. And, while the text is lovely and I'll be getting on to that, I really do need to give a shout-out to the fabulous illustrations, all done by children. There are flowers, butterflies, fruits, trees, and some feature Stan at home amongst them. My favourite is the human figure created from fern fronds. It truly is the green man of the forest. They're wonderful and vivid and heartwarming. And I think they bring the reader closer to the text. Hats off to Gonsalves for commissioning kids to illustrate her book. It was a stroke of genius.

The text is lovely, too. Inside her story of a friendship between the human and natural worlds, Gonsalves fills it with all sorts of useful information about how plants are used and what benefits they have and about their histories. Ferns are the oldest plant species on Earth: 300 million years old, in fact. Pine resin makes perfume. Mushrooms dye cloth. Poppies can calm. Feverfew can ease a headache. The Vitamin C in fruit prevents scurvy. There's a lot to find out here.

But mostly, it's the charming story of a little boy who loves his forest. And through Stan, readers will love his forest too. What more could children - or their parents - want?

If *Danloria* appeals, I think you might also enjoy [Weslandia by Paul Fleischman](#), a fabulous little book about a geeky boy who sets about creating a micronation in his back garden and who achieves not only a self-sufficiency success story but also a way to make friends for the first time in his life.

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### Danloria: The Secret Forest of Germania by Gloria D Gonsalves

**Category:** [For Sharing](#)**Reviewer:** [Jill Murphy](#)**Summary:****Buy?** Yes**Borrow?** Yes**Pages:** 48**Date:** [April 2014](#)**Publisher:** AuthorHouse**External links:** [Author's website](#)**ISBN:** 1491876964**Share on:** 

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