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After Eli



Synopsis

When Daniel's brother Eli is killed at war, Daniel considers the history of unusual fatalities to determine what makes a death or a life matter. Some people die heroically, others accidentally. When Daniel Anderson's older brother dies, he wonders which category Eli's death falls into. In an attempt to understand, Danny creates a Book of the Dead - an old binder that he fills with details about dead people, how they died, and, most important, for what purpose. Time passes, and eventually Daniel is prompted to look up from his notebook of death and questions to make new friends and be swept into their imaginings. With gentle humor and genuine emotion, Rebecca Rupp examines the questions that arise following a profound loss and the moments that start life rolling again.

Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up-Though it's been three years since his older brother was killed during the Iraq War, 14-year-old Danny Anderson is still coming to terms with this senseless tragedy. His parents can't offer solace because they're deeply mired in their own grief. As a means of coping, Danny changes his middle name to Eli to keep the memory of his brother alive, and he begins cataloging a Book of the Dead in which he lists the various ways people throughout history have died. Danny is

transformed the summer preceding his sophomore year when he meets 15-year-old Isabelle and her younger brother and sister, twins Jasper and Journey. He also finds comfort in his budding friendship with brainy classmate Walter. As he spends more time with this motley group, Danny feels uplifted and becomes more introspective about life and death. While processing his grief, he starts to realize the importance of moving forward ("Sometimes you have to destroy the past so that you'll have to learn how to live in the new world."). Flashbacks recalling Danny's life with Eli lend heartbreaking pathos to this story. Rupp's poignant bildungsroman is therapeutic, particularly for those readers who have experienced the unimaginable loss of a loved one.-Lalitha Nataraj, Escondido Public Library, CA
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Starred Review Three years after his much older brother, Eli, died as a soldier in Iraq, 14-year-old Daniel is still trying to cope with the loss while living in a household that has never healed. Throughout Daniel's childhood, Eli had set out to teach him all that he needed to know but would never learn from their distant, demanding father. Now, over a summer marked by change, Daniel falls for sophisticated Isabelle, befriends a geeky classmate, outgrows a longtime pal, and works on a farm owned by his brother's best friend. At summer's end, Daniel's realization that he is losing Isabelle opens the floodgates of grief and triggers a violent reaction that allows his family to move forward at last. Depicted only through flashbacks, memories, and conversations, irreverent Eli is one of the most vividly realized characters in this convincing cast. Each chapter heading features someone from Daniel's personal Book of the Dead (Archimedes, Isadora Duncan, the Titanic victims) who come up in his writings, a thread of death that some might find off-putting. But the tone of this first-person narrative isn't maudlin or morbid, it's smart and searching, and the well-structured story quietly builds to a moving climax and a worthy, satisfying conclusion. Grades 5-8. --Carolyn Phelan --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the best book I've ever in my life read, And I'm telling the truth I'm only 9. I think this is a true 5 star rating because it teaches a great way to move on. If you are reading this and you are ages 7,8,9,10,11, and 12 I also suggest , The slumber party wars, Bailey's great escape, and a life worth living.

This book is part of a reading g program in Indiana called the "young hoosier book awards". Kids must read at leaset 5 of them and they get to vote for their favorite book.

Awesome

Short, yet Powerful. Brilliantly written, worth the read. Compassionate. Would recommend it in a heart beat. Glad I came across it. Enjoy.

I purchased this book, along with the following books for my pre-teen grandson for his birthday: "Far Far Away" by Tom McNeal, "Paper Boy" by Vince Vawter, "Hokey Pokey" by Jerry Spinelli, "After Eli" by Rebecca Rupp, "The Bully Book: A Novel" by Eric Kahn Gale, "Jinx" by Sage Blackwood, and "Les Miserables" by Monica Kulling/ Victor Hugo. My grandson has always been an avid reader, having read all of the Harry Potter books by the age of 9. So far he has read all of the books but two in a span of 2 weeks! He reports that he has really enjoyed those he has finished, which pleases me, since they were purchased largely because of the reviews that includes in its description of a book's content and also because I thought he would find them interesting as well as informative about the situations in which males his age often find themselves involved. My thanks to 's editors/reviewers for their recommendations!

3.5-4.0 stars 9/11 happened and Eli wanted to help at ground zero but Eli's dad said no. Feeling that he had to do something to help he enlisted in the army instead. About a year or so after he dies in Iraq while on duty. Eli's death has left Danny alone, his dad even less sociable and mom has checked out. While coping with the death of his brother, Danny begins the "Book of the Dead" a book where he records famous people and the cause of their deaths. I think the most interesting part of this book was the "Book of the Dead" and how the author used it to tie it back to certain events in Danny's life and/or to show his thought process on the topic of death. This definitely made After Eli a very unique story. I liked the story well enough. I thought it was written well. I liked the characters especially the twins who were a hoot! I especially liked that you could noticeably see the growth within these characters. The flow of the story was right on point and the ending was just right. Yet something didn't sit well with me. I've read a few contemporaries as of late and they were heart wrenching and I guess I was expecting this book to be that way. It's not. There are some moments and I did cry during those moments but it was hard for me to connect in that way the entire time. Another thing, I felt like I was reading the wrong era. The book reads like the TV show the

Wonder Years. This is not a negative, people. I loved Wonder Years. My thing was that this is supposed to be the present, you know 2012. Although there were parts that felt like 2012, there were other parts that felt like the 1960's. I don't know. It could just be the emotional overload I've felt reading other types of books in the last few months. Also, it could just be a figment of my imagination about the era switch up I felt often in this book...figment or lack of sleep. Or it could just be that this book is just a different type of grief and it doesn't always have to be over the top and the town is rural and could possibly still feel like the 1960's even if it is 2012. Bottom line: I still recommend this read to everyone because it was an overall enjoyable read. After reading it let me know your thoughts on it. ARC was provided by Candlewick via NetGalley.

"After Eli" is a fun, humorous, and enlightening novel not just for young readers but readers of all ages. Daniel Anderson's tumultuous journey of acceptance and emotional rejuvenation after the death of his older brother Eli in Iraq is a story that will make even the most rigid reader tearful. Rupp's honest portrayal of a teenage boy dealing with the cruelty of his emotionally unavailable father and his equally distant mother will touch your heart. Filled with colorful and captivating characters and situations, "After Eli" is sure to be a modern classic. WHAT'S IT ABOUT? "After Eli" is the first-person account of a fourteen year-old high school freshman whose life and family crumbles after the death of his older brother Eli when Daniel was younger. Taking place during the summer after his first year of high school, Daniel divulges his experiences with vivid detail and worldly knowledge. Along the way he makes a new friend named Walter- a young man who is an outcast at school and has the intellectual capacity of Albert Einstein and the philosophical nature of Plato, whom he greatly admires. Daniel also comes across two eccentric, curious, and sometimes annoying twins named Jasper and Journey who are the siblings of Isabelle- a doe-eyed beauty from New York City who not only brings an urban finesse into Daniel's small-town world, but steals his heart as well. With his Book of the Dead and his new friends to guide him, Daniel embarks on an adventure that will change his outlook on life and death forever. WHO IS IT FOR? This book is for any teen who has endured the loss of a beloved family member or friend. Daniel's exploration for acceptance is a story that any teen can find relatable. The primary themes of the novel are acceptance, dealing with insecurities, volatile family relationships, coming to terms with the inevitable nature of death and, of course, discovering summer love. To those of you who aren't fans of profanity in novels, this book isn't for you. It has its share of a few choice words here and there, but this is only to bring to life the gripping, harsh reality that young Daniel faces. The characters in Rupp's novel are real people with real sensibilities, and so they express their feelings and thoughts

in ways that are replicated in everyday life. WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS? I would definitely recommend this book. It is a great summer and back-to-school read that will catapult any avid young reader into Daniel's world.

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