

Me and Earl and the Dying Girl

Jesse Andrews

Reviewed by: Ziqing Kuang, 14

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

www.bethestaryouare.org

Greg Gaines journeys through his last year of high school, trying to avoid the cliché high school cliques. He doesn't believe in any of that. His best friend, Earl Jackson, is the only guy from school that he really trusts. Earl comes from a disturbed family, and most of his life could be described like that as well. Greg and Earl became best friends after making action and adventure films together during their childhood. Greg's life has been pretty normal, that is, until his mother informs him that his childhood crush, Rachel Kushner, was diagnosed with leukemia. His mom forces Greg to continue this friendship that he had with Rachel even after Greg repeatedly refused.

After surrendering, Greg starts to visit Rachel every single day. They would talk about their own lives, interests, and experiences they faced in high school. He starts to understand that he still has this entire life ahead of him, and Rachel may not be alive in a couple of months. He starts to ponder the real meaning of life as he rekindles his friendship with Rachel.

I loved this book so much because it wasn't one of those cliché "illness romance" books. It was a raw and honest story of two unexpected childhood friends finding their way back to each other in the most heartbreaking way. The book really showed how being friends with someone with a terminal illness can change your outlook and perspective on life. In the beginning of the book, Greg was a normal high schooler with a decent message about life. He pushed through high school with the intent of getting a girlfriend and hanging out with Earl. There were many times I just wanted to shake Greg and demand him to give Earl and Rachel a hug. He didn't seem to understand what was going on outside of his own problems.

Greg represented all the oblivious teenagers today who aren't able to envision their life past high school. They don't know what the real meaning or purpose of life. The end of the book left me in tears because Greg was so shocked and pained over what had happened. I recommend this book to anyone looking for a beautiful read, but I suggest this to readers from the ages of 12 to 16. I would definitely buy this book for someone as a gift.

Recommended Titles:

All the Bright Places by Jennifer Niven

Sadie by Courtney Summers

Let it Snow by John Green

Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

Looking for Alaska by John Green