

## **Me and Earl and the Dying Girl**

**Jesse Andrews**

**Reviewed by: Ananya Ganesh, 16**

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Greg Gaines is your typical seventeen year old attending high school in Pittsburg. He developed a system that allowed him to drift between social groups, trying not to associate himself with any one particular group, and ensuring that he never forms any close connections. In other words, his goal was to not have friends. Of course, this does not apply to his best and only friend, Earl, who, like Greg, does not subscribe to one particular group. When his ex-girlfriend Rachel Kushner gets diagnosed with leukemia, his mother implores him to rekindle the friendship that the two had in Hebrew School five years prior. The two get closer, much to Greg's discomfort, until eventually he gets tricked into making a film for her. Does Greg know enough about film making, death, and Rachel to make this a successful film? Or will this be the end of his career as an amateur director?

We see these dynamic relationships build between Earl and Greg as well as Greg and Rachel, which really contributes to the overall quality of the novel. The way the story is set up to transform Greg from a friendless drifter to someone with deep connections allows the readers to relate to the story, showing just how complicated modern friendships are. In addition, the point of view of the novel allows us to explore the unique and humorous thoughts of our main character. This keeps the novel fairly fast paced and leaves the reader wondering more.

Despite all of this, the book wasn't particularly my favorite. The number of events occurring in any given chapter makes the book a tad overwhelming. Because of this, the novel became a bit tough to follow. That being said, though I may not have liked it, it cannot be said that this was not a good book. The way the story was communicated was unique and engaging and other readers would love it. I did like the characters and the sprinkle of humor incorporated throughout the story, and I liked that though it was dealing with heavy topics, the overall tone of the novel was more light-hearted. It definitely made this book an easier read.

This would make a great gift for anyone who is a fan of contemporary young adult novels or anyone in need of a funny novel. However, those who do not like books with heavy topics should proceed with caution. In addition, there is some strong language and a bit of suggestive material, but not enough that middle schoolers cannot read it. Anyone in eight grade and up would like this book.

### **Recommended Titles:**

The Fault in Our Stars – John Green

Turtles All the Way Down – John Green

Goodbye Days – Jeff Zentner

Also Known as Elvis – James Howe

Be More Chill – Ned Vizzini