

**Mayday**

**Karen Harrington**

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**Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be The Star You Are! Charity**

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Did you know that the chances of getting into a plane crash are 1 in 11 million? Pretty low huh? In fact, your chances of getting into a car crash are significantly higher, being 1 in 103. Despite these statistics however, Wayne Kovok, 12 years old, finds himself on a plane about to take a nosedive. Now, you may be wondering: What is a 12 year old kid doing on a plane in the first place? Well, I'll get to that in a minute. First, I'd like to give a little background as to who Wayne is. Picture this: A tall, thin, and nerdy prepubescent, fact spewing kid who can't stand awkward silences. That is Wayne Kovok. For most of his life he has been like this, trying to fill any silence with a fact. Living with his divorced mom in a small house, Wayne isn't very close to his irresponsible dad. With this said, Wayne can sometimes feel torn between what he thinks he should do with his life. Should he be a track star like his father who seems to be better at running away from things than to them? Or his drill sergeant grandfather who is pressuring him to join the military like all the men in his family? Let's go back to why Wayne is on a plane. As I said, all of Wayne's male family members on his mom's side are in the army, including his uncle Reed. This being said, Wayne soon learns that after his most recent deployment, Reed has been killed and they must take a plane to attend the funeral. This isn't the issue however, as they make it to the funeral fine. The plane back is where the problems arise. After the plane has crashed, Wayne wakes up in a hospital bed unable to talk. Now, when your voice is the only shield you have, it can be hard learning that you no longer have one. Through this novel, Wayne realizes all that has been left unsaid, and when his vocal cords heal, he doesn't hold back, and is able to reconcile with his father and grow into the man his grandfather always knew he could be.

Just like many of my previous book reviews, this synopsis is quite long. The reason for this is that despite the short length of this novel, there is so much that is explored in great depth. Though he is only 12, Wayne has a complicated life and he, along with other characters are brought to life beautifully through detail and well-written side stories. On top of that, this novel has an amazing set up between chapters, using the timeline to its advantage. What I mean by this is that every section is labeled, with 3 individual titles; Before, as in before the crash, After, for after the crash, and Now, all of which symbolize how time has passed. And with the time that has passed Wayne is shown to have learned and grown from his experiences, and overall has a beautiful character development and story arc. However, one thing that I didn't like about this novel was the fact that it seemed a little redundant. When I say redundant I mean in the structure of how the story is told. Of course the story is told from Wayne's perspective, so it goes without saying that some sayings will be repetitive, as that attributes to the characters mannerisms. However, I do wish that it was worded a little different at points because the sayings became recurrent fast. Other than this though, I enjoyed this novel greatly.

In the end, I would recommend this book for ages 12-18, as it teaches valuable lessons and has quite a few good facts littered throughout. This book works good as a gift to anyone really, as it doesn't exactly have a set genre (other than maybe coming of age), however it can also be found at various libraries, just as something to check out. This book was honestly quite entertaining and is a quick read, so I highly encourage you to read it and I hope that you enjoy it as much as I did.

**Recommended Titles:**

Courage for Beginners

Sure Signs of Crazy

Hideout