

I Am The Messenger

Markus Zusak

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Ed Kennedy is just a regular cab driver who frequently hangs out with his friends, Marv, Ritchie, and Audrey. One afternoon, the gang goes to the bank and finds themselves in the middle of an armed robbery. The four of them lie on the ground, cracking jokes and waiting for the robbery to be over so they can return to their broken-down car, but Ed gets a jolt of confidence as the robbery comes to a close. As though he was possessed, Ed grabs the dropped gun and chases the robber out of the bank, leading to the conviction of said robber and a local hero story about Ed. Since then, Ed received a card in the mail with clues scrawled across the top, and has been tasked with solving the puzzle. Ed has to decipher the clues and act on them like his life depends on it, because it does.

What I loved about this book is the way Ed Kennedy stays humble after his 'zero to hero' story. He still acts as though he's regular old Ed Kennedy, but takes that newfound confidence and manifests it into anonymously helping other people. He didn't turn into a superhero, but did little things that brightened people's lives just a bit. I thought this was a great message to send to readers. In addition to this, Ed and his tight-knit group of friends have a great sense of humor and it added a very entertaining quality to the novel. I loved reading about their tradition, how they think of each other, and their optimistic outlook on life despite what's going on in their own world. The four of them have a beautiful friendship that tells us more about the story as a whole as well as each character. In addition to all this, each clue was fascinating. It was almost like a puzzle that the readers would try to solve as Ed goes along, which kept me engaged throughout the novel. It also made the novel a bit unpredictable, because even though each section was set up so you have a vague idea of what Ed's job is, you'd never truly know what qualifies as a completed task. That adds to that element of suspense that Zusak maintains throughout the novel.

I would recommend this to any fan of contemporary novels, particularly action, adventure, or mystery novels. This book would be a great gift to anyone who is in eighth grade or above. There is some language that people under the age of thirteen may not be that comfortable with, but there isn't anything too explicit or blunt. Overall, it's a fairly lighthearted book.

Recommended Titles

Mosquitoland – David Arnold

Little Brother – Cory Doctorow

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone – JK Rowling