

When Breath Becomes Air

By Author, Paul Kalanithi

Reviewed by: Shrayaa Jayapal, 16

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

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This non-fiction title is a first hand account of a neurosurgeon, Dr. Kalanithi and his battle against lung cancer. It details his struggles, being a doctor in a demanding field while battling a chronic illness. This novel explores many important themes such as the meaning of time, death and life.

When Breath Becomes Air is a breathtaking memoir. It starts with Paul Kalathini talking about his day as a senior resident and his passion for neurosurgery. He firstly views death and life from a doctor standpoint, then after his diagnosis he begins to understand it from a patient viewpoint. He tries to make the most of his remaining time, along with his wife. He practices medicine for as long as he can, even while struggling with the symptoms of his illness.

This novel was a masterpiece, one of my favorites of all time. It was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. I would recommend this book for anyone 14 and older, because it does address some heavy themes and is filled with angst. I think it is a book definitely worth rereading and would make an excellent gift, especially for someone thinking about going into the medical field. Overall, this book was such a fulfilling experience and was one of the best non-fiction titles I've ever read.

Recommended Titles:

Less by Andrew Sean Greer

The forgetting machine by Rodrigo Quian Quiroga

This is Going to Hurt, by Adam Kay