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Some Kind Of Happiness



Synopsis

Reality and fantasy collide in this heartfelt and mysterious novel for fans of *Counting by 7s* and *Bridge to Terabithia*, about a girl who must save a magical make-believe world in order to save herself. Things Finley Hart doesn't want to talk about: -Her parents, who are having problems. (But they pretend like they're not.) -Being sent to her grandparents' house for the summer. -Never having met said grandparents. -Her blue days "when life feels overwhelming, and it's hard to keep her head up. (This happens a lot.) Finley's only retreat is the Everwood, a forest kingdom that exists in the pages of her notebook. Until she discovers the endless woods behind her grandparents' house and realizes the Everwood is real "and holds more mysteries than she'd ever imagined, including a family of pirates that she isn't allowed to talk to, trees covered in ash, and a strange old wizard living in a house made of bones. With the help of her cousins, Finley sets out on a mission to save the dying Everwood and uncover its secrets. But as the mysteries pile up and the frightening sadness inside her grows, Finley realizes that if she wants to save the Everwood, she'll first have to save herself.

Book Information

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Life > Family Life > Multigenerational

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

I don't know how to deal with my feelings for this book. I can't. It was simply perfection. I have

wanted to read it for so long, ever since Claire first started talking about it. As I adore Claire. And her books have all been amazing so far. I knew I would love this stunning middle grade. And I did. The most. It was so good. But how do I even begin to talk about it? Oh, I don't know. This book was everything I wanted it to be and more. It made me feel so much. It made me cry. Many times. My heart was hurting at all times. It was painful. Yet I was so happy while reading it. This book was simply precious. Cannot deal with this perfect. The writing is gorgeous. I adore how Claire writes books. She's the best. And the writing in this one was so good. All the love. The story is so well done too. And the characters. They broke my heart. They made me so happy. They were written perfectly. I couldn't have loved this middle grade book more than I did. Well, okay, I might have wished for a bit of romance, lol, but it so didn't need that. I'm thrilled with how much I loved this book. With how amazing it was. With how heartbreaking it was. I loved it the most. And I cannot wait to read it again. Which will probably end up being really painful for me, as it broke my heart wide open. But I still cannot wait to read it again and again. Because this book was beautiful. It means the most to me. This is the story of eleven year old Finley. Whom is the most adorable girl I have read about. She is amazing. I loved reading from her point of view. I loved getting to know her. I love how she wrote in her notebook. How she had been writing about a mysterious forest called Everwood for years. How she felt so much, yet managed to not share it with anyone.

A few chapters into this book I began to wonder what it was, exactly, that I was reading. The general feeling was claustrophobic and intense, and it seemed fairly clear that Finley, our eleven year old heroine, (who was being dropped off by her distraught parents at her estranged grandparents' home), was suffering from a combination of depression, anxiety, panic attacks and possibly even a mild form of some disassociative disorder. I had just an ARC and some uninformative publisher blurbs available, so I nosed around the internet. My first clue was that this book is listed three ways on its site: Children's Books - Fiction; Children's Books - Family Life - New Experiences; and "Children's Books - Growing Up & Facts of Life - Difficult Discussions - Illness". More to the point was an author interview in which Ms. LeGrand discussed her childhood struggles with anxiety, depression and panic attacks, and described the happiness she shared with her cousins playing in the woods behind her grandma's house. So, with the book a bit more in focus, I soldiered on. This is an intense book. It is not a tra-la-la saving-the-faerie-kingdom book. (MILD NON-PLOT RELATED SPOILERS) Because the lines between Finley's real world and her imaginary world of Everwood are so blurred, and because the story set in Everwood is ever present as a metaphor for her actual mental and family problems, we are never far from and never get much of a break from Finley's

anxiety and depression. Finley is precocious, observant and articulate, but she's also wound pretty tight, so her reactions to everything are intense and mercurial.

Ever since I met Claire Legrand in 2014, I've been meaning to read her books. I know, I've been terrible about getting around to it, but the premise of *Some Kind of Happiness* was so unique that I decided I had to take the plunge right away. And I'm glad I did, because this book sure is special. While *Some Kind of Happiness* is a middle grade story, its message is so profound that young adults and adults can easily get deeply engrossed in it, because primarily this story focuses on the main character, Finley, and her struggles with anxiety and depression. First off, I want to stress how important this story is. We're getting to a time now where it's generally becoming more acceptable to talk about mental health issues – to admit when you struggle with things and have ‘blue days’ as Finley calls them, and where we encourage each other to seek help. Finding yourself in fiction can be a big part on that road to self-discovery, but even if you don't have any mental health issues, *Some Kind of Happiness* can give you so much insight into what it feels like to live with one. And since mental health struggles are not limited to adults, I'm so glad this book exists for kids to find as well. It'll ultimately contribute to a more compassionate society. Finley has anxiety which sometimes triggers panic attacks and can send her slowly into a spiral of depression. To a certain extent she's aware of her condition, but in her voice you can still tell that she's very much a child. She's confused about why she's like this. She hates that she can't just be ‘normal’. She's conscious of her blue moods, but as is the case with depression, knowing you're upset without a reason and wishing it away doesn't help you at all. I thought her voice and her thought process were amazingly developed.

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