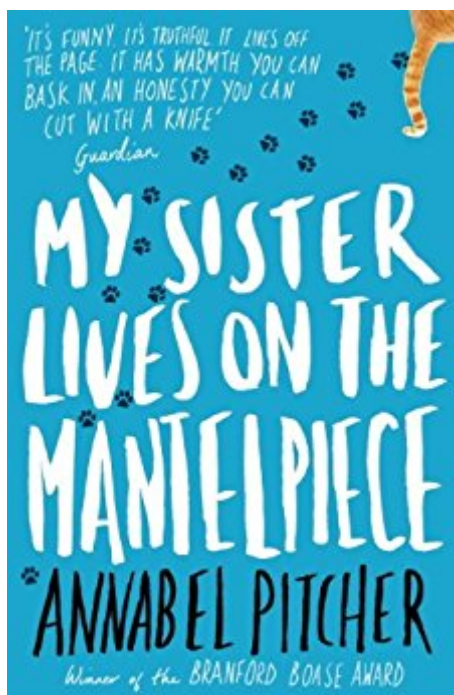


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My Sister Lives On The Mantelpiece



Synopsis

Winner of the 2012 Branford Boase Award, this is Annabel Pitcher's stunning debut about ten-year-old Jamie, and the way his life and his family are shaped by the sister in an urn on the mantelpiece. Five years ago, Jamie's sister, Rose, was blown up by a terrorist bomb. His family is torn apart by their grief. His mum runs away. His dad turns to drink and hate. Rose's surviving twin sister Jasmine stops eating, gets piercings and dyes her hair pink - anything to look different to her twin. But Jamie hasn't cried in all that time. To him, Rose is just a distant memory. Jamie is far more interested in his cat, Roger, his Spiderman T-shirt, and his deep longing and unshakeable belief that his Mum will come back to the family she walked out on months ago. But moving away for a Fresh New Start introduces Jamie to something else very interesting - a girl named Sunya. Sunya is bright, exciting and fun, and the one person at school he can call a friend. But how far can this new friendship grow when Jamie is desperate that his dad doesn't find out?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece is a poignant, funny, satirical and realistic coming-of-age story. Author, Annabel Pitcher, creates that classic British very subtle wit that may go over the heads of younger teen readers, but will amuse and touch those who understand. Jamie is a very sad and lonely ten year old. He knows he is invisible to both his parents. They have neglected him since his teen sister was killed years earlier in a terrorist attack. Jamie can't grieve for his sister because he doesn't remember her, and grief consumes every part of his family. But Jamie refuses to give up on his parents. He is sure he can bring the family back to normal and everyone will be happy again. Jamie is convinced the key to healing his family is "Britain's Got Talent." If he, and his other teen sister, win a spot on the show, his parents will be so filled with joy and pride, it will chase the sadness and anger away. Jamie's clumsy attempts to make friends with classmate, and fellow super-hero fan, Sunya, are adorable. His devotion for his sister, his cat and Spiderman are touching. His devotion for his self-absorbed derelict parents is heartbreaking. But Jamie's youthful optimism cannot help but rub off on the reader.

I started this book yesterday and finished it today at lunch, sobbing into my polenta. Sort of embarrassing when you're sitting in the middle of the office. But it's a touching book with a really killer ending. Warning: A cat dies. But the death of the cat leads, in a believable and real way, to more than one epiphany. There's a realistic "things-are-going-to-be-better-even-if-they-aren't-perfect" ending. And while there are one or two moments where the main character, Jamie, seems a little old for his age, they aren't jarring enough to throw you out of the story. This is a kid who's been through a lot...he would be a mature 10-year old. And Jasmine, his sister, is a wonderful character. Can't wait to see what comes next from Annabel Pitcher's pen. She's one to watch.

An enjoyable read. Purchased for a class, but will keep and reread.

This book dragged on and on with little going on. Boring.

Wonderfully narrated by David Tennant, this is a story for our time. Jamie's sister "lives" on the mantelpiece because she was killed by terrorists, leaving him and the remaining twin with a mother who abandons them physically and a father, consumed with grief and bitterness, who abandons them by way of drinking. The broken family relocates...where Jamie makes a new friend: a Muslim girl. I've listened to this several times. It's a real keeper, and I'll listen to it many times more.

My Sister Lives On the Mantelpiece was the Forever Young Adult book club pick for the month of November and I'm going to be upfront with you guys: I never would have picked it up otherwise. I read so little middle grade and even less contemporary middle grade, and while I still can't say that My Sister Lives On the Mantelpiece was my cup of tea, even I could see how perfectly Annabel Pitcher nailed the voice of her ten year-old main character, Jamie. My brief stint as a substitute teacher let me see writing samples from ten year-olds and yes, it's a little more simplistic than the adult thought process, but it's not dumbed down by any means. They can be very observant. And at times, Jamie's observations were a little horrifying. With a drunk racist for a father, and an absentee mother, frankly, the adults in this book made me a little doubtful about humanity. I loved that the point of view Pitcher chose to take on this was Jamie's. From someone who was closer to his sister, who was killed in the bombing, like her twin or a parent, the novel would have probably focused way more on the grief. With Jamie, it went back somewhat to that observing; how it affected everyone else affected him more than his own grief. Largely it was about a boy who just wanted to live a normal life. But it was a little hard for me to get with the program and connect with Jamie. I couldn't connect with him about grief that he didn't feel, and though there was plenty more to be found in the book's friendship, sibling relationships, and comedic relief, the part that really struck home for me was when Jamie felt a different sort of grief, and was able to connect it to what his father felt. The novel didn't exactly end on a happy note, but it left off on a realistic note: one of hope. To sum up: Not particularly my kind of book, but a quick and short read with a superbly authentic voice that pulled a range of emotions from me, from laughter to horror and sadness to hope.

This is an amazing book, beautifully written through the eyes of a 10 yr old I plan to use it to initiate a conversation with my kid

When the twin sister in the family dies, the adults in that family fall apart. It is left to the two surviving siblings to go on living without any support from their dysfunctional parents. The two main characters, Jas and James, are well defined in this novel. Makes the reader want to adopt the two and show/give them some love. While the book is recommended for young adults, this 70 year old could not put the book down!

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