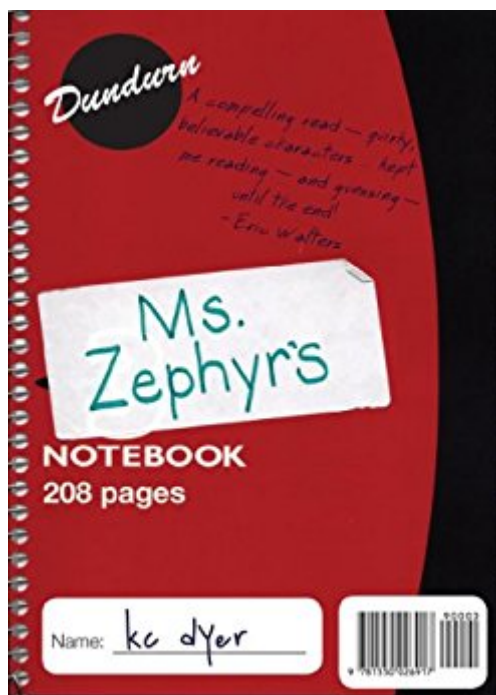


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Ms. Zephyr's Notebook



Synopsis

Commended for the 2008 Best Books for Kids and Teens When Logan Kemp hurls himself into a rugby scrum one morning, he has no idea that by afternoon heâ™ll be fighting for his life. Worse, the only other patient on his ward is a troubled girl named Cleo who may not be hospitalized just for a broken wrist. When all he wants is his regular life back, the thought of Cleo throwing away her own leaves Logan determined to change her mind. Cleopatra Jones wants to design the perfect life; a teenage boy and a few well-meaning health professionals are not going to stand in her way. But Cleo soon finds that life â “ and even death â “ can interfere with the best-laid plans. Both teens reinforce the walls that have kept them safe in their own worlds, but the secrets in a teacherâ™s notebook show them how the word sustenance can have more than one meaning. Facing the biggest challenge of their lives, Logan and Cleo discover the powerful forces of redemption and forgiveness.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Logan Kemp's rugby life is thrown off course by a condition that means he's in the hospital now,

unable to eat what he wants. There he meets perfectionist Cleopatra Jones, who can eat whatever she wants, but has an eating disorder and considers food her enemy. The irony vibrating between these two characters is enriched by the introduction of a third patient, a younger boy named Kip who's waiting for a kidney transplant. KC Dyer frames her story using a hospital teacher's notebook in which these young patients keep their journals. Logan is critical of Cleo at first, but after he starts sneaking a peek at her journal pages, he gradually begins to care about her. The plot starts with the struggle to survive physically, but it moves on to Cleo's escape from the hospital. Kip helps her with her getaway and Logan follows her to make sure she's all right. But Cleo has a destination, and the road trip ends up taking on a whole new meaning for the two teens. Note that the journal entries and prose passages alternate with memos back and forth between doctors, parents, and teachers, giving us a more complete context for our main characters' situation. Weaving all of this together can't have been easy, but Dyer makes it read effortlessly. This story might have been too heavy if it weren't for the brisk, friendly pace along with Logan's wry voice--which provides a nice counterpoint to Cleo's earnest tones and Kip's younger style. Logan is probably the strongest character. He is frustrated and fairly obnoxious, but is nevertheless very appealing. It's nice to see hospitalized teens portrayed as real kids rather than as one-dimensional saints. By the way, the age range listed for this book is 9-12, but I would have said 12-15 was a better target, or at least 9 and up. Any Young Adult reader will enjoy Ms. Zephyr's Notebook for both the characters and the story, but it should have particular power for teens who have either been hospitalized or who are battling eating disorders. You may never meet Abbie Zephyr in these pages, but you'll be glad you took the time to read through her notebook.

For those experiencing the horror of eating disorders, lots of insight and research done on the subject, with humor and caring .

Now, you wouldn't think that a hospital would be the normal setting for the lives of three seemingly normal teens, would you? But, for Kip, hospitals have been as much regular parts of his life as his computer. For Cleopatra, the hospital has become sort of a safe-haven, an escape from her maybe perfect life, if even for a few days, a few moments. And for Logan, the hospital is somewhere where he never thought he'd have to be. He was always meant to be on the rugby field, and never dreamt that the hospital would prevent him from ever going there again. In Miss Zephyr's Notebook, three teen hospital residents communicate about the ups and downs of family life, school, and of growing up locked within the cells of their own minds and bodies, through an in-hospital teacher's notebook

(Ms.Zephyr) Together, they learn about the powers of togetherness, recovery, and the sweetness of all things unexpected.-Reviewed by Jill MacKenzie

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