

Rain Reign

Ann M. Martin

Reviewed by: Kaden Shover, 16

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

www.bethestaryouare.org

Rain Reign is a book by author, Ann M. Martin. Rain and takes place in a town called Hatford, New York. This story is told from the point of view of Rose Howard who is twelve years old and a high-functioning Autistic girl. Rose lives alone with her father Wesley, because her mother left them when Rose was two years old. Rose is obsessed with homophones, words that are pronounced the same but have different meanings and prime numbers. Rose is a very sympathetic character that is very misunderstood by most people in her life, except for her Uncle Weldon who empathizes with her difficulties. She is teased by her classmates and easily angers her father and teachers for her obsessions, outbursts and obsession with rules. The best relationship Rose has is with her pet dog, Rain Reign who is a stray her father found in the rain and brought home. One day a hurricane hits Roses hometown and Rain Reign is lost when her father accidentally lets Rain out. Rose has to change all her routines and overcome her fears to find her.

What I liked best about this book is how accurately and vividly Autism is portrayed, and how resilient Rose is in overcoming her disability while showing others her strength and courage. Her classmates, who make fun of her because of her strange behavior, learn to like and respect her once they meet rain Reign, and empathize with her when Rain is lost. I really liked how the author was able to show what a person with Autism goes through and how hard it is for them to find acceptance for their differences. I also think this is a story about having strong values and convictions. When Rose finally locates Rain at a shelter and discovers her name is actually Olivia, from her microchip, she makes the hard decision to return her to her rightful owners. I believe this book is appropriate for ages 9-14. This is a lesson in acceptance and learning to accept others differences.

I would suggest this book be required reading in school to teach kids about Autism and accepting others who are different. It would be a great gift to teach kids about values and acceptance. Also this book can be found at the library and downloaded as an e book. This book is very inspiring, humorous and sad at times. But in the end it's message and theme is about resiliency, strength and overcoming odds.

Other books I would suggest would be:

Fish in a Tree by Lydia Mullaly Hunt

Half a World Away by Cynthia Kadohata

Stella by Starlight by Sharon M. Draper

Rain Reign

Ann M. Martin

Reviewed by: Amberley Heins

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Rain Reign is a middle grade book narrated by a 12-year-old girl named Rose. Writing this story so that the reader knows what happened to her dog Rain during a hurricane, Rose sets up the plot and setting very clearly right in the beginning of the story. Rose has Asperger's Syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism, and as a result needs rules and schedules to be very clear and consistent in all aspects of her life in order to feel at peace. Rose's father has worked her whole life to try and maintain this balance in Rose's life, but being a single parent and not having the best coping skills often causes his own stress levels to rise when Rose gets agitated.

When Hurricane Susan arrives in her hometown of Hatford, Rose is also confronted with several other factors that completely skew the order in her life. After her school is closed indefinitely and her dog Rain goes missing, Rose grasps onto all the routines she has left to make sense of what has happened. With the help of her uncle Weldon, Rose sets out to find Rain and bring her home as soon as possible.

Review: This is an outstanding middle grade book for a couple of reasons. First, it deals with very real issues in a manner that is appropriate and Rose's responses are very accurate for a 12-year-old girl. Rose is not only dealing with her missing dog but she has to confront the sadness and loneliness she feels as a result of that, which can be especially difficult for a person with Asperger's, but there are also more complex issues especially surrounding Wesley, Rose's dad. Wesley became a father at 21 and then was put in a position to raise his daughter alone from the age of 23 onward. This is made all the more difficult by the lack of family support Wesley has besides his brother Weldon, and the fact that he is utterly unequipped to handle some of the behaviors Rose exhibits because of her disability. Throughout all of these events Martin portrays Rose's reactions and coping mechanisms really well and makes it entirely believable. The aspect of the writing that I respect the most is how Martin treats Rose's disability is how she writes it as one of the many characteristics Rose has, rather than the main thrust of the story. It is easy to see how this novel would still be worth reading whether Rose had Asperger's Syndrome or not.

I bought this book and intend to donate to my local school's library. I would recommend this book to anyone ages 12 and up.

Other Suggestions:

Rules – Cynthia Lord

Out of my Mind – Sharon Draper

Wonder – RJ Palacio