

Three Quarters Dead

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Three Quarters Dead follows Kerry Williamson as she transforms from a friendless high school freshman to the newest member of the popular clique. Ever since Kerry's best (and only) friend went off to boarding school, Kerry has obsessively observed Tanya, McKenzie, and Natalie, wishing she could be as well-liked, graceful, and knowledgeable. After weeks of eavesdropping over the lunch period, Kerry's dream comes true: Tanya, the clique's leader, invites her to eat with them. Tanya and the others lead Kerry around like a pet, telling her how to act, and to "try to keep up." Kerry believes she is part of the group – even after they convince her to break into another girl's house during a horrible Halloween prank and then leave her stranded when the girl's mother catches her red handed.

Kerry is desperate for approval as she tags along with the older girls until a terrible accident occurs, separating her from them permanently – or so she thinks. At this point the novel enters the realm of fantasy as Kerry continues to get texts from the supposedly dead Tanya. Kerry converses with the three spirits of her once- mentors and discovers Tanya's ability to command the attention of others is due to a unique power over time. Kerry tries to pull herself back to reality as Tanya tries to live through Kerry's experiences. Through Kerry's struggle with social dependence and the realization of her own initiative, this novel creatively, yet eerily, depicts the pressure to be popular in high school.

Three Quarters Dead is labeled Children's fiction but I recommend this novel to teens and older. The Halloween prank alone is frightening enough to cause nightmares, and should only be exposed to those ready to handle more adult topics such as death and abortion. I caution readers younger than high school age to read this book, as it may give a too extreme account of the high school experience.