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All We Have Left



Synopsis

Now: Sixteen-year-old Jesse is used to living with the echoes of the past. Her older brother died in the September 11th attacks, and her dad since has filled their home with anger and grief. When Jesse gets caught up with the wrong crowd, one momentary hate-fueled decision turns her life upside down. The only way to make amends is to face the past, starting Jesse on a journey that will reveal the truth about how her brother died. Then: In 2001, sixteen-year-old Alia is proud to be Muslim . . . it's being a teenager that she finds difficult. After being grounded for a stupid mistake, Alia decides to confront her father at his Manhattan office, putting her in danger she never could have imagined. When the planes collide into the Twin Towers, Alia is trapped inside one of the buildings. In the final hours, she meets a boy who will change everything for her as the flames rage around them . . . Interweaving stories from past and present, *All We Have Left* brings one of the most important days in our recent history to life, showing that love and hope will always triumph.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The minute I read the description for *All We Have Left* on NetGalley, I knew it was a book I JUST HAD TO HAVE. I've never read a 9/11 book except for Jeffery Archer's *False Impressions*, and so a young adult book, with a description so gorgeous and a cover to match was on the top of my to read list! I realized that maybe everybody's story is important, because 9/11 didn't just happen to the people that died, it happened to the entire country. Jesse was two years old when the event that changed America happened. The Crash of the Twin Towers. The end of the world as everyone knew it. The event that's aftermath still goes on today. Jesse's brother was

in the towers but nobody knows why. Nobody talks about Travis. Heâ€™s the black hole in their lives, the one everyone avoids, because Travis with his whole life ahead of him, had brutally lost his lives in the towers that day. All Travis has become today is how and where he died, and nothing else. And Jesse is angry. Angry at being the kid nobody really wants, angry at trying to live her life as small as possible so that she doesnâ€™t get in her parents way. Angry at the people that stole her brother away from her; the family she could have had if those people hadnâ€™t ripped them apart. â€œWith their clumsy stories they are saying: â€˜We all felt it. We remember where we were when the world changed.â€™â€ Alia just wanted to convince her father to send her to art school. And so she ran into the North Tower one fine morning, not knowing that her being there would change her life forever.

When it comes to YA literature, I am usually a bit restless at the constant pushing of love triangles and the follow-the-leader revolving door of plots. Fortunately, Wendy Mills is pretty much able to transcend both of those YA stereotypes by crafting a novel that will pull at 9/11 memories while also piecing together a dual-narrative plot that sets up an emotional conclusion. â€œAll We Have Leftâ€ is told from these two perspectives: -Alia is just starting her Muslim journey (wearing the head scarf) on September 11, 2001. She badly wants to attend the art school that her parents forbid, and finally gathers the courage to stand firm and confront her father about it. Her father works near the top of one of the World Trade Center towers. -In the present day (2016), teenaged Jesseâ€™s life is falling apart. After her brother died on 9/11, her mother moved out and her father takes his anger out on the Muslim community. Second brother Hank hasnâ€™t been heard from in four years. Itâ€™s a bad situation for all involved. Jesse uses rock climbing as her outlet and through that meets a similarly-aged boy who will inadvertently launch her on a journey to find out just what happened to her brother on that fateful day. The hallmark of this novel is the dual-narrative structure. The reader will quickly begin to understand that that certain events are going to converge, but itâ€™s utterly fascinating how it all plays out. Itâ€™s kind of like a television show using flashbacks, except perhaps even more emotionally relevant because the emotions of one character are used to define and other and vice versa. Itâ€™s a rather long read as YA lit goes, but as the two plotlines continue to converge you will find yourself racing through each page.

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