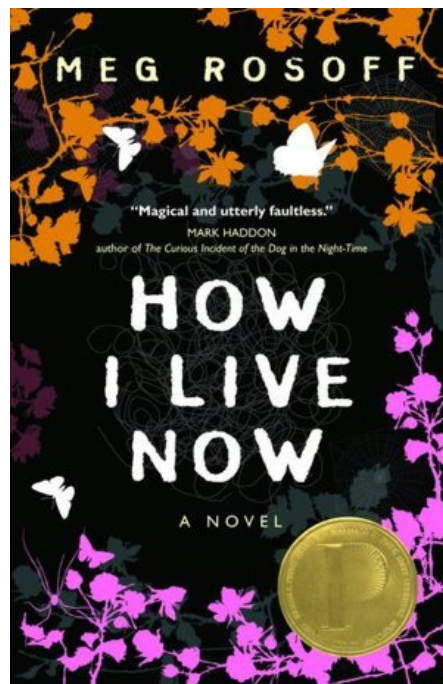




How I Live Now

Meg Rosoff

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"Every war has turning points and every person too."

Fifteen-year-old Daisy is sent from Manhattan to England to visit her aunt and cousins she's never met: three boys near her age, and their little sister. Her aunt goes away on business soon after Daisy arrives. The next day bombs go off as London is attacked and occupied by an unnamed enemy.

As power fails, and systems fail, the farm becomes more isolated. Despite the war, it's a kind of Eden, with no adults in charge and no rules, a place where Daisy's uncanny bond with her cousins grows into something rare and extraordinary. But the war is everywhere, and Daisy and her cousins must lead each other into a world that is unknown in the scariest, most elemental way.

A riveting and astonishing story.

How I Live Now Details

Date : Published November 30th 2004 by Wendy Lamb Books (first published January 1st 2004)

ISBN : 9780553376050

Author : Meg Rosoff

Format : Paperback 194 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fiction, Science Fiction, Dystopia, Romance, War, Teen, Apocalyptic, Post Apocalyptic, Adventure, Survival, Coming Of Age

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From Reader Review How I Live Now for online ebook

Nick says

SO FREAKING GOOD!!!

Kate says

how i live now has been called a modern-day Jane Eyre – which I can dig, had Bronte's novel been set during a terrorist occupation and featured incestuous teenage romance. (St John Rivers doesn't count.) Fleeing a disinterested father, a wicked stepmother, and an eating disorder, 15-year-old Daisy moves to England to live with her cousins on a farm. Their idyllic adventures are interrupted by a war with an unnamed, unseen enemy, and the children are forced to go on the run as food, water, and eventually hope begin to run out.

how i live now is excellent on a number of levels. The plot is well-constructed, with Daisy retelling her story from the future by dropping ominous hints through foreshadowing. Some critics complain about Daisy's unique brand of grammar, erratic sentence structure, and Random Capitalization, but I believe the style Rosoff selected for her anti-heroine reinforces the confusion in Daisy's own mind as well as the chaos of the war. The circumstances surrounding the war are eerily relevant to the type of unstructured, viral attacks facing the world today, and the cousins' initially blase attitude towards the seemingly distant enemy is realistic. Although I was disoriented by the narrative jump forward from Daisy's rescue to six years after the war, I found the conclusion satisfying and powerful – even though I knew I would miss the family as soon as I turned that last page.

Check out a cool "trailer" for this Printz winner at Expanded Books: <http://www.brightcove.com/title.jsp?t...>

Shannon (Giraffe Days) says

While the world wavers on the brink of war, struck by terrorist attacks and embargoes, Daisy's big concern is whether her stepmother is poisoning her food and how much she hates the unborn baby. Shipped off by her father to stay with cousins she's never met in England, she's not so far into herself that she doesn't notice something a bit odd about them.

Osbert, the eldest, seems fairly normal, being responsible for his siblings while their mother, Daisy's Aunt Penn, is away but really wanting to spend time with his friends spying on the enemy. Twins Edmond and Isaac are the most strange. Edmond can hear her thoughts and silent Isaac prefers to talk to the farm animals. The youngest, Piper, is a sweet girl who has a way with animals too, and likes to forage in the woods for things to eat.

Daisy doesn't eat. She's made herself anorexic through her fanciful fear of her stepmother poisoning her, and then it became something she didn't have to think about.

When Aunt Penn leaves for Oslo to help with peace negotiations, the five children are left alone at the old farmhouse. They feel far removed from any conflict, and hear conflicting reports. Warnings of small-pox keep people practically housebound, and idle days lead to an intense relationship between Daisy and her

cousin Edmond.

Finally, the Territorial Army comes and commandeers the house and land for their own use, and Daisy and Piper are sent to live with a Major's wife whose son is fighting elsewhere. Daisy's one goal is to get back to Edmond and the farmhouse, but first she must figure out where Edmond and Isaac have been taken, and how to get there.

I had heard high praise of this book - with such a boring cover, I probably wouldn't have read it otherwise. I certainly never *noticed* it. But it was a hugely disappointing read.

I can see what the author was aiming for here: to show how desensitised young people are to war and violence, and also how they can rise to the occasion and what they go through to survive. There are lots of exceptional stories about these themes; I wrote an assignment on them for my teaching degree. I just don't think Rosoff did a very good job. Also, it piggy-backs on some better novels that deal with the same or similar themes and situations. As with *The Hunger Games*, an enjoyable book that can be read as a Hollywood rewrite of *Battle Royale*, *How I Live Now* simply reminded me of far better books - especially John Marsden's *Tomorrow, When the War Began*.

Written in a stream-of-consciousness first-person narration in two parts, the first part meant to show Daisy's underdeveloped ability to write "properly" because she doesn't know how to write dialogue, as compared to the second part written six years later, it can be exhausting to read. Melinda in *Speak* narrated in similar style but to better effect. Daisy's voice runs on with barely a breath and gives it a rushed feeling, so that details were hard to take in and I sometimes became disorientated. As an example of her running sentences, here's her description of Edmond:

Now let me tell you what he looks like before I forget because it's not exactly what you'd expect from your average fourteen-year-old what with the CIGARETTE and hair that looked like he cut it himself with a hatchet in the dead of night, but aside from that he's exactly like some kind of mutt, you know the ones you see at the dog shelter who are kind of hopeful and sweet and put their nose straight into your hand when they meet you with a certain kind of dignity and you know from that second that you're going to take him home? Well that's him. (p. 3)

It made me dizzy. Sure her exuberance could be seen as energising, or at least realistic, but Daisy was such an unlikeable character for the better part of the book that it's hard to listen to her. Sure, she's vulnerable and yes, she did seem to be a realistic portrayal of self-centred modern teens, and she would doubtless appeal to others for her frankness and inner vulnerability, but to me she was empty, hollow. For someone who's narrating, I didn't learn much about her, and through her shallow eyes I learnt only superficial things about others.

Likewise, I didn't buy her relationship with Edmond. She talks about how intense it is, how they connect, but I can't buy it because she never *shows* me. She never shows anything, just tells tells tells. I've read some very good books with first-person narration that, through the author's skill, manage to reveal more than the narrator realises, so that the reader has an even better understanding of what's going on than the narrator does, even though they're our only source. There's nothing of that here. And since I couldn't get to know any of the characters, I couldn't care about them either.

I was expecting more, to be honest, on all fronts. This is a decidedly lacklustre book and the more I talk about it the less impressed I become. The war situation is never explained in a way that makes sense, so it's more like an annoying gnat trying to get your attention but just isn't important enough to. Daisy says the enemy drew the British troops somewhere else then swooped in and took the country and now defend it from

the original army. Okay. But that then creates a very interesting situation of invader and occupier that is barely touched upon. Want to convince me that Daisy IS in a war zone? Rationing, send the kids off to strangers, shoot a couple of people, a massacre at a farmhouse - yeah, that should do it.

Huh. No.

When you read books written by people who lived through invasions and occupations, who lived through war - books like *Suite Française* for example - you really notice that people being shot is the least of it. It's so much more than that. The elements are here, such as the disintegration of Aunt Penn's family, but it lacks any kind of real emotional involvement. Keep it superficial and hope the reader will fill in the gaps with their imagination? Nice try, but you're missing the point. The only satisfying thing about this survival tale is Daisy learning to eat - the smartest thing she does.

There are other things that nag at me. Quite possibly the reason Rosoff set this story in England is because she now lives there, having moved from America - but it's more than that. For a century England has been the place of children's war stories, Narnia being the most famous. I grew up exposed to many more through books and BBC adaptations, and my mother is a big fan of these stories. There's something about England, captured in Narnia and fantasy books like *Mythago Wood*, that draw on its druidic roots and ancient magic that makes England a place that straddles the line between realms, that makes it a place of possibility and secret gardens and all sorts of things.

Moving Daisy to England seemed a bit redundant, because it wasn't utilised to its full effectiveness. So her cousins were misfits, being telepathic and the like - with so much potential between the war and England's magic and mind powers, it's no wonder I was expecting something with more oomph. Daisy glosses over so many things, never fully explaining or delving into things so that everything becomes almost trite, that I struggled to finish it. My main emotional response a lot of the time was "So?"

Depending on the laws of your country, cousinly love isn't technically incestuous - but there is definitely something a bit creepy about it. The father of Aunt Penn's children is never revealed, but considering the children's oddness it could be thought their parents were cousins themselves. Because the relationship didn't feel real to me, not the way it was written (and I'm not asking for graphic sex scenes, far from it!), it didn't feel *necessary* either.

Add it all up, and you get a quick in-and-out survival story told by someone who's really quite boring and, yes, a product of her (our) times and not a flattering one either - but the novel fails to really explore anything, and what could have been insightful observations, gripping plot and engaging characters merely becomes flaws. The magic that should come with setting a children's war survival story in England is completely missing. A shame, but like I said, there are better books out there.

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

Actual rating: 3.5

"I guess there was a war going on somewhere in the world that night but it wasn't one that could touch us."

Recommended with some reservations.

I read this book on accident. By "accident," I don't mean I mistakenly read a book instead when I thought I had been playing *Plants vs. Zombies 2* ~~I'm not that stupid~~, I meant that I picked up this book thinking the

story would be something else. During World War II in England, there was an operation to evacuate children from the larger cities to more rural areas of England to keep them safe from possible airstrikes from the Axis forces. This has been the basis of some stories I've enjoyed, most notably in the *Narnia* series, and the Noel Streatfield novel *When the Sirens Wailed*. I've also watched my fair share of TV episodes based on this premise, so that is the reason why I started reading this book.

I thought this was going to be a book based on a WWII evacuation. I clearly didn't read the word "MANHATTAN" in the freaking first sentence of the summary, nor did I see the "SCI-FI" tag, because **I sometimes have an annoying tendency to read only what I want to see**. Still, the premise is an interesting one, so I continued with the book. It didn't sound so bad at all, really, quite solidly in my forte when I think about it. A war, survival, love, maturity...all up my forte. Cousinly love? Whatever, I've got no problems with that in fiction, as long as it's believably built. Hell, I've read my fair share of worst incestuous relationships. This book just might turn out awesomely after all, despite not being what I initially signed up for.

This was a short book, but within the first 25 pages, I was sure I would give this book a 2. Things improved, but it took a good 50% of the book for me to begin enjoying it.

The problem is the narrator, Elizabeth (known throughout this book as Daisy). She is a 15 year old originally from Manhattan, and my first impression of her was not good. **She was a little bitch**. I hated her for most of the book. Her narrative was what gave me so much trouble; she is so selfish, so self-centered, so utterly self-absorbed. I didn't like her, I didn't trust her, and to me, she was an unreliable narrator because her view of the world is so skewed...as in completely focused upon ME ME ME.

"No matter how much you put on a sad expression and talked about how awful it was that all those people were killed and what about democracy and the Future of Our Great Nation the fact that none of us kids said out loud was that WE DIDN'T REALLY CARE. Most of the people who got killed were either old like our parents so they'd had good lives already, or people who worked in banks and were pretty boring anyway, or other people we didn't know."

Daisy is spoiled and a pain in the ass. Her mother died giving birth to her, and in essence, Daisy thinks of herself as a murderer, having killed someone as she draws her first breath. Her father remarried a woman named Davina...and Jesus, how Daisy hates Davina.

"...Davina the Diabolical, who sucked my father's soul out through his you know what and then got herself knocked up with the devil's spawn which, when it pops out, Leah and I are going to call Damian even if it's a girl."

Her pettiness and attitude towards her mother is not uncommon, but Daisy's hatred is so spiteful and bitter and over the top that I can't help but hate her for it. Daisy yammers on for a considerable amount of time about how she hates Davina...but **it's never made completely clear WHY we should hate Davina so much besides for the very fact that she happened to be the woman who married her father**.

Oh, and apparently Daisy's got **an eating disorder**. How did she become this way?

"I really tried to explain about at first **not wanting to get poisoned by my stepmother and how much it annoyed her** and how after a while I discovered I liked the feeling of being hungry and the fact that **it drove everyone stark raving mad and cost my father a fortune in shrinks** and also it was something I was good at."

Yeah...she's not the most likeable character. Her first-person narrative style also drove me crazy. The story is written almost from a stream of consciousness style, and it really annoyed me. Added to my dislike of the

main character, and I was not a happy reader for the first half of the book. I just wanted to yell at Daisy "What? Are you too fucking good to use quotation marks for speech like everyone else?"

Little bitch. I seriously hated Daisy.

She is a really, really self-centered narrator. There is a war going on, she doesn't seem to care. Daisy seems more concerned about her own problems and her *womp womp* sad poor-little-rich-girl life than anyone else around her, even when a bomb goes off in London and the world descends into chaos. For the first half of the book, her descriptions of the war and its devastation are described coldly, impersonally, there is no sense of danger, of mortality, of impending doom. **Daisy is so detached from it all, in her own egotistical little mind.**

"That was a bomb that went off in the middle of a big train station in London the day after Aunt Penn went to Oslo and **something like seven or seventy thousand people got killed.** This obviously went over very badly with the populace at large and was pretty scary etc. but to be honest it didn't seem to have that much to do with us way off in the country."

Everything from the war is described similarly in this impersonal, disinterested manner. It frustrated me to no ends. Daisy does grow up, she does mature...she does wake up from her ostrich-in-the-sand status when things literally hit close to home, and her character grows in complexity, although so gradually that I hardly noticed it happening myself. **I actually enjoyed the subtlety of her character development.**

I did not like the other characters in this book. I didn't feel like anyone else besides Daisy had a personality besides herself, most likely because **Daisy's personality is so obnoxious that it overpowers everything surrounding it.** Piper is the perfect princess, Isaac is the autistic twin, Osbert is the pompous prick of an older brother, Edmond is the *clutches pearl* cousinly love interest...and he is just dull.

I have nothing against incest in fiction, I really don't. Cousin-cousin relationships are even less shocking, but there is a way of building up these sorts of relationships to make them believable and I just did not buy the concept of Daisy & Edmond in this book. Edmond is just...weird. He's a short little 14-year old who was smoking a cigarette when they first met, and he seems to be able to read Daisy's mind. Edmond was such a creepy character for me, and their interactions were so limited so that when they began a physical relationship, I was utterly astounded at how fast and how wrong it felt. **It's not the nature of the cousin/cousin relationship that bothers me, it's the implausibility of it.**

My favorite part about the book---when it FINALLY came---was the survival aspect. Without the knowledge that this book is set in present-time, this book could easily have been set in the 1940s, there is a timelessness in how it feels, but that's perhaps intrinsic in a story of this nature. Working for the war effort, struggling to find resources, banding together to help one another, facing the immediate danger from home, as well as from the enemy. All these, I reveled in. The latter half of the book was far superior to the first even if I was disappointed by the book overall.

Christina White says

Horrible. This book contained inappropriate content for the recommended 13 year old and up readers. An anorexic 15 year old has sex with her "cool", cigarette smoking cousin. This book is everything you wouldn't want your 13 year old reading about. On top of the disgusting content I found there to be really no plot and no real clear resolution or ending. The characters were strangers to me the entire time while reading. I found the whole story rather boring and pointless.

PLOT:3/20
CREATIVITY:3/20
WRITING::8/20
CHARACTERS:7/20
ENDING:2/10
COVER:5/10
OVERALL GRADE:28/100=F

Wendy Darling says

2.5 stars I'd heard so many raves about this book that I was expecting to be blown away. The idea of a futuristic setting for a historical war type drama sounded intriguing to me, and I wasn't turned off by the controversial topics covered in it, including the kissing cousins. So it's very strange to read the entire novel without feeling a single genuine emotion other than annoyance at both the characters and the plot.

The war setting and story was perfectly serviceable, though not one that was particularly affecting or unusual. I had no idea who any of these characters were or what they thought or felt, except in what was related to me through Daisy. And Daisy herself is supposed to be smart alecky and funny, I guess, except that I didn't find her to be particularly likable, relatable, or compelling. The writing style, with its run-on sentences, lack of punctuation, distant voice, jumbled sequencing, all-capped sentences, and rampant overuse of "clever" capitalization to Signify Things of Subtle Humor, was also not one I particularly cared for.

You expect that a novel that touches on war, death, separation, hunger, and incest to be one that will move you in some way, and I suppose I'm in the minority since the book has a lot of fans and even won the Printz award. I'm disappointed to find that this one evoked very little emotion in me other than impatience and irritation.

Tatiana says

What a weird little book! Granted, I am into weird, but "How I Live Now" just wasn't my kind of weird I guess.

There were many things I liked about the story - the fact that it didn't fit in any genre (it started as a story of an anorexic girl, then morphed into some kind of dystopia and then became a survival story), I liked Daisy's voice - snarky and witty with a healthy dose of unreasonableness and selfishness, the portrayal of war was gritty, and Daisy's personal struggle with weight was fairly compelling in spite of the fact that she obviously used anorexia as a means to divert her father's attention from her stepmom to herself.

But there was a lot of stuff that I questioned, especially glorification of underage incestuous sex. I see this very often in YA these days and always wonder what is the purpose of such a creative choice? I am pretty sure that "How I Live Now" would have been just as good without these add-ons. But mainly, I finished reading the book with "so what" kind of feeling and a complete disinterest in exploring Rosoff's other works, and it is always a sign for me that the book was not too great or memorable.

Jill says

This summer I started doing more fitnessy activities not in an attempt to lose weight or clear my prematurely blocked arteries but in response to the plethora of Young Adult Dystopian Novels that led me to question whether I could a) win the Hunger Games b) jump from a moving train with my Dauntless buddies c) take out an alien with a swift kick to the face and then evade their hot spaceship pursuit. The answers to these questions are a) no b) no c) no.

Young Adult Dystopian Novels forced me to stare fate straight in the eye: if removed from my cushy existence by a twist of apocalyptic fate, I would die. I would die *every single time*.

Refusing to accept this, I began a workout regimen to guarantee my survival. But then I read *How I Live Now* and my resolve is weakening. **Because Daisy, who charmingly narrates her experiences during a world war, is no Teen Action Hero. She reacts how the vast majority of us would in dire circumstances: not by staging a coup or leading the resistance, but by surviving as best as she can.** Now I'm left wondering if my pushups and jogs are even worth anything—if the world fell apart, I'd probably just stay in my basement trying to stop my towering piles of canned goods from toppling over. And face it: so would you.

So that's what's so refreshing about this novel. It's about normal people. The people that most of us would be during all out world war. The people simply trying to survive. That's Daisy's story. **It's a story of survival in extreme circumstances and then learning to accept those circumstances as her life forevermore.** After finishing the novel, I can't help but wonder whether humankind's immense adaptability is a strength or a weakness. It's wonderful how Daisy and so many others find new ways to live after catastrophe, but isn't it sad how quickly we humans adapt to a less than perfect world? How easily content we become with nothing?

Meg Rosoff is an excellent writer and demonstrates her skill most readily with Daisy's voice. **The novel is first person with Daisy recounting her experiences after the fact. The most incredible thing? Daisy actually sounds like a teenager.** Aside from one too many SAT words, *How I Live Now* truly reads like a teenager talks. Daisy's narration is witty (suggesting that we can find humor even in the darkest moments) and her experiences are recorded in the same way she might have submitted an essay to her English teacher on the first day of school titled "What I Did During Summer Vacation [When Bombs Hit Britain and This Manhattanite Was Stuck On the Wrong Side of the Atlantic During World War Three With Her Very Hot Cousin]."

I've seen many reviewers object to the novel's incestuous relationship. The incest is quite secondary and it's included in the plotline to show how something scandalous in normal times is entirely irrelevant—even laughably unimportant—in times where people care more about 1. dying in a nuclear attack 2. dying by gunfire 3. dying from starvation 4. dying from infection 5. DYING.

"I guess there was a war going on somewhere in the world that night but it wasn't one that could touch us."

How I Live Now may have destroyed any motivation I had to go running tomorrow, but I'm glad I read it. **I want to read more books—especially in YA—about the people who aren't overtly special, who aren't the Chosen Ones. Daisy is a normal teenage girl facing an extraordinary situation. She is a reminder that life persists even in epochs of death.**

PS There is a film adaptation coming soon starring the lovely Saoirse Ronan (trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSaxm6...>). The movie Daisy seems to be more badass than she was in the book, but it was the film's approaching release date that urged me to read this sooner rather than later and I'm happy I did.

Steph Sinclair says

I encourage you all to read this beautiful piece by Kaye M.: <https://medium.com/@gildedspine/this-...>

For more info: <http://bibliodaze.com/2015/10/the-unb...>

Ellen Gail says

I have no earthly idea what is wrong with me. I couldn't finish this tiny ass < 200 page book. Look at how tiny it is. Here's the paperback compared to a standard cat.

I should have finished this in an hour, maybe two. Instead I have spent a solid week trying to read this and failing.

(I then tried *again* over a year later, and was just as unimpressed.)

I ended up getting through just over half. It's likely that I'll give *How I Live Now* another try sometime in the future. It's not aggressively bad or anything. But for right now the writing style is annoying me, the characters are uninspiring, and the story feels entirely hollow. There's a lot missing. No emotion, no dialogue, nothing to make me keep reading.

I want to like it more than I do, but after a week of stops and starts and at least four boredom naps, right now it's not the book for me.

Julio Genao says

takes some balls for a white woman to claim that she's the only one who can write diversity properly.

she wears her privilege like a pimp wears his furs.

but the best part tho is the bit where she says that when anyone else writes diverse characters, it's an "agenda," which has no place in young adult literature, according to her.

no, for real.

that's literally what she said.

so.

fuck *your* needs, people—this white lady's ragey pootling is all the diversity you or your kids will ever require.

s'cool tho. some of her best friends are black.

Lauren says

I spent a while considering how I would rate this book, but finally decided on a full 5/5 rating, and here's why:

It troubles me greatly that so many readers can't see past the unconventional relationship between our protagonist and her cousin, because it so wholly isn't what the book is about. That's the only real downfall of "How I live Now"--unfortunately, Meg Rosoff seemed to target her book towards an audience too immature to realize that this novel is a novel about SURVIVAL. It's a novel about how people change when faced with hardship and how people can come together in the oddest of ways. It's about family. It's about love. It's about hate. Meg Rosoff has a unique gift of just giving the reader the bare bones of a story--that is to say, no surnames are given, little background about the characters is revealed in depth, the enemy is referred to solely as just that, "The Enemy"--and still making a profound impact. This is a novel about people and our determination to survive even in the face of hopelessness.

Stylistically, this book is stunning. The prose is insightful and puzzling, but necessary given the circumstances of the novel. Finally, a book which reads as if the narrator is actually recalling events, rather than the artificially produced recollection of events and conversations, verbatim, which we have grown so used to.

I sincerely hope that people reading this book will start focusing on the beauty of the story--the prose, the characters, the structure which is at once remarkably simplistic and stunningly complex--and stop focusing on details which are not entirely pertinent to the story at large.

Kat Kennedy says

[image error]

Katja says

This book is one of my favorites. I love Rosoff's simple writing, which has a massive effect on the book. Another reviewer wrote how the story is not - which would be the obvious assumption - about the love

between Daisy and Edmond. It's about survival and how people come together in unexpected ways caused by the circumstances. I agree.

I think I gasped out loud when I realized I was on the second last page of the book. "How I Live Now" is beautiful in its simplicity and it's one that sticks with you. Read it!

Read in July 2010
and March 2013

The Serendipity Aegis ~ ?Misericordia? ?????? ✿*♥? says

The world has gone mad... What is there to add more?

While the book was a bit overly simplistic, there was something endearing about it.

The 4 stars is for the unorthodox punctuation.

Q:

Every war has turning points and every person too. (c)

Q:

If you haven't been in a war and are wondering how long it takes to get used to losing everything you think you need or love, I can tell you the answer is no time at all. (c)

Q:

I noticed that once you realize someone's watching you it's pretty hard not to find yourself watching them back. (c)

Q:

Staying alive was what we did to pass the time. (c)

Q:

I didn't seem to have that effect on anyone but it would have been a waste for both of us to be saints. (c)

Q:

The real truth is that the war didn't have much to do with it except that it provided a perfect limbo in which two people who were too young and too related could start kissing without anything or anyone making us stop. (c)

Q:

I was pretty far gone, but not so far gone that I thought anyone with half a toehold in reality would think what we were doing was a good idea. (c)

Q:

Fighting back is what I've discovered I do best. (?)

Q:

some people are lonely for all the right reasons (c)

Q:

Things Happen and once they start happening you pretty much just have to hold on for dear life and see where they drop you when they stop. (c)

l a i n e y says

Well, it's official - I am a total sucker for a stream-of-consciousness style narration.

The writing was very wistful and if it was any more flowing, I would certainly have slipped and face-planted

half way through this!

You know how from time to time a book comes along that you're positive you won't forget about it anytime soon but can't really explain exactly *WHY*? That's how I feel about How I Live Now and these precious kids.

Charming surrounding, **extraordinarily charming** characters (ohmigod Piper!!), in the mist of cruelty, death and loss all around...

- The desperation of it just got to me so hard, the crying that I did (view spoiler).... And not just tears down my face, it was a passionate and ugly cry. Stunned me too how much I ended up feeling for these kids.

Kim Mai Guest is a narrator for this audiobook and damn! If it wasn't one of the best female voice performance I'd ever heard! As Daisy, she is this side of perfect: smooth reading with a little flippancy thrown in which was *exactly* how I imagine Daisy's voice would be.

Ps. I alternated between the book and the audio. Loved, loved them both equally.

karen says

i may just be giving this five stars out of surprise... i was dreading reading all these teen books - not all of them look bad or anything, but there are just so many and i am so far away from my teenage years... but this one is a hoot! (if a book about war and death and eating disorders and all horrible things can be said to be a hoot.for my purposes i say yes) i liked the characters voice, it was just the right combination of faux-sophistication and vulnerability. and all the survival stuff was great, it reminds me of my all-time favorite childrens book which i may write a review for later. and now i am really looking forward to my class!! meet me at the mall!

Ariel says

THIS WAS SO EXCELLENT, YAY.

The good things:

- The stream of consciousness type thing that was going on here was so interesting. It wasn't nonsensical in anyway, but it really felt like this was a girl telling a story at us, but for her own benefit.
- The quotation marks: there was none, and they added to this whole sense of "this is her story not ours." Except without those quotation marks.
- The survivalness: It got real out there, peeps. Painful and dirty.
- The voice: it was unwavering and resolute and hers. It belonged to Daisy and not the author.
- Isolation: There was a real sense of loneliness and limitation. We could see nothing but what Daisy saw. And we were limited by her own lack of knowledge, etc.
- How the war felt so distant and unimportant even though it was continually the problem.

The not so good things:

- I'm not sold on the ending. It just, it didn't, I felt like.. it fell a little flat. HOWEVER, the more I process it how the heck else was this supposed to end? I think I feel like it didn't match the rest of the book, because I flew through it so quickly, but after all maybe it wasn't so bad.

Also, this book really reminded me of a story idea I have had for a very long time and really made me want to pick it back up and finish it off!

MUCH RECOMMENDED, FOLKS.

Maureen says

This book took a while to get into, but once you get used to the writing style it's really captivating and wonderful.

Maggie Stiefvater says

I didn't like this weird little book until about halfway through. The narrator sounded too much like a teen (I know, I know) and I didn't know what was going on . . . but then I somehow got lost in the voice. Suddenly I was seeing things through the narrator's eyes and no one else's. This slim volume is like a textbook on how to write limited first person. Absolutely excellent.

wondering why all my reviews are five stars? Because I'm only reviewing my favorite books -- not every book I read. Consider a novel's presence on my Goodreads bookshelf as a hearty endorsement. I can't believe I just said "hearty." It sounds like a stew.*
