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Seventeen



Synopsis

Imagine a world where everything you grew up with is gone. No TV, no internet, no shopping centres... and no adults. When a catastrophic virus kills everyone above the age of seventeen, life on Earth becomes a battle for survival. As the virus hits Australia, sisters Lexi and Hadley find themselves alone and vulnerable. With the increasing threat, they no longer feel safe in their home and flee the city in search of a safe place to live. Seeking sanctuary, the girls head to the small town of Jasper, a remote coastal town in the Western Australian countryside. They soon discover that the quiet town is not as peaceful as it first seemed. The girls are thrown into a bitter conflict, leading to mistrust, betrayal and murder. In a world without adults and without rules, they must decide who they can trust... before it is too late.

Book Information

File Size: 903 KB

Print Length: 334 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 1541008898

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Creativia; 2 edition (December 28, 2016)

Publication Date: December 28, 2016

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01N7F1OB1

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #33,980 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #15

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > Australian &

Oceanian #38 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Mysteries & Thrillers >

Thrillers & Suspense #82 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Literature &

Fiction > Action & Adventure > Survival Stories

Customer Reviews

Ah, the dystopian novel, quickly becoming a favorite of mine. Here Suzanne Lowe gives us what most teenagers probably think they want - no adults - and quickly teaches them to be careful what they wish for. Sisters Lexi and Hadley are Australian teens orphaned by the adult killing virus known as KV17. Safe for only a short time in their family home, eventually they set off to find security with others like them. Lexi and Hadley are welcomed into the community of Jasper's Bay by the surviving young inhabitants and set about making a new life. As it turns out, it isn't as easy as adults made it look and they struggle. Pepper in a sadistic antagonist named Broc and his band of cruel misfits, KV17 mutating into God only knows what, and Lexi quickly reaching the age of uncertainty and you have *Seventeen*; 337 pages of dark foreboding mixed with just the right amount of lighthearted humor, the quintessential good people versus evil people conflict, and a story that will resonate with any teen or young adult. Fully fleshed out characters, realistic scenarios, and exemplary writing garners this novel a five star review.

One of the greatest fears young adults and teenagers face is the sudden, unavoidable change of their way of life, which goes a long way to explaining the popularity of dystopian literature in YA. *Seventeen* by Suzanne Lowe is an excellent examination of what would happen to children if the world was suddenly without adults thanks to a deadly, fast-spreading virus. Lowe is relentless in her storytelling, with a sense of ominous dread hanging over the book from the very first page. She doesn't let up, artfully combining moments of apparent relief with devastation and despair. It is also particularly refreshing to read a YA dystopian novel that is set somewhere other than North America. In this case, Lowe's native Australia, a land that offers a whole range of unique possibilities for the genre. I can highly recommend this book for young adults, as well as those not quite young adults who still enjoy a good dystopian thrill.

Young Lexi, aged sixteen, and her sister, Hadley, aged twelve are left to look after themselves after their parents die of a mystery virus. It appears that all the adults in the world have died. These sisters struggle to survive in their home without their parents, but realise they are not safe and decide to move to a smaller town, where they hope to find children in a similar position. They do find a community of sorts but it is beset by incursions from a marauding gang, led by troubled teen, Broc. Unfortunately Broc's idea of fun involves cruelty and torture. I can believe that there would be kids who love to cause trouble and that this sort of thing would probably occur if adults and law and order were removed from the equation.

After a plane crashes in far away Japan, a family in Australia soon find their lives facing deadly circumstances and a physical, emotional and mental journey that tests the survival skills of the two surviving daughters, Lexi and Hadley. Alone, the two young teenagers travel to a nearby city to escape the dangers created by a deadly virus that afflicts only adults. Subsequently, they encounter town leadership in a smaller and "safer" city in which the oldest city leader is seventeen years of age. After being accepted by the young survivors in the city, they soon become embroiled in leadership challenges and face tough opposition from a rogue gang and their demented leader. Added to the mix is that virus is mutating. This causes great alarm and uncertainty to those who are soon turning seventeen. The novel is well written and calls like a siren to the reader to turn page after page to absorb each suspenseful moment. *Seventeen*, written by Suzanne Lowe, is a science fiction novel that will grab you by your imagination and heart as two young ladies are thrust into womanhood too soon when all they wanted was a normal life complete with a nurturing family and fulfill unrealized dreams.

Suzanne Lowe unleashes an out-of-this-world story, *Seventeen*, set in Australia of two sisters who are forced to battle for their lives in a world where no adults survive to help them out. A deadly virus was unleashed and kills everyone over seventeen of age, leaving these sisters to fend for themselves. As they flee for safety, they have to make their own decisions and survive the best they know how to, with no help from anyone they've ever known. This novel surprises me with its unforeseen twists of faith and a thrilling plot that keeps you on the edge of your seat. A definite must read that will keep you up all night.

This novel has an interesting take on some familiar plots – a dystopian teen drama combined with a *Lord of the Flies* feel. It was an enjoyable read, but I probably would have enjoyed it more if I read it as a young adult. This book is definitely written for young adults and teens, but I did not realize that at the beginning. Lexi and Hadley's world is forever changed when a deadly virus wipes through the country. The author walks readers through the initial days as the virus takes over. First, people begin to die. Then, people leave town to try to hide and protect themselves. Then, the girls' parents die. At this point, all the adults are susceptible and dying – leaving the world with orphans 17 and under. At this point, the adult authorities, government organizations, and every other company run by adults starts to shut down (television, radio, the internet, and eventually electricity and water). The girls head to a country town where they discover several other kids in the same position. In this town, the children have to run the town,

which turns into a Lord of the Flies type of situation. Overall, I liked the book, but I wanted a little more. It would have been nice to have more characters developed instead of having so many minor characters to keep track of. As a former high school teacher, I would recommend this to my teen students. They would enjoy the plot and dystopian setting.

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