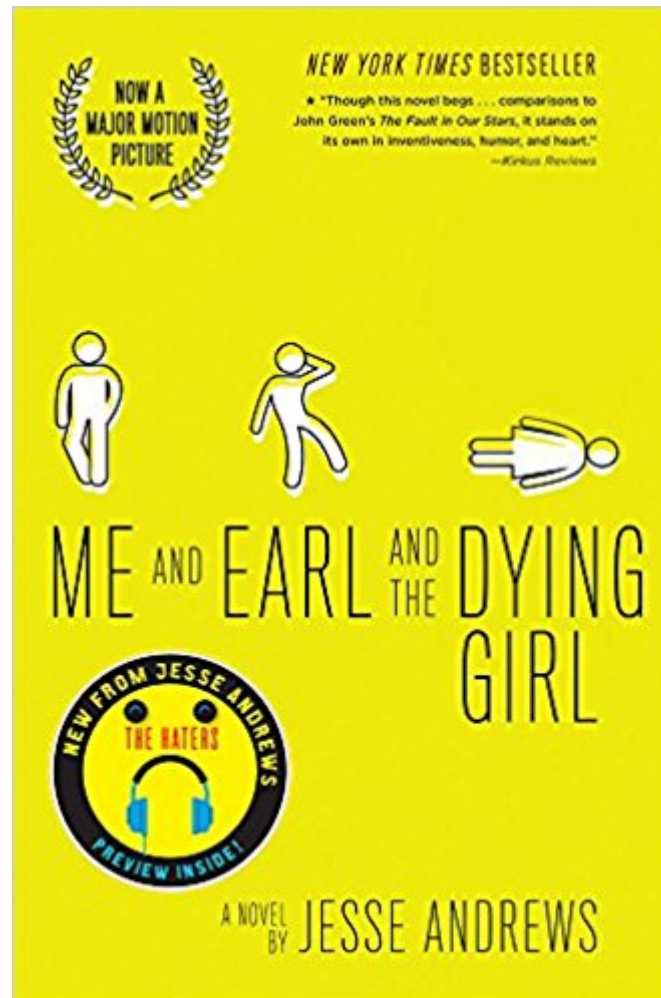




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Me And Earl And The Dying Girl (Revised Edition)



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Customer Reviews

A frequently hysterical confessional from a teen narrator who won't be able to convince readers he's as unlikable as he wants them to believe. "I have no idea how to write this stupid book," narrator Greg begins. Without answering the obvious question "Ã¢ââ just why is he writing" this stupid book"?Ã¢ââ Greg lets readers in on plenty else. His filmmaking ambitions. His unlikely friendship with the unfortunately short, chain-smoking, foulmouthed, African-American Earl of the title. And his unlikelier friendship with Rachel, the titular "dying girl." Punctuating his aggressively self-hating account with film scripts and digressions, he chronicles his senior year, in which his mother guilt-trips him into hanging out with Rachel, who has acute myelogenous leukemia. Almost professionally socially awkward, Greg navigates his unwanted relationship with Rachel by showing her the films he's made with Earl, an oeuvre begun in fifth grade with their remake of *Aguirre, Wrath of God*. Greg's uber-snarky narration is self-conscious in the extreme, resulting in lines like, "This entire paragraph is a moron." Debut novelist Andrews succeeds brilliantly in painting a portrait of a kid whose responses to emotional duress are entirely believable and sympathetic, however fiercely he professes his essential crappiness as a human being. Though this novel begs inevitable thematic comparisons to John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* (2011), it stands on its own in inventiveness, humor and heart. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Jesse Andrews is a writer, musician, and former German youth hostel receptionist. He is a graduate of Schenley High School and Harvard University and lives in Brooklyn, New York, which is almost as good as Pittsburgh. This is his first novel. Visit him online at www.jesseandrews.com.

It's been a loooong while since I've sat and read a book cover to cover in one sitting, throughout one day, and this was the book that got me to do it again. *ME AND EARL AND THE DYING GIRL* is an interesting debut novel centered on a teenage boy and the girl he (re) befriends after finding out she's dying from leukemia. I say 'interesting' because it handles the seriousness of the topic with a kind of brute honesty and a side of humor (sometimes awkward teenage boy humor) which I wasn't sure I was expecting. All around, the story didn't follow any easily identifiable trope or plot, which was refreshing for some reason (and I've read a few other stories about teens dying from illnesses,

so I wouldn't necessary call them contrived either, but maybe more emotionally moving?). In this tale, we see everything through the eyes of the narrator Greg Gaines. He's funny, but awkward, shy, and wants nothing else but to live on the fringe in a kind of unnoticeable, unregistered citizen--a kind of high school drifter who doesn't want to make waves, but also doesn't want to be entirely ignored and thus, he sort of befriends everyone--without actually befriending anyone, really. If I sound confused, it's because this book so accurately describes the microcosm of high school and it's bizarre blurred hierarchy. Greg doesn't fit into any particularly easy labels though he's a Jewish kid with siblings he almost never speaks to, one weird friend he makes (seemingly bad/misunderstood) movies with, and is painfully inept when it comes to girls. He has a fairly self-deprecating sense of humor, though you do kind of want to tell him to not be so down on himself, but for the most part, he doesn't **feel** particularly lacking in confidence (though I would not describe him as especially 'confident' by any stretch of the imagination). But anyway, straight away, you get hooked into the story by Greg's voice. It's fairly unique and you kind of feel like you're reading his diary (if boys kept diaries). The story itself evolves and Greg grows in small, but meaningful ways through his friendship with Rachel (the 'Dying Girl' referenced in the title). Interestingly, it seems his BFF Earl is actually a bit of Touchstone for Greg--which I found surprising but simultaneously really cool because he's kind of untypical with a bit of a rough family life/backstory. I'm finding it kind of hard to really describe how I felt about this book aside from the voice was really engaging and kept me going throughout the entire story. The story itself, while not exactly a surprise, unfolds in what feels like a natural pace and whatever expectations you might have of a book about teenagers facing death, you might find it in this, or you might not. But you will probably laugh and be at least a little charmed... it's an inexplicable connection with the story, with the character of Greg, that I'm walking away with here. After all, there's something when an author's voice can carry you from start to finish while maintaining a sort of distance that is described right at the outset: "This book contains precisely zero Important Life Lessons, or Little-Known Facts About Love, or sappy tear-jerking Moments When We Knew We Had Left Our Childhood Behind for Good, or whatever. And, unlike most books in which a girl gets cancer, there are definitely no sugary paradoxical single-sentence paragraphs that you're supposed to think are deep because they're in italics." (All of that? Truth. Yet, still a really good, really refreshing, really honest read.)

Greg Gaines has spent his high school career not fitting into any group. Along with his buddy Earl they film movies based on favorites they've watched with his dad. All of this changes at the start of his senior year when his mom asks him to befriend a girl dying from leukemia. I wasn't sure about

reading this book as I lost my own sister from leukemia, but this was well worth the read!

Recommended by two friends I decided to buy it with a gift card I received for Christmas. I devoured it in a few hours. The book is written in first person with Greg as the narrator. He often writes as if he's writing a movie script which makes sense because of his love of filmmaking. I like how all the characters develop. You don't get every aspect of them all at once. They slowly unfold. Each character is very well fleshed out. This book isn't your typical syrupy soap opera-type story about death with a fairytale ending. This story is much more true to life. I liked the realness of it. Definitely recommend for high schoolers and older. There is a lot of cussing, but if you've worked with high school students it fits perfectly. There is also a scene where Greg and Earl eat food tainted with marijuana (complete accident...seriously) and talk about other drugs.

"Me and Earl and the Dying Girl" is probably sick of being compared to "A Fault in Our Stars", and I don't blame it one bit. While both fall into the admittedly insensitively named category of "teenage sick lit", the two books couldn't be more different. Andrews' protagonist Greg, who only wants to be unnoticed and detached from the rest of the world, so long as he can make secret films with his partner (but not really friend) Earl. Unfortunately, Greg's mother wants him to hang out with Rachel, the titular dying girl, to help raise her spirits. Mr. Andrews word hard to keep the language scattered enough to be believed that a teenage boy is the author. He equally strains to avoid any of the Hallmark card sentiment this genre can so easily fall into. While our narrator tells us that his experience with the dying girl did not alter his life in some great way, the facts speaks otherwise. His own inability to recognize the impact makes it all the more powerful. Do not come into this expecting a Hazel and Gus romance. It is not here. While TFIOS is a movie about how a short life can also have great meaning, this novel is about how loss and life's big transitions can knock us about, leaving us a bit bruised and sometimes wiser, sometimes not. It is a realization that happy endings are for the movies, and I've is a continuing story, with hopes, dreams, and promises that don't always make it. No more do you see this than with the harsh reality of Earl, and, of course, the dying girl. Funny, profane, and yes, poignant and gripping, this novel is worth a read. Be warned, however: it is frustrating in its honesty, because seen through a different filter, these characters could have tasted the stars. Instead, we get to taste the truth, which isn't always as sweet.

A perfect book for imperfect people. Me, Earl and the Dying Girl is a gem. It not only deals with the heart-breaking issue of death and dying but also poverty, violence and coming of age at a particularly difficult time. This book also features the importance of family and true friendship. The

incredible thing about the book is that it does all of these things while using the most hilarious dark humor, unpretentious dialogue and morally ambiguous characters. I laughed out loud while reading this book while still appreciated the harsh realities it portrayed. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wants something a little different and is not offended by a dash of dark humor.

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