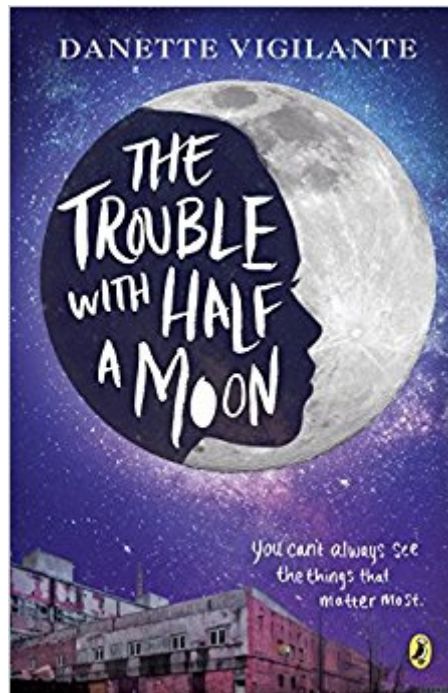




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# The Trouble With Half A Moon



## Synopsis

“Readers cannot help but cheer for Dellie and the little boy who helps pull her family together. Rich secondary characters add depth and dimension to this fast-paced tale of bereavement, forgiveness and healing.” —Kirkus Reviews

Ever since her brother's death, Dellie's life has been quiet and sad. Her mother cries all the time, and Dellie lives with the horrible guilt that the accident that killed her brother may have been all her fault. But Dellie's world begins to change when new neighbors move into her housing project building. Suddenly, men are fighting on the stoop and gunfire is sounding off in the night. In the middle of all that trouble is Corey, an abused five-year-old boy, who's often left home alone and hungry. Dellie strikes up a dangerous friendship with this little boy who reminds her so much of her brother. She wonders if she can do for Corey what she couldn't do for her brother — save him.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0600 (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #865,602 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #114 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Dysfunctional Relationships #239 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Abuse #629 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Death & Dying

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Haunted by the belief that she caused the death of her beloved little brother, Louis, in a car accident, Dellie, 13, grieves with her loving, hardworking Puerto Rican parents. She also nurtures Corey, 5, her neighbor in their rough, housing-project building, and she tries to protect him from his

abusive mom. Then Dellie is falsely accused of shoplifting; her relationship with a cute, smart classmate, Michael, takes a downturn; and she is betrayed by her best friend, Kayla, who is ashamed of being poor. The novel's resolution is too neat: Kayla apologizes, Dellie's enemy is demonized, things with Michael improve, and Corey helps Dellie overcome her guilt about her brother. What will grab readers in this first novel is the realistic sense of the diverse neighborhood community, both rough and caring. With lots of fast, immediate dialogue, the characters' grief, anger, and heartbreaking coming-to-terms are realistic. Grades 5-8. --Hazel Rochman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**PRAISE FOR *DANETTE VIGILANTE*:** "Readers cannot help but cheer for Dellie and the little boy who helps pull her family together. Rich secondary characters add depth and dimension to this fast-paced tale of bereavement, forgiveness and healing." •Kirkus Reviews "What will grab readers in this first novel is realistic sense of the diverse neighborhood community, both rough and caring. With lots of fast, immediate dialogue, the characters' grief, anger, and heartbreaking coming-to-terms are realistic." •Booklist "Vigilante has a nice way with subplots and solid daily life details that bring the book particular warmth...the story is told with considerable appeal and accessibility, and kids won't have to lead the same life as Dellie to recognize her travails." •BCCB "Dellie's story will speak to young people who've needed a little faith to get them through tough times. Interesting scenarios, like the cloaked Jamaican woman who moves in next door, provide interest to an already well-developed story." •School Library Journal

Delijah (Dellie) is thirteen years old and she's in the seventh grade. She is her mother and father's only child, but that wasn't always the case. Her parents had a son, she had a little brother, his name was Louis, but now he's gone; died at the young age of five. Corey just moved into the building where Dellie lives. His father isn't around and his mother treats him badly. He is a little boy in need of a friend. Diana (Dellie's Mother): She had a fear of losing the only child she had left, and I could understand that. I don't believe it was her intention to make her daughter feel like a prisoner in her own home. Diana was dealing with her own grief the only way she knew how and she couldn't see how much she was hurting Dellie. I want to say she thought she was helping her daughter, but keeping Dellie under lock and key the way she did was for her sake, not Dellie's. Miss Shirley: When this Jamaican woman came on the scene, I have to admit that, because of the way she was described, my first thought was conjure woman, and I was not sure I wanted to read on. Voodoo is not my thing. I do not want to hear about it. I do not want to read about it. But I gave Miss Shirley a

chance, and my `spiritual eyes' didn't see any black magic. (God's healing power is something I believe in, and who's to say what person He'll use to get His work done). It turned out Miss Shirley was a colorful woman with a uniqueness that I found strange and delightful at the same time. She was caring, and she was a woman of wisdom, knowing just the right words to speak to those she came in contact with. Kayla (Dellie's friend): This girl went from friendly to downright hateful and spiteful toward Dellie, and I did not like her attitude. The way she changed out of the blue was bothersome, but insecurities can make a person do and say things that aren't coming from the heart. Bryan: He was not a likable character. Not at all. He was immature and what he did to Dellie was so uncalled for. Michael: He was a likable character. Mr. Dumbrowski (Substitute Math Teacher): He was the kind of educator every student needs. I liked him. Alexa Rodriguez: A girl not to be trusted. Corey's mom: There was no more peace from the time she moved into the building. She was an angry woman taking her frustrations out on her child. She needed help, but she was too proud to accept it. But then again, maybe she was trying to hide shame and insecurities or even past hurts. Whatever the case, she most certainly needed counseling and parenting classes. And better taste in men. Corey: His story was heartbreaking. He had problems no seven year old should have, but, unfortunately, many do. He was a neglected, abused child. It was obvious that he was used to being hit for the slightest mistake, so I certainly understood why he was such a nervous little boy. I wasn't sure I wanted to turn the page after Chapter eleven, thinking something terrible was about to happen to this poor child. Dellie: I felt for her because she was having the bad dreams and suffering from panic attacks. She could have been getting help, though, but no longer attending grief counseling was a choice she made. She hid her pain well, so I don't blame her parents for not realizing how much she was still hurting. Dellie was good with Corey and I'm glad she took an interest in him. She did what she could do to help him and she even put herself in harm's way at one point. That was admirable, mostly because of her young age. The Trouble with Half a Moon caught my attention while visiting a blog; I didn't realize it was a middle grade book. From the moment I read the synopsis, I wanted to know what happened to Dellie's little brother. Why did he die so young? I made a few guesses as I read the story, but I never guessed correctly. One incident on Bellmore Avenue tore Dellie's world apart, and another incident on that same street was a beginning to putting the pieces back together. This story is well-written with quite a few clever sentences. I was so into the goings on in Dellie's world that I felt like I was part of it. When I finished reading and closed the book, I had to get my bearings! Kudos to Danette Vigilante. She did a good job!

This is a sweet MG novel about a thirteen-year-old girl named Dellie who has suffered the loss of her brother. She's not allowed to go out much because her mother wants to keep her only remaining child safe, yet her building has an increase in crime. Dellie bonds with an abused five-year-old boy in her building named Corey, meanwhile things are becoming rocky with her best friend Kayla. *THE TROUBLE WITH HALF A MOON* is a quick, enjoyable read with interesting facets of love, loss, being protected and being a protector.

Just so you know, I'm a New Yorker and what makes this book so extra poignant for me is that it brings NYC to life for me. I grew up in area just like the one Dellie lives in. The book captured the look, the sound, the feel of my own childhood. And what it also does is provide a beautiful family with a tragic back story. I admit I teared up quite a lot reading this book and I've happily recommended it to many young readers. The relationship that builds between Dellie, a wonderful girl protagonist, and Corey the little boy who needs help - is so well done. The dynamics with Dellie's parents is wonderfully drawn. I loved everything about this book and can't recommend it highly enough!!

I read this book with my soon-to-be 12 year old son and we both enjoyed it! It was interesting, realistic, and full of emotions!

Reason for Reading: I'm not exactly sure how I came about receiving this ARC, as I don't typically read Teen realistic fiction, but the subject matter was enticing as I read the back of the book, then proceeded to read the book. This is a brief book, short in it's page numbers and printed with a line and a half spacing between text lines. This makes the book a quick read and I did read it within a day but the story does make one slow down one's normal reading speed as it is a poignant story with deep emotion that one wants to linger over. Dellie lives in the projects with her mom and dad. Last summer her little brother was killed in an accident. Dellie blames herself. Her mother is overcome with grief and spends most of her time dusting his shrine and crying. She has also forbidden 13yo Dellie to go outside on her own; this includes having her father shadow her to and from school. The father is dealing with his grief in a much more healthy manner but he stands by his wife giving her time. New tenants move in on the ground floor and the once peaceful building starts to have problems. A gunshot goes off in one of the halls. A small 5yo boy wanders the halls knocking on doors asking for bread. Dellie secretly becomes close to the boy, taking him under her wing, feeding him and finding out that he is neglected and abused by his mother. She feels as if she

can save Corey in a way she was unable to save her brother but what she hasn't counted on is that Corey may have a way of saving what is left of her family. Terribly striking story, emotional and poignant on many levels. The secret of Dellie's brother's accident isn't revealed until near the end of the book and why she feels so responsible. This keeps it a personal agony that only she deals with, no one else remotely considers her responsible. The mother's grief of losing a child is heart-wrenching to read and the family's faith even amidst the pain is comforting. The abused boy's story is heart-breaking and eye-opening in what can go on behind closed doors and how others need to get involved in these situations, even if only in a small way, until someone has the strength to overcome the fear of calling the police. The story even includes a bit of paranormal or providential intervention, however you may want to interpret it, or not, when a strange purple cape wearing Jamaican woman moves into the building and always seems to be at hand with the right things to say when the worst things are happening. This is a small element that doesn't really even crossover into magical realism. The reader is to make of it what they will. Personally, I found providence ever present in the lives of these characters. A stunning debut novel and I will have my ear to the ground anxiously awaiting news of her second.

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