



TEEN SERVICES COMMUNITY SERVICE TEEN BOOK REVIEW

The Memory Of Things By Gae Polisner Reviewed by Jessica Lie

Name: Jessica Lie

Grade: 10

Book Title: The Memory Of Things

Author: Gae Polisner

Number of Pages: 279

Rating (on a scale of 1-5): 3.5/5

Character List:

- **Kyle Donohue** – Kyle is a 16-year-old boy who finds himself in the middle of Manhattan when the Twin Towers are hit. He rescued a girl in the midst of the chaos and takes her home.
- **Hannah Marconi** – Hannah is the girl with “wings: who Kyle rescues. She has some form of amnesia, leaving Kyle to figure out her identity and bring her home safe.
- **Uncle Matt** – Uncle Matt is Kyle’s uncle who has been through a motorcycle accident and is paralyzed. He lives with Kyle and his family in their small Brooklyn apartment.
- **Marcus** – Marcus is Ugandan and is one of Kyle’s best friends. Surrounded with the story of a troubled past, he explains how he lost his parents during a constant state of genocide in Uganda.
- **Dad** – Kyle’s dad is a New York City detective who is responsible for the Joint Terrorist Take Force when the Twin Towers collapse. He is loyal and determined as he continues rescuing people days after the Towers collapse, instead of seeing his family.

Review:

Kyle Donohue is a teenage boy who finds himself in the middle of Manhattan when the planes hit the Twin Towers. Heading away from downtown Manhattan and on the Brooklyn Bridge, Kyle sees a pair of wings buried underneath rubble and decides to save it. He finds not a bird, but a girl in a traumatic state of mind. Kyle makes a quick decision and brings her home. With his mom and sister across the country in California and his dad nowhere to reach, he takes on full responsibility and takes care of his Uncle Matt and the mysterious girl. The girl, still clueless about her own identity, cleans up. Meanwhile, Kyle discovers bits and pieces of her identity. Kyle’s uncle Matt resides in the small Brooklyn apartment with Kyle and his family. Uncle Matt, just like Kyle’s dad, was in the New York City police force until the day he was in a motorcycle accident. Getting thrown off his motorcycle left him with a spinal injury and life in a wheelchair; as a result, he has trouble speaking and has to be fed. Chaos outside, the three reside in the apartment waiting for Kyle’s father to go home and the girl to be rescued. Day by day, they go through the same routine; however, Kyle develops feeling for the girl and seeks to go outside the house. Later on, he discovers the girl’s identity and her past when her father, a lawyer, appears on a rerun on television. Kyle is eventually able to bring her back to her family, and his family is also reunited.

The book, "The Memory of Things" hits close to home to the author, Gae Polisner. Polisner lives in Long Island, only a blink away from disaster. That day affected their family forever, and she understands how to live through disaster. Polisner successfully tells the story in a way that grasps the reader's attention and fully submerges them into the storyline. The plot definitely flows through very quickly as the story goes from Tuesday morning, when the Twin Towers were hit, up until to Friday night, when Hannah is finally reunited with her dad. Polisner adds a little bit of originality to her writing by adding Hannah's consciousness as a part of the text. This book is a must read for teens, because 9/11 is a topic that is meaningful. I would recommend this book to my peers because many of us had just been born or not even born yet. We were a part of 9/11, yet don't really know much about what went on in New York City. This book can give us insight on how people got through this disaster.