If I Had One Wish



By Jackie French Koller



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Self-pitying Alec is struggling through eighth grade, plagued by six-year-old brother Stevie and unable to measure up to older sister Kelly. After being kind to an old woman, Alec is granted one wish; at the same time he gets grounded for not looking after Stevie. So Alec wishes his brother had never been born. He immediately regrets this, as he discovers not only that he misses Stevie, but that his wish has wider consequences. Alec's parents become less caring, more materialistic and more involved in their careers, and thus the wish is fulfilled by their decision to not have another child. The boy's mother, in particular, now a hustling lawyer, changes for the worse. Alec learns a lesson and manages to undo his wish. Readers will wish a potentially interesting look at sibling conflict had not been cut off by Koller's apparent desire to didactically champion traditional values and sex roles. The generic characters and simplistic handling of a complex problem will disappoint even those who share her views. Ages 9-13. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8-- Alec Lansing, at 62, is the tallest boy in the eighth grade, but his athletic talent doesn't quite match his height. That's only one of his problems, however. A basically nice kid, he keeps getting himself into trouble. He resents the affection his parents show to his little brother, and gradually focuses on Stevie as the cause of all his difficulties. When the charm given him by a strange bag lady at the mall turns out to be real. Alec finds that his thoughtless wish that Stevie had never been born has become reality. This sets off a junior version of It's a Wonderful Life . Alec finds that his family, while materially much better off ("I'd traded my little brother in for a Porsche") has also changed in the affection for, and interest in, each other. Life without Stevie is definitely not better. Alec's attempt to locate the bag lady and undo his wish brings him into contact with the people at a shelter for the homeless and reinforces the lesson that kindness is a valuable commodity. Readers will readily identify with Alec's problems at home and school, and sympathize with his frustration with his little brother. Considering the way wealth changes his life, they will also accept his growing desire to have his brother, and his family, restored. Alec's confusion and panic as he realizes what has happened is nicely paced; the magic elements are underplayed and believable. In all, an interesting and thought-provoking story for those who have ever wished they didn't have to put up with younger siblings. --Elaine Fort Weischedel, Turner Free Library, Randolph, MA Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Kirkus Reviews

When an eighth grader's wish that his little brother had never been born actually comes true, he's dismayed by the implications. Alec's father expects him to excel at sports; his older sister excels at everything; and little brother Stevie gets the unquestioning affection that Alec himself feels he has lost. One afternoon while he's minding Stevie (under protest) at the mall, Alec has an encounter with a bag lady who gives him a talisman that grants him just the one wish that he imagines will solve his problems. Instead, he discovers that the rest of the family is radically changed without Stevie: they may be richer in possessions, but they're poorer in mutual regard and interaction. Fortunately, he's able to reverse his wish and live more contentedly ever after. It's a promising premise, and the depiction of a boy who is chronically exasperated with his little brother and insensitive to almost everyone else's feelings, yet touchingly considerate of a bag lady, rings painfully true. Koller takes on too many issues without dealing with them in any depth (e.g., overbusy, affluent parents; the homeless); still, amusing, though lightweight. (Fiction. 11-13) -- *Copyright* ©1991, *Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Colby McCray:

Do you considered one of people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this aren't like that. This If I Had One Wish book is readable through you who hate the straight word style. You will find the facts here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving actually decrease the knowledge that want to deliver to you. The writer connected with If I Had One Wish content conveys prospect easily to understand by many individuals. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different such as it. So , do you continue to thinking If I Had One Wish is not loveable to be your top checklist reading book?

Thomas Kelly:

Precisely why? Because this If I Had One Wish is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap it but latter it will distress you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book adjacent to it was fantastic author who write the book in such amazing way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of rewards than the other book possess such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I had been you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

Martin Duval:

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Latoya Jones:

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