



The Thing About Jellyfish

By Ali Benjamin

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This stunning debut novel about grief and wonder was an instant New York Times bestseller and captured widespread critical acclaim, including selection as a 2015 National Book Award finalist! Oddlot Entertainment has acquired the screen rights to *The Thing About Jellyfish*, with Gigi Pritzker set to produce with Bruna Papandrea and Reese Witherspoon.

After her best friend dies in a drowning accident, Suzy is convinced that the true cause of the tragedy must have been a rare jellyfish sting--things don't just happen for no reason. Retreating into a silent world of imagination, she crafts a plan to prove her theory--even if it means traveling the globe, alone. Suzy's achingly heartfelt journey explores life, death, the astonishing wonder of the universe...and the potential for love and hope right next door.

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The Thing About Jellyfish By Ali Benjamin Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 4–7—Suzy's best friend, Franny Jackson, was a strong swimmer. There is no way she could have drowned, at least in Suzy's mind. Suzy's determined search for a different explanation for her friend's death leads her to believe that Franny was stung by an Irukandji jellyfish. Having nothing but time, since she has no other friends and has decided to stop talking, Suzy sets out to prove her theory. This multilayered novel takes readers on several concurrent emotional journeys. Benjamin skillfully blends time and narrative to slowly reveal truths about Suzy: first and foremost that their friendship was over long before Franny's death. The girl she had once thought was her best friend decided it was time for a middle school social upgrade, choosing popularity over her awkward childhood pal. Suzy's decision to seek revenge and remind Franny of their bond backfires, destroying what was left of their relationship. Consequently, Franny's death is the impetus for the protagonist's mission of personal reconciliation for the guilt and regret she feels over their falling out. Suzy's fierce intelligence, compounded by her painful transition into adolescence, makes her a sympathetic and compelling character. Benjamin's sense of timing and delivery is extraordinary, as she blends the visceral experiences of Suzy's journey with an internal dialogue that is authentic and poignant. Though Suzy herself is oddly unique in her self-imposed social ineptitude and singular focus, the politics of friendships and changing values of young teens will resonate with readers. Benjamin's inverse approach to tragedy, placing the death at the beginning of the novel and storytelling through the grieving process, transcends the trope, as the story triumphs in the affecting realities of emotional response and resilience. VERDICT Strong readers of middle grade realistic fiction will fully immerse themselves in this superbly written, heartfelt novel.—Juliet Morefield, Multnomah County Library, OR

Review

*"A painful story smartly told, Benjamin's first solo novel has appeal well beyond a middle school audience."

?*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

*"Reminiscent of works by Jennifer L. Holm and Sharon Creech, Benjamin's novel is a shining example of the highs and lows of early adolescence."? *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

*"Benjamin's sense of timing and delivery is extraordinary, as she blends the visceral experiences of Suzy's journey with an internal dialogue that is authentic and poignant....readers...will fully immerse themselves in this superbly written, heartfelt novel."? *School Library Journal*, starred review

*"Benjamin's involving novel features clean, fluid writing that is highly accessible, yet rich with possibilities for discussion.... Her highly individual, first-person narrative makes compelling reading.... An uncommonly fine first novel."? *Booklist*, starred review

*"This novel has it all: just-right pacing, authentic voices and characters, beautifully crafted plot, and superb writing. Readers will find that this story lingers with them after the book is closed."? *VOYA*, starred review

"There are...a lot of children who might not only benefit from this book but also find themselves deeply moved by it."? *New York Times Book Review*

"Seventh-grade narrator Suzy Swanson will win readers' hearts as she silently struggles to come to terms

with her complex emotions over the death of her former best friend."?Shelf Awareness

About the Author

Ali Benjamin is a National Book Award Finalist for *The Thing About Jellyfish*, and the co-writer for HIV-positive teen Paige Rawl's coming-of-age memoir *Positive* as well as Tim Howard's *New York Times* bestseller *The Keeper*. She is a member of New England Science Writers and has written for *The Boston Globe Magazine*, *Martha Stewart's Whole Living*, and Sesame Street. She lives in Massachusetts.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jean Fuller:

This book untitled *The Thing About Jellyfish* to be one of several books that best seller in this year, this is because when you read this book you can get a lot of benefit into it. You will easily to buy this particular book in the book store or you can order it by means of online. The publisher in this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, because you can read this book in your Mobile phone. So there is no reason for you to past this e-book from your list.

Jennifer Frederick:

The Thing About Jellyfish can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary which could increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to get every word into satisfaction arrangement in writing *The Thing About Jellyfish* nevertheless doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource info that maybe you can be one of it. This great information may drawn you into completely new stage of crucial considering.

Richard Broderick:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray a person, why because this *The Thing About Jellyfish* guide written by well-known writer we are excited for well how to make book which can be understand by anyone who else read the book. Written with good manner for you, leaking every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your personal hunger then you still doubt *The Thing About Jellyfish* as good book not merely by the cover but also from the content. This is one reserve that can break don't judge book by its handle, so do you still needing another sixth sense to pick that!? Oh come on your looking at sixth sense already alerted you so why you have to listening to yet another sixth sense.

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