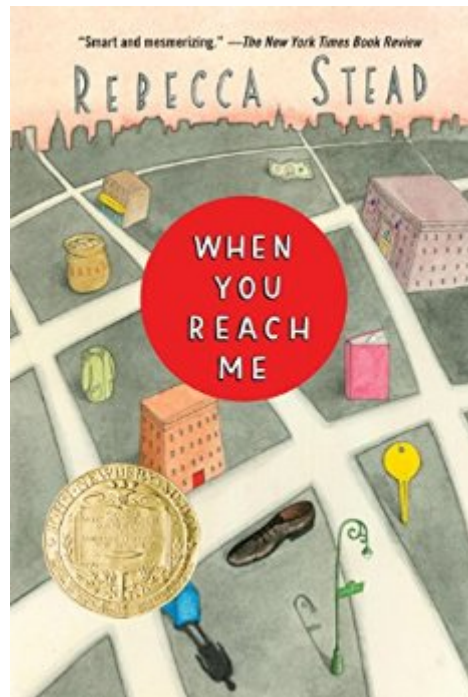


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When You Reach Me



Synopsis

Winner of the 2010 John Newbery Medal Four mysterious letters change Miranda's world forever. By sixth grade, Miranda and her best friend, Sal, know how to navigate their New York City neighborhood. They know where it's safe to go, like the local grocery store, and they know whom to avoid, like the crazy guy on the corner. But things start to unravel. Sal gets punched by a new kid for what seems like no reason, and he shuts Miranda out of his life. The apartment key that Miranda's mom keeps hidden for emergencies is stolen. And then Miranda finds a mysterious note scrawled on a tiny slip of paper: I am coming to save your friend's life, and my own. I must ask two favors. First, you must write me a letter. The notes keep coming, and Miranda slowly realizes that whoever is leaving them knows all about her, including things that have not even happened yet. Each message brings her closer to believing that only she can prevent a tragic death. Until the final note makes her think she's too late. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"When You Reach Me" is a rare gem of young adult fiction: an involving story whose subtle writing

and characterization pull you in as much as the mystery that binds the story together. I liked the slice of life of 1979 New York as twelve-year old Miranda and her friends explore their neighborhood, giving us a bit of a Free-Range Kids perspective on days gone by. Miranda gains and loses friends, and grapples with normal sixth-grade angst, but her worries take on a new twist when she discovers mysterious notes from someone who tries to convince her that he or she can see things that have not happened yet, adding fantasy and sci-fi into this realistic setting where you'd least expect it. Once the mystery has been solved, many readers will want to go back and read the story a second time to see how the pieces fit together in a new light. In a thematic parallel, Miranda's experiences reflect her own shifting ability to see situations through other people's eyes. She also learns that giving or withholding small acts of kindness or meanness can have big consequences. What I love though is that the story is told in a way that does not feel at all preachy. This is a great book for anyone ages 10 and up. It would be okay for younger kids, but those readers have so many choices that I would save "When You Reach Me" for age 10, because in my experience it's harder to find good books for that age.

BOOK REVIEW: WHEN YOU REACH ME I'll never forget the day I learned the wonders of the Möbius strip...mathematics wasn't my thing - I am a word nerd. So I was caught off guard when I was handed a thin blue strip of paper. "Now put a small twist in it like this," he explained. "Next, bring the ends together and tape them, like so." Then, I took my pencil, as instructed, and drew a thin carbon line, starting on the outside. I was stunned when I eventually connected it back and had one continuous strand, looping around on itself. I hung up that paper in my room and would stare at it, trying to figure out how it all worked. Not really understanding the physics behind it all, but loving the impossible rightness of it all. That's the way I felt about **WHEN YOU REACH ME** by Rebecca Stead. It is just SO perfect, so impossible, so right...so perfectly impossibly right. I was stunned when I finished it, too. I propped it on the arm of the chair and just stared at the cover. "What in the world are you doing?" my husband asked. I was taking it in...turning the story over in my mind...reflecting on the perfect circle I had traveled. I could only say, "Wow." This book is an original, showing me logical ideas that seemed almost enchanted. Oh. My. Here's the official summary: "As her mother prepares to be a contestant on the 1970's television game show, "The \$20,000 Pyramid," a twelve-year-old New York City girl tries to make sense of mysterious notes received from an anonymous source that seems to defy the laws of time and space." What the official summary for **WHEN YOU REACH ME** does not tell you is that this mid-grade novel will make you laugh...and then cry.

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