

[PDF] The Sledding Hill

Chris Crutcher - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The Sledding Hill

Author: Chris Crutcher

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Pages:

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Crutcher takes the fad in authorial intrusion one better, inserting himself as a character in this metafictional novel with a heavy-handed message, a schizophrenic presentation and a highly entertaining plot. Eddie Proffit is the very definition of a sympathetic character, losing his Dad and best friend to violent accidents in the opening pages. His story is narrated in *Lovely Bones*-esque fashion by the dead friend, Billy, who, if not in Heaven, is in a very good place—free of pain and full of neat tricks to employ during his ghostly mission to help Eddie overcome sadness so deep he has stopped speaking. The exploration of death and of being silenced by grief takes a hairpin turn when book banning—a very different type of silencing—becomes the focus of the novel's second half. Eddie's elective mutism has his mother's minister, the villainous Sanford Tarter, convinced he needs to be baptized. Tarter also teaches English at the high school, but Eddie is enrolled in a class called Really Modern Literature, run by a librarian who prefers "books by authors who are still alive." She requires everyone read *Warren Peerce* by the "relatively obscure" author Chris Crutcher. Naturally, this "good book with bad words" exercises Tarter, who

incites a crusade to rid the library of all Crutcher's "irrelevant and only marginally well written" books. Plausibility is pushed aside for entertainment and moralizing—Billy's father loses his job as school janitor for reading the book aloud to students in the boiler room, a student comes out as gay at the public hearing, another admits openly that she cuts herself—but Eddie's cause, and his decision to speak out, is so honorable, these lapses are easily overlooked. The title – an allusion to a favorite spot the two friends enjoyed when both were alive—doesn't work but, despite its flaws, the story does. Ages 12-up. (*May*)

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From School Library Journal Starred Review. Grade 7 Up—This clever, spirited post-modern meta-narrative is a quick read that is bound to be controversial. It has no profanity, sexual acts, drug or alcohol use, or bloody violence but takes dead aim at censors who can't get past counting swear words or the notion of a gay character who is still alive at the end of a book. Eddie Proffit, 14, is a prototypical Crutcher protagonist, a misunderstood teen who in quick succession has lost his father and best friend, Billy, in accidents. And he must deal with Mr. Tartar, who is both a feared English teacher at school and the minister to a flock of Protestant fundamentalists at the Red Brick Church. However, the author's approach to these familiar themes is fresh and fun, beginning when Billy, recently deceased, opts to keep his newly omniscient eye on Eddie, taking advantage of opportune "windows" to communicate, initially scaring Eddie into voluntary mutism but eventually working with him to bring about...the climax of the book. This centers around the use of Crutcher's faux novel, *Warren Peece*, in class and the community-wide uproar over it. The author's obvious delight in writing himself into the story (complete with e-mail address) does not diminish its effectiveness, though he occasionally gets his religious icons confused. Crutcherisms such as "When something seems mysterious and magical, it's because we don't have enough information" meld neatly with upbeat metaphysical speculation to give teen readers an involving story and plenty to think about.—*Joel Shoemaker, Southeast Junior High School, Iowa City, IA*

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