



2017

The Honest Truth

Nancy Haight

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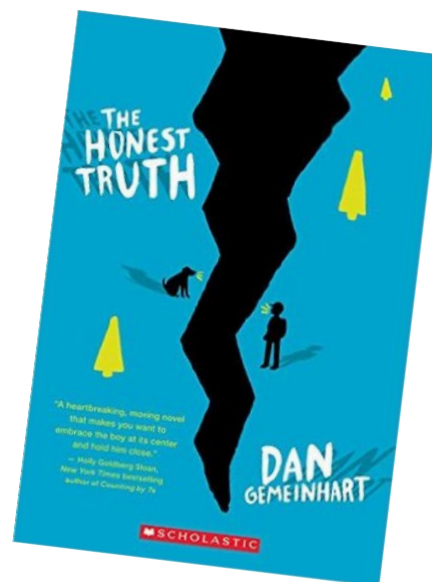
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Book Review

Title: The Honest Truth
Author: Dan Gemeinhart
Reviewer: Nancy Haight
Publisher: Scholastic Press
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9780545665735
Number of Pages: 229
Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult
Rating: Outstanding



Review

Mark runs away from home with his dog, Beau, to climb Mount Rainier. Only twelve, he has carefully planned his route to confuse those he knows will be searching for him. The cancer Mark has been fighting since he was five has returned before recovering from his last round of treatments and he sees his death coming. Mark wants to climb Mount Rainier and die there. His journey encompasses a train ride, the scary streets of a strange city at night, a gang of teenage thugs, a bus trip, lots of walking, rain, and a dip in an icy river all while experiencing the exhaustion of a body weak from cancer treatment. Finally arriving at the mountain, he begins climbing with Beau in the midst of a huge snowstorm. Freezing conditions, a glacier crevasse, unrelenting exhaustion, and new insights end his quest. But Beau manages to save his life as the search-and-rescue team is finally able to find Mark.

From the first sentence, Gemeinhart pulls the reader into the compelling story of Mark; his dog, Beau; and his childhood best friend, Jess. The story is told through the eyes of Mark and Jess in alternating chapters. Jess, who knows all Mark's secrets, figures out where Mark is headed soon after Mark disappears and struggles with the burden of being his secret keeper and letting him die as he wants, or telling the authorities so he can be brought home to his frantic and worried parents. Both Mark's trek and Jess's dilemma are intriguing storylines that keep the reader turning pages until the story's end. This book is highly recommended for readers ages ten and older, especially those who enjoy adventure, animals, and thought-provoking stories.

*Contains mild violence