



2005

Each Little Bird That Sings

Sharon Kuttler

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Wiles, Deborah. *Each Little Bird That Sings*. Harcourt, Inc., 2005. ISBN 0152051139. \$16.00. 247 pp.

Reviewer: Sharon Kuttler

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Contemporary Realistic Fiction;

Subject: Grief--Juvenile fiction; Family--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Ten-year-old Comfort Snowberger has attended 247 funerals at her family's funeral home. Comfort writes and submits "life notices," humorous descriptions of the deceased person's life, to the local small-town Mississippi newspaper. Co-author of *Fantastic (and Fun) Funeral Food for Families and Friends*, Comfort is an expert on death and funerals. Her expertise fails her, however, when her beloved pet and "funeral dog extraordinaire" perishes in a flash flood that nearly kills Comfort and her cousin as well.

This coming-of-age novel with lots of southern flair is about family, friends, potato chip casseroles, and coping with death. Both humor and heartbreak combine to illustrate that life is full of surprises, some good and some bad. Although this book is outstanding, parts of it are almost overwhelmingly sad and could be too distressing for some children. It is a 2005 National Book Awards Finalist for Young People's Literature.