



2005

Me, dead dad, and Alcatraz

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Lynch, Chris. *Me, dead dad, and Alcatraz*. HarperCollins, 2005. ISBN 0060597097. \$15.99.
240 pp.

Reviewer: Lara M. Ackerman

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Humorous stories; Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Uncles--Juvenile fiction; Self-perception--Juvenile fiction; Family problems-- Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Following up on characters introduced in *Slot Machine* and *Extreme Elvin*, this book continues the account of fourteen-year-old Elvin Bishop and his dryly predictable life with two semi-supportive friends, a mother, a dog, and a tuba for company. So far, this arrangement has suited him fine -- as he doesn't expect too much out of life, that is. And, prudently enough, Elvin hasn't -- until his uncle, who was supposed to have died in a plane crash, shows up on the living room couch and starts challenging the status quo. Readers will cringe and chuckle as Elvin cannon-balls his way through the typical adolescent male experience: identity crisis, puberty, weight issues, and just about everything else. Lynch's pell-mell wordplay brings Elvin's struggles to life as he maneuvers around obstacles both in and out of his head. While at times this book is painfully honest about some struggles being easier to overlook than to overcome, readers-- especially those in Elvin's shoes--will enjoy this mostly optimistic glimpse into the adolescent experience.