



2007

This is What I Did:

Holly Dickman

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Ellis, Ann Dee. *This is What I Did*. Little, Brown, ISBN 9780316013635. 2007. \$16.99. 157 p.

Reviewer: Holly Dickman

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Bullying--Juvenile fiction; Interpersonal relationships--Juvenile fiction; Schools--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Logan witnesses a terrible event involving his best friend, his best friend's abusive father, and a cute girl from school. This horrendous event plunges him into depression. In order to try and help him his parents decide it is time to move to a new area of town where he can make new friends, attend a new school, and have a fresh start. Unfortunately, Logan's past follows wherever he goes, and Logan's demons of depression and guilt negatively affect his ability to fit in. Although Logan is faced with bullies, judgmental neighbors, and nasty rumors, an unexpected pleasant surprise surfaces in the form of Laurel: a strange, quirky girl from school who sends notes of creative palindromes to Logan. With the help of his family, a therapist, and Laurel, Logan begins to come to terms with his psychological troubles. Slowly, this brave (and slightly awkward) eighth grader opens up and embraces the opportunity to finally heal.

Ellis has addressed the mature themes of abuse and depression in a unique and profound way. The story is told through the narrative voice of her character Logan. The reader will struggle along with Logan as the character's innermost thoughts and feelings are revealed. Although it takes some time to piece together what exactly happened to Logan, this does not stop the reader from building a deep bond with the character. Because of the connection between reader and character, this disturbing novel is hard to put down. The mature themes may require adults to read the novel before recommending it to young adults. Useful addition for middle and high school libraries. Young adult and mature audiences will be deeply moved by the simplicity of format, and the complexity of story.