Hiding Out at the Pancake Palace

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Review

Elvis Ruby was supposed to win the biggest reality TV show, Tween Star. He doesn’t. Cecilia is supposed to be able to hear the music of the trees that played when she was born. She doesn’t. When Elvis runs away to the middle of New Jersey to avoid the press after he panics on stage and loses the competition, he meets Cecilia. The two of them explore their interesting town to discover their own music in the midst of disguising Elvis, helping Elvis’s Aunt Emily and cousin Millicent keep the press off his tail, and learning more about their own secrets.

The parts about the music in the trees and the jersey devil were interesting, but they didn’t make a lot of sense and sometimes felt strange in a book that was otherwise somewhat realistic. However, the characters were interesting, with Elvis dealing with the aftermath of disappointing himself and other people and Cecelia refusing to go along with the crowd. It would have been nice to have more description of why Elvis froze up on stage when he’d had performance experience in the past. It’s a fun read without a lot of depth but a good message about finding your own path.