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The Bunker Diary

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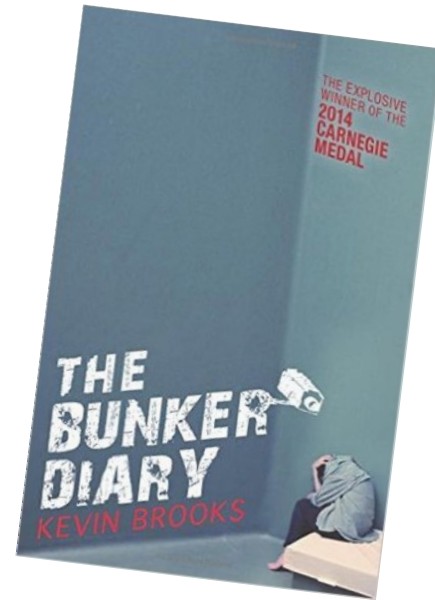
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Book Review

Title: The Bunker Diary
Author: Kevin Brooks
Reviewer: Carlie Smith
Publisher: Carolrhoda Lab
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9781467754200
Number of Pages: 260
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Significant Shortcomings



Review

Linus Weems has led a peculiar life. He's rejected his famous cartoonist father's wealth in favor of a life of homelessness on London's streets, but nothing is stranger than the day he is kidnapped by a man faking blindness and held captive in a refurbished war bunker. The bunker has eight rooms, an elevator, surveillance equipment, and some notebooks that Linus fills with a record of his experience. Each morning the elevator opens with supplies, and, sometimes, additional captives. Jenny, a 9 year old girl; Fred, a beefy drug addict; Bird, an angry businessman; Anja, a posh real estate agent; and Russell, a terminally-ill natural philosopher, join Linus in the bizarre social experiment. Despite their best attempts to communicate and escape, the group is trapped for weeks. Even more disturbingly, they cannot determine the motivation of their abductor. One by one the people succumb to madness or to the surprises that are sent down the elevator, such as drugs or Dobermans. In a sick twist of fate, the Man raises the elevator, turns off the power, and leaves Linus and his friends to starve. Linus is the last to die, and the final pages of his diary are filled with reflections on his life.

The greatest flaw in *The Bunker Diary* is its lack of resolution. Though it begins in an explosive and intriguing manner, the meaningful plot material dwindles as Linus does. The ambiguous ending which asks readers to question the meaning of life, social relationships, and suffering is not inherently unsatisfactory. However, there is not enough development of Linus and the other characters to give readers enough substance to analyze the question. Readers who are expecting a thrilling story will be disappointed with the last third of the book. Readers who are prepared to ponder the darkness of humanity, from mental illness to cannibalism, may find it more worthwhile.

*Contains moderate sexual content, severe language, and violence.