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The Wrap-Up List

Lisi Hong

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Book Review

Title: The Wrap-Up List
Author: Steven Arntson
Reviewer: Lisi Hong
Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9780547824109
Number of Pages: 240
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Excellent



Review

Gabriela doesn't quite know what she wants to be when she grows up. But after receiving her departure letter—the notification that she will be guided to the afterlife by the mystical, gray creatures called Deaths—she might not have time to figure it out. She only has seven more days to live, and in that short week she decides to help her and her three friends finally receive their first kisses, try to gain a pardon, and avoid death. In order to achieve all these things, Gabriela must figure out the cryptic hints her Death, Hercule, sent her. With the help of Hercule and her friends and family, Gabriela succeeds in all her goals and lives to find out who she wants to be.

The Wrap-Up List is a different, yet real and compelling story that gracefully deals with issues that are highly relevant to every young adult. In her last week, Gabriela's parents argue constantly, her best friend comes out as gay, and she realizes that even seemingly perfect people have weaknesses. The book is particularly captivating because each character faces some sort of challenge throughout the novel. At the end of the story, none of the characters are the same as they were on the first page. Gabriela realizes who she is, where she wants to go, and what is most important to her—and every young adult wants to figure all those things out too. Because of the messages hope, acceptance, and love found on every page, readers finish this book feeling a bit better about life.

*Contains mild language and moderate sexual content.