



2022

Eden Summer

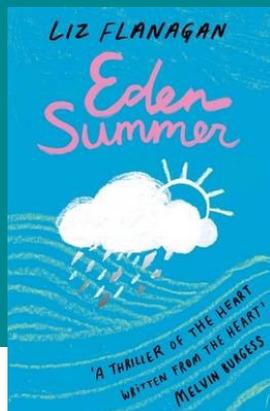
Jennifer Padgett

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Book Review

Eden Summer

Author

Liz Flanagan

Reviewer

Jennifer Padgett

Rating

Excellent

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

288

Year

2017

ISBN

9781338121209

Publisher

David Fickling Books

Two seemingly mismatched friends - one short with frizzy hair, pale skin, tattoos and piercings marking her thin frame, the other tall, blonde, and naturally beautiful - are journeying through their volatile teenage years together. Eden is there for Jess after she's brutally attacked by a gang of six on her way home one unforgettable night. After a painful stint at the hospital and many long weeks of recovery at home, Jess tries desperately to find her way back to normalcy. As her best friend, Eden is there to comfort her, to offer her hope when little seems to be in sight. Just months later, Eden's sister, Iona, dies unexpectedly in a car accident. Eden blames herself for this tragic twist of fate, and her existence in the world changes dramatically. She no longer seems herself, and despite Jess's and others' attempts to rescue her from her own horror, Eden makes a decision that leaves everyone in fear for her life. Though it appears the damage may be irreversible, Jess is there to help her pick up the tiny pieces of what's left of her life.

This is an extraordinary story of friendship, hope, loss, and recovery. Flanagan does a remarkable job of reaching out to a teenage audience with her captivating, yet easy to understand language, as well as her ability to incorporate so many topics at the heart of teenage existence today. She craftily draws her readers into the story, allowing them to experience it right along with the characters. At times, the novel is truly enlightening and happy, and at others it is terribly sad and calamitous. This is precisely what brings the story to life. Additionally, Flanagan's choice of alternating between the past and the present grants readers an extra element of challenge and adventure, and there is little question as to whether this novel is a page-turner. It's filled with raw emotion from beginning to end, making it irresistible to put down before delving into the next chapter of Jess and Eden's young and tumultuous lives.

*Contains mild language, mild sexual content, mild substance abuse, and moderate violence.