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Young Adult Literature
14 December 2018

You Are The Everything

The odds of a plane crash are one for every 1.2 million flights, deeming it one of the safest modes of transportation. Elyse Schmidt never would have thought she'd be that one in a million, until the unbelievable happened to her. *You Are The Everything* was published by Algonquin Young Readers on October 31, and was written by Karen Rivers, an award winning young adult literature author. Rivers creates a story of tragedy and a love so strong that it changes destiny. In her book, *You Are The Everything*, Elyse Schmidt is on her way back to California from a band festival in Paris when the plane she is on crashes; the only survivors being Elyse and her crush Josh Harris. The crash forms a relationship bound together by what they both survived. The story tells of the heartache of loss, love, and the undeniable sacrifices needed to be made in order to feel peace within yourself and those around you.

You Are The Everything is written in second person, telling the story of "you," Elyse Schmidt. Elyse Schmidt is a young teen currently in her high school years. She stands out from the typical crowd as she always has bright colored hair and white as snow skin. Drawing and obsessing over her no-so-secret crush Josh Harris are her main points of interest. However, throughout the novel Elyse begins to lose herself, forgetting everything she loved and every memory she's ever cherished. Josh Harris, Schmidt's dream boy and the second most important character, is basically the complete opposite. Life is exceptionally difficult for him due to the loss of his mother at the age of seven and the general criticism he endures for being black. His hobbies include mainly sports, specifically basketball, however after the crash sports are completely out of the question. Later in the novel, Josh Harris and Elyse Schmidt move to Elyse's safe haven, Wyoming, in hopes to get away from all forms of

media and news. For some background, Elyse Schmidt dreamed of living in Wyoming long before the fatal crash occurred. As she states several times in the novel, she had a weird feeling that Wyoming was where she belonged. Once they settle into their new home, the story seems to go on as your typical tragic love narrative; Something bad happens bringing the two lovebirds together. That is until the effects of the crash begin to twist the plot into something unthinkable.

Karen Rivers, the author of *You Are The Everything*, has written numerous other award winning novels. *You Are The Everything*, being her most recent novel, has already received many positive critiques by famous reviews such as *The Chicago Tribune*, and *Booklist*. I would say that this book could be compared to a well known book known as *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon. Both novels are based around a love story branching off of something tragic, in this case something such as a crash or an incurable disease. Other than *You Are The Everything*, Rivers published countless other YA Lit novels, some which include *All That Was, Before We Go Extinct*, *What is Real*, and *The Cure for Crushes*. Along with these books, she has won many literary awards including the 2012 School Library Journal Starred Review, and a 2017 Booklist Starred Review.

I would recommend *You Are The Everything* to anybody looking for a quick, jampacked read. I wouldn't necessarily say it is one of my top books, however it wasn't a bad book either. The only downside to this novel is that the plot can be quite slow at times and the story jumps around fairly often. This book does contain some sexual content along with commonly discussing the topic of death so this book may not be the best fit for a younger audience. All in all, it was a good read and had me coming back for more.

Overall, Karen Rivers does a great job with openly expressing the idea of dealing with death along with finding peace after a traumatic life endeavor. Through the mind of Elyse, the author shows how life can change in an instant and touches on your typical love story as stated previously. This book had great substance, and I would recommend it to anybody interested in contemporary fiction. With the discussion of love and loss combined throughout the book, it makes for a very important message.