



Just in Case

Meg Rosoff

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After his younger brother narrowly avoids a serious fall, fifteen-year-old David Case realizes the fragility of life and senses impending doom. He changes his name, assumes a new identity, new clothing and new friends, and dares to fall in love.

Justin Case is convinced fate has in for him.

And he's right.

After finding his younger brother teetering on the edge of his balcony, fifteen-year-old David Case realizes the fragility of life and senses impending doom. Without looking back, he changes his name to Justin and assumes a new identity, new clothing and new friends, and dares to fall in love with the seductive Agnes Day. With his imaginary dog Boy in tow, Justin struggles to fit into his new role and above all, to survive in a world where tragedy is around every corner. He's got to be prepared, just in case.

Just in Case Details

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Author : Meg Rosoff

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From Reader Review Just in Case for online ebook

Roya says

YES. This is what actual YA literature looks like. This is what actually goes through the mind of an actual person who is actually grappling with life and adolescence and shit

Margaret Sophia says

DISCLAIMER: This is my first review, and therefore as bad as this book.

I'm not going to lie. I picked up this book in the library because the cover was intriguing. That's a euphemism for *the boy on the cover was very attractive*. The name was actually intriguing. Just In Case, Justin Case. Clever. But the name, and the cover jacket blurb are extremely misleading. This book was not intriguing. It was all over the place, and I found it just a mash together of several implausible situations.

The book started off pretty mild, with a little boy trying to jump out the window and a teenager attempting to reinvent himself. The few words from fate got me interested, so I decided to stick around. I wish I hadn't.

This book, to put it mildly, was a complete and utter disappointment. Plot? What plot? The story is about a crazy kid, who no one seems to be able to figure out is crazy, despite the fact that he acts like a total schitzo. Only once in the entire book is it suggested that he go see a doctor or a counselor. Oh, but wait-there's more! Not only is this kid totally insane, he's also Fate's little plaything. Fate tries and tries again to... kill him? It's not always clear, Fate's a confusing guy. But, Justin manages to avoid death, once even saving himself from **getting hit by a plane** by... **STEPPING OUT OF THE WAY**.

What?

Here's a list of complaints, since I'm struggling with this whole review:

1. EVERYONE seems to have something to say in this book. But not vocally, no. In fact, there's hardly any dialogue in this book and the parts that are dialogue are extremely short. No, this book is in everyone's head. Even a baby, who is about 2 years old, seems to be having complex thoughts, and is the only one in the book that "gets" Justin.
2. Does no one care about this kid? His parents let him run away from home and move in with an older woman. The older woman gives up on him, so he moves in with his friend. Once again, the parents don't even care.
3. For someone who is mentally unstable and constantly thinking about fate, he sure thinks about sex a lot.
4. His friend's sister, Dorothea? Yeah, she aggravated me to no end.

Kathryn says

David Case wants a life that is just like everyone else's, but Fate just can't seem to leave him alone. In an attempt to outwit Fate, David changes his name to Justin, takes on a new persona and begins to run, quite literally, from what Fate has in store for him next. From causing bicycle accidents to being the target of a

plane crash to a deadly disease that nearly kills him, Justin learns that it is not Fate that determines his future but the choices he makes and the people he surrounds himself with that guide his course.

The running dialogue between Justin and Fate can be quite disturbing at times with its intensity, but it helps you see how Justin's mind works. And Rosoff seems to understand that depression/anxiety/borderline schizophrenia can make the mind a dark place to dwell, especially for a teenage who is beginning to deal with it for the first time.

The most exciting aspect of this book actually comes from the case of supporting characters, all of who wait in the shadows of Justin's mind to lead him on new paths. With an imaginary dog that the most unexpected people seem to be able to see and an older girl whom Justin thinks is his lucky charm, Justin builds a life that is far from normal, but this book goes on to make you question what is normal in an entirely different way that any other book.

Blodeuedd Finland says

I liked this book, but then I am drawn to weird books that do not make much sense, and this one is no exception.

It starts at once. David Case rescues his brother, who get annoyed. His brother tells him (well thinks it) what he wanted to do, of course out of the 1 year olds mouth nonsense comes out. Through out the book we can hear the baby's clever thoughts, and he is sure wondering why no one gets him.

David is dead sure that Fate is out after him, and he has a lot of gloomy thoughts. So he changes his name to Justin, starts wearing new clothes, and thinks that Fate can't find him any more. He also gets a dog, a greyhound, and the dog is of course not real. But he sees him. He gets a new friend, who also plays with the dog. I guess crazy attracts crazy. And then there is the older girl who wants to photograph him, and he falls in love. I think that was all teh crazy stuff.

Or was it? No, this book has a second POV, Fate with short sentences tells us that he actually is after David.

Why did I then like this book? I didn't think I would but suddenly I was drawn in to it and could not stop. David was so crazy, I guess it made me think of that Gyllenhaal movie with the rabbit. But David, or Justin really believed fate wanted him dead. And soon he saw dangers in everything, and that is not a way to live. His love affair with the girl was doomed, and it was rather painful to read who much he wanted her, when one could see her indifference. Even if she did care for him as a friend. Luckily he did meet Peter, who was great, and his little sister. That family was a pillar in Justin's life, even if they did talk about the dog. Like saying that Boy needed Justin to survive and exist...yes cos he was made up, duh. But then again Justin needed that dog, I think it made him stay sane.

There was the crazy, the weird thoughts, fate showing up and scaring me, first love, friendship and a wonder how this all would end. A great YA book in the end, with some amazing writing in it.

What can I say, I am a sucker for the weird,

Blodeuedd's Cover Thoughts: Pretty, but pretty girl, but yes looks YA.

Reason for reading: library

Final thoughts: I enjoyed this strange tale, about a boy who lost is footing in the world.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Me for TeensReadToo.com

Now that I've finished reading JUST IN CASE and it's time for me to write my review, I'm having a hard time thinking of how to describe it. I've had the pleasure of reading HOW I LIVE NOW, Ms. Rosoff's Michael L. Printz award-winning book, so I began reading JUST IN CASE with high expectations. I wasn't disappointed, not in the least, and have high hopes for the awards this book will garner over the coming year. It's just that, now that I need to put it in words, it's difficult to describe just who, exactly, the main character in this story is--David Case, now known as Justin, or Fate? I guess the book could be summed up, quite easily, by the words (actually, by the alphabet blocks) of eighteen-month-old Charlie Case: "JUST IN CASE WHAT?" Or, possibly, by the photograph of Agnes, the style-maven with the pink hair, entitled "ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH."

Regardless of how you describe the story, you'll find yourself quickly immersed in the life and times of Justin Case. A teen on the verge of sixteen, David Case is irrevocably changed on the day he saves his baby brother from falling out of an open window. For those of us who are privy to his story, we would see two lucky brothers, one narrowly avoiding a long fall to his death, and one heroic for his quick thinking. For David, though, this break isn't a lucky one. No, this is just one more example of how Fate has it in for him. How can he get away, escape, allude Fate, trick it? He begins by changing his name to Justin, follows it up by becoming even more quiet and withdrawn than he originally was, and finishes it up with a new way of dressing, walking, and talking.

When Justin meets Agnes, she immediately takes him under her wing--and uses him for her own purposes, although Justin doesn't realize it at first. Justin is too busy dodging Fate, avoiding certain death, worrying about the ways that Fate can trick him into an early grave. As Justin survives day to day, with the help of Boy, his imaginary dog, and Peter, his not imaginary friend and fellow runner, Justin is unable to see that Fate is still following him, hot on his heels.

JUST IN CASE is the story of David, who becomes Justin, who melds into a boy that simply wants to make his own choices in life, rather than having it mapped out for him in advance. It's the story of Agnes, who wants to fix Justin, but in the end doesn't even truly understand the ways in which he's broken. It's the story of Charlie, an abnormally bright child who wishes his brother could forgive himself. It is, most of all, the story of Fate, and Fate's wicked sense of humor.

Although it's hard to put JUST IN CASE neatly into a category, I can highly recommend it nevertheless. Once I started this story, I was unable to put it down until the very last word--and even then I was still entranced by Justin Case and his battle with Fate. This book is definitely one worth reading.

Emma says

I wanted to like this. I really did. I loved "How I Live Now", thought it one of the best written and innovative young adult books for a generation. And indeed, I did love the first third of this second novel. I felt the same sense of heady exhilaration at the sheer audacity and exuberance of Rosoff's prose.

But then I began to falter. Or rather the story did. First I noticed the frequent changes of viewpoint. Writers

are recommended to stick to just one viewpoint per scene for a reason - to do otherwise is both distracting and distancing. You feel you are never truly in any one character's head, and frankly that's where you need to be for a story to really work.

Then I felt that the plot, quite simply, was floundering. All satisfying plots hinge on character development, and Justin didn't seem to develop at all. By the end of the story, he can barely even pull himself out of a coma. Without a compelling 'hero', all the other characters seem redundant, incidental to each other. I remember reading a publisher's warning not to bother sending in manuscripts about depressed teenage boys. It's the default option of young adult fiction, and not inherently interesting, unless you actually are J D Salinger. I think this may be a case in point.

To summarise, I still think Meg Rosoff is an immensely talented author, unsurpassed for her daring and honesty. But I am not at all sure this story was worthy of the telling - like Justin, it seemed to promised much, only to sicken and turn comatose, ultimately revealing itself as gloomy, self-absorbed, and not really going anywhere.

Deejay (DZ) says

Pfiioouuuu ce lives était juste MA-GNI-FIQUE ! j'ai tout aimé de A à Z . David Case est un charmant garçon doté d'une superbe vision de la vie. Malheureusement comme chaque adolescent il a fait de mauvais choix , et ces mauvais choix on fait que certaines choses ce passent très mal .. En tout cas moi j'ai dévoré ce roman en trois jours , et je lui donne 4 étoiles car même si je l'ai adoré , y'a quelques points où le style d'écriture ne m'a pas charmer ..

MallyReads says

This is a terrible book.

Be aware, people, this may ruin the book for you - but hey, I'm only trying to warn you to **not** read this book, no matter what.

This book starts off with David Case's younger little brother trying to throw himself out of a window because he believes he can fly. This is believable, as young children obviously don't understand much.

What **isn't** believable is that a: the child talks, like full fluent English. Oh no, he doesn't actually **say** the words out loud, its more like thinking but so that it seems like talking - **yes, very confusing.**
And b: David believes that after this encounter that his brother had with death, that **he** (no, not his brother, but him) is cursed, and that Fate has it in for him. Uh-huh.

My thoughts at this stage of the book: This person is obviously paranoid.

Then we have small witty dialogues from Fate him/herself, these actually interested me so I decided to continue reading. **Stupid me.**

So then, he changes him name - to Justin, gettit - Just in Case, Justin Case. Yay, awesome! ***sarcasm there***
And then goes to a shop, where we meet Agnes, who hands him a load of clothes and takes pictures of him

before Justin leaves the shop. Now, at this point I am pretty scared - why would you let a stranger take a load of pictures of you? Who knows what they would do with them? ***sigh***

Then there is school, where everyone thinks David - oops, I mean Justin - thinks is extremely weird. He is. And to top it all off! He has **an imaginary dog** , yeah, a greyhound...

At this point I came to the conclusion that the author was...

a: high

b: drunk

c: both (probably this one)

when she was writing this horrible novel --> if you can call it that.

David - Justin - then joins the cross country team (track, whatever) and because he actually gets better at running, he believes he is all suave and mysterious and more Justin, than David. **Oh lord.**

Oh, and he has **one** friend who runs as well, Peter. And to be honest, Peter was like the only **normal** person in this book.

And then Agnes calls Justin 'cos she wants to meet him, and Justin agrees.

Thoughts: Why? Why would you meet with a complete stranger? What? Oh, yeah, cos your Justin now, not David.

Anyways, they meet up, he tells her about Fate wanting to kill him (oooooh) and she takes a load more pictures of him. Does this book even have a plot?

A load of other stuff happens, not necessarily in this order, but here goes:

- More dialogues from Fate, showing he/she is a bitch. Yeah...the crazy thing.
- David - Justin - nearly dies when a plane crashes, making him believe Fate is trying to kill him.
- Justin moves in with Agnes...oh lord...and they have sex (at 15)...(note about this further down.)
- Justin falls in lurveeee with Agnes, but Agnes doesn't love him.
- There is an art gallery opening with pictures of Justin - (note further down about this.)
- Some dude dies, trying to save a coat from being run over by a taxi - Justin's coat.
- And Justin falls into a coma...and I don't even remember why, something at track.
- Fate acts even bitchier.
- I don't get the ending, plain weird.

Okay, notes:

-Throughout the book, Justin says that he wants Agnes to beg him for sex and all...Oh god: Seriously, **WHAT THE FUCK?** You're 15, for god's sake!

-As for the gallery, Agnes doesn't tell him he was her muse, and she kinda acts cruel because she used him for pictures, had sex with him, and tossed him away.

This book is **TERRIBLE** . I repeat, **TERRIBLE! BAD BAD BAD BAD!**

EEVIL!

sighs I really need a really good book now! Bye!

Naban says

I don't get this book. I don't get the point or the message the author was trying to convey, if any. All it had going for it were series of confusing events which were left unexplained and a depressed main character in his teenage years, something we've read about over and over again. Once all my crazy theories turned out to be wrong, I couldn't take this book seriously.

David Case's baby brother almost falls out of the window and that somehow leads him to believe that Fate is out to get him. (Not even his baby brother, but him. Talk about self-obsessed). So, he changes his name to Justin because Justin Case (har har har), gets himself an imaginary dog and becomes a whole new person. Obviously, he is being a naive little fuck if he thinks that will fool Fate.

He is also, clearly, anything but mentally stable, and I'm not even poking a stick at humor here. It's a fact, and it baffled me how the other characters were so oblivious, and kept brushing it off as typical teenage behaviour. No one bothers to take the kid to a specialist (although it is suggested briefly once or twice) and we're talking about a fifteen year old with living, breathing parents.

However, these mental conditions didn't earn him my sympathy. In fact, I'm pretty sure if you're a teenage boy you'll find this book offensive to a certain degree because I did, and I'm not even a teenage boy. As much as I appreciated the inclusion of sex, Justin was like a walking, talking signboard that screamed "I am a teenage boy so all I think about is sex" - a common misconception. Granted, I've never been a teenage boy. Maybe they do metamorphose into brain-dead creatures who think with their genitals on the merry night of their 13th birthday.

What rattled me was how he didn't even try. He didn't try to get along with people - he pushed them away and then complained about being lonely. If we looked at him from a minor character's point of view, we'd just see an asshole who thinks he's better than everyone, and that's true. Justin - and his friends were wise beyond their years, what I like to call The Fault in Our Stars syndrome where they use fancy words for casual conversations and talk like philosophers. What kind of teenager refers to other teenagers as hormone-charged particles?

We also have Agnes, an older woman who was pushy, and pretty much forced Justin into the modelling business. (view spoiler) If the gender roles were reversed, we would see everyone losing their shit.

Like Death in The Book Thief, Just in Case is narrated by Fate, who unlike Death, annoyed the fuck out me. The whole time I felt like someone was whispering in my ears - "Look, this one is narrated by Fate! - not something you hear every day, aye? It's so mysterious. Oh, the suspense!"

The point of view kept switching abruptly, often times not even with a new chapter, and that made things worse. I was really put off by how we could see Justin's baby brother's thoughts that were too mature (sometimes even more than Justin himself) and I just...nah, dude, you're a baby. Think like a baby.

If you're like me, and would rather peel off your nails than go through purple prose, this is either going to be a hard read..or an extremely fun one. I've picked some of my personal favorites - thank you, ridiculous lines, for making me roll my eyes and chuckle.

Meatballs? Deepballs!

"The way another person might have pursued the meaning of life, Justin made meatballs, shaping each ball into a sphere so laboured and perfect, it caused his eyes to fill with tears for the flesh of the

noble cow, for the perfection of three-dimensional geometric forms in nature, for the relentless universality of dinner time."

Breathing.

"He breathed in deeply through his nose and into the empty cave of his skull flowed the swirling vapours of people, ideas, desires."

Inhaling...people?

"He inhaled Agnes, florescent lime and sparkly."

"He let his heart pump her bright aura through his veins like morphine, like adrenalin, warming and energizing the machine, causing it to glide, accelerate."

Going to the library.

"He drifted, vapourized, to the library, found the gloomiest, most uninhabited corner and settled, a few random molecules with a wounded soul."

"She carried a tray into the sitting room and Justin watched the fingers of her left hand as she poured milk into streaming cups. He felt awkward and unconnected to the world of people. I'd like to have sex with her fingers, he thought, squeezing his eyes shut."

Justin needs help. Preferably a blowjob. Oh and, according to him, it's an embarrassing thing to be a virgin at the ripe, *old* age of fifteen.

God bless us all.

Janelle says

This was probably one of the strangest books I have ever read. I didn't think it was as good as I thought it would be. Actually, to be honest I didn't even finish it! I made it to chapter thirty then just decided that I wasn't interested in reading it. It was pretty confusing because it switched from one persons thoughts to another, and even the little baby brother had thoughts. Also, there was almost no dialogue! So, even though I really hate stopping in the middle of a book, I could just not continue with this one.

Haley says

I give this book a high review because it is different. I don't mean *different* in that flashy "oh my god this book changed my life" sort of way. No, this book is different in that it is unexpected. It is not altogether an incredibly happy book nor is in extremely depressing. Just In Case embodies the the full fledged confusion, angst and self centered mindset of the teenage adolescent and multiplies it by pi. This book both stretches the imagination and ties you firmly into a state of reality in a way that only a teenager both wanting to grow up and stay a child can.

I hope you find this book as enjoyable as I have. ;-P

Kayla_greeley says

Meg Rosoff, the author of *Just in Case* wrote a ground breaking novel, with a complex plot through the intriguing believable mind of a teen age boy. Meg Rosoff won the Carnegie Medal in 2007 for the novel *Just in Case*. I found very similar plot lines and themes between *Just in Case*, *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D Salinger and *A&P* by John Updike. Each of these novels uses the theme of coming of age. I would defiantly recommend *Just in Case* to fellow readers because it is very much a classic, a book recommended because of the metaphors and multifaceted characters. There are few characters in the novel, but the ones that are in it have their purpose, some of who play a large role in David Case's life.

The novel *Just in Case* by Meg Rosoff is a realistic, coming of age novel with a genuine account of a 15 year old boy, who has a change of heart after a forbidding life or death moment with his toddler brother. David Case living in Luton, England, was watching his baby brother Charlie Case when a blackbird flies by the window. Charlie gets the assumption that he can fly and was attempting to leap out the window to test his flight. David grabs his brother; he pulls him through the window only to saves his brother's life. Some would take this as a lucky moment and be glad he saved his brother's life, but David is a strange boy. He thinks fate is out to get him and will stop at nothing to deceive fate. David has a plan to outrun fate and disguise himself so fate will not find him ever again.

I quiet enjoyed reading about David's life and his alteration of a new identity, I thought it was extremely ironic that the name of the book is *Just in Case*, the name he chooses for his new persona, Justin Case. My favorite aspect of the novel is David's friend Anges, who meets Justin/David in a thrift store trying to decide on what type of style his identity should have. Anges is a photographer, she takes pictures of everything Justin does, and publicizes him as a character of "doomed youth". She is my favorite character because she is Justin's first friend in his new life. Another part of the novel I enjoyed reading is how he has an imaginary dog, name Boy. Even his friend Peter acknowledges his "dog" frequently. This novel gave me an intriguing outlook in the mind of a despondent teenage boy.

I would recommend this novel for others to read, because although there was not a lot of action and it only had engagement with people, it had an incredible, believable replication of an inside look of a boys mind. The novel is very similar to *The Catcher in the Rye*. The similarities are each boy is trying to find their way in life, while believe the world, and fate is out to get them. *The Catcher in the Rye* is a classic, and so is *Just in Case*, *The New York Times* even said *Just in Case* is, "A modern *Catcher in the Rye*". Another reason why I recommend *Just in Case* is because in current times now, children and teenagers are acting older and wiser than their actual age, very much like David, so people can relate.

Throughout the novel the over dramatized ideas of David have a huge effect on the reader, making you ether sympathizes for him, or just think he is a crazy youngling trying to find problems in everything. In the novel it is once said, "Pouring breakfast cereal into a bowl, he saw his life crashing down in smoking ruins", stressing the speculation of David's life. David has his fellow grey hound, his family and friends but still feels he has a quandary with life. Like many obstructed teenagers he wants to blame fate for his problems but soon he finds out the true meaning of life, and it is not outrunning fate.

Lisa says

Most often, young adult fiction leaves me quite cold. I read it for professional reasons, make suggestions regarding suitability for class reading, and put it aside again. Every once in a while, though, I come across beautifully crafted novels, containing the human condition in the making, made accessible to a younger reading audience without diluting content and message.

Just In Case is such a case. Pun intended as it is part of the story, as well. Justin Case, the main character, all of a sudden realises how fragile his reality is becoming and wants to make sure he stays in control. In order to do that, he has to take all possibilities of the world into account. Just in case... A quite impossible task, of course. He decides to trick Fate. He needs to change shape to go unnoticed!

I loved the idea of trying to hide from Fate by becoming another person, and how that decision ultimately becomes part of your Fate and your identity.

Justin Case is in many ways a typical teenager trying to find his way through the jungle of different options that suddenly open up as he is preparing to become an adult. His increasingly bizarre actions are motivated by his fear and wish to control the surrounding world. It is a genuine coming-of-age story, describing the vacuum between the protected world of childhood and the responsibility and agency of the grown-up.

When Justin understands that he has to give in to the fact that total control is impossible, he is ready to take charge of his own life.

I find that to be an important message not only for adolescents, but for adults as well. Sometimes hiding from Fate is the worst thing you can do. The ancient Greeks knew that already, as demonstrated in countless myths involving people trying to avoid the unpleasant news of the oracle and thus creating the stage for its fulfillment. Paris or Oedipus come to mind, for example.

In our modern world of perfectionist obsession, we can use a dose of Justin Case's medicine to let go of some of the fears that prevent us from enjoying what we are doing fully.

Just in case you have some time to spare, I highly recommend this novel!

Lokum Çocuk Kutuphanesi says

okudugum en çarpıcı? gençlik hikayesi. "just-in case" kaderinden kaçabilecek mi? veya sorgulamalardan? ismi pek duyulmamış bir kitapta neler gizliymiş meğerse :)
bazı yerler yüzeysel geçilmiş gibi gelse de ergenlik dönemi çalkantılarını oldukça derinden incelemiş yazar.
dorothea en sevdiğim karakter oldu, keske daha yakından tanıyabilseydim

Meaghan says

Although I loved How I Live Now, Just In Case seriously didn't do it for me. This book just seemed to go nowhere. I mean, things happened, but it felt like nothing was happening at all, and the story line was just drifting along. It was like the author couldn't decide between fantasy and psychology. Also, I had a hard time believing David/Justin's parents would just let him run away from home and quit school and move in with that older girl without being just a little bit upset. Try again, Meg Rosoff. Your first book was so good I'd be willing to give you another chance.
