



Particular Stones

David J. Kirk

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Imagine growing up without family, kept in a dungeon-like orphanage, charged with crimes you didn't commit, while harassed and threatened by bullies. Dan Kelley finds himself in such a place, alone in a society whose over reliance on science and technology has led to the near-extinction of the human race. Dan and his friends face their challenges assuming the tactics of their tormentors, with fists flying. With their backs to the wall, they pull a strategic retreat into the wilderness where things are seen more clearly. Realizing a more rational plan, redemption begins to unfold. Join Dan on his journey down this fractured road as he overcomes obstacles, finds love and compassion, and discovers himself with the help of a phenomenon the world has apparently forgotten about. Are there answers or just a strong wind?

Particular Stones Details

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From Reader Review Particular Stones for online ebook

Kimberly Gould says

I spent a lot of this book trying to figure out what it was about. I kept thinking I wasn't getting it. Was it about who murdered Gov Viche? Was it about where Dan Kelley actually came from? Was it about a bleak post-apocalyptic community that was so focused on survival it forgot how to live? Okay, it was definitely about that last one — I wasn't COMPLETELY lost. Eventually, I stopped trying to analyze how this or that encounter related to the story and figured out that it WAS the story. There wasn't an over-arching 'point' I was supposed to see (or if there was, I missed it).

I found a lot of time and attention was given to explaining why things were the way they were. On one hand, I was glad to have some of my bigger questions answered (like why aren't things more advanced 1000 years from now) but found many of these sections dragging. It also took longer than expected for me to fall into Kelley's voice. He seemed rather cold and analytic in the beginning, making sudden outbursts of emotion seem strange and out of place. By the latter half, this isn't a problem and the narrative seems as heated as the response he's giving.

Regarding not getting it: this is a boys' book. It's about being a boy and growing up as a boy. I'm not a boy (big surprise, I know) so I can't tell if my bias is a feminine one, reading as author/editor, or just being slow on the uptake (I am, let's be honest). I've asked my husband to read the book and let me know which it is.

Robin Boren says

I simply loved it. Such an intriguing story once I began to read it, I couldn't put it down. David has a way of taking the reader through the story and really makes you feel like you are there. This is a must read for anyone who is looking for adventure and a story that thinks outside the box.

Jennifer says

I won this book in a First Reads giveaway on GoodReads.

When I first cracked open this book, I didn't know what to expect. It seemed at first to be a mild story about an orphaned boy growing up in the future. Boy, was that an understatement. Before you know it, you are deep in a complex story of ten boys fighting to survive this small town, and the orphanage they live in. Dan Kelley narrates this vivid story of the year 3036, in the township of Centura, which used to be Illinois.

From moving into the big kids orphanage, to starting middle school, to making friends from kids just like him, you see this world they have to live in vividly. After a short time, Dan and a group of boys make a pact to stand together to fight against bullies and other hardships. They title themselves the Eagles, and slowly turn their gang into a family that sticks together, through good times, but most often, bad times. The road just gets bumpier and bumpier as they get older, and stronger.

I quite enjoyed this book. I honestly felt when reading this, that I was apart of the story. Seeing it through

their eyes, and feeling their pain, anger, and struggles. It is an amazing book about the power of friendship and battles we all have to overcome when faced with adversity and prejudice. Definitely a good read, in my opinion.

Heather Alexander says

Dan is an orphan, raised in numerous orphanages his since he was 4 years old, they are mostly the same. The book is set in the future, after a mini ice age, a blue chemical disaster and a rash of infertility. Dan is at a new orphanage, same environment, he knows the drill. He stays mostly to himself, an advanced student, he does his work and doesn't make waves. When his deformed roommate is murdered and he discovers the extent of the bullying in the orphanage and the grounds around it, Dan is appalled. There is a gang called the Mustangs, with members outside and inside the orphanage, and Dan and a group of boys from the orphanage form their own club, The Eagles. The Eagles are going to do whatever they have to to stop the violence. This book is about orphaned kids that have no one but each other, undying and complete loyalty to friends, overcoming adversity, and generally growing up. There is love lost and found, fights, kids with nothing trying to make something of themselves, and the few people that help them along the way. I like the idea of the story and really liked it when the characters were interacting, they are very well developed characters and you grow to respect and care for them throughout the book. The only problems I had with the book is that #1 the author tends to switch between the first and last names of the boys while describing things, and that gets a bit confusing. #2, there is way to much narration, it's like a filler, for example, every time they are in history class, you will get the entire history lesson as if you were sitting in class. Too much info. I do understand that the author wants to give you as much history as possible in this new world, but I think, in this case, less would have been better. All in all, once you push through some of the parts, the story itself is a good one.

Sandra says

When sitting back with Particular Stones, I expected to find an amusing adventure about an orphan boy. What I did not expect was the depth of the adventure and to be delighted by the most wonderful love story. It's not the fairy tale type of love story, but the one that comes from the core of humanity. Faced with loneliness and havoc, a group of orphan boys resource to their primal nature to save themselves from becoming victims of a system devoid of the one bond society has forgotten all about: friendship, love and family.

Angie Lisle says

I usually divide books -by page count- into quarters, the goal being to read one-quarter of the book per day. I finished this book in three days.

The prose is militaristic, which probably comes about because Kirk is a Navy veteran. The writing is simple and efficient. There's no flowery prose.

Orphaned boys come together to form a group that helps them survive an abusive orphanage in a futuristic

world affected by climate change. If William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, and Stephen King's *The Body (Stand by Me)* could have a love-child, it would be this book.

I also saw many parallels to the life and works of Henry David Thoreau – if you haven't read Thoreau, I recommend doing so as an accompaniment to this book.

The story occurs in a school and I love how Kirk catches us readers up on the events that have happened between today and 3063, the year that this story occurs in, by letting us go to history class with the main character Dan. This was an easy way to get us info in short bursts without overloading us.

I had an issue with his use of the term 'Ice Age' at the beginning of the book (circa page 25). An Ice Age lasts millions of years. His 'Ice Age' lasts a couple of centuries, making it a glaciation period (in layman's terms, this is often referred to as a 'mini Ice Age') and not an actual Ice Age.

I thought Kirk made an error, which was strange because most of his Ice Age information is spot on with what scientists know happened in previous Ice Ages (kudos for getting that information correct).

As I said, Kirk doles out information slowly so as to not overload readers, but this 'slip of tongue' haunted me for the next 185-pages. Finally, on page 210, Kirk clarifies that the event in his story is, in fact, a 'mini Ice Age.' Kirk probably chose to use the term Ice Age at the beginning of the book because most people don't know the difference between glaciation and interglacial periods (let alone that there have been Ice Ages). By doing so, he avoided overloading readers with unnecessary details, which is commendable, but I wish he would have clarified this information sooner.

This is a minor issue that other people will probably overlook, as it doesn't take anything away from the story. It's not crucial to the plot; it's simply how Kirk bridges the gap between our reality and Dan's world, but it hounded me for several chapters.

Another unusual feature of this book - Kirk gave two sets of minor characters the same names - two boys were named Frank and two were named Corky. Since the boys refer to each other by their surnames or a nickname, this makes the group feel realistic while avoiding confusion between characters. Overall, I think this little quirk contributed to the militaristic-style of the book.

I won a free copy of this book from Goodreads First Reads.

Tara Bush says

The story is about an teenager, Dan, who lost his parents when he was only four and can't remember enough to truly understand what happened to them. The story takes place far in the future, after the world has gone through another ice age. Dan has been living in various orphanages and has to deal with stereotyping and bullies (nothing ever changes). I enjoyed reading the book and kept picking up, waiting for something big to happen. Perhaps I've been tainted by Harry Potter, because I was disappointed when Dan didn't end up being some special kid with parents that had been lost in some noble quest. In the end, it was just a book about a kid growing up. I wanted something bigger.

Jennifer Barry says

I loved this book. Told carefully but not ponderously, the story takes place in the future and would definitely be described as dystopian. However, Mr. Kirk keeps us so firmly in our own world that none of it is unbelievable. The main character is strong, well developed, and teaches the reader as he learns. I'd recommend to teen boys without hesitation, but also to anyone who loves a well-rounded speculative story that makes one think "what if...?"
