



The Garbage King

Elizabeth Laird

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A gritty, deeply moving story that shows how the human spirit can triumph in the harshest of worlds.

The Garbage King Details

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Author : Elizabeth Laird

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Taylor says

It was very moving and I love the way it ended, how they went through all that hardship and it was worth it because they were happy in the end.

Iris Fagniez says

This book was not really a binge book, however it was so captivating that I ended up reading it in only 2 days. The author was addressing a very serious issue, but was still able to make it sound not too depressing. Overall, I loved this book and will definitely be looking for similar genres in the future.

Eluisa F says

This is a really good book that gives an insight into street kids, slavery and struggles at school. I really recommend this book to anyone who has spare time on their hands.

Mary Ann says

This book is quite an insight into the haves and have nots! Hopefully our children will never face the tragedy of surviving on the streets as the main characters of this story did!

Anya says

This was a very good, emotional book. It made me more aware of what was going on in different parts of the world, especially where poverty is there.

Polly Todd says

I can't say that I was inspired by the cover or the blurb of this book. As I settled down to read, I was anticipating a tone of worthy exploration into poverty in the developing world. By the time I got to the end of the first chapter I was well and truly hooked!

Yes, the story does expose some of the issues of child poverty. Yes, it is set in Ethiopia. Yes, the contrast between the lives of rich and poor are contrasted starkly throughout. However - this book is a real gem in the way that it flits over all the "issues" to get on with an excellent adventure, which, indeed, remains the true focus from start to end.

Bad things can happen and people can be unhappy, rich or poor. This is the firm foundation upon which the rest of the narrative is built. The plot could be set anywhere in any divided society at any time. This makes all the difference in the world - any reader can immediately relate to the plight of the two main characters as

they struggle along their converging journeys to learn from each other. The horrors of disempowerment can resonate with any reader.

This book is heartily recommended for readers over the age of 10, although very sensitive children could find some of the passages disturbing. Overall, I found this book enjoyable, easy to follow and thought-provoking. What more could you want from a book?

stephanie says

this is the first ever book that i have read. I read this book with i was 11 or 12 years old. This book got me into reading and ive been ever since. This book will always have a special place in my heart.

Joel Wong says

A little scanty on the details... Could have fleshed it out more

Esther Prins says

This was a good book. Not great, but good. The book is set in Ethiopia, but it doesn't tell a lot about the country or the culture. I think the thing that bugged me the most was Mamo's relationship with his sister - it seemed like Tiggist didn't care about Mamo at all during the book. That was quite disappointing. The rest of the book as a whole was okay, if not a little bit slow.

Rohan Ganglani says

It is a very interesting book and puts you in the shoes of a street boy in Africa who is sold as a slave but then escapes and a young talented writer whose father doesn't see full potential of.

Elizabeth says

Why does a child leave a comfortable home and run away? Why are there so few safety valves for children in poverty? These questions are asked often in the media but are not generally answered. The Garbage King will provide you with some insight into the world of young teens struggling to make sense of their world. This piece of fiction brings together two boys from two totally different social classes in Ethiopia, who are searching for a way to survive, alone, on the streets of the capital of this African country. Their journeys bring them together into a street family led by an older boy, Million, who tolerates no stealing but enforces a code of "one for all" as they navigate a life of survival and brotherhood.

Young adult novels such as this one are filled with strong characters, strong plots and a very realistic setting that take the reader outside their comfort zone. The simplest act of drinking a cup of refreshing water is put into a new perspective. The title and its setting caught my attention. This novel by Elizabeth Laird will not disappoint young or older readers as she captures the essence of what is truly of value in life.

Awais Cash says

This is book is absolutely amazing, it teleports you out this world and into the book, love it, easy read, i definitely recommend this book to anyone who wants to acknowledge the struggle of the poor and also this books delivers a good moral of how you should be thankful for the life you have been granted. Overall A Great Book, one of favourite by far.

Sheryln Tan says

This book here used to be my literature book! Recommended for ages 13-14?

Ananya says

OH MY GAWD THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS I HAVE EVA READ

:)

Sarah Saleh says

A really great book that connects you with the main character really well!

Chie says

The Garbage King, is the perfect title, i love the title. And I enjoyed this book! If you like realistic street life, tough children with personality, then you could be utterly charmed by this. I'm a sucker for earnest, hard-earned friendships, its close to home and as I know/knew people in similar situations, so found this sweet and might be biased because of so.

3.8 Stars, but happily 4 on the ratings

Gwyneth says

1. The Garbage King by Elizabeth Laird is a fiction novel for older boys and girls that conveys the exciting and dramatic story of homeless street children forced to do whatever they have to do in order to stay alive in the streets of an Ethiopian city. The two main characters— Mamo and Dani—come from stable families but are tossed by circumstances beyond their abilities to control and into the dangers and hardships of street life. They find a temporary way to survive when they are taken into a street gang led by a tough but charming boy named Million. The gang is composed of kids who have never known the security and happiness of family

life. Children of our own culture, protection and comforts of a home as well as family are taken for granted. When reading this book one will be shocked with the huge gap differences, but one will also learn about the deprivations, uncertainties, and sometimes the different experiences many Third World children face. The story of Mamo and Dani, although surprising in its authenticity. The Garbage king is also an inspiring tale of bravery and abundance in a world where danger and anxiety are the norm.

2. Laird has written the book through the life of a 2 boys, one of which has been through a lot and had to managed his own responsibilities in order to survive while the other character is very much “spoon fed” all his life and things aren’t going so well in regards with his family. What I liked about the book are the juxtapositions between the 2 characters and how they solve certain situations alone or with each other. What I learned are that kids in 3rd world countries are striving so hard to receive proper education as well as food and shelter while here in Canada some could not care at all and we take opportunities and in a way abuse them. I believe situations like this can happen and we shouldn’t be ignorant based on looks or actions. I also believe that all children should have the right to proper education therefore we are able to work as a community and solve even bigger problems. If children are just being sold for money, become beggars, or used as slaves how can we innovate? One thing I didn’t like is that Laird took a long time describing something in detail, this somehow causes the story to take really long and many parts did not point directly to the main idea. There is not quite a happy ending, but The Garbage King is a reminder that for most of the street children life will go on as normal, picking garbage for useful items, eating the thrown-away food and taking comfort in each other.

3. “You didn’t say anything wrong. I know your story. Bad things happened to me when I was young. I had to run away too

This was a quote that was spoken from a taxi driver to Mamo, who had to run away from his loved ones when he was young. When the taxi driver was talking I think that Mamo was also thinking about the family he left behind making this a pretty powerful quote because even if we think that we are doing something good we have to make really big sacrifices and it turns out that things don’t go usually as planned. Therefore running away can be an option.

“He felt a horrible trembling sensation begin to shake him, and a cloudy mushiness invaded his mind. Before he fainted, his last thought was “I shouldn’t have done that.” And then, like the flicker of a flame in a dying fire, “No! No! I want to live!”

In this scene Mamo is already sold as a slave and Mamo had accidentally let one of the cows go astray resulting to a cow’s death and a beating from the farmer. Mamo felt as if his life has been over and decides that he no longer wants to live therefore he eats a mouthful of poison leaves. I just can’t believe how much it would take a person to decide they didn’t want to live anymore based on their situation but I guess it wasn’t meant to be.

“No, Ruth, you are not to get up. I won’t have you distressed over this. Daniel can’t hide behind you any longer. He’s got to face up to reality”

Here is Ato Paulo (Dani’s dad) talking to his wife that Dani should be sent far away to be taught and understand the reality of life. For the longest time Ruth (Dani’s mom)—who is bed ridden—has always been defending Dani and given him lots of second chances. Now that she is being sent to England for medical purposes Dani’s only option is to run away now that he is no longer under his mother’s wing.

“‘Mm,’ he said. ‘This is good.’ ‘It’s share,’ Mamo said awkwardly. ‘It’s for us both.’ Dani’s face went hot. ‘Oh. I’m sorry. I didn’t think.’”

This part of the story made me laugh because Dani sent Mamo to find food because he doesn't want to be seen in public and so when Mamo arrived back with some food Dani quickly started to eat. without realizing that it was for the both of them, living in a higher class Dani thought that he would have eaten three times that amount in any normal meal he's used to.

“He was pulling out a beautiful yellow shirt with white buttons and a neat little breast. It was the most magnificent garment Mamo had ever seen close up”

Dani wanted to give Mamo a token for his trust and friendship, it just amazes me because a small gift such as a shirt placed Mamo into shock. I thought that it was really sweet because this gesture made me realize that giving something to someone even if it's small and not a special holiday can affect them.

Vanessa Chan says

This fascinating book tells a story of two different boys named Dani and Mamo. Dani is extremely rich and lives in a humongous house. However, his dad wants to send him away so that he would learn to toughen up.

On the other hand, Mamo is very poor. His whole family has died except for himself and his sister, Tiggist. A man who claims himself to be Uncle Merga pretends to take care of Mamo. In fact, Merga takes Mamo far away from the city and sells him to a farmer as a slave.

The two boys escaped from their harsh situation. After running a long distance, they find themselves in a graveyard. There they met each other. Together, they joined a gang of beggar street boys and went through a series of ups and downs.

This book is surely a great and beautiful piece of writing. Through Mamo and Dani's adventurous but exciting experiences, I have deeply learnt and understood the importance of friendship. In the afterword, the author, Elizabeth Laird mentions how she knows a lots of boys and girls whole has lived in Addis Ababa. One of them in particular, has helped her write the story. That boy has left a message, saying how he really wants us, the readers of this book, to be grateful about our lives and be happy with it. He also wants to clarify the fact that life on the streets isn't easy and exciting. However, if someone is out there already, he wants them to stay strong and brave, Most importantly, even though life will be tough, we should always stay positive and never try to die.

I highly recommend this book to both children and adults, especially the ones who never feel satisfied with their lives and think that running away will solve all and every problem. I really hope that after reading the book, the will learn their lesson and understand how running away is actually the worst thing to do.

Erika says

This book didn't wow me but it was still an interesting story about street "urchins" in Ethiopia. Good for grades 5+ but with a warning about references to prostitution, alcohol use, huffing of gasoline, and some swearing.

Kozmokitap says

Kitab? çok sevdim. Her ya?a hitap eden, etkileyici bir kitap. Gerçek öykülerden kurgulanmas? da kitab? daha etkileyici k?lm??.

<https://kozmo kitap.blogspot.com.tr/20...>
