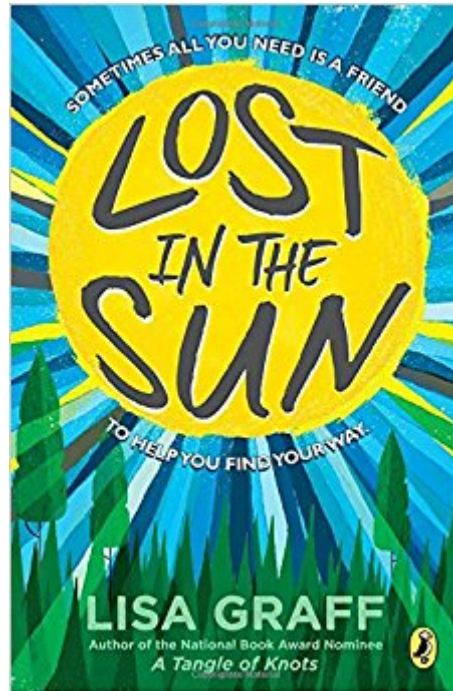




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Lost In The Sun



Synopsis

From the author of *A Tangle of Knots* and *Absolutely Almost*, a touching story about a boy who won't let one tragic accident define him. Everyone says that middle school is awful, but Trent knows nothing could be worse than the year he had in fifth grade, when a freak accident on Cedar Lake left one kid dead, and Trent with a brain full of terrible thoughts he can't get rid of. Trent's pretty positive the entire disaster was his fault, so for him middle school feels like a fresh start, a chance to prove to everyone that he's not the horrible screw-up they seem to think he is. If only Trent could make that fresh start happen. It isn't until Trent gets caught up in the whirlwind that is Fallon Little—the girl with the mysterious scar across her face—that things begin to change. Because fresh starts aren't always easy. Even in baseball, when a fly ball gets lost in the sun, you have to remember to shift your position to find it. Praise for *Lost in the Sun*: Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year! "Graff writes with stunning insight [and] consistently demonstrates why character-driven novels can live from generation to generation."--Kirkus Reviews **STARRED** "Graff creates layered, vulnerable characters that are worth getting to know."--Booklist **STARRED** "[A]n ambitious and gracefully executed story."--Publishers Weekly **STARRED** "Weighty matters deftly handled with humor and grace will give this book wide appeal."--School Library Journal **STARRED** "Characterization is thoughtful."--BCCB **STARRED** "In *Lost in the Sun*, Trent decides that he will speak the truth: that pain and anger and loss are not the final words, that goodness can find us after all—even when we hide from it. This is a novel that speaks powerfully, honestly, almost shockingly about our human pain and our human redemption. This book will change you."—Gary Schmidt, two-time Newbery Honor-winning author of *The Wednesday Wars* and *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy* "Lisa Graff crafts a compelling story about a boy touched with tragedy and the world of people he cares about. And like all the best stories, it ends at a new beginning."—Richard Peck, Newbery Award-winning author of *A Year Down Yonder* and *A Long Way From Chicago* Lisa Graff's Awards and Reviews: Lisa Graff's books have been named to 30 state award lists, and *A Tangle of Knots* was long-listed for the National Book Award. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 4-8 • Trent Zimmerman is consumed by rage. The universe has been manifestly unfair to him and he doesn't know how to handle it. Seven months ago, he struck a hockey puck at a bad angle, sending it like a missile into the chest of a boy with a previously undiagnosed heart ailment. That boy died and Trent feels responsible. And he's furious about it. He can no longer bring himself to play sports (at which he used to excel) since he has panic attacks any time he tries. He's sure everyone hates him, except maybe for his mom and his older brother, and he doesn't blame them. His father and stepmother seem to prefer his brothers and he thinks that's understandable. He tries to expel his morbid, angry thoughts by drawing in a journal. He doesn't know if that makes things better. He feels like a screwup, so he deliberately screws up even more. And makes more people angry with him, which is what he feels he deserves. Into this maelstrom comes Fallon, a fellow sixth-grader whose face bears a large and mysterious scar. For some reason, she seems to like spending time with Trent and almost against his will he starts to like spending time with her. Graff takes readers through Trent's gradual process of coming to terms with the tragic accident and his recognition that, while he can't change the past, he can control his present behavior to influence his future. While Trent makes multiple bad decisions and his impulsivity is a constant liability, he's also funny, sensitive, and kind. Fallon is a firecracker and the two of them are a lot of fun together. It's a mark of Graff's skill that readers can easily discern and appreciate complexities behind the behaviors of every character in the novel without having them explicitly delineated. VERDICT Weighty matters deftly handled with humor and grace will give this book wide appeal. •Miriam Lang Budin, Chappaqua Library, NY --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Praise for LOST IN THE SUN: A Publishers Weekly A Best Book of the Year! A * "Graff writes with stunning insight into boyhood and humanity, allowing Trent to speak for himself in a pained, honest narration. Investing Trent with all the tragic frailty of Holden Caulfield, Graff tackles issues of loss, isolation, and rage without apology. Graff consistently demonstrates why character-driven novels can live from generation to generation, and here she offers a story that can survive for many school years to come."--Kirkus Reviews A *STARRED* "Graff creates layered, vulnerable characters that are worth getting to know and rooting for. Narrated by the moody, sarcastic Trent, the story never buckles beneath his troubles, and it finds wings once he can see beyond them. Pranks, The Sandlot reenactments, sports talk, and donuts are in plentiful supply, adding dashes of levity at the right moments. The book's real magic is found in simple acts like watering plants and learning when to listen and when to just tip your head back and scream at the sky."--Booklist *STARRED* A * "In an ambitious and gracefully executed story, Graff covers a lot of emotional ground, empathically tracing Trent's efforts to deal with a horrible, inexplicable accident and to heal the relationships that have become collateral damage along the way."--Publishers Weekly A *STARRED* A A A A * "Weighty matters deftly handled with humor and grace will give this book wide appeal."--School Library Journal *STARRED* A * "Characterization is thoughtful: Graff is highly sensitive to a sixth-grade boy's limited emotional savvy and lack of tools to deal with this kind of pain."--BCCB A *STARRED* A "In Lost in the Sun, Trent decides that he will speak the truth: that pain and anger and loss are not the final words, that goodness can find us after all—even when we hide from it. A This is a novel that speaks powerfully, honestly, almost shockingly about our human pain and our human redemption. A This book will change you. A •Gary Schmidt, two-time Newbery Honor-winning author of The Wednesday Wars and Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy A A A "Lisa Graff crafts a compelling story about a boy touched with tragedy and the world of people he cares about. A And like all the best stories, it ends at a new beginning. A •Richard Peck, Newbery Award-winning author of A A Year Down Yonder and A A Long Way From Chicago From the Hardcover edition.

Thoughts: [another Sweet Sixteen book, by the way. I'll have to remember to add a Category for that :)]. The first book people started actually, thoroughly talking about at our school was Lost in the Sun. A "It's SO sad! A my classmates would say. A "It's such an amazing, sweet story! A A

“I cried!” some kids would even announce. Lost in the Sun seemed all the rage, I thought, so I felt like I should pick it up and see what all the buzz was about. Lost in the Sun was sad. I didn’t cry, though. I was hoping I would cry. Fish in a Tree, of all things, made me cry, so I was surprised that I didn’t shed at least one tear in this book. When I thought about it, I realized the story didn’t feel that special, or different, to me. I honestly sometimes forgot about the trauma Trent, the main character, had gone through (abusive father, divorced parents, accidentally killing a boy with a hockey puck in a freak accident). This book felt like just another realistic fiction about going through Middle School to me - a heavy one, nonetheless, but still a pretty generic one. I realized that this was because it wasn’t impactful or deep or heart wrenching - at least to me. I didn’t really connect with it, and the writing felt slow. I did actually like Fallon Little, who ends up being Trent’s sort-of friend, but her story didn’t really feel that important, even though it ended up being the “climax,” if there even was one. That was another problem. THERE WAS NO CLIMAX! The book just went on and on, almost like a personal narrative of every second of your life, without any ups or downs. Now, don’t get me wrong, none of these things make the book bad. I just didn’t like it as much as I thought I would. In fact, it pretty much just came down to having high expectations, and being disappointed. I would still recommend it, but I think it might appeal a little more to boys, versus The Thing About Jellyfish, which is a similar story, except with a female protagonist.

Lost in the Sun was a stellar book. I was skeptical about reading it because it was recommended by someone who does not have the same interests as me, (I prefer fantasy) but I was very much pleasantly surprised. I think that Lisa Graff has impeccable imagination because her characters, each and every one of them, have interesting differences and traits. I am in elementary school, but I am in gifted reading, so my teacher thought that this book would be an easy read for me and it was. I recommend this book for kids in middle grades, as the book is set in the sixth grade. This book easily deserves 5 out of 5 stars if not more. It describes father-son relationship troubles, as I understand because my brother and my dad do not, let’s just say, have the best “bond”. It also lets kids who’s parents are still together understand further about divorce. This book is STELLAR and you NEED to read it.

Didn’t read it myself, but my 11-year-old proclaimed it to be “the best book (she’s) ever read.” She

reads a lot. She also insisted that, "there has to be a sequel." Apparently some things were left untold? We'll try more books by this author.

I was extremely moved by this novel of a young man struggling with guilt. It gave me added insight as to why some kids seem to self-destruct for no apparent reason. If we only knew what was going on in their hearts and heads, we might be able to reach them before it's too late. The characters in this novel are beautifully drawn, even if the dad who has moved on to another woman does seem a bit stereotypical. The depth of the narrator makes up for any weak spots. Outstanding!

I got this book for my daughters school summer reading. She liked the book but it has a death in it and the main characters makes hard decisions. I think it would be good for an older child, but 11 was a bit much.

My 12 year old daughter got this in her Easter basket and exclaimed "This is my favorite author!" Who knew? She devoured this book and said it was just as amazing as the last Lisa Graf she read. (I haven't read it, I'm reviewing based on my daughter's reaction to the book.)

I really enjoyed this book, I love a book that can appeal to students and adults. I am a teacher, and this book reminded me how important my job is. It is always said that the kids who don't deserve our love need it the most. I loved seeing the teachers in this book apply that idea with such grace. This summer as I read through tons of books for my classroom I am looking for read alouds that can teach some social emotion skills and learning. This is such a book, I can't wait to share it with my students.

Trent was part of a terrible accident that ended tragically, and has changed him. Then a mysterious classmate, Fallon, who has her own demons to deal with, befriends him, and together, they begin a journey of healing. The characters are believable and likeable, and you find yourself rooting for them throughout their story. A wonderful read for grades 5 and up.

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