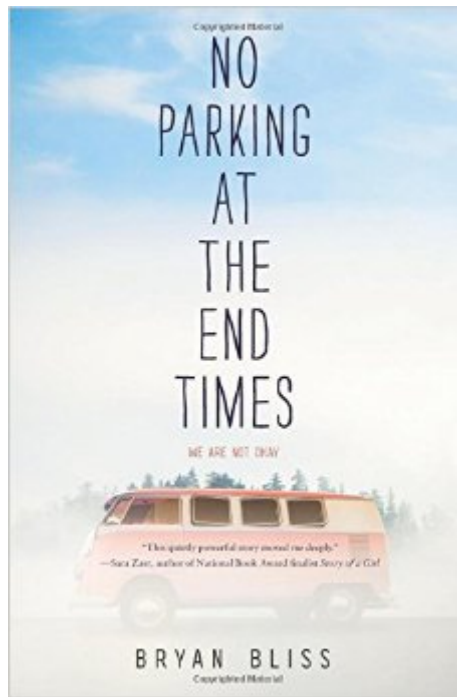


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No Parking At The End Times



Synopsis

Abigail's parents believed the world was going to end. And "of course" it didn't. But they've lost everything anyway. And she must decide: does she still believe in them? Or is it time to believe in herself? Fans of Sara Zarr, David Levithan, and Rainbow Rowell will connect with this moving debut. Abigail's parents never should have made that first donation to that end-of-times preacher. Or the next, or the next. They shouldn't have sold their house. Or packed Abigail and her twin brother, Aaron, into their old van to drive across the country to San Francisco, to be there for the "end of the world." Because now they're living in their van. And Aaron is full of anger, disappearing to who-knows-where every night. Their family is falling apart. All Abigail wants is to hold them together, to get them back to the place where things were right. But maybe it's too big a task for one teenage girl. Bryan Bliss's thoughtful debut novel is about losing everything and about what you will do for the people you love.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Review: Even as an adult it is sometimes hard to admit the failings of our parents. And if it's hard for an adult, imagine how difficult it is for a young teen that is 100% dependent on their parents and who should be able to trust that their parents will nurture and care for them. This is the reason that Abigail is so bewildered with her situation. Because after her parents have sold everything to help Brother John spread his message about the End of Times and then traveled cross country to witness said event (which, of course, never happened) Abigail can't help but wonder if her

parents have failed her and her twin brother, Aaron. As the reader, the obvious answer to Abigail's question is a resounding YES. Her parents have given away everything. Betting on the fact that the end has come and there is no reason to worry about anything else. Now, they are living in their van and depending on the generosity of churches and shelters to feed them until God has decided the end is here. Their neglect is reflected in Aaron's behavior "he's disappearing from their van every night and they don't ever notice he's gone. It's also reflected in Abigail's internal struggle. Slowly, Abigail realizes that they haven't just lost the physical things. She and Aaron have also lost their parents. And if they no longer have their parents, what will she do in order to survive her current situation? This is such an overwhelming circumstance for anyone to be in, let alone a 16-year-old. And getting the help she needs isn't easy when the two adults you should be able to trust the most are no longer emotionally available. I knew what this was about going in and I knew I was taking a chance. For me, personally, anything related to religion and/or faith has the distinct possibility of making me twitchy as I flashback to my religious upbringing as a child/teen. But this book was remarkably thought out. What I appreciated most is Bliss's depth of understanding. His obvious empathy and ability to put himself in both Abigail and Aaron's shoes. This wasn't a book that tried to either encourage or denounce faith/religion. Instead, it is a book about parental failure and one girl's struggle to reconcile that failure with her desire to live and do what's right. No Parking at the End Times is a very thoughtful book and an excellent addition to the YA contemporary world. It opens up a lot of questions for discussion and it is one that I will be adding to my bookshelf for not only myself but for my kids as well. Nat

I was a little disappointed in the plot. I wanted just a little more excitement. The religious undertones were fine and not at all preachy. But I was waiting for the big the finale. I did keep reading until the end. I wanted to see the moment when the parents snapped out of their blind mind set and see what was really going on. This is just one person's opinion doesn't mean others won't like it. My apologies to author. Please don't take my opinion to heart. A crystal has many facets and everyone is entitled to their own view.

The author is clearly skilled as a novelist. His story of a family embroiled in a cult is subtle, realistic, and full of insights into human nature and how cult thinking can take hold of people's minds and affect their behavior to the point of delusion-- how the longing for meaning in life can even bring a family to the brink of destruction. I couldn't get enough of his characters--infuriating, likable,

frightened, brain washed, and desperate for the same things we all want. Chilling and thought-provoking. Don't miss this book--it's a treat.

This is a story about a sixteen-year old girl named Abigail. Abigail's parents sold everything they owned in South Carolina, packed a van, packed Abigail and her twin Aaron, and headed to San Francisco following the call of a preacher named Brother John who is preaching the end of the world. Their father is the most fervent in his support of Brother John. He didn't lose faith when the world didn't end as Brother John predicted. The family is living in the van and going from church to church for their meals. Aaron has lost faith both in Brother John and his parents and has begun sneaking out at night to hang out with other homeless kids. Abigail is torn between her parents' beliefs and her brother. She tries to be a good kid but she misses home and a more settled life and she is rapidly losing her faith in God. The final straw for her comes when her brother runs off, the van is towed, and her father gives money that a church donated to them to Brother John. Her parents don't make any effort to find Aaron, so she runs off to find her brother. She learns that, as bad as it is for her and her family, it is even worse for many of the other homeless kids. Aaron has met a girl named Jess who has been homeless for three years. Jess and Aaron have also run afoul of another homeless guy who has something on Jess. This book was very well-written and brings up lots of points for discussion - faith vs. fanaticism, parental responsibilities. I can't wait to talk about this one with my students.

As I'd read in another review before purchasing it, there was a great villain already present on the page (within the first 100 pages). The need to create more opposition actually took away from the existing conflict. This doesn't happen a lot in fiction, but it did here. It was distracting to focus on the central characters as they tackled not one but several foes. The first was good and enough. Adding more obstacles detracted from the story's intriguing plot and this family's struggles with life on the road.

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