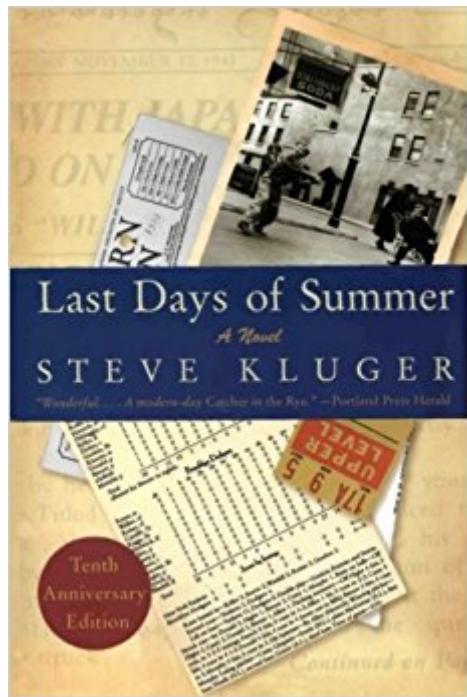


The book was found

Last Days Of Summer



Synopsis

Last Days of Summer is the story of Joey Margolis, neighborhood punching bag, growing up goofy and mostly fatherless in Brooklyn in the early 1940s. A boy looking for a hero, Joey decides to latch on to Charlie Banks, the all-star third baseman for the New York Giants. But Joey's chosen champion doesn't exactly welcome the extreme attention of a persistent young fan with an overactive imagination. Then again, this strange, needy kid might be exactly what Banks needs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Last Days of Summer by Steve Kluger has to be one of the best books that I have read this year. I am not usually a big fan of baseball books but initially I found the layout of this book to be intriguing. The story is told through a series of letters, notes, report cards and newspaper clippings. Although there is a rich cast of supporting characters the basic story line follows the friendship of a lonely boy named Joseph Margolis a precocious, 95 pound, Jewish weakling, living in Brooklyn during WWII and a foul mouthed baseball player named Charles Banks. It tells the story of how family can be made anywhere and it really did make me laugh and cry. This was fantastic.

I don't like sports. I don't really understand sports. In fact, if sports were my last hope for survival on a wasting planet, I would have to just give up and die with the rest of the athletically-challenged population. So why I picked up a book centered around baseball (in my opinion the second-most boring sport to golf) is beyond me, but it turned out to be a pretty good purchase. It's not a new concept - fatherless, smart-aleck boy gains begrudging mentor who changes his life forever - but the

characters are fresh and relatable. Joey Margolis is a mouthy Jewish kid growing up in Brooklyn. After one too many beatings from the neighborhood bullies, he claims NY Giants' 3rd baseman Charles Banks is his best friend. When he's pressured for proof, Joey writes to Banks to request a home run, starting a flurry of funny, emotionally authentic letters. The letter exchange - peppered by miscellaneous newspaper articles, report cards and psychiatrist's transcripts - continues over a period of seven years, chronicling Joey and Banks' tumultuous but fiercely devoted friendship. The unlikely pair crack jokes, poke fun, threaten, boss, cajole, confide, advise and offer support to one another as the two face extended tours, Bar Mitzvahs, first girlfriends, last girlfriends and absentee fathers. It is not only Joey's coming of age that is revealed in their notes, but Banks' too. Yeah, there's some baseball talk, but although the sport is what brings the characters together, it's still secondary to the sincere, funny, totally believable relationship between a boy and his reluctant hero.

I was skeptical about buying this book because of the format....letters..postcards...report cards etc. but something told me to buy it. I did and I can say it was one of the best books that I have ever read and I have read many. I wish Oprah would recommend this book. I am going to try to get my family to read it..I know they will love it if they do. Here's to you Joey, Charlie and the rest of the gang...you did an outstanding job.

I first got this book from the library, and I thought it was so amazing that I bought a copy soon after. The format of letters, news articles, telegrams, report cards, etc. made it very easy to read, I zipped through it in a day or so. I haven't laughed this hard out loud over a book since I was a kid, and the end had me crying my eyes out. I made most of the members of my family read it and they all loved it. I would highly recommend it, it's a sweet, spunky, smart story, especially for people who like it when characters do everything right (for example the movie the Fugitive, when the main character was escaping, he did everything right to get away from his captors, in the same respect the kid in this book does everything right with his crazy escapades).

This is one of two books that have succeeded in making me not notice the budding tap-dancer seated behind me on a plane (and the other was by JRR Tolkien, so that says something). The "sports book" label is a misnomer; the baseball is really secondary to the friendships. This book is about a boy and a man who change one another's life. It is laugh-out-loud funny, it is moving, and contrary to other reviews I found it completely believable--Joey Margolis is so unusual that his exploits seem completely within his abilities, but at the same time he has very human flaws. The

time you've spent reading this review could have been put to better use reading the book!

I absolutely loved this book, and began to read it again immediately after finishing it. I fell in love with the main character, as he reminded me of so many young, precocious children I have met. This book made me laugh and cry over and over again, and I think about it all the time. It offers incredible historical insight from the eyes of a brilliant child, and it is a tribute to the human condition. I recommend this book to anyone who has an open heart. This is a book to be cherished and passed around.

I would love to be able to describe this book to you, but I can't. The fact is, the book is like the movie Citizen Kane-- you can say it is about a man who runs a newspaper, but it would be a massive oversimplification. I could say that this book is about a little Jewish boy and his hero, best friend, and surrogate father, but it would do the book no justice whatsoever. The book is funny and sad, hilarious and heartbreakin, all at the same time. You just have to read it.

A wonderful book! Enjoyed equally by an 83 year old WWII vet, a 20 year old female college student and a variety of people in between. A great gift idea for anyone on your list!

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