



## **Aftershock**

*Kelly Easton*

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**TORMENT: EXTREME PAIN OR ANGUISH OF BODY OR MIND**Seventeen-year-old Adam is tormented. His parents have just been killed in a car crash in Idaho, and he has survived. In a speechless state of shock, Adam begins walking home, back to Rhode Island. But he can't think in a straight line: The past and present blend and merge in his thoughts; the future's a blank; he's lost his voice and his money. Memories fling themselves at him like stones, some inflicting great pain. In Adam's harrowing journey he faces many challenges. He confronts situations that demand violence or compromise from him, forcing him to question what it means to be a man, even as he tries to find his voice in a world suddenly devoid of meaning. This gripping and haunting novel is the story of one young man's struggle to survive -- literally -- on the road, and to propel himself emotionally from despair to hope and freedom.

## Aftershock Details

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Author : Kelly Easton

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# From Reader Review Aftershock for online ebook

## Kelly says

Adam is suffering from severe shock after he and his parents are in a terrible car accident. His parents are killed, and Adam wanders from the site of the accident, his brain unable to process what has happened. Adam begins walking home, unable to think clearly or to speak. The book follows his journey, and is interspersed with anecdotes from Adam's former life as he is reminded of what happened. Through these stories, the reader becomes acquainted with Adam's parents, his aunt and cousin, and his girlfriend Mira. It's an emotionally difficult book at points, as Adam slowly starts to cope with his parents' death, but it is a quick read, and would be a good pick for reluctant male readers.

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## Lauren Kester says

The book Aftershock wasn't the best book I've read, but it kept my interest. The main character, Adam, and his parents get in a car accident. After Adam walks away from the car. Instead of walking away from the car Adam should have stayed or found some help. Throughout the rest of the book Adam can't talk due to shock.

Adam stays with Stacey, a Wiccan girl, he meets while walking in a forest. I think he should have asked questions on how to get back home instead of trusting Stacey right away. During the five weeks Adam just lies in bed and watches TV, when he should have been figuring out how to get back home. In one of the sections Adam steals a car in Twin Meadows. Perhaps Adam should have just asked someone to take him back to Rhode Island where his house is. While at a bar Adam bumps into a guy wearing cowboy boots and a cowboy hat. Curly, the guy Adam bumped into and his friends take Adam to Portsmouth, a town next to Adam's house. But since Adam bumped into Curly, Curly and his friends beat Adam up and leave him in a ditch. If I were Adam at this point I would feel like giving up. In the last section when Adam finally gets home he is reunited with his aunt, cousin, and girlfriend. Adam moves in with his aunt and cousin since his parents died. In the future I predict that Adam will recover from the accident, but will never forget the memories with his parents.

I would recommend this book to either girl or boy teenagers because it has a mature theme and some swearing throughout the book. Teenagers would enjoy this book because it keeps your interest and you can't predict what will happen next.

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## Sydney Bartel says

Personal Response: I wasn't too impressed with this book. It was very boring and slow moving to me. I didn't think it had a good enough story line. I was also pretty annoyed the the main character, Adam, wouldn't talk during the entire book. I understand that he just went through a traumatizing situation, but you would still think that he would at least talk. I thought that the first several pages were good, but it went all downhill from there.

Plot: This book is about a boy named Adam. He got into a car accident with his parents and was the only

survivor. He was all the way across the country when the accident happened, so he had to travel all the way back home. He spent the whole book hitchhiking and walking across the country. He stayed with people along the way, but he also stayed on the streets. After the accident he would not talk at all. He did not say a word throughout the whole book. At the end of the story, he finally made it back to his home, nearly half dead, where his aunt and girlfriend were waiting for him.

Characterization: Adam was the main character in this story. He was a pretty average teenage boy. He was smart, funny, and had a girlfriend. His character changed a lot throughout the story. He got stronger and stronger after the car accident. He also got a lot smarter about his actions and choices as the book went on.

Recommendation: I would recommend this book to high school students. I would not recommend it to anybody younger than that because it has some inappropriate scenes. I think teens of any gender would enjoy this if they are looking for a quick, easy read.

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### **Kylipari says**

I have never read a worse book than this.  
Would not recommend.

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### **Benjamin D. EHS says**

This book in summary is about a 17 year old boy named Adam. He is on a road trip with his parents and they get into a car crash. His parents die and he is alone and sets off on a destination that leads him home. He meets new people and encounters problems every step back home. The sight of his dead parents traumatise him so bad he does not speak for the rest of this story. He becomes a bum with his only enemy; the past.

The title of the book was well chosen because it truly resembles the story itself. There is good literary elements that are shown in this book and can be quickly picked out and exemplified. The main character (Adam) is pretty dynamic character. After his parents die he feels as if he's dead "I'm not laid out like her, but there might be different ways of being dead." (3) (Referring to his mother's dead body in the car.). In the end of the book he says "People don't die. That isn't how it happens. They float inside of you. Like leaves on water." (165) that to me shows a great change in thinking of the character which seems quite dynamic. At first he thinks people can die physically and mentally, but as he later soon to figure out that people will always live on with memories and things that they have touched in their life. There is a lot of attention to detail in the story; the flashbacks and descriptions of his travel are thorough and make the story much better.

Although there is good literary elements there is also great meaning and messages that I interpreted from the story. One of the messages I got from the story was; taking things for granted. On Adam's travel he is forced to use bum tactics due to the circumstances. It shows you how the little things that most people take in life for granted can be needed more than anything for others. Another message that I grasped from the story was; people that died "Define you as much as by their absence as they did when they were there." (165). When Adam's parents are gone the deadliness that illuminates off them goes in to him. He seems dead by the way he acts and represents himself by not speaking. This amount of defining was equivalent to; when they were alive and happy. This story has many more lessons/morals that can be learned and touched by. That's why

this book is a must read.

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### **Mel says**

AWESOME fast and easy read. I finally found time to read Aftershock this afternoon since so many of the residents have been reading and loving it.

This would be a great book for class, there is some discussion of sex but nothing explicit and a few f bombs. I would highly recommend it.

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### **Christine DePetrillo says**

What an interesting story with a poetic, thought-provoking ending.

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### **Corey May says**

If you are bored and want a good read, you should read Aftershock by Kelly Easton. I rated Aftershock 3 stars for several reasons. I liked the plot and how it developed but I personally thought it got repetitive on how he went from town to town; to say the least it was very predictable. Basically the book was about this boy named Adam and his parents are going to attend a peace rally in Seattle. On their way back home to Rhode Island his family gets into a single car crash that kills both his parents.

Adam stunned and is no longer able to speak as he tries to make it home by himself with the help of some people on the way. He makes several stops across the United States and encounters different characters along the way including people that make life harder for Adam.

He has sudden flashbacks mostly of events with himself and his girlfriend Mira, his parents' bookstore, or events of himself and his parents. I liked the way Kelly Easton connected Adam's past to the present situation that Adam was in. It gave me a better understanding on what type of character Adam was.

For the most part people are fine with Adam's muteness, but Adam runs into a couple of sticky situations. On his way home Adam came across a couple of punks in a bar parking lot with a bad temper that created a life threatening situation for Adam. Just because he ran into the one of them inside the bar. But somehow Adams survives getting beat to a pulp and being thrown off the road. And he continues through these events as his journey back home/bookstore becomes more difficult.

It all came down to this kind mother who was driving her son to get Adam finally home. She lived in a town nearby where Adam lived and drove him for the most part of the way back. When he got back the first thing he did was go to the bookstore, he didn't even return to his own house or try to contact his aunt who is looking for him after the phone call. He is later reunited with his girlfriend and his aunt and cousin, his only remaining family members as the book is resolved.

As I said I liked the book because it had an amazing plot and it was developed very well. Also I enjoyed reading the flashbacks Adam had while on his journey. The one thing I liked the most about the book was that it was a short quick read, very easy and enjoyable.

The parts I didn't like was that it was a predictable book, it was very easy to guess what's going to happen next. I would have liked a little suspense in the book. Plus I didn't like the ending, yes he made it home but I thought it was anti-dramatic. It seemed like the ending was rushed. I also didn't like how she skipped passed a couple of scenes, as I can remember she passed 6 months by in a sentence and she did it again later in the book as well.

But I have to say Aftershock was an enjoyable read. It tells us how life can be so unpredictable and it also motivates me that nothing is impossible. Even though Adam is lost and abandoned he does not give up and he does everything he can do to get back home. These messages made the book an even better book and made it have that quality that other books lack. I would advise you to all read if you have the spare time to do so.

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## **Andi says**

### Personal Response:

I personally did not enjoy reading this book. The book wasn't terribly written, but the storyline was annoying. I hated the main character. He was stupid and irresponsible. The fact that I didn't like the main character made the book hard to finish.

### Plot:

This book started off with Adam and his parents in Idaho when suddenly, they got in a car crash. Both of Adam's parents died. However, Adam survived. In a state of shock, Adam got up and started to walk home to Rhode Island. Adam walked until he ran into a group of girls who took him in. Adam wouldn't speak because of his traumatic experience. As the weeks went on, Adam stayed in a comatose state. He seemed to not care about his parents or going home. Finally Adam snapped out of it and realized he needed to make his way back home. Between walking and hitching rides, Adam eventually made it back to Rhode Island. When he got there he found his Aunt. Adam was then admitted to the hospital and luckily had little health issues. In the end, Adam still wouldn't talk because he was scared that he wasn't able to anymore.

### Setting:

In the beginning of the book, Adam and his parents were in Idaho. Throughout the book, Adam traveled to many states in the U.S. At one point, Adam was working in Texas. In the end of the book, Adam ended up back home in Rhode Island. The book took place in present time and tense.

### Characterization:

Adam was a teenage boy. He was usually very smart, but during this specific occasion he acted stupidly. The trauma from the accident affected him very seriously. Adam was always very nice and friendly to the people he traveled with. Even though he wouldn't talk, Adam used body language to communicate well with people.

### Rating/ Recommendation:

I gave this book 2 out of 5 stars. I personally did not like this book. It made me angry how stupid the main character was and it was completely unrealistic. Overall, the book was not written the best and I have read much better books. I would not recommend this book to any of my friends. This book was appropriate for people ages 14 and up. It included some inappropriate language and profanity for younger children. This book was also gender neutral.

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## **Ramona Frei says**

After a horrible accident, where both of his parents died, a teenager boy tries to find a way through his memories, to make his journey back home.

Although the book was confusing at first, I really liked it. The style of the author is really captivating. I would recommend this book to people who are learning English as a second language, just as I am, because it was clear and easy to read and understand.

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## **Jenna LaMie says**

### **Personal Response:**

I really liked this book because you never know what was gonna happen next and was very exciting. The book started off exciting and never got boring. There was always something new going on. It was a little confusing at the beginning because it would randomly switch from topic to topic but then once you get a little farther in the book it was easy to know what was going on.

### **Summary:**

The book started off as the family driving home from their vacation and in the car was the two parents and their son. They were driving and got in a car accident, the boy was the only one who lived. When he woke up he didn't think his dad was dead, he just thought he was unconscious. Then he realized that he wasn't breathing and he was actually dead. He already knew his mom was dead by the way she was laying on the ground because she had been run out of the car when they crashed. So he started wandering into the woods and came to another road, he started his journey home. His plan was to hitchhike all the way home because he had no money, no phone, and couldn't really remember anything or anyone's number. He was surprised at how many people would actually pick him up and give him rides to where they were going. It took about a week and a half to get home by hitchhiking and walking.

### **Recommendation:**

I recommend this book to both boys and girls. It would be a good book for boys and girls that like fun and adventures books. It wouldn't be good for little kids to read.

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## **Makenzie Lienemann says**

Imagine desperately trying to get home without money, transportation, or a voice. That's exactly what it was like for 17-year-old Adam, after him and his parents were in a car accident that killed his parents instantly. Shortly after the crash Adam wandered off, adrenaline pumped and in no way near a healthy mental state. He found a group of "Angels" of whom one of them brought Adam to their apartment and fixed him up there for a while. With no voice, came no true help for Adam, though. After he overstayed his welcome there he hopped from ride to ride courtesy of hitchhiking. He eventually found himself trying to get home, but he only seemed to get farther away; Starving, thirsty, and exhausted he was beginning to lose all hope. Will Adam make it home before he dies of dehydration? Will he escape all odds and make it back home in one piece?

Sometimes in life you just have to keep pushing even when all you want to do is give up.

Although I can not relate to Adam in a literal sense, I can find some allusions that relate to my life right now. Adam is trying to make it home, tired, hungry, and ready to give up. I am trying to make it through this quarter of school, musical practice, and work; Thirsting for free time and sleep. There are moments when I feel like I can't do it anymore, like my 4.0 isn't all that important and I should just give up on it. But, Adam was so close to home when he was ready to give up. Just as I am so close to getting a 4.0 throughout my whole high school career. Adam and myself are more alike than I would have originally thought when learning the plot of this book.

Although it was a quick read, I didn't feel entertained. It felt like the same day over and over, hitch hiking, finding food, struggling with communication. It could be the lack of conversation that drowned this book from what it could have been, since all you could hear were Adam's thoughts and what people occasionally said to him. It wasn't a bad book, it wasn't a great book, just your run of the mill, mediocre book. It is intended for a young adult crowd. I wouldn't tell someone to not read this book, but I also wouldn't tell them to hurry and get their copy of Aftershock because they just haaaave to read it. So, maybe if you're super bored one day or just need another book for a GoodReads review, pick up a copy of Aftershock.

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## **Jennifer Wardrip says**

Reviewed by Sally Kruger, aka "Readingjunky" for TeensReadToo.com

Life can completely change in a moment. Seventeen-year-old Adam's life changes the moment his family's car hits a deer on a back road in Idaho. He and his bookstore-owning, pacifist parents have traveled from Rhode Island for a peace vigil, but only Adam will be heading home. His parents die instantly leaving Adam helpless on the side of the road.

In shock, Adam begins walking. His mind is spinning with past memories and present pain. His only constant, steady thought? To get home. This journey without any emotional and financial support would be challenging enough, but to complicate matters Adam finds he can't speak.

Adam's journey is filled with dangerous situations, a few truly kind and generous people, and others out to make his life miserable. Through his exhaustion and hunger he continues to focus on the life he had in Rhode Island. Dreams of the family's bookstore, his girlfriend Mira, and even his irritating Aunt Margarete and her son, Joey, keep Adam heading toward hope and home.

AFTERSHOCK is a tale of survival and the compelling human need to carry on even after heartbreaking tragedy. Adam's strength and courage will touch all who read his story.

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## **Arminzerella says**

Adam's parents are killed in a car crash while they are all driving home to Rhode Island and Adam is stranded. Stunned by his grief over the tragedy, Adam walks away from the accident and keeps walking until



he collapses in the arms of a pretty young waitress who takes him home with her. Adam can't tell her his story – he can't tell anyone. He literally can't speak, and he can't make himself write. He has to rely on body language to make himself understood. Adam bounces from place to place, struggling to feed himself and to get back home to Rhode Island. Along the way he flashes back to what his life has been like with his family and his girlfriend, Mira. Home becomes the mantra that keeps him going – somehow, if he can just get there, everything will be all right.

As you're reading about Adam's journey home, you're learning more about him from his thoughts, his reminisces. He's a really decent guy and his parents were pretty wonderful. I was much more interested in the memories Adam's brain churned up as he made his way home than I was in his actual journey, but I think that particular plot development was a compelling backdrop for his story. He's obviously out of his mind with grief and can't deal with his feelings/emotions, but he seems completely sane otherwise. He set this whole journey in motion, and he has the power to end it at any time, but it's like that never occurs to him. He can't bring himself to contact the authorities, he can't remember phone numbers, he can't make the necessary connections to reconnect himself with his past life. It takes him months to get back, and when he's nearly there, he's picked up by a trio of jerks who almost beat him to death. Adam winds up in a hospital (after crawling down the street and collapsing in front of his parents' bookstore) where he's finally able to recuperate after his ordeal. Powerful story, short read. I can't quite wrap my head around whatever compels Adam to wander away from the site of the accident in the first place, but suspend that particular disbelief, and there's a decent story.

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### **John Clark says**

A fascinating stream of consciousness, dual journey. After surviving the car crash that killed his parents, Adam must figure out how to go home, but his emotions are so strong and confused, he can't speak. Following him from Idaho across the south and eventually back to Rhode Island, makes for a an intriguing and emotional experience.

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