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Elsewhere

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

~~New Talent~~

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

15-year-old Liz is 'just a girl who forgot to look both ways before she crossed the street'. It comes as a shock to her that she is in fact dead and that everyone else on the SS Nile cruising towards the land of Elsewhere is also dead. Liz is met on the quay by her grandmother, Betty, who died before she was born.

Life in Elsewhere has something of the quality of the Mad Hatter's tea party - it has its own logic (instead of growing older the dead grow younger) and is as bureaucratic and rule bound as life for the living is on Earth. At first Liz, numb with grief, obsessively watches her family from the Observation Deck (including at her own funeral) but gradually she begins to interest herself in life/death on Elsewhere. From being angry that she never got to go to a prom or pass her driving test, she practises three point turns with Owen, a married fire-fighter who died at 24 but is now 17. When Owen's wife Emily dies of flu and arrives in Elsewhere things get complicated. What happens to relationships after death?

This is a highly original first novel, both poignant and witty, with much to say about living and dying. 'A life isn't measured in hours and minutes. It's the quality, not the length,' Liz tells the taxi driver who ran her over on his arrival in Elsewhere. RS

Running Order:

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