

Title: *Rayne and Delilah's Midnite Matinee*

Author: Jeff Zentner

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Reviewer Name and Grade: Anna P. 8th Grade

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Josie and Delia are two sarcastic senior girls in highschool, strong best friends for years. They live in Tennessee, and on Friday nights, film segments for their (self-aware) cheesy horror hosting show on public access cable television. The show appears on Saturdays at eleven, broadcasting little-known and low-budget older movies. Josie and Delia get into character as Rayne Ravenscroft and Delilah Darkwood, respectively, and both love their work to pieces. But their life starts getting complicated as graduation approaches.

Delia's dad walked out on her and her mom when she was eight, and her mom had to go on medication for her depression. The small family is poor, but they love each other very much. However, Delia still clings to the false hope that her dad might come back. She even originally started the television show in hopes he might see it and return home; she remembers watching horror movies with him as a child. When she gets enough savings, she hires a Private Investigator only to find that her father has changed his name to Derek Armstrong (receiving his email and address in the process) and moved to Florida.

Josie lives with her father, mother, and younger sister. They are successful, and encourage her to pursue her dreams of TV which she has had since she was very young. She receives a special offer for an internship on the Food Network in Kansas. Josie loves the show, and while she knows this opportunity would be good for her, she doesn't want to abandon Delia in Tennessee. During one of their filming sessions, Josie meets an MMA fighter her age named Lawson whom after talking to, slowly begins to gain feelings for. They care for each other deeply and improve their relationship as the story goes on, but Lawson intends to stay in Tennessee to continue training with his current coach. This puts even more strain on Josie's final decision.

In a turn of events, Josie and Delia decide to go to ShiverCon (a convention for horror-related fans and creators) in an effort to get Jack Divine (famous horror-host and producer) to boost their show to fame. For Josie, it was a last ditch effort to convince her parents and herself that the show is not worth giving up on. She had promised her mom and dad that if Divine declines producing their show, she would take the internship in Kansas. Delia is there partly to help the show she loves so much, but also to meet her father. The convention is in Florida. Lawson tags along.

Nothing goes as planned. The three are only there for a weekend, so partway through the meeting with Jack Divine Delia excuses herself to drive to her father's address. She finds that he has started a new life with a new woman, with a baby on the way. He has turned his life around and is a computer analyst. After dinner and a conversation at the beach, she is able to come to terms with her life situation and is able to tell her father how great she is and drives off. She feels stronger now that she has told herself that she is not inadequate. On Josie's side, she and Lawson find that Jack Divine is a man full of himself in extreme debt (even to the Russian mob) and a con-man. He takes them to a fancy restaurant and forces them to pay for his bill (amounting to almost \$1000). He tries to force them to pay for his "services," (rambling on about prior gigs in the form of 'advice') but they retaliate and run off after his assistant tries to attack them (Lawson is a professional fighter). Josie realizes that she will have to take the internship, but also feels that while she loves Delia, wants to and that her heart isn't in the horror industry. Delia understands, and after a while, Lawson

even decides to follow her and look for a new coach. While Delia is heartbroken, she finds support in her mother and continues the show. They remain friends, and while they realize their future isn't together, know that their path together is what mattered and their future relationship can still proceed.

Did the plot(for fiction) or presentation of information (for non-fiction)keep you interested?

The plot of this book kept me interested all the way through, as new information and plot developments in these characters' lives kept being presented with no filler.

Was the pace of the book too fast,too slow, or just right?

The pace of this book was definitely just right for me. Life progresses at a natural rate, and the characters take realistic approaches to their scenarios.

What grade level(s)is this book appropriate for?

I would say the book is appropriate for honestly almost any grade level, as long as the reader and their parents are okay with some mild cursing on the parts of the two main characters, whose banter can sometimes be overboard.

What type of reader would you recommend this book to?

I would think that people who enjoy very realistic stories would like this book. Of course, while the life of Delia is not the norm in our society, and it is certainly extraordinary that two people quite young can host their own television show (albeit public-access), all of the decisions made by the characters had thought and reason behind them. The characters acted as normal people do with regard for their own future and feelings. I, and I predict others, liked this book particularly because it doesn't try to sugarcoat the inevitabilities of life and separation, and how the book acknowledged that some people have different expectations out of life.

What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?

I don't think there is any other information teens should know about this book, as one could say it speaks for itself. It's almost a coming of age story where two friends who care about each other very much have to each evaluate their lives and their views on what they cherish.

I would personally rate this book as:

4 stars: I enjoyed this book and found it worthwhile reading.

I chose this rating for the book because I really enjoyed it and the dynamics between characters, but I found some of the dialogue to be a little over-the-top and unrealistic for actual people to say. Some of the book and its character relies on random-humour within the characters bringing up weird and random things out of the blue. However, overall, the personalities presented got me attached to these people and the occurrences in their lives.