



## Wish You Weren't

*Sherrie Petersen*

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Marten doesn't believe in the power of wishes. None of his have ever come true. His parents ignore him, his little brother is a pain and his family is talking about moving to Texas. Not cool. So when he makes an impulsive wish during a meteor shower, he doesn't expect it to make any difference.

Until his annoying brother disappears.

With the present uncertain and his brother's future in limbo, Marten finds himself stuck in his past. And if he runs out of time, even wishes might not be enough to save the ones he loves.

## Wish You Weren't Details

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Author : Sherrie Petersen

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## From Reader Review Wish You Weren't for online ebook

### Kimberley Troutte says

This is such a wonderful book. What kid hasn't wished his little brother would disappear for a little while? And when it actually happens to Marten...whoa, boy. A mysterious stranger tells Marten that his wish not only changed Marten's life but could also change the universe and time is running out. You've got to read this one.

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### Tonja Drecker says

I received this copy for an honest review. And to be honest right away (I do try), I'm actually kind of torn between a 4 and a 5 on this one = 4.5. So I just rounded up.

I saw this cover and immediately remembered those wonderful star-watching nights with my parents on camping trips. This initial feeling was right on with the first pages of the story. I love it when covers get it right.

Marten has had enough of his little brother, and who can blame him? The kid just broke off the head of his prized action figure! A few seconds later, when his mother has him wish on a star, it's no wonder Marten wishes that stupid little brother was never born. Then the wish comes true, and Marten must find away to get his brother back again.

I felt for Marten, and I think any kid with younger siblings will. Even those brothers and sisters who get along better than best friends have times where they just wish the other would disappear. Of course, they don't mean it--and neither did Marten. As the horror of what has happened hits Marten, I felt it too. And when he launched his quest to try to save the little boy, I could only root and cheer Marten on. Of course, he doesn't have to save his brother alone. Marten has his best friend on his side (one that's true-blue through and through) and a wish spirit from another planet, who reminds me a bit of a hair-brained professor. To his defense, the spirit is battling some pretty heavy problems of his own, ones that make Marten's mission even more difficult. This spirit added a quirky mixture of wisdom and humor--I couldn't help but liking him.

When I first picked this book up, I was sure it would be based more in reality (more of a contemporary). I was a little surprised at how fantastical the journey becomes and thought maybe less would have been more at times. Marten is thrown through time and dimensions--never much, usually just little bounds of a few days and miles. The light space feel and the little bits of astronomy, which were thrown in, gave the entire thing a nice atmosphere.

There's tension and humor, twists and turns. Nothing ever works out as Marten had hoped, and every step forward turns out to be backwards instead--so, there's definitely tension. But still, I did catch myself skimming several paragraphs, especially toward the 2nd half of the book. I felt that some scenes could have simply been a little more adventurous. But in general, the story pulled through on a jet through space and time.

Summed up, this is a lovely story with a lot of imagination. Kids will easily relate to Marten, especially those with siblings and fans of wishing stars.

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## Robert Kent says

First Paragraph(s): IT'S MIDNIGHT AND I'M FLAT ON MY BACK on a patch of grass in front of our hotel room, hoping that no one looks outside and wonders what the weirdos from California are doing. Tonight is the peak of the Perseids meteor shower. Every year my mom drags us out of bed just to see the shooting stars. My brother's on one side of me, squirming around, trying to stay awake. My friend Paul's on the other side, snoring. At least he already knew our family was crazy before he came on this vacation with us.

When I was younger, I thought it was cool to get up at midnight and watch the stars. Tonight I'd rather be in bed. Like Dad. I swear it's still over a hundred degrees out here. And don't get me started with the mosquitoes.

Did you have a good weekend, Esteemed Reader? Never mind. I only ask as a segue to telling you about my weekend. You might ask why I bothered with the formality of inquiring about your weekend when I could've just started by telling you about mine. Well, Esteemed Reader, I didn't want to be rude:)

I have three siblings and I spent my weekend reunited with them and all the new members of the next generation. My poor nephew used to be the only baby in the family and we fawned over him. Then he had a little sister and a little brother and now two baby cousins and while we still fawn over him--of course we do, he's adorable--there's less fawning time to be allocated just to him. The pool of resources that was only his now has to be shared equally with others who have encroached on his territory. Countries go to war in this scenario, so is it any wonder there's such a thing as sibling rivalry? Having once been the only baby (long, long ago) before my little brother and sister arrived, I feel my nephew's pain.

This weekend was the perfect time to be reading *Wish You Weren't* by Sherrie Petersen, which is a book all about sibling rivalry. Middle grade readers are going to eat this story up. It's fun and charming and has all the feels. I knew I'd enjoy it as it comes highly recommended by old friends of ours:

"I love all the science details mixed with fantasy in *Wish You Weren't* — just the kinds of flights-of-science-fancy I wish I had as child!"

SUSAN KAYE QUINN

bestselling author of *The Mindjack Trilogy*, *Faery Swap* and *Third Daughter*

"Fun and accessible, rich with realism and heart, this magical adventure reminds us of the things truly worth wishing for."

CASEY McCORMICK

literary agent intern and blogger at *Literary Rambles*

I am quite pleased to see more and more books being blurbed by bloggers and fellow indie authors. Having recently had a blurb of my own grace a book, I know it's a thrill, and I love to see authors and bloggers supporting each other in this way. Blurbs no longer need to be handed down on a mountain top. Casey McCormick is a blogger I've long known and trusted and her blurb carries more weight with me than the blurb of a formally posh literary magazine. And regular Esteemed Readers know I hang on Susan Kaye Quinn's every word:) Both these folks have been critique partners of mine.

Meet eleven-almost-twelve-year-old Marten and note how Petersen tells most everything we need to know going in during a discussion seemingly about wishing on stars:

I roll my eyes. Mom always has her head up in the clouds, dreaming impossible dreams. I'm not really sure how she ever became a respected scientist. The guys in her lab would die laughing if they heard her talking about wishing on stars.

My dreams are much more down to earth. Get through middle school without ever experiencing swirlies. Install an alarm system on my bedroom to keep my brother out. Change my parents' minds about moving to Texas.

I stifle a yawn and wonder how much longer we're going to stay out of bed. When the sun comes up, it'll be our last day of vacation here in Corpus Christi. If you can call visiting cousins and looking at model homes a vacation.

Marten's biggest problem is his little brother Aldrin (yes, named after Buzz):

Sometimes I think the reason my parents waited so long to have another kid is so that they would have a built-in babysitter.

Marten doesn't believe in wishing upon stars despite the charming Disney song. His dad embarrasses him, his mom placates him, and his little brother annoys him. He's in a tough spot we older siblings know all too well. Some people like to think of childhood as the finest time of life, and certainly it has its charms, but at a cost. Children have very little say in their day-to-day lives and that's poor Marten. He doesn't want to move. He doesn't want to be a babysitter, but he has very little choice in the matter. It's this powerlessness that makes Marten the perfect candidate to have a wish come true and to at long last have a say.

Even though the whole wishing on a star thing has never worked before, I'm willing to give it one more try. I take a deep breath, squeeze my eyes tight and make my wish. Sweat drips into my ear as a mosquito buzzes around my head, then . . .

Silence.

I relax my tensed muscles and listen for any telltale sounds. I open one eye and look around.

Aldrin is staring up at me, his brown curls bouncing around his face. "What'cha doing, Marten?"

I sigh. So much for that.

Aldrin jabs me in the ribs, reminding me that I've failed. Again.

I jog back toward the room, biting my tongue to keep the words inside.

I'm wishing you weren't here.

To be fair, prior to this wish Aldrin has been extra obnoxious. He's broken Marten's 1978 Han Solo action figure complete with The Rebel Alliance Medal of Honor. Noooooooooo!!!! I'm with Marten on this one. That kid's gotta go:) By the way, multiple references to Star Wars in a book about wishing on stars is the right call.

Marten doesn't give his wish much thought as everyone knows wishing on stars, while fun, is a mostly meaningless activity beyond articulating your goals and centering your focus on achieving them (always a good idea). Marten almost forgets his wish until the next day when this happens:

I rub my eyes, sure I'm just seeing things. But he's still fading. In slow motion. I reach out to grab him, but my hands pass through his body. I glance around for help, but Paul looks like he's frozen at the trashcan and no one else is near. Even the lady in the cowboy hat has wandered off.

Panic twists my stomach into knots as I turn back toward my brother. Aldrin reaches for my hand, his mouth seems to silently scream my name.

"Can you hear me?" I try to hold him, watch my hand pass through his rapidly disappearing body, squeeze the air that used to hold his form.

And then he's gone.

Now that's a situation! Marten's parents are quite concerned to learn their son has disappeared Marty McFly-singing-Earth-Angel style. Will Aldrin return in time for a rousing rendition of Johnny B. Goode!?! It's all good and well to wish your siblings would disappear, but the actual experience of it would be terrifying, I think.

And speaking of movies, in addition to being a Star Wars and Back to the Future fan, I'm positive Sherrie Petersen's looking forward to that new X-men movie the internets are currently buzzing about. Whilst in a history museum, Marten and his buddy Paul find themselves suddenly the only people moving. Everyone else is frozen, then they move backwards in time, then they move about unable to see our heroes, and then one particularly interesting child from the past can see them, and then they travel through limbo:

"Limbo? Seriously?" I focus back on Aldrin. He doesn't seem to be tiring of this constant motion. Not that the little guy tires out easily. "Isn't Limbo like for Catholics and people who play Dungeons & Dragons?"

Wish You Weren't reminded me quite a bit of the classic A Wrinkle in Time. Our heroes are on a mission through space and time to save a loved one and are guided by a strange adult who seems to know the terrain, but is peculiar and not entirely trustworthy.

This weekend, as I read this book, I thought of the many times I wished my siblings had disappeared. None of them ever broke an original 1978 Han Solo doll, so I suppose they can be tolerated. All I can say to the Martens of the world is it does get better. There may come a day, many, many days from where you currently are, that you may be grateful for your brothers and sisters. They're the people who've known you longest and in some ways best and they preserve your past as you preserve theirs.

So is Aldrin returned to existence? Esteemed Reader, you'll have to read the book to find out and you should. Wish You Weren't is a fun tale with a story geared toward younger readers, but which will be enjoyed by older readers as there are plenty of tidbits aimed at adults. There's a pleasant twist at the end and you might just get a little emotional before it's all done.

As always, I'll leave you with some of my favorite passages from Wish You Weren't:

My brother's face lights up. That look makes me nervous. His innocent face always fools people, but not me. I know he's a devil in cute kid clothing.

The problem is, my mother actually has no concept of time. Whenever we go to someone's house and she says, "Okay, Marten. Stop playing that video game. It's time to go," what she really means is, "Stop what you're doing and stand here and be bored while I keep on talking to my friend."

Everything is deadly quiet. It's like I've stumbled into the back room of a creepy department store and all the mannequins have surrounded me.

Every muscle in my body tenses. Paul squeezes his eyes shut, like that's going to make us invisible again.

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## Heather says

(This review can also be found on my blog [The \(Mis\)Adventures of a Twenty-Something Year Old Girl](#)).

The blurb of this book really caught my eye. I don't usually read middle grade books, but this one sounded very interesting.

The title of this book is fantastic! It's really conveys what the book is about. Once you read the book, you'll know what I'm talking about.

I like the cover, but I don't feel like a child in junior high school or elementary would be drawn to the cover. For me, the cover encompasses what this book is about.

The world building, for a children's book, was believable. I feel like children will instantly be immersed in Marten's world.

The pacing starts off decent enough, but I felt like it becomes a little too fast paced. There were times I was left so confused as to what had just happened. I felt like the transitions between one scene to the next weren't very smooth. I feel that maybe if this book was a little bit longer, the pacing could have been better as things could've been explained a bit better.

I think children in middle school and older elementary children will definitely enjoy the plot. I'm sure many children with younger siblings have been so annoyed with them, that they've wished they would disappear. That's exactly what happens to Marten, but after his wish comes true, he begins to regret it and does anything and everything he can in order to make his little brother come back. Wish You Weren't conveys such a fantastic message about being a family.

I think most children will be able to easily relate to Marten. He's an 11 year old boy who is sick of his younger brother always messing with his stuff and always getting him in trouble. Marten is definitely a brave boy, and throughout the book, it's easy to see how much he really does love his brother as well as the rest of the family. I don't really have an opinion about Paul. On one hand, he just felt like a really pointless character, but I could see why the author chose to put him in the book. Paul is Marten's best friend, and I felt like he contributed to making Marten feel a bit braver. I would've like to know more about Aldrin, Marten's younger brother, so I would feel a bit more emotional towards him.

The dialogue flows really well and fits in with a middle grade level book. I think children who are interested in astronomy will really love this book as there's some scientific information regarding stars and space in this book. There's not any violence or sexual references and no swearing unless you consider "hell" a swear word which was only mentioned once.

Overall, Wish You Weren't by Sherrie Petersen is a great read for older elementary children as well as those in junior high. It touches on a topic that most children can relate to and has a sense of adventure to it. The only downside was the pacing which goes a little too fast although that doesn't take away from the book that much. However, the message this book conveys is a very good one!

I'd recommend this book to those aged 8+ who have ever wished a sibling away or for those that like a book that has a great sense of adventure within its pages.

(I received a free ebook of this title from the tour host in exchange for a fair and honest review).

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### **Kristi (Books and Needlepoint) says**

I have been trying to find more middle grade books to read and share with my son, and I think this may be a good one. In the book Marten is eleven (almost twelve) and I think that would be a good age to target for this book.

The book starts out with Marten, his best friend Paul, his little brother Aldrin and his mom laying on the grass outside of a hotel in Texas in the middle of the night. They are watching for a meteor shower and according to Marten's mom, if you see one you are to make a (silent) wish. Marten has been doing this for years with his mom and so he is kind of bored. He doesn't believe in wishes and finds it ironic that his mom, a scientist, does.

As things often go between siblings, Aldrin and Marten get into a fight. Towards the end of it, Marten sees a shooting star and makes a fierce wish that he wishes his brother wasn't there. When he opens his eyes he is a little disappointed, but not surprised to see his little brother still standing there. But sometimes wishes take time to come to fruition and it isn't until the next day that Aldren disappears right in front of their eyes.

Well, you can imagine that Marten and Paul are distressed as they can't believe what they have seen. Soon, a spirit being from the star that was wished on appears and a series of adventures ensues as Marten tries to figure out how to get his brother back and undo the wish.

This was a quick book to read at 150 pages and I finished it in one sitting. I really thing my son would like it as it is quick, with lots of information about space, stars and super novas. There are also some subtle lesson squeezed in along the way about love, family and responsibility. At the end you will find an index with links to lots of things "space" like a meteor shower calendar, links to the Hubble telescope, the Spitzer telescope and the solar system. I must admit I have already visited some of the links provided.

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## **Jessica says**

I loved the premise of Wish You Weren't. You've never had a younger sibling if you've never, at least once, wished they would just disappear for a while. Unfortunately for Marten, his wish actually comes true. What do you do when the one thing you thought you wanted more than anything else turns out to be a mistake? You fix it, that's what you do. This book has a ton of heart, and an adorable moral to it all.

I also adored the brotherly banter between Marten and his little brother. As the oldest in my family, I know that sometimes it's tough to have a younger sibling. You become a built in babysitter, you get in trouble if they do (even if you didn't do a thing), and sometimes you just want to plug your ears and run away. I loved how Sherrie Petersen showed this dynamic so beautifully. Marten's little brother can definitely be a pest. She also shows the flip side though, how sometimes we forget to look at the good moments too. It's a great moral for the young readers who are going to put their hands on this book.

There's so much wrapped up into this quick read. The idea of friendship, and what lengths you're willing to go to in order to help a friend. The concept of family, and that sometimes you have to sacrifice to make someone else's dream come true. Even the idea that sometimes all we need to do is speak up when we're feeling put down. Since this is such a brief read, I don't want to say too much for fear of spoiling. I will say that this is sweet, and fun! A bit of time travel, a lot of heart.

So if you're looking for a new read to put into the hands of your young bibliophile? Give this one a spot on your list. Wish You Weren't will be sure to resonate with them, and it has the perfect amount of action to keep things fresh.

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## **Deen Ferrell says**

I don't usually read middle-grade fiction, but I had the pleasure of being at the same table with Sherrie at a book signing and my wife and I found ourselves wanting to read her book after getting to know her a little. The positive impression carried over in her writing. This a fun book for young readers with a great message! There are far too few of these type books out there. Good family dialog and interesting science.

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## **Heidi says**

Wish You Weren't is based on a rather interesting idea. What if wishing on stars really did work and what if you made a wish in the heat of frustration that you soon realized you shouldn't have made? That's what happens to Marten after he wishes his little brother, Aldrin, away. With the supposed help of an otherworldly being named Tor, Marten tries to figure out what has happened and how it can be undone, but as things continue to go wrong, it becomes apparent that his life may never be the same, if he is even able to get his family back.

There was a lot that I really liked about the book. The characters are well-developed and I cared about them almost immediately. It was easy to sympathize with Marten and his frustration with his annoying little brother. And haven't we all made wishes at one time or another that we would want to take back later if they had actually come true?

There were some thing that I found a bit irritating. Marten's parents scold him on several occasions for not watching his brother properly, which is fine and appropriate, but his little brother does some dangerous things such as running out into the road and combining dangerous chemicals that should have led the parents to sit down and teach him otherwise, there should be consequences for those things and all I saw was them comforting him afterwards. Five is old enough to be taught better. And when Marten saves his brother from getting run over, his parents barely say thank you. These aren't major things, but I did find them a bit irritating. It's a good sign actually, that the characters felt real enough for me to be irritated about such things.

The plot was interesting enough that I read the book in one sitting. There were just enough science details to be interesting without slowing the story unnecessarily. The only problem I had was the time travel aspects. Time travel is such a hard thing to portray in a believable way and it's presentation here was a bit confusing and underexplained.

Overall though I don't think the things that bothered me will bother child readers and they will enjoy following Marten on his journey from resentful son and brother, to appreciating what he has and learning to care about others besides just himself.

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## **Lenny says**

I'm a teen, but I still love a good mg book. That's why I loved "Wish You Weren't." It's a terrific mix of science and fantasy.

The mostly black front and back covers are pretty cool. They give you clues about what's inside: stars, outer space, time (stopwatch) and big and little brother. Easy to guess there's gonna be a pretty big problem. I'd pick up this book and give it a look just because of the neat cover.

The relationship between the MC, Marten, and his brother, Aldrin, is full of big brother vs little brother stuff. Marten's escalating annoyance over his brother's mischief, and his mother seeming to always side with him, was described really well. I found myself getting mad at Aldrin along with Marten.

Tor, the star spirit, is likable and all you expect from someone with magical powers. He's like a guy right outta "Star Wars." Marten's friend, Paul, is humorous and adds relief when things get hard or scary and he's a good dude who helps Marten solve problems along the way.

The 138 page story moves at a pretty even pace and kept me wanting to read more to find out what was gonna happen next or how a dilemma would get solved. I never felt it lagged or left me trying to catch my breath. I always had enough time to digest what was happening before moving on.

It's written in first person, present tense. I like that because it makes me feel like I'm right there when things are happening. It gives me an extra boost of emotion and a chumminess with the characters.

The time descriptions are way cool, especially when Marten, Paul and Tor are getting sucked up toward the middle of the red star. Yikes! I could feel myself hanging on with them and holding my breath while we're spiraling upward and swirling around in all the cosmic junk. The time shifts are fast and exciting.

There are some really nice lessons woven into the story about relationships, love, family, friends and responsibility. They're just sorta there and don't overshadow the story.

I really like the links at the end. Very cool science sites with lots of information. You can watch videos and sign up for newsletters and even watch live events. Wow! How cool it that!

I'm giving this book 5 stars and one big super nova because it has all the stuff that makes for a good mg read. It's a terrific fantasy with lots of excitement and a bunch of cool scientific facts. I'd recommend it to readers age eight and older.

WARNING: "Be careful what you wish for, it just might just come true." ?

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## **Yzabel Ginsberg says**

*(I got a copy through NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.)*

A quick and entertaining read, that could appeal to a lot of middle-graders, especially the first-borns who (like me \*wink\* \*wink\*) found themselves "trapped" at 11-12 with a younger sibling they had to be responsible for, and burdened with the feeling that life was so unfair. Seriously, even 20-odd years later, I could still relate, remembering how that was the way I felt towards my own sister at the time. A book that can appeal to older readers through the chasm of time, well, isn't that something?

The story was sometimes pretty bizarre, and I suppose I would've liked some parts to be better explained (let's just say Tör isn't the most straightforward character when it comes to answering questions). It may or may not be a problem, in that having such answers doesn't really matter in the end, but not having them made things a little confusing, so it's a tie here. For instance, I would've liked to see more of the watches, how exactly they worked, etc: not essential to the story and the message it conveys... but still something that would titillate my curiosity. The shooting stars part felt confusing somewhat confusing, and a couple of points (such as, people able to see the characters when they weren't supposed to) were maybe too easily chalked out to "things aren't working as intended", without anything to support the why and how behind it.

The characters' reactions weren't always the most clever, to be honest. However, being 12 and stranded and without any advice to go by, I guess you can't help but making mistakes. I wouldn't have forgiven this is an older character; I could forgive Marten, though, all the more because he also realised soon enough how exactly he felt about his brother, whose "fault" things were, and because he grew up in the process, becoming more understanding of the people around him.

This book is also interesting for its bits of astronomy: not too many, nothing impossible to understand for a younger reader, and at the same time this is something that could make one look further (which is also why the book provides links at the end, towards various websites about the Hubble telescope and other astronomy-related themes).

In short: a pretty sweet novel, with a few holes, but nonetheless enjoyable for younger readers.

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### **Kate ★ says**

*I received a free digital copy from the author/publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest feedback.*

The thing I absolutely love about this book is that it is so relatable. As the oldest of four, I know what it is like to be blamed for your younger siblings' actions. You know that feeling when you just can't believe your parents always seem to side them even though it's not your fault? Yes, that is exactly what our boy Marten's sentiments are. The pesky little brother always gets away with everything. So, out of all that rage and frustration, there is one solution left - wish that his younger brother weren't here.

If I loved the idea, you might ask why the three stars? I think I didn't really but that part about the shooting star. It became confusing for me because of the lack of explanation for everything that is happening. There are some ends which weren't neatly tied together like that time when Susan accidentally teleported with them. She just went on with her life like nothing happened.

Really nice concept and good values for being appreciative of our siblings. I think children will better understand how it is to be more patient and loving to each other.

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### **Rosi Hollinbeck says**

Marten is eleven. His family is moving from California, where they have always lived, to Texas. He will be leaving all his friends behind. His family -- Mom, Dad, and annoying little brother, Aldrin, six annoying years old -- take a trip to Texas before the move, and they take Marten's best friend, Paul, along. One night while on that trip, Marten's mom takes all the kids out really late at night to lay on the lawn and watch the Perseids meteor shower. Aldrin pulls out one of Marten's very collectible Star Wars action figures. Marten is livid and tries to get it back, but Aldrin doesn't give it to him and the head comes off in the struggle. Mom tries to calm things down, When a huge meteor streaks across the sky, Marten wishes a terrible wish -- that his brother weren't here.

Of course, nothing happens. Nothing, that is, until the next day when they are at a museum. Marten's parents are going to meet with some of the museum staff and ask Marten to watch his brother for just a little while. Aldrin is as annoying and bothersome as he can be, but then he suddenly disappears -- right before Marten's and Paul's eyes. While they are searching for Aldrin, a really strange guy shows up in the bathroom. Everyone in the museum is frozen in time, and the man, Tör, whisks the two boys away with him. He

explains there might be a way to overcome the wish Marten had made, but time was of the essence. The adventure begins. Marten has a particularly steep learning curve. And let me say, it does not all go smoothly.

This book is absolutely pure fun, with a few scary moments and a lot of uh-oh happenings. One of my all-time favorite movies is *Back to the Future*. This book has some similarities to some of the best of its moments. I loved every word of *Wish You Weren't*. Middle-graders will surely love it, but I think the rest of us who might like a quick read to escape from real life, this is a good one.

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## **Ken Rahmoeller says**

When I first began reading *Wish You Weren't*, I didn't have high expectations. Books where a kid learns a life lesson are usually slow and kind of dull (at least for me) and it seems to take forever for the character to figure it out for himself.

This is not one of those books.

As soon as Marten gets his wish and his brother disappears, he immediately resolves to take the wish back. The trick, of course, is how to do it, which is what he spends the rest of the book doing. Marten does learn additional lessons throughout the book, but never at the expense of slowing the story.

The words and dialogue flow nicely, and the pacing is good, with hardly a dull moment anywhere in the book. The method used to solve the problem at the end was unique and interesting, and the pace really picked up in the last quarter of the book. I especially liked the way science was merged with the fantasy aspects of the story.

The title is clever and I like the cover, although I think it should have incorporated more of a fantasy feel to match the story. Anyone who's ever had a sibling, both younger and older, should be able to relate to Marten's irritation with his little brother. And I think the fact that Marten wants to revoke his wish as soon as his brother disappears sends a great message to middle graders.

There's not much to be said about the other characters in the book. Paul is Marten's best friend, but most of the time he's only there for comic relief.

My only real complaint occurs in the first half of the book, where things got a little confusing. We meet Tor, the being responsible for fulfilling Marten's wish, and although Tor appears to be there on Marten's behalf, he's incredibly cryptic about what Marten needs to do to rescue his brother, almost to the point of annoyance. I realize the appearance of a stranger who knows what's going on but remains stingy with the information is a standard trope in fiction--a way to keep the reader turning the pages--but the trick is to dole out enough information to keep the story moving forward. In this case, other than mentioning something about a "review" a few times, Tor refuses to answer even the simplest of questions, apparently for no other reason than to keep the reader in the dark for as long as possible.

Because of this, Marten's first couple of adventures come across as kind of random and, not surprisingly, result in total failures, or at least I think they were failures, since Tor never explains what Marten was supposed to do, doesn't seem all that interested in what happened, and never explains the purpose of the adventures—even by the end of the book. Fortunately, once Tor releases a few more details, the story begins moving forward again.

I should also mention that *Wish You Weren't* is written in present tense, which is a turn off for some readers,

although once the story gets moving, I bet you'll hardly notice it.

I give Wish You Weren't a 4 out of 5, and I'm looking forward to her next book.

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## **Marjolein says**

Full review to come!

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## **booksandbark says**

A really sweet book of sibling love for middle-grade kids. I don't have any siblings, so I don't have anything to really compare Marten's feelings about Aldrin to, but I really felt what Marten felt. There was a fair bit of telling going on in the book, but I think for MG kids, it works perfectly, not using any big words or references inappropriate for children/that they wouldn't understand.

I read this book on Christmas Eve 2014, and I thought it was the perfect read for this time of year: ultimately about family and love. Though it was obviously a book intended for younger readers, the book doesn't try to simplify the storyline (when I was twelve, I read Harry Potter!), and it nicely includes a subplot of Marten's reconciliation of his feelings about his mother as well as Aldrin. Although I have to say, his father's character fell a little flat, as did Aldrin's: we didn't really get a sense of Aldrin's personality. Sure, we understood he was a pretty outgoing kid, but that was all. We didn't even get to know what his favorite color was!

I think the idea of Tor and wishes coming true was also great, reminding kids to be careful of what they wish for, because sometimes, those things might come true, and not in the way in which you originally intended. Tor reminded me of Slartibartfast from *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* in a way--a politer, more child appropriate Slartibartfast--and I really enjoyed the idea of stars going supernova. Also, the science in this book was great! For kids like me, who loved to read (and still do!), it would have been a great introduction to the science of the world around us. Luckily for me, my parents were in the field of science and so I got to learn more about it, but I don't think all kids realize the wonders of nature so easily.

I loved Marten's voice. I think kids can find him relatable, and he doesn't narrate too formally to connect. I also liked the backdrop of his whole life changing, whatwith the move to Texas and his mom's big reveal close to the end of the book (view spoiler). I think kids experiencing similar changes in their lives (though not quite as much supernatural sci-fi star God change) can find themselves in Marten and he can help them realize that everything may be for the better.

Overall, I really enjoyed reading this book more than I thought I would! It has excellent themes and an exploration of science children can draw from, and a very relatable voice for our MC. Though some of the characters--like Aldrin and Marten's father--fell a bit flat, the plot and the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* feel to it totally made up for it!

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