



Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel

By Ava Dellaira

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Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel By Ava Dellaira

It begins as an assignment for English class: Write a letter to a dead person. Laurel chooses Kurt Cobain because her sister, May, loved him. And he died young, just like May did. Soon, Laurel has a notebook full of letters to people like Janis Joplin, Amy Winehouse, Amelia Earhart, Heath Ledger, and more -- though she never gives a single one of them to her teacher. She writes about starting high school, navigating new friendships, falling in love for the first time, learning to live with her splintering family. And, finally, about the abuse she suffered while May was supposed to be looking out for her. Only then, once Laurel has written down the truth about what happened to herself, can she truly begin to accept what happened to May. And only when Laurel has begun to see her sister as the person she was -- lovely and amazing and deeply flawed -- can she begin to discover her own path in this stunning debut from Ava Dellaira, *Love Letters to the Dead*.

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Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel By Ava Dellaira Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up—Debut author Dellaira's heart-wrenching epistolary novel begins with Laurel's freshman assignment to write a letter to a dead person. She starts with a missive to Kurt Cobain, who had been a favorite of her recently deceased older sister, May. Gradually, through the teen's letters to other dead celebrities (Janis Joplin, Amelia Earhart, River Phoenix, and more), readers will begin to piece together the history of her splintered family life, including her parents' divorce and mother's virtual abandonment following May's unexplained death. Laurel is devastatingly, emotionally fragile, but she makes friends at her new high school and even starts to develop a serious love interest. Her misconstrued hero-worship of May gradually evolves into a deeper understanding of her beloved sister's strengths and many imperfections. Beautifully written, although a bit choppy in sections, particularly regarding the dead addressees' lives, this powerful novel deftly illustrates the concept that writing is an especially valuable form of healing for those dealing with overwhelming pain and grief. Best for teens who enjoyed Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (MTV, 1999).—Susan Riley, Mamaroneck Public Library, NY

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review The assignment: write a letter to someone who is dead. Laurel falls into this classroom task deeper than she could have ever imagined, writing to deceased stars like Kurt Cobain, Amelia Earhart, Judy Garland, River Phoenix, Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, Amy Winehouse, and others whose lives ended as abruptly as Laurel's older sister's did. Her methodology expands beyond simply writing to the dead. Rather, she researches each recipient, learning about their lives in order to make each letter relatable to the intended party. These quite savvy letters become Laurel's way of working through her emotions as she begins high school, makes new friends, deals with a crumbling family, falls in love, and continues to grieve for the loss of her sister. With the help of her fantasy correspondence, she is able to find common ground, express herself, and eventually discover the messages and lessons of the deceased addressee's lives—as well as her own. Well paced and cleverly plotted, this debut uses a fresh, new voice to tell a sometimes sad, sometimes edgy, but always compelling narrative. Fans of Sarah Dessen and Jenny Han, get ready. Grades 7-10. -- Jeanne Fredriksen

Review

"Reminiscent of Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, this is powerfully emotional stuff." ?BCCB

"Dellaira's characters are authentically conceived and beautifully drawn." ?*The Horn Book*

"Best for teens who enjoyed Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*." ?*School Library Journal*

"Laurel and her friends' struggles and hard-won successes are poignant, and seeing Laurel begin to forgive herself and May is extremely moving." ?*Publishers Weekly*

"I simply loved this book. *Love Letters to the Dead* is more than a stunning debut. It is the announcement of a bold new literary voice." ?*Stephen Chbosky, author of The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

"A brilliant story about the courage it takes to keep living after your world falls apart. A heart-wrenching celebration of love and friendship and family." ?*Laurie Halse Anderson, author of Speak*

"With beautiful observations of where life can take us, from grieving to celebrating, disappointment to

wonder, LOVE LETTERS TO THE DEAD is a love letter to living.” ?Jay Asher, *author of 13 Reasons Why*

“Dear Ava Dellaira: Your book broke my heart, and pieced it back together. As with Kurt, Janis, Amelia and the others who are gone but still somehow here, LOVE LETTERS TO THE DEAD leaves an indelible mark.” ?Gayle Forman, *author of If I Stay*

“As wondrous--and as fearless--as a shooting star.” ?Lauren Myracle, *author, The Winnie Years*

“Riveting, captivating, utterly disarming. I could not put this book down! LOVE LETTERS TO THE DEAD is like discovering a shoebox full of notes addressed to someone else. I read fast, afraid I'd be caught peeking at something I wasn't ever supposed to see. A voyeuristic delight!” ?Siobhan Vivian, *author of The List*

“Effective and satisfyingly heartbreaking.” ?*Kirkus Reviews*

"Well paced and cleverly plotted, this debut uses a fresh, new voice to tell a sometimes sad, sometimes edgy, but always compelling narrative. Fans of Sarah Dessen and Jenny Han, get ready."?Booklist, **starred review**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

George Hartzell:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book might be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the book untitled Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel can be excellent book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Ira Knudsen:

Are you kind of hectic person, only have 10 or 15 minute in your moment to upgrading your mind expertise or thinking skill perhaps analytical thinking? Then you are experiencing problem with the book when compared with can satisfy your small amount of time to read it because pretty much everything time you only find publication that need more time to be go through. Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel can be your answer given it can be read by an individual who have those short time problems.

James Valenzuela:

This Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel is brand-new way for you who has curiosity to look for some information as it relief your hunger details. Getting deeper you in it getting knowledge more you know or perhaps you who still having little bit of digest in reading this Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel can be the light food for you because the information inside this specific book is easy to get by means of anyone. These books acquire itself in the form that is reachable by anyone, yep I mean in the e-book application form. People who think that in reserve form make them feel sleepy even dizzy this e-book is the answer. So there is

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Edna Davis:

Some individuals said that they feel fed up when they reading a book. They are directly felt this when they get a half elements of the book. You can choose the book Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel to make your current reading is interesting. Your skill of reading expertise is developing when you just like reading. Try to choose basic book to make you enjoy to learn it and mingle the sensation about book and studying especially. It is to be 1st opinion for you to like to open up a book and go through it. Beside that the e-book Love Letters to the Dead: A Novel can to be your brand-new friend when you're experience alone and confuse in doing what must you're doing of their time.

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