



Dear Life, You Suck

By Scott Blagden

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Irreverent, foulmouthed seventeen-year-old Cricket is the oldest ward in a Catholic boys' home in Maine—and his life sucks. With prospects for the future that range from professional fighter to professional drug dealer, he seems doomed to a life of "criminal rapscallinity." In fact, things look so bleak that Cricket can't help but wonder if his best option is one final cliff dive into the great unknown. But then Wynona Bidaban steps into his world, and Cricket slowly realizes that maybe, just maybe, life doesn't *totally* suck.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up-In present-day Maine, Cricket Cherpin is the oldest resident at the Naskeag Home for Boys. Since he arrived at age 10 with a scar in the shape of an "X" marring one side of his face, he has been both trouble to the nuns who raise him and a godsend to the Little Ones who look up to him. Taught to box by the caretaker of the property, Cricket protects the younger kids from bullies, one school-yard fight at a time. But it comes at a cost. He is one fight away from expulsion and eight months away from his 18th birthday. His request to remain a boarder at the home is denied, and Cricket must decide where he will go when the nuns can no longer protect him. The way he sees it, he has three options: go from collecting fees for a drug dealer to dealing himself, take Caretaker's advice and box for real, or choose the easy way out and end his life. Throughout this first novel, Cricket evolves from an angry young man into the role model the younger boys believe him to be. His internal dialogue evolves as well. The beginning pages are wrought with sarcasm and teen speak that will likely be as difficult for some teen readers to decipher as it is for adults. However, as the character changes, so does the writing. This is a truly original work, and fans of Sherman Alexie may find a new favorite in Blagden.-Jennifer Furuyama, Pendleton Public Library, OR©(c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From Booklist

Cricket Cherpin, 17, is ready to hurt someone. Again. As the oldest boy residing at the Naskeag Home for Boys, he is fiercely protective of the others, the "Little Ones." Pick on one of the Little Ones and be prepared for a pounding from Cricket. Mother Mary, a formidable nun who has cared for Cricket since his arrival, eight years earlier, struggles to show Cricket that violence is not the answer. The true source of Cricket's grief and rage is his personal horror story, which left him parentless and with a terrible scar on his face. As Cricket himself relates, "I stare until reality morphs into memory, memory into fear, fear into pain, pain into rage, and rage into energy." Cricket's narration is filled with razor-sharp wit and SAT vocabulary words that some readers will find exhilarating, while others may struggle to interpret them. But, through Cricket, Blagden offers a fine masculine viewpoint that expresses the intensity of grief. Grades 9-12. --Diane Colson

Review

"A profane, profound debut. . . . One of the most wrenching and engaging young-adult books to come along in ages."—*The Wall Street Journal*

"This is a truly original work, and fans of Sherman Alexie may find a new favorite in Blagden."
—*School Library Journal, starred review*

"Dear story, you rock. . . . All readers will appreciate Cricket's complex, lovable character and the strong adults who nourish it."

—*Kirkus*

"Through Cricket, Blagden offers a fine masculine viewpoint that expresses the intensity of grief."
—*Booklist*

"Readers who like male protagonists and gritty, contemporary settings will enjoy this carefully crafted novel."

—*VOYA, 3Q 3P J S*

"Cricket conveys his damage through a wildly inventive voice; his often profound philosophies and speculations about life, parents, art, sex, and God are couched in energetic (and sometimes shockingly profane) imagery that turn ordinary language into the verbal equivalent of a Chihuly glass sculpture--colorful, twisted, brittle, and arresting."

—*Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"Holden Caulfield, meet 2013. With his irreverent, hilarious, and heartbreakingly first novel, one thing is clear: Scott Blagden is the real thing."

—**Deb Caletti**

"*Dear Life, You Suck* will certainly offend a few and delight thousands. Profane, sacrilegious, and defiant, this debut novel crackles with energy. It has depth and human significance, by which I mean the real stuff of real life."

—**Ron Koertge**

"Cricket Cherpin is profane, funny, hard, vulnerable, kind, angry. In other words, he's as complex and as unique as you or me. His unusual and realistic voice will grab you from the first page and stay with you long after the last one."

—**Francisco X. Stork**

"Dear Cricket, you *rock*!"

—**Tim Wynne-Jones**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Florence Whitney:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book might be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of publication that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the e-book untitled *Dear Life, You Suck* can be excellent book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

Mamie Crossett:

This *Dear Life, You Suck* is great reserve for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who have always deal with world and still have to make decision every minute. This specific book reveal it info accurately using great organize word or we can point out no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole data in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but tough core information with lovely delivering sentences. Having *Dear Life, You Suck* in your hand like getting the world in your arm, details in it is not ridiculous one. We can say that no book that offer you world inside ten or fifteen second right but this publication already do that. So , this is certainly good reading book. Hi Mr. and Mrs. busy do you still doubt this?

Stanley Cooper:

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Clara Duke:

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