



## **Anthem for Jackson Dawes**

*Celia Bryce*

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Megan Bright and Jackson Dawes are two teenagers who first meet each other on the hospital ward where they are both being treated for cancer. Megan is scared and worried about her illness, but Jackson seems to be an old hand, having been on the ward for ages. And everybody loves Jackson! He is a whirlwind of life and energy, warmth and sparkle. Megan will need to borrow some of Jackson's extraordinary optimism to face her and Jackson's future. A moving story of first love and a remarkably powerful debut novel.

## **Anthem for Jackson Dawes Details**

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Author : Celia Bryce

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## From Reader Review Anthem for Jackson Dawes for online ebook

### Thyago | MrsMargotBlog says

<http://mrs-margot.blogspot.pt/>

A story like many others that can sin by lack of intensity, lack of detail to help plunge us into their lives and not wanting to get out of there. No leaves, of course, to be a story that brings us to tears, especially because this story portrays to children with cancer and if we have the facility to put ourselves in the place of others easily are transported to the described hospital and that makes our heart go very little.

I enjoyed reading this, could have been better, but it is a reading with an easy writing, simple and easily reaches younger.

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### A Book Vacation says

To see my full review:

<http://bookvacations.wordpress.com/20...>

The title and synopsis of this novel basically foreshadows the dismal events that will transpire within the pages, but even so, it's still a poignant look at the fragility of life, refusing to leave readers unscathed. This is the story of cancer. Of beating the odds. Of watching good friends succumb. It's a story of joy, heartbreak, and remembrance. Though relatively short, it packs a punch that will definitely leave readers reaching for the tissue box, even though much of the prose is clipped and choppy, jumping from scene to scene as Megan attempts to come to terms with her illness as it reshapes her entire life.

Though I personally was not a huge fan of the main character, and she wasn't as developed as I'd have liked her to be, she is very true to life. She's also experiencing something completely raw, terrible, and emotional, and her attitude and disdain for those around her are more so a reflex and yearning for normalcy than a true rendition of her persona. Hence, I hold nothing against her as she comes into herself, embracing her diagnosis and coming to terms with the very real possibility that she may die. This is a novel that truly tugs at the heart strings and, I imagine, will be a very difficult read for parents, as it deals with kids and teens in a cancer ward. Although choppy and uneven at times, my emotions were rubbed quite raw near the end, and I found it was indeed a great anthem for Jackson Dawes.

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### Gemma says

This looks like it's going to be a sad one. I was sent a packet of kleenex with my copy. :(.

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### Melissa Layton says

When we first meet Megan Bright, she has just been admitted into the hospital to begin her chemotherapy

treatments for the tumor in her head. Upon her arrival, she runs into the only other teenager in the children's ward, Jackson Dawes. He's all energy and smiles, which annoys the very angry, bitter Megan. She doesn't need a new friend and she certainly doesn't need this boy to bother her. Little does she know that this seemingly annoying boy will become her salvation. Jackson is exactly the person to help her through this most trying of times.

As I said above, Megan is less than pleasant when we first meet her. Off the bat, I wasn't quite sure what to think of Megan. I get that she's angry and annoyed to be in the hospital at all, let alone in the "baby" ward. It can't be easy, but still. I could tell that her mother was trying her best to make Megan feel comfortable in her hospital room, but Megan just wouldn't stop being sullen long enough to notice it. As with many teenagers, she's very much involved in her own problems and doesn't think about how others are affected. Then Jackson comes and *literally* runs into her, which doesn't improve Megan's mood, but certainly lights up the pages for the reader. Though she is quite moody in the beginning, Jackson is able to help turn Megan around. She really becomes a much more mature, likable and optimistic person by the end.

From the second he bumps into Megan, drip stand in hand, I loved Jackson. He is definitely the shining beacon in this novel. I just really like how full of life he is! Jackson has a super rare form of cancer, one that doesn't even have a name yet, but he's infectiously happy. Regardless of how much he's suffering, he makes it a point to laugh, be friendly, have adventures and make the most out of every moment he has. His personality is contagious, especially when he's trying to help the little ones feel better. He's so wise and gentle with the other children in the ward. He takes time to tell stories and make them laugh with silly faces, jokes and mischievous hijinks. This in turn helps the children forget, if just for a second, about the "bad cells" attacking their body and have some pure joy. As you may be able to tell, I really enjoyed this character. We don't get to find out much about his background, but he's still a gem. I'm glad Megan eventually comes around to his charm, too. Jackson really brings out the best in Megan and all those around him, making him the star of the book, in my opinion.

There were a few other characters that I liked, as well. I was really quite fond of Sister Brewster and Siobhan, who both work with the children in the cancer ward. Celia, the author, really did a great job in depicting these caring adults. You could tell they really love these kids and their job, though it can definitely be difficult and heartbreaking. I was also very fond of Megan's Grandad. He is so adorable! We don't get to "officially" meet him, as his only interactions with Megan are on the phone, but you could tell they have a really tight relationship. He's in his mid-90's, quirky, funny and completely dotes upon his granddaughter. I wish we could have seen more of him and his relationship with Megan. I have a feeling he would have gotten along with Jackson very well indeed. On the ward, there's also a little girl about 6 years old named Kipper. Kipper is a little princess and Megan even says she looks like an angel with her shiny, bald head, big eyes and sparkly pink outfits. As is to be expected when a little one has an illness such as cancer, Kipper isn't always well-behaved. She throws fits and gets emotional, but she really is the cutest little thing. Kipper really broke my heart, I felt so much for her. (view spoiler) Such a tiny little child with such a huge thing happening to her.

Though I liked quite a few of the characters, I wish they would have been more fleshed out. It seemed to me that the only character able to shine through the page was Jackson; which I guess is fitting, since the book title has his name in it and all. I didn't like that sometimes the story would jump around, almost like it ran off on a tangent and forgot to take the reader with it. This made it quite difficult to figure out what happened in the in-between time, which then made it hard to have a better connection to the story. I also didn't really like how Megan falls for Jackson all of a sudden. She was continuously annoyed by him and then, in the blink of an eye, she can't stand to be away from him. It just didn't seem realistic for her to fall so hard for him out of nowhere. I would have liked to read about how her feelings grew from annoyance to friendship to first love,

you know?

(view spoiler)

Celia Bryce has written about cancer - and the children and families who suffer through it all - in such a brilliant and honest way, which shows some real talent and heart. It was really difficult, but interesting, to hear about all the trials and experiences these kids have to go through. I mean, there were babies on the ward. Babies. That's just so sad and not right. Celia has handled this subject with such grace and tenderness. She shows that though there *is* a lot of pain and sadness associated with cancer and those who have it, but there is hope and joy to be found as well.

I would definitely recommend this moving novel to readers of both young adult and middle-grade fiction. The content is clean, and the protagonist young enough (she's 13), that many readers will be able to enjoy it. Overall, I think *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* is a touching story that will stick with you long after you read it.

**A favorite quote:** "Megan watched as everything about her, everything that said who she was, slid down her shoulders and cascaded to the floor, like leaves shaken from a dying tree."

\*This is a review of an ARC copy provided by the Book Depository Affiliate Review Program in exchange for an honest review. This review first appeared on my blog, *She Dreams in Fiction*.

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## Joanne says

Originally posted on Once Upon a Bookcase.

I picked up *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* thinking I was in for a really good, quick, sad read. Unfortunately, that's not really what I got.

Megan Bright has gone into hospital to get chemo for her brain tumour, only to discover she's being kept on a kids ward with babies and young children. The only other teenager on the ward is Jackson Dawes, who is constantly appearing when he's not wanted, annoying the hell out of her. But they may be the only people who can help each other through their time in hospital, the people they need most.

All in all, it was a sweet story, but it was just far too young for me. Megan is thirteen, almost fourteen, and she's so young, she annoyed me most of the time. She has cancer, and so you would expect her to be angry, but she mostly just teenage angsting over the most ridiculous of things. In a way, I suppose you could say that the cancer didn't cause her to grow up too quickly and lose what makes her a young teen, but I generally can't handle such young angsting. Also, later on, Megan moans herself about the things that her friends want to talk about that don't seem important any more, yet she still acts exactly the same. I just really didn't like her.

The tagline on the cover is wrong, in my opinion. This isn't a love story. Jackson and Megan don't spend enough time together to fall in love. It's a crush, they both fancy each other, but we don't get to know Jackson all that well. He's rebellious, he likes music, he likes making the little kids smile with made-up stories and wandering around, but that's about all we get. Considering his name is in the title, we don't actually see as much of him as you would expect. Most of it is just Megan's internal thoughts. So yes, there are feelings, but it's not a love story.

Finally, I would have expected more when it came to the medical side of things. They're in a hospital, and there are drips, vomiting, wheel chairs, and operations, but we're not really told about very much of it. I wanted more about what they were going through, how they felt, but we didn't really get that.

All in all, I was pretty disappointed with *Anthem for Jackson Dawes*, but I would say it's more for the younger YA audience. It gives enough info about cancer and treatment to make it believable but without scaring young readers, and the feeling between the two characters is quite sweet and innocent, perfect for younger readers. Just not really for me.

Thank you to Bloomsbury for the review copy.

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### **Rosie Donson says**

An inspiring novel by Celia Bryce about two teenagers suffering from cancer. *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* not only draws upon the difficulties of coping with being in hospital and away from family and friends but also the hardships parents and other cancer patients have to endure when a death occurs on the ward.

Although reasonably well written, the plot is unoriginal and too fast-moving; one minute Megan hates Jackson and in the next chapter she loves him. I think if Bryce had made the novel longer and had a few twists and unexpected plot lines then it would have been a much more enjoyable read.

I'm glad I read it and although basically a bad version of John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* and Jodi Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper*, *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* is definitely worth reading, I would especially recommend it to a younger reader looking for an upsetting novel as it is not as graphic or descriptive as the two other books listed above.

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### **Lottie Eve says**

3.5 Stars!

*Anthem for Jackson Dawes* is a novel with a lot of heart. It's heartwarming, sweet, and very endearing. But, admittedly, I felt a bit distant from the story as a whole. I loved the characters and the plot, it just seems that I couldn't put as much emotional investment in the story as I have done with others. I have been pondering about this for a while and I still haven't come up with why I had this problem. This novel does have some really good qualities though.

If you read the first few pages, you will know that this is a story about a girl, Megan, that has been diagnosed with cancer, sent to the children's hospital ward, and put on Chemo. And if you read even farther, you will know that Megan is in internal turmoil, and is scared for her future. Fortunately, there is a certain sunshine of a person called Jackson Dawes who might be able to give Megan the friendship and comfort she needs.

As you can see, this is a story about friendship and finding hope in the most unlikely places. I loved the story—even though I didn't have a large emotional attachment—and breezed through the pages as fast as I could.

Megan Bright and Jackson Dawes were wonderful characters. I believe that they will be very easy to relate

to, for many people, even though those many people have not suffered from cancer themselves. Megan does a lot of growing as the pages go on, and she felt like a real character to me. Jackson is a character filled with color and strange stories. I couldn't help but smile when his name was written in a sentence.

The side characters were also very satisfying character-wise. We have the mysterious, adorable Kipper, the serious but compassionate Sister Brewster, the humorous, fun Siobhan, and the absolutely amazing Bright family. I loved reading about them all!

I did think that some of the moments that were supposed to make a person laugh fell flat. Not all of them, but some. Awhile this might only be a little thing among all the good things this novel has, I still found it bothersome. This little quibble is really only based on my sense of humor so those moments might make someone else laugh to pieces.

Bryce did an amazing job with the prose in this novel. It was engaging, readable, and had a certain lightness about it that made this story very addicting.

All in all, Anthem for Jackson Dawes is an great, strong debut novel, and I will certainly be looking out for Celia Bryce's next books. Even though I did have some trouble with feeling connected to the story, this is very much worth the read since the good qualities that I mention are freaking good.

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## **Ulises says**

Qué libro tan subestimado. Es una historia que parece muy simple, y que a medida que avanza se va volviendo más compleja, retratando todo lo que implica el cáncer no solo para quien lo padece, sino que para todo el que le rodea. Me sacó lágrimas de cocodrilo, tanto la alegría como el dolor y el duelo se sienten muy cercanos. En absoluto pretencioso o que parece esforzarse demasiado por ser memorable: en otras palabras, sencillamente me encantó.

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## **Michelle says**

***I chat to Celia Bryce about her writing, this novel and her next book here***

*Anthem for Jackson Dawes* was a deceiving book. I looked at its gorgeous cover and its tiny little spine and thought 'there's no way you're going to make me cry'. Yet, I did wipe away a sneaky tear or two as this little book burrowed its way into my heart. Don't you just hate when that happens?

This could easily have fallen into the stereotypical category, but the gorgeous prose and touching exploration of first love and loss made it something which continues to linger. Everything about this just seemed to click for me, particularly the use of setting. The majority of the story takes place on the ward and this in itself seemed rather realistic to me. Megan's life before her diagnosis starts to dissolve around her and suddenly all her energy and attention is focused on Jackson and the ward. She can't talk to her friends because they just don't understand and her mum's heartache for her is too much to bear. Jackson understands though, and this is just what Megan needs; someone who will just be and not ask her how she feels or what it's like. When Megan was at home, I really felt her sense of being out of place and her need to be understood.

At first I found it quite hard to connect to the characters, especially Megan. I was annoyed by how bratty she came across, especially towards her mother. However, the more I read, the more I felt this was her coping mechanism. She did develop as a character with the help of the gorgeous Jackson. Sometimes, special people come into your life at the perfect time and Jackson was this person for Megan. The third person narrative was also confronting at first but, like Megan, it grew on me.

Overall, this was a touching and poignant read with loveable characters placed in heartbreaking situations. It's a beautifully written story of love, friendship and loss; one which will stay with me for a long time.

*Thank you to Bloomsbury for providing a copy of the book for review.*

*This review and many more can be found at Maree's Musings.*

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## **Mia Searles (The Muses Circle) says**

This review and more can be viewed over at my blog: [The Muses Circle](#)

**My Review:** *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* is a quiet little novel that had the potential to pack a strong punch with its challenging topic and themes, but somehow fell short on its delivery. Characters weren't fully developed, and the story itself was just coming together when the author decided to wrap things up quicker than you can blink. That being said, there is no denying Celia Bryce is a talented writer. The poems at the beginning and the end of the book are beautiful (and make more sense once the story is over) and despite me wishing for more, I did like how the scenes were purposely short, almost giving it a journal-type feel.

The story is set somewhere in the UK, so for those who are from the US, just go into the novel with an open mind. It's not a difficult read by any means, but there may be words or phrases that aren't familiar. Thirteen year old Megan, who has a brain tumor, arrives at the hospital to start treatment. It only takes her a few moments to digest the fact that she has literally walked into a cancer ward for babies and little kids: *"Toys being banged. Something rattling. Another thing chiming. Whirring. Squeaking. Somewhere to the right there was a baby crying."* She is outraged that she will be spending the next several days in a "kiddie ward". She even thinks to herself: *"Where were the other patients? People like her? People her age?"* Perhaps she asked that question too soon because that's when Jackson Dawes comes barging into her life, the only other person around her age staying on the same ward. Megan immediately dislikes him, thinking him rude, obnoxious, and the thing that irritates her the most-- why and how can he be so happy?

What I liked the most about *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* and what I think the author portrays well is the different ways people--children in this case-- deal with having cancer. Megan is fueled with anger and bitterness. Jackson is jovial and mischievous, always trying to look at the bright side of cancer (in his opinion, not mine!), such as not having to really worry about school and driving the nurses crazy with his pranks and disappearing acts. Then there is Kipper, a little girl who refuses to use her real name while in for treatments. Her mother tells Megan that her daughter made her swear she would not reveal her real name. Could it be that in order for Kipper to cope during treatments and stays at the hospital, she chooses to go by a fake name and live in an imaginary world?



Celia Bryce also subtly weaves in a few philosophical questions that Megan and Jackson are left to ponder. Megan, coming face to face with the possibility that she could die, has a hard time coming to terms with why some people get to live long, healthy lives while others perish so young. Her grandfather is nearly 100 years old and while her family prepares to celebrate another birthday with him, Megan doesn't want to go to the party even though she loves him dearly. Although we mostly get to see Jackson's silly side, the one thing that seems to bother him is what kind of legacy would he leave behind if he should die. Will he be remembered? Maybe the reason he causes so much trouble is because it is his way of making sure he will never be forgotten...

There are quite a few reviewers that didn't care for Megan, some finding her annoying and immature. Maybe it's because I work with kids, but let us not forget that she is only 13 years old and many children around that age can try our patience. And while I have never had cancer, I do know what it is like having medical problems at a young age, so you try to find any way you can to cope. That being said, it was nice to see Megan start to warm up to not only Jackson, but to the little ones in the ward. Jackson teaches her how important their role is, that they must set an example to the younger patients. She learns this by watching Jackson somehow convince Kipper to take her medicine when no one, including her own mother, could do it.

But while I loved all of these things, the story lacked development. I know that may sound crazy since I just mentioned some of the themes running through the book, but that's all it is, just glimpses and impressions. None of these themes are fully explored. It is the same with the characters. Just when the layers of Jackson are starting to peel away to reveal the true young man under the goofy exterior, the story ends. It almost feels like we only get a small slice of the story.

Oh and while I am on the topic of lack of character development and feeling like things aren't fully explained, I noticed something quite interesting. Is Jackson Dawes black??? I absolutely don't have a problem with this (I am bi-racial) but the author sticks in this small detail that I picked up around page 180: "*Megan stared down at the pure black fingers wrapped around hers. Her hand looked pale and tiny in his.*" When I read this and I started imagining Jackson Dawes as a young black kid, it made the story and this mysterious character that much more interesting. But Celia Bryce does not elaborate on this tidbit of information. Maybe she did that on purpose, after all, that's not the point of the story. But it does make me wonder....

*Anthem for Jackson Dawes* would be a great classroom read for middle schoolers and for those who want to ease into the topic of cancer and first love. While not as powerfully moving as other books/movies in the genre such as Jodi Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper* or the tear jerker *Now Is Good*, there is something beautifully haunting about the story that sticks with you for awhile. But there is no doubt that the novel could have easily benefited from an extra 50+ pages to fully flush out the main characters and story. Oh, and for those out there that didn't like the book because it was terribly depressing? It's a story about kids that have cancer for crying out loud!!! Why are people surprised???

## **Michelle says**

I won an Uncorrected Proof of this book from Hooked on Books who are part of the Bloomsbury group i believe. After getting the book and reading the back cover i thought oh boy this is going to be one of those books that make me cry. For this reason it was a few weeks before i decided to read it.

The book starts off with Megan going into hospital for her first bout of chemo after finding out she has a brain tumour. While there she meets the only other teenager in attendance in the children's ward.

Jackson is full of jokes and seems to be happy all the time. He is so charming that everyone instantly loves him. Megan not so much. She isn't interested in getting to know him because she has friends already and doesn't need anyone else in her life.

This soon changes. Once she has started her treatment she soon begins to realise that she now lives in another world. She is completely shut off from the outside world and only others in her situation can really understand what she is going through. Her friends don't come to visit because it's hard and the things that meant so much to Megan only weeks before seem trivial now. She finds that Jackson is the only one that really understands her and she comes to rely on him and shares a deep bond with him.

As the story goes on it is clear to the reader that Megan is falling in love with Jackson and knowing the situation these kids are in and the title of the book you know this isn't going to end in any happy ending.

I read this book within a couple of hours and it did keep my attention until i had finished it. However the end section of the book really let it down in my opinion. I knew that Jackson would probably die in the end since he had a rare form of cancer and the book title pretty much gives it away. So to me when it got there the author just didn't grab that opportunity to make it more.

It was like Jackson was a huge part of Megan's story and he was a big enough part to the story that the author used his name for the book. Yet he just disappeared. Megan just accepts that he went home. She doesn't try to visit him outside the hospital or contact him in any way. To me that isn't believable. If someone you love is dying you don't accept it. It isn't a part of that process. I have lost many loved ones and a good few from cancer and you don't give up until they are gone. Yet she waits months until she finds out via a letter that he died.

This was meant to be a life changing love for Megan. So i think the author should have not removed him from the story that easily. To truly feel the loss and make the reader feel it Jackson's death should have been a big part of that story.

I really wanted to rate this book better but given the way it ended i just couldn't. It is a good book for a YA to read to gain perspective i think though. It would teach them that things can change in an instant and to appreciate everything they have so yes i would recommend the book. I was just disappointed in how it ended.

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## **Michelle (Fluttering Butterflies) says**

This review was originally published at Fluttering Butterflies

I'm not entirely sure what to make of *Anthem of Jackson Dawes* by Celia Bryce. I hadn't heard very much about it before I bought the book and I went into the story without any real indication of what the book would be about. *Anthem for Jackson Dawes* was first out last year in hardback, and the paperback was published this month by Bloomsbury.

And I think when I finished *Anthem for Jackson Dawes*, my overwhelming feelings were that I liked the idea of this book more than I liked the actual execution of it.

Because this book is about a young girl who enters the cancer ward of a hospital and spends some time getting to know how things will work, the other children in the ward, the nurses and so on. Megan is feeling pretty crappy about her situation. She doesn't like how her cancer has disrupted her life and how she won't be able to continue doing the things she's used to, the things she enjoys doing. She's not very fond of being on the children's ward, with the cartoon elephants on the walls and not much else for her to do in order to occupy her time.

The only person on the cancer ward the same sort of age as Megan is Jackson Dawes. This really larger-than-life character who bubbles over with his warmth and energy and the way in which he speaks to everyone like he or she is the only other person in the world. And through Megan's brief friendship with Jackson Dawes, she is better able to come to terms with her illness and the way in which things have changed in her life and in her relationships with those around her.

I did like the story, but I felt like I always wanted more. I wanted to see a bigger development in Megan's character from the beginning to end. I wanted to see more of Jackson. I wanted the relationship between Megan and Jackson to be less brief and more memorable. While I did feel sad for Megan and Jackson and some of the other children on the ward, most notably Kipper, I didn't feel as though I knew any of them well enough. I felt very detached from the story when a child on the ward dies midway through the book because there wasn't enough time within the pages for me to overly care about that character.

And that is a shame. I still enjoyed the story, especially the parts where Jackson and Megan go exploring in the hospital. I loved Jackson's determination to break the rules and to live every moment that he was able to. Jackson is definitely a character that I could see myself really falling for, I just think things were a bit too subtle for my liking.

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### **Stephanie (Stepping out of the Page) says**

*Anthem for Jackson Dawes* is a book that I was very pleased to receive for review - it really sounded like something I'd enjoy. Though the subject matter is rather difficult, I do enjoy reading about real life issues and I was interested in seeing how this YA book turned out. Teenage cancer has been explored in several extremely popular books, namely *The Fault in Our Stars*, *Before I Die* and *My Sister's Keeper*, so Bryce really had to try hard to give us something new and something with a strong emotional impact.

This book is definitely a hard one to review, which is partially due to the content. In general, I thought that this was a good book which was well written. However, as the book is relatively short at 240 pages, there was not all that much depth to the story or characters. This is a book revolving around young cancer patients, but most respectfully, the characters are the stars of the book - not the illness. I thought it was great that Bryce managed to really emphasise the personalities of the kids. Of course, the characters were all in hospital for a reason - they all had some form of cancer. Bryce is clearly a careful writer - she writes what is

necessary, what is suitable for the age group she is writing for. The writing is soft but concise. Personally, I would have preferred some more depth to the book, more detail, more interactions, I especially wanted to know more about the characters, how they really felt.

Our main character is Megan Bright, a teenager with a cancerous brain tumour. Understandably, Megan is not happy being in hospital, let alone in the children's ward. She feels lonely and she worries about her friends, whether or not they will keep in touch with her or not whilst she's sick. There is only one older teenager on the ward, the upbeat, sociable and caring Jackson Dawes. When they first meet, Megan isn't all that nice to Jackson even though he's only trying to be nice. It could come across as a bit 'bratty', but to be honest, I think I would be the same in her situation - she's scared. Jackson and Megan certainly don't click straight away, but as Megan succumbs to his friendship, it's clear that they are a lovely couple of friends. Though it's suggested that it's a romance between the two, I just saw it as a special connection, a friendship.

As you can imagine, this book isn't full of joy, though it's not deeply depressing throughout there is an undertone of melancholy. There are a lot of 'extra' upsetting moments dotted throughout the book, as well as many feelings of uncertainty. Unfortunately, for some reason the book didn't hold the emotion that I really wanted - it wasn't raw, intense or passionate enough, it just didn't grab me in the way that some other books have. Maybe it's because, although I liked them, I didn't relate all that much to Megan or Jackson. Maybe it's the lack of depth or detail. I'm not entirely sure.

Overall, Anthem for Jackson Dawes is a well executed book and one that is more friendly towards younger young adult audience. I am very impressed with Bryce's writing and particularly enjoyed her description of the new cancer unit in the book, based on a unit in my home city. Bryce has done really well and I would certainly like to see more from her in the future.

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## **Lois Brewer says**

A bit of a predicable ending

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## **Laurence R. says**

Oh, man. I cried!

There's the kind of crying that's simply because you read something sad. However, there's also the kind of crying that you go through when you read something that implies something sad. That one's even worse than the first. Since this book's about cancer, I experienced the second kind maybe even more than the first.

I don't know why, but I needed to read this book after having read the summary. In fact, I put everything else down just so I could read it in one night, two sittings. There was something in this summary that drew me to the story and I want to say that whoever wrote it did an amazing job.

Talking about the story itself, I found myself loving the side characters more than the main one. Not that I hated Megan or something, but I fell in love with Jackson, and the little kids, and Gemma, and Megan's grandfather... For once, I felt like everyone else's personality was so much deeper than the main character's, which wasn't exactly a terrible thing, because it's a short novel and I still cared about the story. I did find that

it was a bit predictable, because I expected many events, but I guess it's also targeted for a younger audience - when did I become too old for some books? That can't be happening. Anyway, I thought this story had a great message at the end, maybe not the one I was supposed to remember, but more the one about growing up and keeping friendships alive, which really struck me.

Overall, this isn't a perfect book, although I didn't really mention its flaws. I guess there was just something missing, but I still really enjoyed reading it - and my head hurts from crying earlier. I recommend it!

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