



Two Weeks With the Queen

By Morris Gleitzman

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Dear Your Majesty the Queen, I need to speak to you urgently about my brother Luke. He's got cancer and the doctors in Australia are being really slack. If I could borrow your top doctor for a few days I know he/she would fix things up in no time. Of course Mum and Dad would pay his/her fares even if it meant selling the car or getting a loan. Please contact me at the above address urgently. Yours sincerely Colin Mudford PS: This is not a hoax.

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Two Weeks With the Queen By Morris Gleitzman Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This isn't at all the carefree story implied by the title and cover artwork--terminal cancer, AIDS, gay-bashing and death are treated tenderly here, in appropriate middle-reader fashion. Colin Mudford, an Australian boy, suspects that his parents favor his younger brother, Luke. When Luke collapses suddenly and is hospitalized, Colin wistfully imagines he has a malady of his own. Yet upon hearing that Luke will die of cancer, Colin sets out to find a doctor to cure him. Sent to live with relatives in England, Colin first tries soliciting the Queen's help, then approaches hospital physicians. He eventually meets Ted, a homosexual whose lover is dying of AIDS. Colin and Ted support one another through a difficult time (including Ted's assault by homophobic thugs), which enables Colin to shed his self-centered ways and allow a brave, resourceful and loving person to emerge. Gleitzman's liberal sprinkling of humor prevents the novel from becoming too dark. While the progression is slow at first, and several Australian expressions ("sooky," "sticky-beaking") may perplex readers, the material's topicality makes this a special book. Ages 8-12.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 4-6—Colin's younger brother has cancer, but he refuses to acknowledge that Luke is dying in this novel (Trophy Press, pap. 1993) by Morris Gleitzman. Colin's parents send him to stay with relatives in England until his brother dies. The boy decides that he must find the best oncologist in the UK and bring him back to Australia to help his brother. He contacts doctors and even solicits help from the Queen. Outside the hospital, Colin meets Ted, who's lover is dying of AIDS. Colin is non-judgmental about Ted's relationship and helps the couple by telling jokes, bringing fruit, and more. After realizing how much it meant to Ted and his boyfriend to spend those last moments together, Colin returns home to Australia to be there for Luke. Colin's observations and innocence lead to some very funny scenes. Gleitzman superbly narrates this story that deals with many important issues: cancer, AIDS, gay-bashing, death. His wonderful sense of pacing portrays Colin's maturation. Listeners will understand the Australian and British words in context.—*B.*

Allison Gray, John Jermain Memorial Library, Sag Harbor, NY

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About the Author

Morris Gleitzman was born in 1953 in Sleaford, Lincolnshire, England and immigrated to Australia when he was sixteen. He has worked in a variety of jobs including TV producer, newspaper columnist and screenwriter. Then he had a wonderful experience. He wrote a novel for young people. Now he is a children's author. Morris Gleitzman's brilliant comic style has endeared him to adults and children alike. He is one of Australia's best known writers of novels for children. His family comedies are enormously popular in Australia and overseas and involve unusual characters in unusual situations. Behind the humor is a poignancy that reflects real life problems, many of them controversial. His hugely successful books have won many awards and been published internationally.

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Joseph Thomas:

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Noel Klein:

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