



Red

Libby Gleeson

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A gripping mystery unfolds in the aftermath of a devastating cyclone that leaves a young girl unable to remember her name or where she comes from

Mud. In her mouth, her nose and her eyes. Mud in her hair and caked on her neck and her arms. Mud filling her shoes and seeping through the thin cotton weave of her trousers. She lay sprawled on her side, a garbled, barely distinct sound coming from her: jaymartinjaymartin. Her world was mud and pain.

'What's your name?' A boy was sitting on a kitchen table floating in a muddy pool. At his feet was a child's doll, the head lolling to one side.

Red can't remember the cyclone. She can't remember anything—her name, where she lived, or who her family might be. Her identity has been ripped away. Then she makes a discovery, and finds she has an important mission to accomplish. But in this chaotic, bewildering world, can she do it on her own? Who can she trust?

Red Details

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From Reader Review Red for online ebook

Pam Saunders says

The girl on the cover is one of the students at my school. She was pretty pleased about this of course and that meant I had to read the book. It is adventure and suspense for upper primary and first year high school students. A tropical cyclone hitting Sydney didn't quite ring true to me but with the strange weather events lately maybe it should. I enjoyed reading how Red/Ruby/Rose/Rhiannon discovered who she really was after suffering amnesia.

Monique says

Why I decided to read this book:

I decided to read the book 'Red' by Libby Gleeson because the blurb really caught my attention when I read it and a friend recommended this book to me - it fits under 'a book recommended by a member of your family' box on the bingo board.

What the book is about:

The book is about 'Red' (Rhiannon Chambers). She falls victim to a terrible cyclone in her home town of Sydney, Australia. She is found out doors covered in mud by a boy named Peri, she has lost her memory and doesn't remember anything. Soon after Red manages to find her best friend from Year 5 - Jazz. Jazz takes her back to her house - Red discovers that the necklace she has had on since before the cyclone when opened reveals a USB device. When Red watches the contents of the USB it has a message from her Father David asking for whoever reads the message to take the USB to the Federal Royal Commissioner in Melbourne, Australia. This leads her on a secretive mission which could potentially put herself and her fathers life in grave danger.

My Favourite quote from this book (and why):

My favourite quote from the book is 'You kids are so amazing. You have grown so much, Rhiannon.' And she will shake her head and say I'm not Rhiannon, Dad, or Rose, and not Ruby, not now, not any more. I'm Red.'

This is my favourite quote because when the cyclone incident occurred in Sydney, Rhiannon didn't even remember her name. Her and Peri started to try come up with a name for her. In the end Peri chose the name Red because of the bright red tshirt she was wearing when he found her. She discovers later on from Jazz that her real name is Rhiannon Chambers. I like this quote at the end of the story as it shows the journey that Rhiannon took to become 'Red' and her choice to not look back but to start a new chapter of her life as 'Red'.

Something new I learned from this book is:

Something new I learned from the book is to trust my parents and what they say, especially when it could

effect my well-being. In the message from Reds father David - he asks that the USB & its contents not be revealed to anyone, and that no one could be trusted not even the Police. Red chose to trust her father even when others around her were trying to convince her otherwise. She made the right choice and everything turned out as it should have.

A character/setting in this book that was interesting to me (and why):

A character in the book that was interesting to me was Peri. It seemed that he didn't care about Red very much, he lied to Red about his family but in the end he reveals that both of his parents are alcoholics and he didn't have a sister as he had previously told Red he did. Peri became one of Red's best & closest friends.

Out of 10, I would rate 'Red' by Libby Gleeson, 8/10. It was a really gripping book that I thoroughly enjoyed.

Yasmin says

When I was in grade five or six, we had this book club. Basically we picked a book as a group, brought some cookies to school once a week and discussed the book we had chosen. In our group we had five 10 year olds rolling around on the floor laughing at the complete stupidity of the book Red. TEN years olds.

I'm sorry, but Libby Gleeson really failed this book. It is boring, predictable and not to mention unrealistic to the point that I wonder if Libby was on meth.

The idea was alright I guess, had it been written differently. I think this could have been a good book, but to the probable drunkenness of the author it never will be.

Don't think I'm dissing Libby Gleeson, I mean she is a great kids book writer I suppose, I just think she is way out of her depth here.

Do not read this book. Not unless you want to pay the consequences

I think I'm going to go have some therapy now.

Bec says

It has been a while since I've read Libby Gleeson (discarding her picture books which are always amazing), and I had high expectations going into 'Red'.

I wasn't disappointed.

This gripping story weaves natural disaster with suspenseful thriller, all through a character who doesn't even remember her full name.

I'll be posting a full review on my blog in the next week or so, but until then consider this a must-read as soon as it hits the shelves.

Charmaine Clancy says

Great book for younger teens. Starts right in the action, the opening scene showing our protagonist awakening in a park, caked in mud. She can't remember who she is, why she's here or anything, only one

name runs through her head, but she doesn't know who the name belongs to.

We follow this girl, nicknamed 'Red' by the homeless boy who finds her, as she tries to figure out who she is and why she's in so much danger.

The setting for the story is quite unique too, it seems a cyclone has hit Sydney harbour and devastated our biggest city. Red faces one survival challenge after another, and why is she warned not to trust anyone? Fast, fun read.

Sharon says

Gripping thriller for children. A massive cyclone has devastated Sydney and teenager Red wakes from unconsciousness with mud in her mouth, covered in cuts and bruises and a name in her head : Jay Martin. Taken under the wing of a young street kid named Peri, Red must discover her identity and work out the significance of the strange locket she is wearing. After being identified by an old school friend, Red begins to learn more about herself and discovers she has an important mission to fulfil that leads her, Peri and Jazz in an exciting chase across country to Melbourne,

Paula says

You are all alone, covered in mud, your memory gone. Things could hardly get worse - or so you might think. In the aftermath of a disastrous storm that has devastated the city of Sydney, Australia, a young girl struggles to discover who she is and where she comes from. But for Red - as she is called by the homeless boy who befriends her - the more she learns about herself, the more dangerous her situation appears to be. Soon, she is on the run from the police, learning to rely on her courage and resourcefulness and the kindness of strangers.

Australian author Libby Gleeson has won many awards for her books for children, and her craftsmanship is evident in Red. Hiding out in ruined buildings and scavenging for food, Red's physical and psychological pain is at the fore, but when she reconnects with an old friend and is once more in comfortable surroundings, she is, if anything, even less at ease. Swift, smart plotting makes this short novel a compulsive read.

—Paula Willey

Marita says

I really liked this book which starts in a Sydney recovering from a cyclone and moves to Melbourne as Red heads off to find her father and her memories with her new friend, a homeless boy who has helped her when she was lost in more ways than one. I did think that much was sacrificed to achieve a quick read - and I do appreciate a quick read for the target young teen audience. I would have liked to read a longer version of this one that teased out a few more of the complications inherent to the plot.

Saniya Telang says

I really enjoyed reading this book, as I was able to read it in just one sitting! I think that this book was a "just right" one for me as it used very simple and understandable language. Each character in the book had very distinct and unique personalities and I thought that the plot was very intriguing. This book is about a girl given the name of "Red" by a homeless boy who finds her after a disastrous cyclone has hit the city of Sydney, Australia. Red wakes up totally unaware of who she is or what has happened. Driven by the will to discover her true identity and where and whom she really belongs to, with only a locket which contains a memory stick, an unknown name which keeps on repeating in her head and a few flashbacks from the past, Red and her friends soon find themselves caught up in a dangerous journey, not knowing whom to trust or if they will be able to complete the task which will guide them to uncover who Red really is. This book was a gripping page turner as it kept me predicting to what will happen next and I would personally like to recommend it to people who love reading mystery/thriller novels.

Linsey Painter says

Libby Gleeson delivers another fantastic read. Raw and real, Red will keep you guessing and turning pages until the end.

Waking up, covered in mud and with no memory of who she is or what has happened, Red is given her name by the boy who discovers her. Driven by her need to know her identity and find anyone related to her Red and her friends are soon involved in a dangerous journey, not knowing who to trust or how they will accomplish the task set before them.

It's so great to read a book that's set in Australia and with such obviously Aussie characters. Libby Gleeson has given us another treasure.

Amanda says

Red by Libby Gleeson is set in Sydney after a cyclone has destroyed most of the coastal suburbs. A girl wakes up and has no recollection of who she is but a boy nearby lets her tag along with him. Peri has been living on his own, even before the cyclone, but is very guarded about his past. Together they try and piece together what happened to her, and he nicknames her Red because of her t shirt.

Libby is a well known Australian author and I was sure I'd read other books of hers but looking at the list of them now it seems I haven't. I'm not sure what I expected from this book, there was just something about the cover that appealed to me and I love a book set in Sydney but this turned out to be aimed a lot younger than I thought it would be. Red is only eleven or twelve years old and I have a feeling this is older middle grade as opposed to YA.

It was an interesting idea to combine a realistic story with a cyclone in Sydney (something that probably wouldn't ever happen here) as well as the story of what happened to Red and her father and who they are running from. The story moved at a good pace though there were quite a few coincidences that stood out to me but overall I enjoyed the story and felt it was wrapped up well.

Adele Broadbent says

A girl wakes up to find herself lying in a sea of mud. It's in her mouth, her hair and encrusted across her body. What happened? Where is she? When she is found by a street kid, he asks her her name. She can't remember - and so he calls her Red after the red shirt she is wearing.

A cyclone has hit Sydney and now she has to find out who she is and where she belongs. And why is there a locket around her neck with a USB inside?

A gripping 'quest' story intertwined with Red's confusion and memory loss over her past. The reader puts her past together along with her as she remembers snippets throughout the story. Excellent.

Matilda Rose says

I didn't like Red. It wasn't what I expected, which is probably my fault. Don't shoot me. It was more because I looked at the front cover, interesting. Looked at the back cover, interesting. Australia? Yes. Flip through it and find towns that you've lived around? Author name, okay it must be good. Recommendations, yep yep. And it's on the new books shelf at the library. But I felt a bit mislead. I picked it up believing it to be a YA. Then, I got into it, and the girl was described as being 11-12. The plot that I thought was going to be intricate was a bit simple, aimed more for younger kids. It wasn't precisely believable. That was how the first few chapters felt to me anyway, because, I'm sorry to say, after that I stopped. Skimmed a bit but didn't find anything that made me want to properly read it. I felt a bit like I was reading Deltora Quest, which is fine, because I loved that series when I was younger. I don't mean any disrespect to Libby Gleeson who is obviously a talented author. So anyway, I reckon it would be a great book for probably in my mind 10-13 year olds, or younger kids who are mature or older kids who love that sort of simple, enjoyable read, but if you're looking for Australian YA along the lines of Vikki Wakefield, Melina Marchetta, Cath Crowley etc, this one might not be the one for you.

Karen Bartlett says

A cyclone has destroyed much of Sydney, and a young girl awakes on her own, covered in mud, and with no recollection of what has happened or who she is. She teams up with a young boy, who nicknames her Red (for her red hair) and together they set out to discover her identity and locate her family. Glimpses of her life come back to her, and she discovers a Memory Stick, and knows that it holds important information that she must get to someone... but who?? And why??

A good little mystery for younger adolescents (10+).

Sharon Marchingo says

Red by Libby Gleeson is a riveting little read that hooks the reader right from the start when the protagonist awakens with mud in her mouth and hair, without any idea of who she is and where she lives. She is the survivor of a catastrophic cyclone that has torn her suburb in Sydney apart. She remembers nothing about her past except for one name, 'Jay Martin', that keeps circulating around in her brain.

She is rescued by a homeless boy called Perri. He tries to assist her to find out her identity but meanwhile reveals little about himself. In the absence of a name he nicknames her 'Red'. The cover of the book is a little deceiving as it makes Red look like she is much older than the 11 year old that she is described as. This being said, it is certainly well pitched at a junior secondary level.

It is a fast paced adventure that takes the readers from Sydney to Melbourne in the quest for truth.

Friendships are made and families are reunited along the way. Well worth reading!
