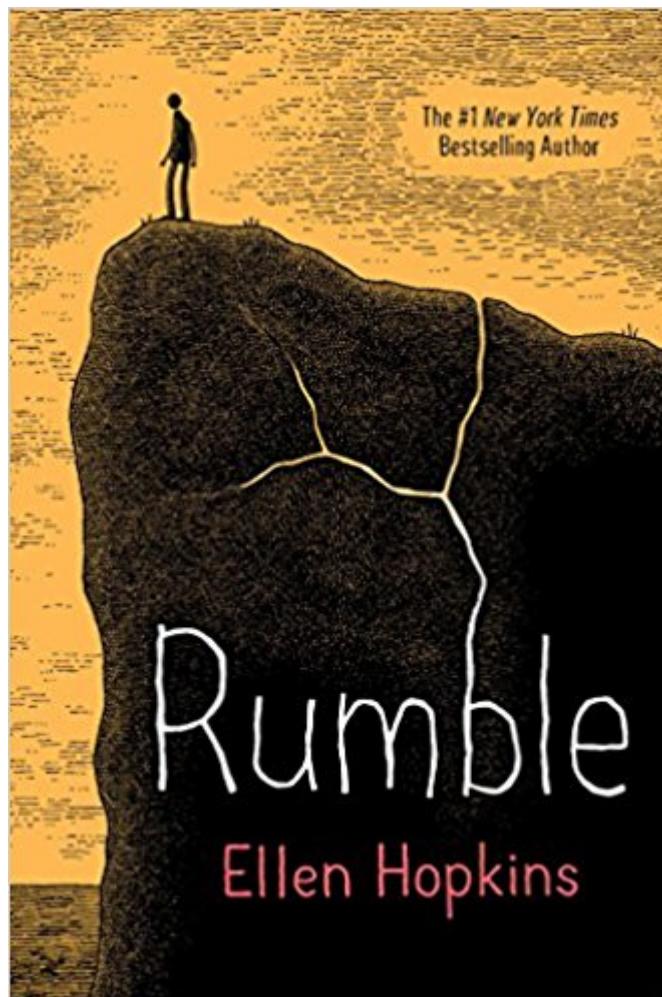


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Rumble



Synopsis

Does it get better? The New York Times bestselling author of *Crank* and *Tricks* explores the highly charged landscapes of bullying and forgiveness in this “strong and worthy” (Kirkus Reviews) novel. Matthew Turner knows it doesn’t get better. His younger brother Luke was bullied mercilessly after one of Matt’s friends outed Luke to the whole school, and when Luke called Matt on the brink of suicide—Matt was too wrapped up in his new girlfriend to answer the phone. Now Luke is gone, and Matt’s family is falling apart. No matter what his girlfriend Hayden says about forgiveness, there’s no way Matt’s letting those he blames off the hook—including himself. As Matt spirals further into bitterness, he risks losing Hayden, the love of his life. But when her father begins to pressure the school board into banning books because of their homosexual content, he begins to wonder if he and Hayden ever had anything in common. With brilliant sensitivity and emotional resonance, bestselling author Ellen Hopkins’ *Rumble* explores bullying and suicide in a powerful story that examines the value of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up—Matt’s gay brother Luke committed suicide because he couldn’t take the bullying any more. Matt blames everyone for his brother’s death: his friends, his dysfunctional parents, and the middle school teachers and counselors who did nothing to halt the torment Luke experienced daily. The protagonist’s temper is perpetually balanced on a knife’s edge, and it takes very little to

push him into a rage. Matt's only peace comes when he is with his girlfriend, Hayden. However, she seems to be pulling away to spend more time with God and her youth group, many members of whom were Luke's worst bullies. Matt has no faith in an imaginary deity and no forgiveness for those who used their theology to justify their abuse of his brother. His hatred is eating him up inside, but he can't let it go or he'll have to confront the real reason for his anger. Hopkins's latest novel in verse is timely and poignant. Matt is a wonderfully faceted character that readers will alternately sympathize with and dislike. His actions are directly related to his emotional turmoil, and teens will understand his pain and admire his intellect, even while shaking their heads over his actions. The work doesn't gloss over uncomfortable or difficult topics. Hopkins's realistic, truthful approach to bullying, religion, and homosexuality make this a powerful story for even the most reluctant readers. •Heather Miller Cover, Homewood Public Library, AL --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

"Strong and worthy." (Kirkus Reviews)"Hopkins' realistic, truthful approach to bullying, religion, and homosexuality make this a powerful story for even the most reluctant readers." (School Library Journal)"Hopkins' many fans... [will find] catharsis and comfort in her portrayal of teens facing and surviving myriad societal problems. Fans wait eagerly for the next Hopkins book, and this one will be no exception." (Booklist)"Hopkins again tackles hot-button subjects through free verse, taking on cyberbullying, censorship, the role of religion, and the difficulties of veterans returning from war.... Hopkins expertly documents Matt's increasing ability to accept and love others in his life, and eventually himself." (Publishers Weekly)"The free verse is the perfect form to capture the intense emotions Matthew feels...and those who will find solace in Matthew's journey, however, will certainly connect with this novel." (VOYA)

Rumble by Ellen Hopkins relates the story of an eighteen-year-old boy named Matt reeling in the wake of his younger brother's suicide. Blatantly atheist, Matt blames the religious folk in his school for bullying his newly outed gay brother into killing himself. Much of the book takes place in Matt's mind, revealing his inner rants towards those he hates. And, quite frankly, it seems like he hates nearly everyone. The spark of light in his life is his girlfriend Hayden, although it is fairly easy for the reader to dislike her from the very beginning. As she grows in her faith, she puts distance between herself and Matt, becoming the epitome of the person that he so dislikes. Matt tells us that the two of them have been together for quite a while, that she greatly aided him in his recovery and emotional healing, that things used to be quite different between them. Good times are hinted at, but

never actually shown. I personally felt nothing but disdain and resentment for Hayden. There was absolutely no ambivalence at all. Then there is Alexa, Hayden's ex best friend and an object of lust for Matt. Once again, it's quite clear to the reader that this is who Matt should really be pursuing. Although not a perfect person, she is quite perfect for him. A little too perfect, if you ask me. Her character is written to easily make us like and accept her, to make it especially easy for us to justify Matt cheating on Hayden. His parents are so bad it's almost unbelievable. His mother is detached and selfish; his father is punishing and volatile. Neither outwardly exhibits any remorse for their son's suicide or for their living son's struggle. The father is more concerned about reconnecting with his college girlfriend and his mother is more immersed in opening a boutique with her sister. All in all, Matt does not have good friends, nor does he have good family. It's incredibly understandable how he has grown to be so cynical, hateful, and just angry. Although I hated reading it, even his ongoing relationship with Hayden is understandable. Of course he doesn't want to let go of the one good thing in his life, or at least in his eyes is the one good thing. As all of Ellen Hopkins's other books, this is very well-written. However, I struggle to like it as I did all of the other ones. It's not that I find it boring or dragging or any other thing like that. It's more that the book's description led me to believe it was going to be about his struggle to overcome his family and peers, his struggle to discover his own faith, and his struggle to surmount the tragedy that has befallen him. Those struggles do happen, but the overcoming and the discovering and the surmounting do not. At least not until the very end. His moral questions and change of heart do not show up until the climax, which is roughly 30 pages from the end in a 560 page book. Intended to be a grey world, it is instead very black and white. There are Matt's versions of good and evil, and never once does he waver from these beliefs until a new tragedy forces him to. When he finally does have his questions, it is the result of a horrible accident. There is no question in my mind that his faltering would not have come about had it not been for an accident. Furthermore, people tend to be grateful for life after such an event and they do change, but sometimes just for a short while. By the time his questions and inner changes come about, they are so close to the end that they are unbelievable. They are especially not welcome changes as he has spent over 500 pages making us hate and resent the other people in his life and making us believe in the absoluteness of his views. The transition is much too sudden, rendering it fantastical. This element of falsehood is especially disappointing, as all of Ellen Hopkins's other books have left me breathless with the stark reality they portray. <http://lackadaisicalperambulation.blogspot.com/>

"Wow," is all I can say to this book. I am a huge fan of Ellen Hopkins. She is truly an inspiration. All

the material she publishes is absolutely amazing and this one met my expectations to the highest level. This book takes you on a roller-coaster ride dealing with issues such as: suicide, PTSD, depression, beliefs, and trust in another person. It hits heavily on all of these topics in a mere 540 pages, yet still astonishes. The main character, Matthew, is completely relatable. While you may not have his beliefs on religion, he still has many flaws that anyone can attach to and find a similarity. In conclusion, this is definitely an amazing book written by an amazing author. This book surely delivers its, "I did not see that coming"s and "Woah" moments. This is a gem. I am sad that her next YA, verse novel will not be released for two more years, because this, like all of her fiction books, leaves me thirsty for more!

Where do I start other than saying I loved this book so so much and I don't regret buying it and will be reading more books from the author (Ellen Hopkins). This is a book about a teenager Matthew dealing with the aftermath of his younger brother's suicide who was bullied for being gay up until the point of suicide where Matthew found his body where he hanged himself. Also piling on to this is his parents' crippling relationship which was already fragile to begin with as they were forced to get married after his mother became pregnant with him. Also on this is his girlfriend Hayden (who I hate so much) who is the cause of his brother's bullying as she told her friend about him being gay and she started the rumors which ended up as bullying and ultimately suicide. This story drove me to tears many times throughout the book and I loved the story and could not stop reading it. I loved the writing style which was easy to get into and made the book fly past while reading. If you didn't get that I loved this book from above I will say it again I loved this book so much. 5 Stars

Matt Turner, along with his parents, are still in a downward spiral six months after Luke, his younger brother, has committed suicide. Luke was prompted by a mixture of intolerance, harassment, and depression. He was gay and there was no one to speak up for him, when his father, and classmates turned on him when he was unintentionally outed. Matt is unable to move on, submerged in the rage, guilt, and distraction of his girlfriend, Hayden. Over time, Matt is faced with the question of who and what to blame: God, his religious, bullying class-mates, his homophobic father, his distant zealot of a mother, himself? Matt realizes there's plenty of blame to go around, along with possibility for understanding, and ultimately, forgiveness.

This was a great book like all her books! This story touched upon serious pressing issues in our society and in our young people that need to be addressed and publicized. Reading these books

reminds me of the struggles that adolescents face every day and the very challenges that we as a society don't take seriously. I recommend these books to parents, teens, and any human being who seeks to understand the depths of a persons pain. I appreciate her always putting factual statistics and resources for help at the end of her books and I am proud to be a faithful reader of her books.

I found myself having to "make" myself read this book. It didn't grab me in the beginning like her novels normally do, but I kept going thinking somewhere in the middle it would get my attention. But sadly, it never did. However, there were some amazing feelings in this book and real emotion, and I really enjoyed how the main character was so strong minded. He was impressive.

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