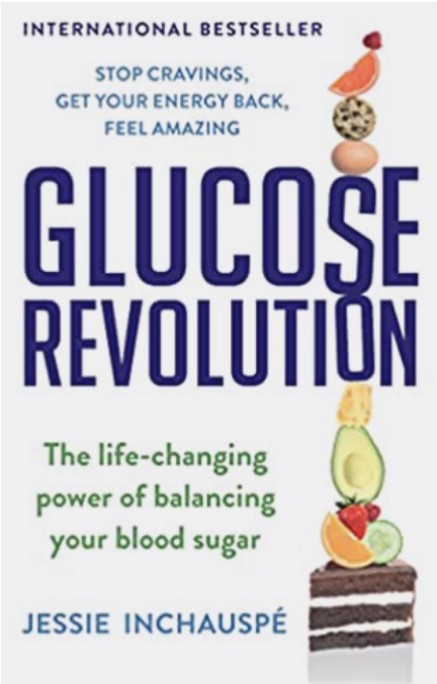
I truly hadn't forgotten about the book reviews, they just got pushed to the back burner between migraines, and the chaos that is life at times. Never mind that though. Instead, perhaps, you'll find a new book to read!



[redacted] Glucose Revolution by Jessie Inchauspé

[redacted] Jessie offers ten simple ideas to help balance your glucose levels without a diet, and keep it there.

[redacted]This book was a large topic of conversation amongst a group of friends, and I confess I hadn't even heard of the book much less read it. After hearing some of the chatter I decided to read it myself and see what I thought of it.

[redacted] I confess, I'm not big on non-fiction reads, they can often bog me down and struggle to hold my attention. Yet, Inchauspé found a way to make her book informative and funny, managing to keep my interest without making me feel like it was a drag to read.

She struggles with some mental health issues of her own, and when she shared that it really

caught my attention. Having a child who also has some minor health struggles I wondered if implementing the simple ideas in this book might help him.

The overall idea is more about balancing how you eat, more than worrying about what you eat. I hesitate to go into deep detail, because the book is really a quick and easy read. The author gives lots of the why's behind the ideas that she shares, and also offers a peek into how it helped her.

[redacted] Yes, although I'd likely skip around to the parts that I wanted to refresh myself on as opposed to rereading the entire book again. That's not a slant against the writing or book itself, but just how I tend to navigate non-fiction books.

[redacted] "Before going out the door I grabbed a square of 80 percent dark chocolate—What? Don't judge!" (*Note, the portion after the em dash is only in the audio book, where the author ad libs some funny things into her narration. In the actual book the quote can be found on page 217, and does not include the don't judge comment.)*

[redacted] The Midnight Library by Matt Haig

[redacted] Nora Seed is fed up with life, she feels nothing she does matters and she's ready to be done. Yet, it's upon taking action upon that negative thought that makes her realize her own worth.

[redacted] This is another one of those books that had been sitting in my audible library for ages. I'd tried it previously and the narrator made me stop. I tried again, cranked the speed up to 1.5, and ran with it.

[redacted] In all fairness, I nearly put this book down the second time too. In the beginning of the book Nora Seed is fed up with life, she gets bad news after bad news and decides she's had enough and if she just chugs a handful of her prescription medication that perhaps she can bring an end to the pain she constantly feels trapped in.

In short, Nora is suffering from depression, and I was turned off by the idea that one would write about such a hard topic in such a manner. But I decided to keep going and see where the author was really putting his theme, after all Nora makes her bad choice in the first chapter or two so one has to presume there's far more to the story than a moment of poor indiscretion.

Nora is thrown into a library of her imagination, where there's an endless supply of books and a librarian who looks an awful lot like the librarian from her elementary school days who was the kindest person Nora can remember. Enter the Midnight Library.

It is through selecting one book at a time, Nora learns that had she made other choices in life, there was no guarantee that her life would have been any happier. She quickly learns that despite the drudgery, the loneliness at times, the hurt, and broken relationships, it is the small everyday things that she does that have the greatest impact upon the world.

[redacted] Maybe, I think we all have moments when we need to remember that despite the mundane and dreary we are needed, wanted, and loved– even if it comes in the most unexpected ways. Plus, Haig nailed the ending, I could reread that small portion a million times over and hear my heart sing each time.

[redacted] "Never underestimate the importance of small things," Mrs Elm said. "You must

always remember that."

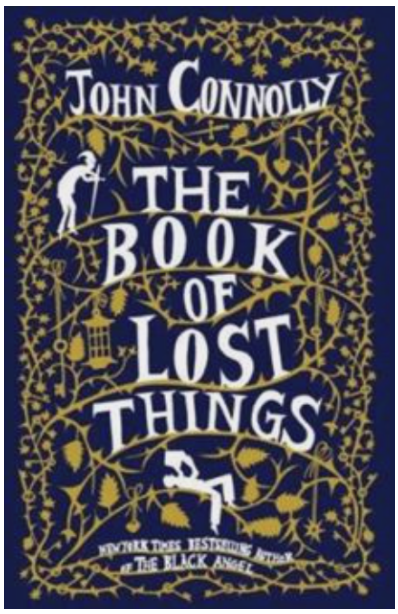
"Because Nora, the only way to learn is to live."

"The impossible, I suppose, happens via living.

Will my life be miraculously free from pain, despair, grief, heartbreak, hardship, loneliness, depression? No.

But do I want to live? Yes. *Yes.*

A thousand times, yes."



[redacted]The Book Of Lost Things by John Connolly

[redacted]Twelve year old David is mourning the loss of his book loving mother when his father announces that he's getting remarried. Confused and unsure of how his father could love another, David finds solace in the books that talk to him.

[redacted] July was a month of pulling up books I'd had in my library for a while and

hadn't actually had the time to read. I was determined to read some of what I owned as opposed to obtaining more books.

[redacted] The book of lost things is part Labyrinth, part every fairy tale retold for grown-ups that you can imagine. David has a love for books, in them are memories of love and home and mother. With his mother gone, David is filled with sorrow and confusion that none of the adults around him seem to notice or be able to give him peace about. David turns to his beloved books, and soon they begin to talk to him.

When David and his father move in with Rose who is expecting a little baby. David doesn't particularly love his little brother, or at least he doesn't think he does. He's convinced he doesn't love Rose, because to do so would be to betray his mother. To compound the difficulty of their relationship, David took on performing [OCD] routines that he believed would keep his mother alive. To continue with those routines now frustrates Rose.

David spends most of his time in his bedroom consoling himself with his books, until one day Rose and David come to blows in the garden. Rose slaps David in frustration and he retaliates by saying cruel and unkind things. David's father takes Rose's side and banishes David to his bedroom forbidding him to leave it.

But David does leave, because he's certain he saw someone prowling in the garden… again. David soon finds himself in another world. A dangerous world of make-believe. Stories like Red Ridinghood have taken on a new meaning where wolves behave like humans, and the woodcutter is only trying to keep the humans alive. Each new day in the new world brings David deeper into the world, and closer to the King who can help him find his way home. But at every corner the Trickster attempts to foil David's plans.

It is not until David reaches the King's palace and learns the truth behind the land, and who the trickster really is. And not until he's put to the test does David realize that he does, genuinely, love his younger brother, and understand the difficulty of Rose's situation.

I found this book quite hard to put down with the twists and turns that David kept finding himself in. I also loved the writing, and could spend countless hours quoting excerpts simply because I love the way the words sang to me.

[redacted] “Once upon a time – for that is how all stories should begin – there was a boy who lost his mother.”

“For in every adult there dwells the child that was, and in every child there lies the adult that will be.”

“Without a human voice to read them aloud, or a pair of wide eyes following them by flashlight beneath a blanket, books had no real existence in our world. Like seeds in the beak of a bird waiting to fall to earth, or the notes of a song laid out on a sheet, yearning for an instrument to bring their music into being. they lie dormant hoping for the chance to emerge.They want us to give them life.”

“Can I ever come back here?” he asked, and the Woodsman said something very strange in reply.

“Most people come back here,” he said, “in the end”

[redacted] The fairy tales retold in this book have a much darker side than what we are use to hearing. From why the wolves seem to behave like humans, to the depth of evil the Trickster has stooped to in his lifetime.

[redacted] On The Edge Of The Sea Of Darkness by Andrew Peterson

[redacted]The three Wingfeather siblings, Janner, Tink, and Leeli will need to use their gifts in order to survive the evil Fangs Of Dang who have crossed the dark sea to rule the land with malice. Little do they know that they hold the key to the lost legend of and jewels of Anniera.

[redacted] During the lockdown of 2020 Peterson read from his books each day, to give a little light to a darker time. Unfortunately, being on another continent we were often not awake during his live readings, and struggled to find the videos afterwards. We purchased the audio recordings instead, but while most people were struggling with boredom during 2020, my little family did not, and we never found the time to sit down and listen together. Stumbling upon the book in my audio library, I decided it might be just the thing to pull me out of the book slump I was in after reading Connolly's book.

[redacted] The Igiby children have no idea they are special, or that the gifts they spend each morning practicing have any real importance in their lives. They have no idea the Fangs of Dang who invaded their small country town are actually looking for them. Nor do they have any idea that the Crazy Sock Man is someone a little more important, someone they are related to.

I expected a soft, simply fantasy, and soon found myself strangely surprised that this series was written for a much older audience than I'd originally thought. Thus, we found characters in some very difficult and dangerous situations as they endured their hard. Cliffhanger endings that left the reader with no choice but to continue to read on to be sure all would end well.

Ahh, but Peterson is a master of his craft, and while I, as the reader, was ready to cry, pull my hair out, and step in to rescue the beloved Igibies, the part of me that is a writer couldn't help but constantly tip my cap and silently whisper, "Well done Mr Peterson, well done indeed."

[redacted] "Blood was shed that you three might breathe the good air of life, and if that means you have to miss out on a Zibzy game, then so be it. Part of being a man is putting

others' needs before your own."

"Lad, it's one thing to be poor in pocket – nothing wrong with that. But poor in heart – that's no good."

"So this is a story about light and goodness and Truth with a capital T. It's about beauty, and resurrection, and redemption. But for those things to ring true in a child's heart, the storyteller has to be honest. He has to acknowledge that sometimes when the hall light goes out and the bedroom goes dark, the world is a scary place. He has to nod his head to the presence of all the sadness in the world; children know it's there from a very young age, and I wonder sometimes if that's why babies cry. He has to admit that sometimes characters make bad choices, because every child has seen their parent angry or irritable or deceitful–even the best people in our lives are capable of evil.

But of course the storyteller can't stop there. He has to show in the end there is a Great Good in the world (and beyond it). Sometimes it is necessary to paint the sky black in order to show how beautiful is the prick of light. Gather all the wickedness in the universe into its loudest shriek and God hears it as a squeak at best. And that is a comforting thought. When a child reads the last sentence of my stories, I hope he or she drifts to sleep with a glow in their hearts and a warmth in their bones, believing that all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

July was a slower month of reading for me. I really dragged my feet in places when reading *The Book Of Hard Things*, and then when it was done I was left in that odd way one is when they get to the end of a good story and don't want to quite shatter the effect it had on them. The fear that starting another book will not quite live up to the expectations or hype of the previous book.

If I had to pick a favorite out of all three books it'd be a hard toss up between *The Book Of Hard Things* and *The Wingfeather Saga*. Both were brilliant in their own rights. Having said that, I chose the Wingfeather book as my choice to slip in the winner slot for July reads on my Book Of The Year chart.