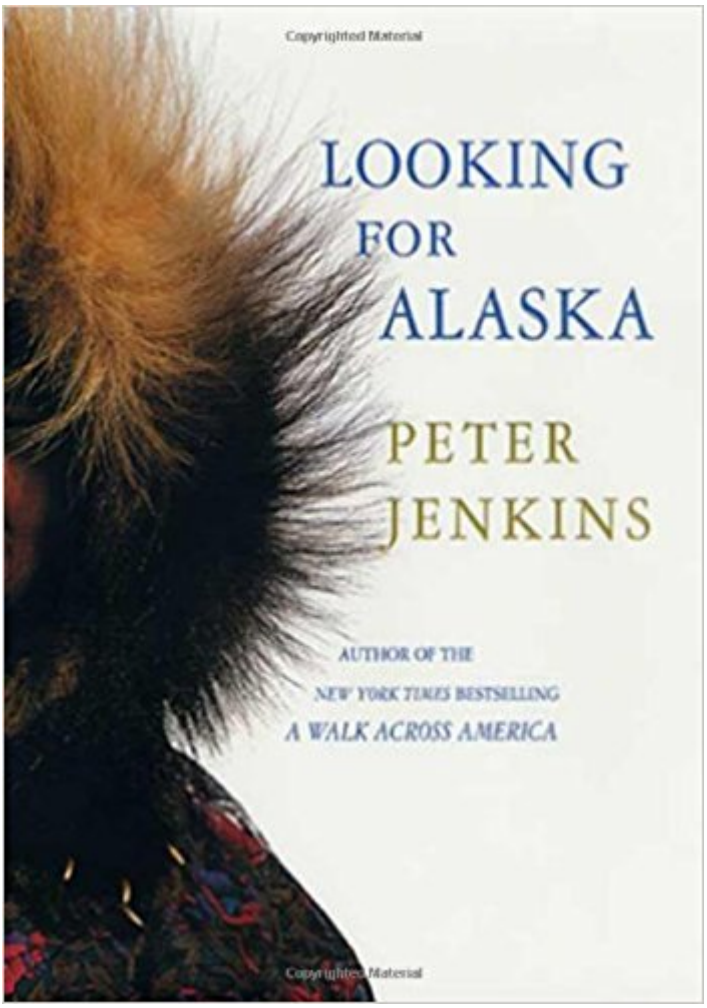
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Looking For Alaska



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Synopsis

More than twenty years ago, a disillusioned college graduate named Peter Jenkins set out with his dog Cooper to look for himself and his nation. His memoir of what he found, A Walk Across America, captured the hearts of millions of Americans.Now, Peter is a bit older, married with a family, and his journeys are different than they were. Perhaps he is looking for adventure, perhaps inspiration, perhaps new communities, perhaps unspoiled land. Certainly, he found all of this and more in Alaska, America’s last wilderness.Looking for Alaska is Peter’s account of eighteen months spent traveling over twenty thousand miles in tiny bush planes, on snow machines and snowshoes, in fishing boats and kayaks, on the Alaska Marine Highway and the Haul Road, searching for what defines Alaska. Hearing the amazing stories of many real Alaskans--from Barrow to Craig, Seward to Deering, and everywhere in between--Peter gets to know this place in the way that only he can. His resulting portrait is a rare and unforgettable depiction of a dangerous and beautiful land and all the people that call it home. He also took his wife and eight-year-old daughter with him, settling into a "home base" in Seward on the Kenai Peninsula, coming and going from there, and hosting the rest of their family for extended visits. The way his family lived, how they made Alaska their home and even participated in Peter’s explorations, is as much a part of this story as Peter’s own travels.All in all, Jenkins delivers a warm, funny, awe-inspiring, and memorable diary of discovery-both of this place that captures all of our imaginations, and of himself, all over again.

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Customer Reviews

In 1999, Peter Jenkins and his family left their farm in Tennessee to live in Alaska for a few

seasons, eventually renting a house in Seward, Alaska (pop. 2,830) on the Kenai Peninsula. The principal aim of the trip was for Jenkins to write a travelogue, but he also saw it as an opportunity to end a period of personal stagnation. It appears to have worked, for Looking for Alaska is filled with a vibrancy that can only come from one with a fully charged battery. Recognizing that "This giant place is filled with people determined to live as free as possible of others' intervention," he employed the same low-key approach to research that made his bestselling book A Walk Across America (1979) so engaging--he made friends wherever he went and allowed people to share their stories in their own way and in their own time. Part of Jenkins's charm is that he never pretends that he's figured the place out; he readily cops to his outsider status and invites readers to experience his sense of awe and surprise with him. During his 18-month stay in the Last Frontier, Jenkins spent time with wildlife rangers, recreation guides, native whalers, fishermen, and dogsled mushers, all of whom showed Jenkins and his family glimpses of their own private Alaska. (They also shared their bear stories; it seems nearly everyone in the state has had at least one run-in with the giant predator). "No one is ever the same after coming back from Alaska," he writes and after reading his book, it's easy to believe him. --Shawn Carkonen

The footloose Jenkins (A Walk Across America; The Walk West; etc.) hits the road again if not actually the blacktop. Jenkins's 18-month sojourn in Alaska involves more unconventional modes of travel: a nervy float-plane trip through the fog with a passenger who knows the route better than the pilot, for instance, or a wild ride across a frozen river on a sled attached to 13 surging huskies. For all its moments of adventure, though, this book feels more deliberate than Jenkins's earlier journeys. The people he meets seem to have been selected in advance by a booking agent. But that doesn't take away from their stories or from Jenkins's ability to draw them out. He is no poet, but maybe that's why he fits so easily into the company of a people with a natural distrust of outsiders, and why he can bond with a fisherman who "would feel much more at home at the dinner-table with ex-football coaches John Madden and Mike Ditka." Even if Jenkins comes across as more settled and his need for self-discovery a quest that added a spark to his previous works has lessened, the author's ability to inspire confidence in others is a quality that hasn't changed. Nor has his courage to even undertake such a trek. And whether it's the crepuscular sunlight ricocheting off a glacier, a massive brown bear rooting through his garbage or a grizzled mountain man named Wild Gene, Jenkins convinces readers that there is much to look at and to look for in Alaska. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

This book was recommended to me because of my love of The Catcher in the Rye. I was told that there had been some comparisons made between the main character, Miles, and Holden Caulfield. While I did see some similarities between the two, I found Looking for Alaska to be filled with original characters who were memorable all on their own. Every character had such a vivid personality, and the relationships between them was much deeper than you find in your typical young adult novel. I loved that the characters were genuinely good people - even the principal ended up being decent - and they were all there for each other, working through the hard times, and learning from each other. There were a lot of serious issues covered, but they were covered with such wit and humor and such an amazing choice of words, that by the time you finish you feel as if you are a changed person. You feel as if you learned something important about the world - which I believe is the test of a really good book. Needless to say, I loved it and highly recommend it.

"Looking for Alaska" is a complex and amazing book full of hope, tears, love, and more tears. In the book it sets up the book as a predictable love story or falling for the girl story but has many changes in the plot that may catch you off guard but overall thrill and excite you. The book is perfectly descriptive and yet simply to the point. There is very little or none that I would change about this book. Good job yet again John Green

After enjoying a few of John Greens books, I was excited about Looking for Alaska. Unfortunately it was a huge let down. The characters were irritatingly predictable, and the use of profanity was ridiculous. Whereas Greens other books manage to cross over to enjoyable literature for older adults, this felt like I was reading something designed to be read by snickering teenage boys in the corner of the library.

As I absolutely loved the movie "The Fault of Our Stars". I decided to try reading a Green book. They do seem geared more to younger people. I liked it OK but I could not relate to the willingness of these young people who had a chance to be at this well thought of prep school and how they could that away for "pranks". It did not seem to have any real end. Green did seem to tie it up with the idea of Alaska’s end stragity to the labyrinth, but I was never too happy with it. I wasn’t crazy about Alaska’s willy, nilly flippancy either . Her moral "looseness" offended me. Guess I will have to maybe try another one to see if I missed out here. I think my problem is my age. I kinda wish that there would be a ball park figure on the reviewers age then you might get a better idea of where the reviewer is coming from in their comments so you would be better able to see how this might affect

your reading of the reviewed book.

The answer to "what did you think" is kind of complicated. Overall, I liked the book. John Green really has a way with words and such real character that I can't dislike any of his books. He tends to choose heavier topics and does a good job at...doing so. This one though, is by far the heaviest of the stories of his that I've read. It almost doesn't feel like the same author in some respects. It is a first novel. (At least in known publications.)Pros:Well-writtenComplex, believable, real charactersInteresting storyLoved the narrator's voiceIt's so normal and extraordinary all at once - if you know what I meanCons:It's very sad. VeryI am left with a feeling of loss -- which goes to show good writing, but it still hurtsI found it weird how this straight-laced kid goes from no friends at home to friends and doing all kinds of not straight-laced things at his new schoolIt's very, very sadI can't John Green's novel. I just can't. The voice of the narrator is just so wonderful...it's amusing and it's like someone is really talking. You can hear it. I love it. This isn't my favorite John Green novel, but it's still a good one.

I read this book because I wanted to get my 12 year old niece one. I didn't find it appropriate for her but that was not a problem; I kept reading waiting for the story to improve and find something that might make want to wait a few more years and then give it to her, but nothing happened. Even the parts that are supposed to be intense are predictable. I feel like John Green has been using the same characters, but with different names. I think the book is poorly written and even the metaphors are plain. I'm 22 so I don't think it's because I'm too old for the story. I just don't think this is a book worth reading.

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