

## This is how we Change the Ending- Vikki Wakefield

### No-Spoiler Review -Cass

*This is how we Change the Ending* is a book written by Vikki Wakefield who has written other books such as *All I Ever Wanted*, *Friday Brown*, *Ballad for a Mad Girl*, and *In between Days*. I don't usually read books like this or ones with realistic themes that delve into gritty aspects of life as I think I won't enjoy them. When I started to read *This is how we Change the Ending* however, I quickly became hooked. The blurb is as written:

*"I have questions I've never asked. Worries I've never shared. Thoughts that circle and collide and die screaming because they never make it outside my head. Stuff like that, if you let it go—it's a survival risk.*

*Sixteen-year-old Nate McKee is doing his best to be invisible. He's worried about a lot of things—how his dad treats Nance and his twin half-brothers; the hydro crop in his bedroom; his reckless friend, Merrick.*

*Nate hangs out at the local youth centre and fills his notebooks with things he can't say. But when some of his pages are stolen, and his words are graffitied at the centre, Nate realises he has allies. He might be able to make a difference, change his life, and claim his future. Or can he?*

*This is How We Change the Ending is raw and real, funny and heartbreaking—a story about what it takes to fight back when you're not a hero."*

As the blurb states, the story is set around the life of Nate, who is a quiet main character who only wants to get through each day with ease. That's not easy however, when he gets involved with friend Merrick, a laid back, trouble maker and Pokémon card lover. Nate also struggles with his home life as he lives with his dad, his step-mum Nance and his quirky twin half-brothers. Nate just wants to be able to live his own life and be himself without limitations. Like many good, quiet main characters, Nate also gets picked on by a bully at school.

What Nate does enjoy though is going to the local Youth Center and being able to write in his notebook.

During the book, we gradually learn important things about Nate and the other characters which, along with events that happen during the story, explain so many of his actions and build up to important scenes in the novel.

As I read this book, I became increasingly interested in the story and the characters. I particularly enjoyed the parts of the story with Nance in it and how she cares for Nate and the twins. Scenes with Nate and the twins are also entertaining parts to read. Merrick is definitely a troublemaker, but he was also a funny character to read about. Nate was an intriguing character especially as we follow his family life, his school life and the enormous problems and worries he has with them both. Along the way he reflects on these problems and how writing in his notebook helps him process the difficulties he faces.

As I've said, I don't really read books like *This is how we Change the Ending*, I'm more of an adventure, mystery and fantasy reader but reading *This is how we Change the Ending* did show me how there are more genres out there that might spark my interest.

When I finished the book the meaning of the title of the novel became clear; as Nate was able to change the direction his life was taking. Vikki Wakefield has done a great job writing this book and I look forward to reading more of her novels.

I do recommend this book to older readers (15+) as it does have some references to drugs and other mature themes as well as those readers who enjoy realistic novels and long reads. *This is how we Change the Ending* is definitely a recommended read.

