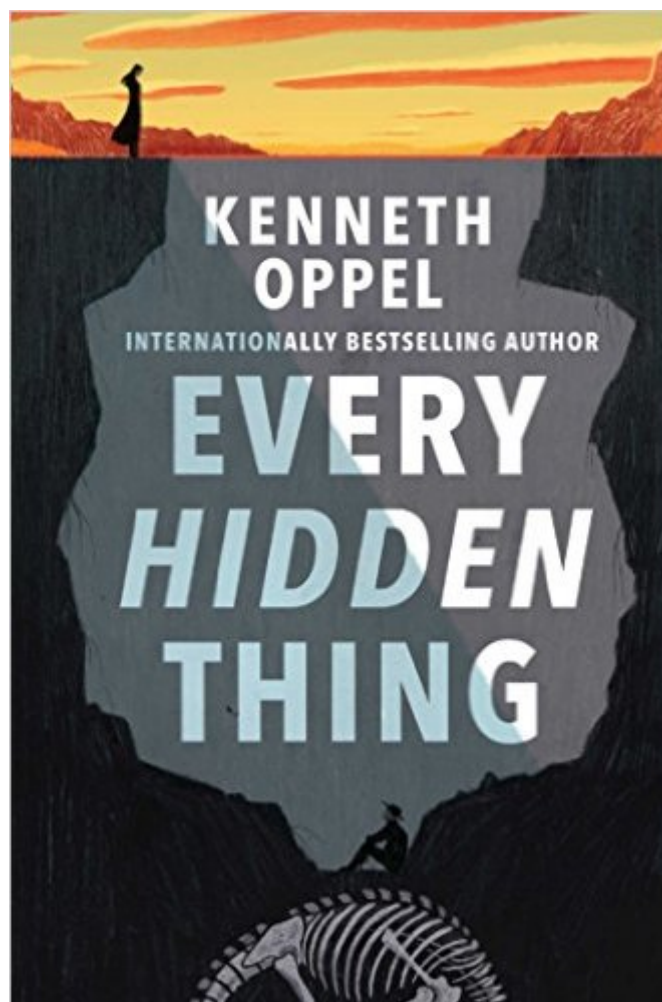


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Every Hidden Thing



Synopsis

The hunt for a dinosaur skeleton buried in the Badlands, bitter rivalries, and a forbidden romance come together in this beautifully written new novel thatâ€™s Romeo and Juliet meets Indiana Jones. Somewhere in the Badlands, embedded deep in centuries-buried rock and sand, lies the skeleton of a massive dinosaur, larger than anything the late nineteenth century world has ever seen. Some legends call it the Black Beauty, with its bones as black as ebony, but to seventeen-year-old Samuel Bolt itâ€™s the âœœrexâœ•, the king dinosaur that could put him and his struggling, temperamental archaeologist father in the history books (and conveniently make his father forget heâ€™s been kicked out of school), if they can just quarry it out. But Samuel and his father arenâ€™t the only ones after the rex. For Rachel Cartland this find could be her ticket to a different life, one where her loves of science and adventure arenâ€™t just relegated to books and sitting rooms. Because if she canâ€™t prove herself on this expedition with her professor father, the only adventures she may have to look forward to are marriage or spinsterhood. As their paths cross and the rivalry between their fathers becomes more intense, Samuel and Rachel are pushed closer together. And with both eyeing the same prize, their budding romance seems destined to fail. But as danger looms on the other side of the hills, causing everyoneâ€™s secrets to come to light, Samuel and Rachel are forced to make a decision. Can they join forces to find their quarryâ”and with it a new life togetherâ”or will old enmities and prejudices keep them from both the rex and each other?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

First of all, this is NOT a middle grade book. The quotes on this product page from Oppel's middle

grade book, *The Nest*, make that a bit confusing, but there are sex scenes and mature parts in *Every Hidden Thing*, and simply not appropriate for a young reader. Also, there's some mild profanity, but it's pretty conservative in that department. I thought I was entering into a middle grade book, so I was surprised by the content. It's even too much for a YA book, in my conservative little opinion. Despite the fact that I adored the story, I didn't care for the sex scenes and another scene in the beginning involving a young man trying to get his "private part" to go down while talking to a girl. Those parts make it more difficult to recommend to others, especially considering this is a YA book. Other than that, this is a wonderful book that I can easily recommend, but only as long as you're aware of the content. For conservative YA readers, give this book a pass! Kenneth Oppel won me over last year with *The Nest*, but he proved to me with this book what a great writer he is. I loved this story probably even more than *The Nest*, even though it didn't have the odd factor that *The Nest* had. It has great historical value, and reading it made me desperately want to dig around in my yard in hopes of finding something magnificent. Not only did I learn a bit more about the world of paleontology, but also about the conflicts with Native Americans during that time. This story takes place in the 19th century, during a time when women didn't have the rights or the freedom that they do now. It was also a time of great discovery in the world of dinosaurs. I can only imagine how amazing it would have been to discover such bones as paleontologists did during that time. The leading lady, Rachel, wants to be a paleontologist, but is trying to convince her father to let her go to college. The leading male, Samuel, is a Quaker. That really doesn't have much effect on the story, but it does add some extra interest. Their fathers are rivals, so that portion brings the Romeo and Juliet part into play. (Although, really, I don't care for the Romeo and Juliet comparison, since I don't care for their nonsense.) The point of view swaps between Samuel and Rachel. This was done to perfection! I loved seeing the story from both sides. The ending is vague, but not so vague that I was left furious. I would like another book with these characters, though. In the end, I really do wish some of the content wasn't an issue, and I'd recommend this book more freely. The writing was wonderful, and as all good books should do, it has me doing more research. I want more knowledge about that time period and about the hunt for dinosaurs. It has fed my curiosity, and that's always a good thing!

I liked this book, not as much as I should have given the Romeo and Juliet meets Indiana Jones pitch, but I liked it. And while the comparisons were technically accurate (the children of rival fossil hunting families fall in love), it lacked the promised sweeping romance and exhilarating adventure. There was romance and adventure, just in a more tepid form. That being said, the writing is very

good, with just enough period accurate phrasing and detail to sell the 19th century setting. I also liked that the characters--for the most part--acted and thought in the way people from that time would (I despise reading modern sensibilities in historical books). Sam and Rachel were both strong, distinct characters. I never found myself in a rush to get back to the other's POV while reading--both had compelling narratives. Another highlight were the dinosaurs. I loved how the discoveries and conversations about paleontology were woven throughout the narrative without bogging the story down. Everything from how they named the newly discovered dinosaurs to the methods for distinguishing bone from wood or rock. Really, what's keeping me from giving this book a higher rating is the story itself. Despite discovering dinosaurs, forbidden romance, and various dangers on the dig, the story was slow. Pleasant, interesting in places, and informative, but slow. My heart rate never escalated and I never rushed to turn the pages. In fact, it took me four days to finish what I'd normally read in one sitting. Again, not because it was bad, just not as consuming as a book about discovering dinosaurs, forbidden romance, and a dangerous dig should be.

I enjoyed "Every Hidden Thing" with a few exceptions. I loved the plot of rival paleontologists in the 19th century out to find the biggest dinosaur before the other. I liked the idea of their children falling for each other. And for the most part the story was enjoyable. I will say off the bat that this novel is not for younger readers and I think that is a tricky point because I think the book seems marketed to more of a middle grade school audience. There is definitely some sex scenes in the book. There are references to private parts. There is innuendo regarding both the teens and adults in the story. I am not offended or upset by this but I understand some parents might be. I also really liked the story about the Indians and how it mixed into the dinosaur story. I just felt like the romance was far too rushed between the teens and their spat at the end of the book was resolved far too quickly. I know space is at a premium with a young adult novel but I almost think the book would have been stronger with a more innocent romance that stayed away with the star crossed teens taking it to the next level (don't mean sex, but read the book!). The Indian story and the dualing fathers would have carried this novel along quite nicely. This is my first by Kenneth Oppel and he does have a talent with scene settings and I liked how young Rachel wasn't the obvious beauty but Samuel still fell for her. That was a nice tidbit.

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