



Unboxed

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Editor's Choice:

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Alix, Ben, Zara, Dean and Millie are at age thirteen an inseparable gang. They decide to make a time capsule and hide it on the roof of their school. When the time comes after five years for the capsule to be opened, in the meantime one of their number, Millie, has died. The others have all experienced changes in their lives.

The story revolves around the moment when the four survivors find and open the capsule. As part of the input to the time capsule, each child wrote a letter to his or her own eighteen year old self. The rule is that when the capsule is opened, each person must read his or her letter aloud. Alix has recorded in her letter a deep personal secret. Will she dare to read it out? If so, how will the three surviving comrades respond? The four survivors, now to be classified as young adults, also discover in the time capsule something none of them had any reason to suspect would be there.

The central concept of this book is extremely powerful. It obliges the protagonists to look back on their childish personae, to examine themselves as they are and to conjecture what the future holds. These preoccupations will be familiar to anyone at this point of life. But Non Pratt could, in this reviewer's opinion, had made a far more substantial book from these ingredients. It would have been both instructive and satisfying to have a more explicit account of each character's history and identity. Despite this reservation, the book stands well on its own merits: it is to be hoped that film producers cast an appreciative eye over **Unboxed**.

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