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Far Rockaway

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Editor's Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Far Rockaway is the last stop on the NYC metro line, a place Cat Manno and her grandfather Victor have always meant to travel to, just for the sake of it. On the day they do, Cat is crossing a street (her hood up, headphones in and staring at her smartphone) when she's hit by a truck (teenagers ? beware!). Victor dives in front of her, saving Cat from instant death, but both end up in hospital and in a coma.

While their family wait anxiously for an outcome to their condition in the real world, Cat and Victor wake up in a place they have never been before, which yet feels incredibly familiar. It's a world vividly created from the best classic books Victor has read to Cat over the years: **The Last of the Mohicans**, **Treasure Island** and **Kidnapped!** Here Cat must rescue Victor and survive the villains from these stories ? or face death in the real world.

Cat's got some allies, in the form of classic characters Chingachgook, Long John Silver and Alan Breck but thankfully she's also the sort of girl who ultimately relies on her own smarts, reactions and quick-thinking to save her skin. Which is just as well. Despite a fairly slow first half, the chases, scrapes and escapes build into real thrills ? there are lethal warriors who just won't die, a night-time trek across a mountain peak, being tied to the top of a ship's mast, a pirate crew and treacherous characters, to give you just a flavour of what's on offer here. Cat's headstrong nature and deep-running emotions make her an appealing character to adventure with, although she is slightly dwarfed by the famous rogues and heroes ? all huge fun and exploding off the pages here. It's a great way to show that the classics are not as dry and boring as some young readers may think.

Rippling with an undercurrent of the themes of death, grief and making the most of life, this is pure adventure for readers who love being drawn into descriptive, fascinating, real worlds.

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