



The Impossible Knife of Memory

By Laurie Halse Anderson

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For the past five years, Hayley Kincaid and her father, Andy, have been on the road, never staying long in one place as he struggles to escape the demons that have tortured him since his return from Iraq. Now they are back in the town where he grew up so Hayley can attend school. Perhaps, for the first time, Hayley can have a normal life, put aside her own painful memories, even have a relationship with Finn, the hot guy who obviously likes her but is hiding secrets of his own. Will being back home help Andy's PTSD, or will his terrible memories drag him to the edge of hell, and drugs push him over? *The Impossible Knife of Memory* is Laurie Halse Anderson at her finest: compelling, surprising, and impossible to put down.

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The Impossible Knife of Memory By Laurie Halse Anderson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up—Hayley is the daughter of a veteran, and his PTSD colors every aspect of their lives. After serving his country, Andy is trying to rebuild some stability for himself and his daughter, but each day is a challenge for them both. Hayley lives with the constant threat of her father harming himself or others while also dealing with feelings of abandonment after essentially losing her parental figures. She copes through snark and skepticism but begins to let her guard down when her charming, easygoing classmate, Finn, gives her a much-needed taste of normal teenage life. A relationship with Finn opens the door to the possibility of trusting again, but it's not easy. Through Hayley's tenuous search for balance, Anderson explores the complicated nature of perception and memory, and how individuals manage to carry on after experiencing the worst. Readers will be thoroughly invested in this book's nuanced cast of characters and their struggles. Hayley's relatable first-person narration is interspersed with flashbacks of Andy's brutal war experiences, providing a visceral look at his inner demons. The endearing Finn and Hayley's bubbly best friend, Gracie, add levity to the narrative, even as they, too, grapple with their own problems. With powerful themes of loyalty and forgiveness, this tightly woven story is a forthright examination of the realities of war and its aftermath on soldiers and their families. One of Anderson's strongest and most relevant works to date.—Allison Tran, Mission Viejo Library, CA

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review There's a compelling theme running through Anderson's powerful, timely novel, and it's this: The difference between forgetting something and not remembering is big enough to drive an eighteen-wheeler through. Hayley Kincaid won't allow herself to remember the happy times in her life, and why should she? After five years on the road with her trucker father, Andy, the two are finally staying put in her grandmother's old house in upstate New York. But military tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan have left Andy racked by nightmares of gunfire and roadside bombs, and alcohol and drugs are his means of coping. Short, gripping chapters presented in italics appear on occasion and are told from Andy's point-of-view as the war rages around him. As her father's PTSD grows worse, and the past is ever present, 17-year-old Hayley assumes the role of parent. But there's a good part of her life, too: Finn. He's got dreams for his future, and, as Hayley lets him in to her own scary reality, she tentatively begins to imagine a future of her own. Unfortunately—or fortunately—memories have a way of catching up, and as each hits, it cuts away at Hayley's protective bubble like a knife. This is challenging material, but in Anderson's skilled hands, readers will find a light shining on the shadowy reality of living with someone who has lived through war—and who is still at war with himself. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** A major marketing campaign, including a national author tour, backs up this latest from multiple-award-winning Anderson. Grades 9-12. --Ann Kelley

Review

PRAISE FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE KNIFE OF MEMORY:

- *New York Times* bestseller
- 2014 National Book Award longlist
- A *Publishers Weekly* Best Young Adult Book of 2014
- A *School Library Journal* Best Young Adult Book of 2014

"Anderson's novels . . . speak for the still-silent among us, and force all of us to acknowledge the real and painful truths that are too dangerous to ignore." —*New York Times*

"*The Impossible Knife of Memory* isn't always an easy read-Anderson's gritty, authentic look at PTSD is by turns painful and heartbreaking-but it's an important one." —*Entertainment Weekly*

"Andy comes home from the war in Iraq honored for his service, and haunted by it. The war still goes on inside of him and threatens to make Hayley another causality. Laurie Halse Anderson is one of the best known writers of literature for young adults and children in the world." —Scott Simon, *NPR Weekend Edition*

"Laurie Halse Anderson has been lauded and awarded for her ability to channel the teenage mind (and heart) dealing with tough issues. In *The Impossible Knife of Memory*, she takes on PTSD through the story of a girl coping with her troubled veteran dad." —*Family Circle*

"**At turns heartbreaking, at turns funny**, the narrative in this book is so spot on I wanted to give Hayley my phone number so she would have a friend in times of crisis. Seriously—does ANYONE write troubled teen characters with the realism, grace, and soul of Laurie Halse Anderson?" —**Jodi Picoult**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Storyteller* and *Between the Lines*

"Laurie Halse Anderson serves the families of veterans with the same honor, dignity, and respect that the veterans, who serve us, deserve. With her trademark **hope, humor, and heart-breaking realism**, Laurie Halse Anderson has given us a roadmap to heal. She is a treasure." —**Stephen Chbosky**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

* "As in *Speak*, Anderson provides a **riveting** study of a psychologically scarred teenager . . . **absorbing**" —*Publishers Weekly*, **starred review**

* "**Compelling, powerful, and timely** . . . This is challenging material, but in Anderson's **skilled** hands, readers will find a light shining on the shadowy reality of living with someone who has lived through war" —*Booklist*, **starred review**

* "The book offers an **eloquent portrait** of the effects of both war and family legacies, and many readers will find reflections of their own struggle to keep family connections while obtaining their independence." —*BCCB*, **starred review**

* "With powerful themes of loyalty and forgiveness, this **tightly woven story** is a forthright examination of the realities of war and its aftermath on soldiers and their families. One of Anderson's **strongest and most relevant** works to date." —*School Library Journal*, **starred review**

* "It is Anderson at her absolute best, providing significant and touching realistic fiction." —*VOYA*, **starred review**

* "A serious subject is balanced by humorous cultural commentary, making this an intelligent, thought-provoking, and entertaining read." —*LMC*, **starred review**

TWISTED: A *New York Times* Bestseller, An ALA BBYA title (2008), An ALA Quick Pick title (2008), A NYPL Book for the Teen Age (2008), A CCBC Choices title (2008), An IRA Top Ten (2008); **PROM:** A *New York Times* Bestseller, A *VOYA* Top Shelf Fiction for Middle School Readers title (2005), An IRA Young Adults' Choice (2005), A Junior Library Guild Selection, *Booksense* Top Ten Pick (2005), Tayshas Reading List (2006-07), *ELLEgirl* Dare to Read book club pick Nominee, SC Assoc of School Librarians YA Book Award (2007-08); **CATALYST:** An ALA Top Ten BBYA title, A NYPL Book for the Teen Age

(2002), A Borders Original Voices finalist for YA lit. (2002); **SPEAK**: A 2000 Printz Honor Book, A 1999 National Book Award Finalist, A *New York Times* Bestseller, An Edgar Allan Poe Award Finalist for YA, A 1999 *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize Finalist, Winner of the Golden Kite Award, An ALA Top Ten BBYA, An ALA Quick Pick, A PW Best Book of the Year, A *Booklist* Top Ten First Novel, 1999, A *BCCB* Blue Ribbon Book, A *School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year, A *Horn Book* Fanfare Title, A *Publishers Weekly* Best Seller, A Junior Library Guild Selection, A NYPL Book for the Teen Age, An IRA Young Adult Choice; **WINTERGIRLS**: 2010 YALSA Teens' Top Ten list; 2009 *Booklist* Editor's Choice; Pennsylvania School Library Association's Young Adult Top Forty (Pennsylvania) – top ten; Kirkus best books of 2009 list; Chicago Tribune's list of Top Ten Most Influential Books of the Decade; Chicago Public Library's Best Books of 2009 List; 2010 Quick Picks; 2010 BBYA; 2010 Amelia Bloomer Project; 2010 Capitol Choices Noteworthy Books for Children; 2010 Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices; ABA Indie Choice Award finalist; New York Public Library's 2010 Stuff for the Teen Age list; Included in the 2010 Kansas State Reading Circle Catalog; **THE IMPOSSIBLE KNIFE OF MEMORY**: A *New York Times* Bestseller, 2014 National Book Award Finalist

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lucinda Brown:

Book will be written, printed, or created for everything. You can realize everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. As you may know that book is important matter to bring us around the world. Beside that you can your reading expertise was fluently. A reserve The Impossible Knife of Memory will make you to always be smarter. You can feel far more confidence if you can know about everything. But some of you think in which open or reading any book make you bored. It's not make you fun. Why they may be thought like that? Have you in search of best book or ideal book with you?

Ellis Arnold:

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Jennifer Stephens:

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Merle Poteet:

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