



## Posthumous: A Novel about the Power of Belief

**Paul Aertker**

Flying Solo Press (Jun 1, 2018)

Softcover \$9.95 (200pp)

978-1-940137-99-5

Beautiful and emotional, *Posthumous* is about Ellie, a twelve-year-old girl trying to deal with her mother's death.

Life in Paris is pretty great for Ellie and her parents. Ellie's father, Calvert, works for the man who would have been the king of France. Ellie's mother, Etta, writes travel stories for children, though she has never been published. Then one day Etta complains of bad back pain, and life changes very quickly.

In the first half of the story Ellie describes the process of her mother dying, how Etta tried to stay positive, and of the friends and neighbors who rallied around her family. Tears are guaranteed as the story tracks the family's enormous grief.

After Etta passes, Ellie and her father move back to the United States. Ellie wants to get her mother's manuscripts published. She enlists the help of new friends in this endeavor, as well as in making a new home.

The novel is both sad and lovely. Ellie's reactions to the loss of her mother are authentic, as are her expressed feelings of powerlessness. Her bravery and tenacity when it comes to Etta's manuscripts serve as a powerful tribute to a daughter's love. Children who have lost a parent will relate to Ellie and find comfort in sharing her story, but empathy is ensured for all.

*Posthumous* is about love and hope and finding joy, even through incredible loss. It is a deeply moving story that belongs on any juvenile bookshelf.

CATHERINE THURESON (July/August 2018)

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