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Foreword Review SPIRITUAL

This Is All He Asks of You

Anne Egseth
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Anne Egseth's captivating epistolary novel *This Is All He Asks of You* is about growing up and finding light in the darkness.

Luna is Norwegian; when she is twelve, she spends time living with her single mother in the US. The book's two distinct sections encompass her time in America and her early adulthood in Europe. She narrates both sections—first through letters to the father she never met, and then in journal format.

As a child, Luna exhibits an array of unusual gifts: she can commune with trees and physically see people's inner lights. Because of her spiritual sensitivity, Luna wants to understand everything about identities and reasons for being. Her joy is tested, though, by her mother's devastating struggle with cancer.

Through the guidance of Garrick, an elderly neighbor, and through Jacques Lusseyran's *And There Was Light*, Luna copes with impending orphanhood and learns about courage, kindness, joy, and individuality, reflecting like a mantra that "it would be so sad if everything in the world became like everything else."

Luna's voice is distinctive and strong, and though her writing style changes as she grows, its poetic, ethereal quality ties her work together, from her early inquisitive sensitivity to her later, jaded weariness. Her language is a highlight, packing a great deal of meaning into a limited word count. Each word precise and evocative: "We get flung apart … and then we have to find our way back, again, and again… to wholeness." This delicate style balances with spiritual expressions. Much is implied, and the text is resonant for its openness.

This Is All He Asks of You is a stirring metaphysical novel about exploring life, loss, and spirituality.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (July / August 2020)

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