

## The End of Loneliness by Benedict Wells

5 stars

A journey of loss that leads to enlightenment

This is such a powerful story and the writing is so poignant. The original story was written in German and yet the translation has managed to capture this beautiful journey of love and loss. All the bases are covered - family, loneliness, sibling rivalry and so much more.

The main character, Jules, and his two older siblings are left orphans after the sudden death of their parents and are sent to live in a bleak boarding school. They are left reeling and they each develop different coping mechanisms in order to deal with their huge loss. Liz becomes rebellious, bordering on self-destruction, Marty throws himself into his studies and Jules withdraws.

When Jules meets Alva, a classmate, he falls head over heels in love with her. She has her own burdens and secrets and this brings them closer together. They part ways when they leave school and lose touch for many years.

The seemingly simple story belies such insight into the way humans deal with loss. The story follows the three siblings through the trials and tribulations of life and how growing older can bring wisdom and insight.

The author used his own experience with loss at an early age to shape this wonderful story and it is no wonder the book ended up on the bestseller list. He is a great admirer of John Irving and I detected echoes of *The Cider House Rules*.

All in all it's a wonderful read, not to be missed.

Gillian

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review