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# Dear Zoe



Par Philip Beard  
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**Description :** Description du produit Philip Beards stunning debut novel is fifteen-year-old Tess DeNunzios letter to her sister, Zoe, lost to a hit-and-run driver on a day when it seemed that nothing mattered but the tragedies playing out in New York and Washington. Dear Zoe is a remarkable study of grief, adolescence, and healing with a pitch-perfect narrator who is at once sharp and nave, world- worried and self-centered, funny and heartbreakingly honest. Tess begins her letter to Zoe as a means of figuring out her own life, her place in the world, but the result is a novel of rare power and grace that tells us much about ours.

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Like *The Lovely Bones*, [Dear Zoe] is a piercing look at how family recovers from a devastating loss.

Everything about this moving, powerful debut rings true. Booklist (starred review) Beard peels away the layers of his protagonist's anguish simply and sensitively. . . and creates real, multidimensional and affecting characters. The Washington Post The whole novel . . . rings with truth. The Buffalo News From Publishers

Weekly A 15-year-old girl struggles to cope with private grief in an age of public catastrophe in this awkwardly conceived but sweet, sure-voiced debut. When her little sister, Zoe, dies after being struck by a car on September 11, 2001, savvy, self-aware Tess DeNunzio works through her grief by writing letters to Zoe. Tess's candid observations about her feelings of guilt (she witnessed the accident) and her mourning process give warmth and clarity to her descriptions of daily life in the aftermath. Not sure how to deal with her bereaved mother and uncommunicative stepfather, Tess moves across Pittsburgh to live with her real dad, an underemployed weight lifter with a good heart. Tess's wise-beyond-her-years sensibility can seem contrived ("That's one of the strangest parts of being a stepchild. You actually get to watch your parents fall in love"), and a morality lesson about the virtues of virginity feels tacked on. Most problematically,

however, September 11 feels like a giant peg on which a small (but lovely) coat has been hung. Maybe that's the point, but much more moving are Tess's attempts to cope with the conventional aspects of the loss of her sister. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From

School Library Journal Adult/High School When 15-year-old Tess DeNunzio loses her stepsister in a freak hit-and-run accident on September 11, 2001, she chronicles her family's recovery in an epistolary novel that is a tribute to the power of love to heal. First-time novelist Beard has created a unique and authentic voice in

Tess, who struggles with her own ambivalent feelings of guilt. As the first-year anniversary of the Twin Towers collapse and Zoe's death approaches, the teen dreads the day. The world will stop. People will cry I don't care about all those others, because I even resent them for dying on the day that should have been yours alone. This honesty, tempered with wit, keeps her afloat as she navigates her adolescence during this rocky period in her family's life. As her tenuous relationship with her stepfather worsens and her mother's silence permeates the house, Tess escapes to her n'er-do-well father's home. She meets Jimmy Freeze, with whom she shares sex and a little weed, which it turns out her father and Jimmy sell. But, more importantly, she learns what it is to love and be loved. Dear Zoe is not a dark novel. Young adults will identify with

Tess's resilience and find the far-from-perfect adults who populate her world familiar. When Tess returns to her blended family, readers understand her well-intentioned father's pain. It is a moment that will resonate for many as Tess realizes that what is right for her will hurt the imperfect parent she loves. Pat Bangs, Fairfax County Public Library, VA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.