

Xavier in the Meantime

By Kate Gordon
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Primary Fiction
Book of the Month

Blurb:

Sometimes Xavier wakes up feeling hopeless.

Every new doctor... this will fix it.

Removing him from school... this will fix it.

The therapy group... this will fix it.

And his dad moving out. Maybe, this will fix it.

Despite his positive affirmations, the black dog never really leaves him. It watches from the corner of his room, never straying too far away—waiting for the perfect opportunity to sink its teeth in. But Xavier has a plan—one he hopes will help all the kids in his support group. Enlisting the help of best friend Aster, he tries to convince his dad to turn the family sheep farm into a therapy retreat for the group session kids. But he is up against decades of tradition, his parents who are on a “break,” and the spectre of the black dog.

Can Xavier learn to cherish the moments in between the struggles—the moments in the meantime?



Lamont Review:

Xavier tries hard to be happy, but his struggles with depression - the black dog that never seems to leave him - make him question everything.

He loves his Mum and Dad, and knows that they love him, and he enjoys spending time with his best friend Aster. When they come up with the idea to turn his Dad's sheep farm into a place that kids like them can go, to hug animals and experience the joy of being outdoors, he thinks at last the black dog is gone.

This is a confronting book about Xavier's real struggles with depression, and his hopes and fears for the future. It is a companion book to *Aster's Good Right Things*, but it is a standalone as it is Xavier's story.

It is beautifully written and Xavier, Aster and their families are great characters and they will help readers gain an understanding of mental health issues, and how love and support can help.

Best suited to readers 10 years and older.

Reviewed by Michelle

Teacher Notes prepared by the publisher are available for this title on our website.