

Message Is Clear: Zusak's 'Messenger' Delivers

by Jack Bowen

Have you ever read a book and sworn it was the best you ever read? That's how I felt about *I Am the Messenger*. It is written by Markus Zusak, and it's perhaps the most moving book I've ever read, next to *The Book Thief* (also by Markus Zusak).

I Am the Messenger tells the story of one nineteen year-old Ed Kennedy, leader of a boring, mediocre life. Ed doubts his abilities, and is considered inadequate by those around him. One day though, all of this changes. Ed is going to the bank to cash a check when he inadvertently stops a bank robbery. After the highly publicized event, he begins to receive playing cards in the mail, all aces with names and addresses written on them. Ed follows the cards' instructions, unearthing families and lives torn apart and in need of repair.

The story follows his life through all four aces and shows how a simple, mediocre guy like Ed can make a difference. What I love most about this book is that Ed is a normal guy, but he proves that everyone has value. This book is short, but very well done, with funny, tender, and scary moments that many people can relate to and enjoy.

Markus uses Ed as a reminder that all people have merit and are worth something. Ed chooses to care, and in doing so, changes the lives of those around him, as well as his own, for the better. Markus Zusak is a very talented writer, and his style grabs you. I don't typically like these types of "moving" or "touching" books, but I highly recommend this book to anyone of any age.