



Unforgettable

Loretta Ellsworth

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Baxter Green isn't like everyone else. While most people would forget about the little details of everyday life, Baxter never forgets—not pain, not hurt, not embarrassment. In fact, Baxter never forgets anything—including a string of account numbers, flashed before his eyes by his mother's criminal boyfriend, Dink, for use in a credit card scam. Years after his testimony has locked Dink away, Baxter and his mother are in a new town, trying to forget the danger Dink brought into their lives. Baxter wants to hide his unique ability, but it becomes increasingly more difficult when he reconnects with Hallie, a girl from his childhood who has lived on in his memory long after she has forgotten him. Can Baxter win Hallie's heart? Loretta Ellsworth's newest novel is one readers will never forget.

Unforgettable Details

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Author : Loretta Ellsworth

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From Reader Review Unforgettable for online ebook

Sab H. (YA Bliss) says

When I started this book I thought it would be awesome to be like Baxter. To remember EVERYTHING? Never forget a thing? Except, think about it. You'll remember the bad things just as well as the good ones. Every single detail. Gee, poor Baxter.

Then as I started reading, I thought the author had threaded too many plots and themes together and it was just too much and too slow. But as the novel goes on, there were some other aspects that really fascinated me.

1) Baxter has synesthesia which "is a neurological rarity in which two or more senses are connected." In Baxter's case, he hears voices as colors or sounds or textures or smells.

2) As the novel goes on and Baxter is changing and understanding things he starts realizing that yes, he remembers everything, but the interpretation of different situations are connected to your level of maturity and your age. So his memories are actually his interpretation of the moment. Think about it, we all remember things differently, or we have labeled certain memories a certain way just because of our mood or our lack of maturity in that time.

So the subplots and details of this book plus the writing, made it so much more great than it would've been otherwise. The pace was indeed slow, but I believe once you settle and accept that fact the story is very enjoyable. It also has a bit of mystery, and romance and coming of age story.

I always love reading about the awkward outcast and in the case of Baxter it was twice as interesting. Descriptions and details were also very rich, and overall, this was very interesting and unique read.

Magan (Rather Be Reading) says

In my quest to read more books with male characters, I was intrigued by Baxter – a boy who wishes there were some things he could forget, even though it was impossible due to his perfect photographic memory. He wishes he could forget how Dink screwed up he and his mom's lives when he used Baxter for his memory to steal credit card information. With Dink just out of jail, he's sure to come after them again because Baxter has something he's sure Dink wants. One thing he's glad he cannot forget is his kindergarten crush, Halle.

Halle moved away to the small mining town where Baxter and his mom relocate. Coincidence? Not so much. He hopes to reconnect with her without her recalling him as the boy who could recite her favorite television shows verbatim when she was five. Luckily for Baxter, Halle's family still lives in the same town; he pretends to mess up on tests and is assigned a tutor who turns out to be none other than our leading lady. Baxter walks a fine line between allowing Halle to get to know him without revealing too much about his past. He doesn't want to be seen as a freak.

While he's trying to figure out his relationship with Halle and make new friends, he's tortured by memories

of Dink. Small hints that the ex-convict knows their whereabouts start to surface and Baxter doesn't know how to handle his fear. Does he tell his Mom? Is Dink just trying to scare him? Should they move again and will he have to leave Halle behind just when he's reconnected with her?

This book made me think so much – I am not one of the people who has memories from when I was super young. I just don't. While Baxter did, he could never turn them off. He relived emotions and tough moments; scents evoked certain flashbacks. His mind was constantly running a loop of memories. Though I wish there were more I could remember about my past, I've decided I'm quite content with what I can because only the important events, people, and defining moments stay with me.

So what would you choose if you had the choice – to remember it all or to have fragmented memories? Read Baxter's story and see if that helps you decide...

[Review originally posted at Rather be Reading]

Abria Mattina says

I've had this book on my shelves for a couple of months, but finally decided to give it a try. I wish I'd known how good it was, or I would have made it a priority to read sooner. While *Unforgettable* didn't hit it out of the park on all fronts, there were some characters and elements that I really enjoyed. I was particularly excited when I found out that Baxter has synesthesia. It's always great to find something relatable about a character.

Unforgettable progresses at a comfortable pace. There isn't really much urgency anywhere in the plot, excepting one brief prank, but the book isn't slow either. At just over 250 pages, this is a quick book that can be consumed in a day.

Ellsworth is pretty good at writing teenagers. Baxter is a smart kid, but he's capable of making short-sighted, selfish decisions too. When it appears that Dink may try to reenter the Greens' lives, Baxter hides it from his mother because things are finally going well with Halle and he doesn't want to move yet. Typical fifteen-year-old thinking: getting the girl trumps avoiding a stalker.

Baxter is joined by a cast of peers whom he meets through the Environmental Club, something he only joins to get close to his old kindergarten flame, Halle. Most of the other club members aren't well fleshed out or even discernible from each other, but Eddie is memorable and endearing. He has depth and seems like the kind of person a reader would actually like to know.

Baxter spends most of the novel chasing after Halle, trying to impress her and not let on to any of his new classmates that he has a very strong memory. I found Halle a bit flat despite the plethora of information the reader is given about her through Baxter's memories. Everything from her favourite colour to the games she played as a kid is mentioned, but by the end of the novel I felt like I didn't really know anything about Halle except that she is an environmental activist who loves her late granddad. I also didn't understand exactly why she was upset in the third act.

Unforgettable is a fun, well-paced YA read. I don't think it's necessarily a standout of its genre, but it's not a bad book either. It's satisfying, light, and will teach readers something about memory and synesthesia. Bonus: people who only pretended to read *The Great Gatsby* for English class might actually learn

something about its characterization and themes.

TheBookSmugglers says

3 1/2 stars. Original review posted on The Book Smugglers [HERE](#)

I am a bit of a geek when it comes to reading books that have “memory” as a central theme because I find the subject fascinating; I especially like the exploration of how memory relates to emotions and growing up/old. This is why I tend to love unreliable narrators as most of the time, there is something wrong with their memories of the events that are being narrated. This is why I love Peter Pan so much: the way I interpret it, Peter never grows up because his memory of events fade and as such, in his mind, he is always a child.

This is also why, when I came across *Unforgettable* and read its blurb, I knew I would be reading it. Its main character, Baxter Green had an accident when he was three and ever since then he remembers every single detail of his life. He also has synesthesia (and the two conditions might be connected) which means that he hears voices as colours, textures or sounds. These combine to make Baxter a singular, somewhat awkward 15 year old. At the opening of this story he and his mother are starting over, on the run and hiding from her ex-boyfriend who tried to exploit Baxter’s ability in a credit card scam and has now been released from jail. This starting over presents Baxter with the opportunity to not only lay low as a regular guy, hiding his excellent memory but to also try to reconnect with his kindergarten crush, Halle, whom he believes is his soul mate.

The story progresses as Baxter and Halle become friends (although SHE doesn’t remember HIM), both get engaged in the environmental issues that surround the town they live in and then Dink comes back to terrorise Baxter again.

There was a minor stumbling block in the beginning as one particular plot point felt really contrived but I was able to look past this because of the competent writing style and Baxter’s voice. Furthermore, I thought *Unforgettable* combined really well common facets of Contemporary YA with the uniqueness of Baxter’s condition. The former dealt with coming of age, finding oneself, falling in love but it’s the latter aspects that made the book for me.

Given my penchant for the topic it is not surprising that the most interesting aspect of the story to me was the exploration of memory and how it affects the lives of people. I kept wondering what must it be like to have a perfect memory – how would someone feel if they could remember every single thing that has ever happened to them? If I had a crush on someone when I was 3, would I always love this person simply because I remember the feelings and the person so vividly? How does perfect memory affect how one feels?

In that sense, I was able to relate to and understand Baxter’s frustration with his condition and I felt for him – he not only remembered things but also all the accompanying feelings he had at the time he experienced events. At the same time, I thought extremely compelling the way that the author explored the relationship between memory, emotions and maturity which brought up another aspect: that of the interpretation of those memories. Yes, Baxter had perfect memory but that does not necessarily mean that they were true in their purest form. Because there is always room for interpretation: this is all the more evidenced when it comes to his memories of Halle. He does remember clearly everything that they experienced when they were really, really young. But that very youth colours the manner which he remembers her because he didn’t have the emotional maturity to understand those memories.

There were also truly beautiful moments when his memory proved to nothing but a gift: to his mother for example, when he provided her with a long lost memory of his late father. She, on the other hand, would by return, give him a more mature outlook and interpretation of events, something that he is too young and immature to grasp. Not to mention that throughout the story, there were correlations with *The Great Gatsby* (which Baxter was reading for school) that made me want to read that book pronto.

Although at times, I did feel that the plot had far too many threads, ultimately *Unforgettable* proved to be a very good read with fascinating details.

Jen says

So in this book, 15-year-old Baxter Green is the kid who never forgets. Ever. Nothing ever. He had a head injury when he was 3, and he's remembered everything he ever saw, heard, or experienced since then. Naturally, when his mom's crappy ex-boyfriend Dink found out, he took advantage by forcing Baxter to memorize credit card numbers so he could steal. And naturally, when Dink got caught and Baxter testified against him...and stole the stolen cash from his office...that pissed Dink off. So when Dink is paroled, Baxter and his mom move to a randomly (not really) town in Minnesota. There, Baxter tries to start over as a normal kid at school, hiding his ability, and also tries to win the affection of his ecologically passionate crush...who he just happened to fall in love with in kindergarten. Only she doesn't remember him at all.

The book was well-written and interesting. I was rooting for Baxter, and honestly was happy to see a YA novel written from a boy's perspective to begin with, as they're kind of rare. Having never been a teenage boy, I can't speak to how realistic his thoughts and actions in the book are, but they struck me as reasonably accurate for a smart, sensitive teen boy. And the cover art is kick-ass - I would find myself picking up the book to read it and just staring at the cover for a while before actually cracking open the book. The only thing criticism I have is that it felt like the book was trying to do too much, like there were too many elements to the story. If there had been more focus on the memory thing, or the running from the bad guy thing, or the environmental message thing...just one of those would have been an adequate companion to the complex teenage love feelings story, but all of them kind of diluted the purpose until I wasn't really sure what the main thrust of the book was. Even so, I found the Baxter compelling and the writing excellent, so I still liked the book!

Kristi says

Earlier this year I read a novel called *Forgotten* by Cat Patrick about a girl who can't remember anything. Then I read the summary for *Unforgettable* and was instantly intrigued. What if you were the exact opposite of the character in *Forgotten*? What if you remembered everything?

That's exactly what Baxter does, he remembers everything. Not only remembers certain events, but also experiences the emotions and feelings that happened at the same time. Can you imagine experiencing the pain of loosing someone dear to you repeatedly?

Initially I thought it might be cool to remember everything, but as the story progresses it's easy to see how it can be a burden as much as it's a gift. It makes Baxter a little more awkward than usual, but I don't think you have to have an incredible memory to feel awkward as a teenager.

This story is about a lot more than dealing with Baxter's condition. It's about self discovery and first love. It's about interpreting the life around us and our experiences.

Unforgettable is a great story, with a an age old message and a unique character.

Arixel says

Wouldn't it be phenomenal to be able to remember everything and not forget anything? Ever wonder what it's like to be this way? Then this book is for you! Unforgettable is realistic fiction/drama filled with many thrills and very well written quotes. I recommend this book to anyone who wants to read a book about memory or how hard it would be to maintain not being able to forget anything a secret.

The setting of my book takes place in Minnesota, at Baxter's high school and home. Baxter Green has lost the ability to forget anything at the age of 3 because of an accident that occurred, since then he's been able to remember everything that has happened in his life so far. He believes it's abnormal to forget. Being 15 and finally going to an actual school was new to him once again, after all he was home schooled from the age of 11 till now. Of course he knows he has this problem and because of it a few people are using this as an advantage, such as Baxter's mom's boyfriend, Dink. Dink is using Baxter due to his ability to remember anything, even something he can look at for just 5 seconds and he'd remember it perfectly like it was nothing. Things don't end up well.. having to move to Minnesota from California because of the crime Dink has made, Baxter knew it all. Being scared of Dink, even though he was arrested, they decided to move miles and miles away from California. At first it's great, Baxter gets reunited with his long lost kindergarten crush, Halle Phillips. Never did he really get over her. Trying to forget the terrible things that happened with Dink it won't be easy now that he's out of jail and well, might be after them, but will he be able to find them? The conflict of this book I'd say would be person vs self since he's trying to convince himself to keep hiding his unique ability, even though it keeps getting extremely hard once he gets reconnected with Halle.

I absolutely loved some of these phrases/quotes the author included. For example, "Not all memories are good. That's why last month when I blew out the candles on my cake for my fifteenth birthday, I only had one wish, I wished I could forget." I love this because this quote can show what certain types of memories can do to people. Of course memories aren't easy at all to forget, it's like as if your mind is a marathon, a marathon of memories. To the point you wish to forget all the unpleasant and hurtful memories that only cause you pain and sorrow. Another phrase I loved was, "Lies are easier than secrets. No one forgets a secret, not even people with average memories. Secrets are heavy. They're anchors that weigh a person down; the longer you keep them the heavier they become." This practically means the longer you keep secrets, the more obstruct it gets. It just gets in the way.

I understood why Baxter has a fear of Dink. It's not easy to forget what occurred in your life, especially unpleasant events. It's as if Dink marked Baxter's life forever with terrible memories. Dink coming drunk after his mother and him argued and also the crime Dink put Baxter in that he had no idea of. Baxter deserved none of this.

I'm pretty sure we can all relate to Baxter wanting to forget certain memories. I've overcome a few events in my life that I wish could just vanish. We all have those flashbacks or memories that aren't the greatest, but sometimes certain memories cause us sorrow and pain because we know those were the most cheerful and happy memories that we know won't happen a second time. Except I believe we need to leave the past in the past, live in present day, and not worry about what will happen tomorrow, next week, next year. We should focus on making more happy and delighted memories to fulfill us with happiness.

I'd say the major event that happened to Baxter was how he lost the ability to forget. Some may say it would be amazing to not be able to forget, others such as Baxter think not being able to forget can be something difficult to live with, and well I agree. Just think if something happened and you had no way of forgetting, that made a mark on your life. That could forever be the memory that keeps you up at night till 3 am because you keep replaying it in your head. It's not an easy thing to cooperate with.

I give this book 4 out of 5 stars. Why? It makes you think so much, and it's amazing seeing how even though he's been through a lot, he still has a spark of hope that in the end everything will get better and soon Baxter and his mom can finally be fully happy once again. I'd definitely wouldn't mind re reading this book again. I recommend this book to anyone who likes a good inspirational book or anyone really who wants to read something new, I'm sure you'll end up loving it just as much as I did.

Sophia Casillas says

I NO LONGER HAVE THE BOOK

This book is about Baxter Green's story, a boy who never forgot. He lost the ability to forget things, so he remembers everything. To him it is abnormal to forget. He knows he has this problem, and people use it to their advantage, like Dink the criminal boyfriend of his mother. His crimes forced Baxter & his mother to move to a small town in Minnesota, thousands of miles away from California, where Baxter is re-united with his long lost kindergarten love, Halle. I recommend this book to mostly teenage girls who love a story with twists & turns, & a different type of love story. What will happen? Will Halle remember and love him again? Will the criminal boyfriend find them? Read to find out! It's unforgettable...

Julia Wilson says

Good for the 'gentle read' YA crowd. A mystery and a romance set in Minnesota. Baxter Green has a photographic memory. It is both a blessing and a curse. He has convinced his mom to move to this small town because he remembers a girl from kindergarten that he thinks he loved. It's a stretch but the writing is good and I think teens would enjoy it.

Sarah Bullard says

[the fear of him was more of the villain than he himself was, which was an interesting idea. (hide spoiler)]

Brooke says

Naw, Baxter!

I really enjoyed this one. A very unique, thought provoking read.

Baxter was easy to like and sympathise for, the supporting characters were fun and a great crowd for Baxter to be associated with (I had to laugh at the irony, the mental club). Dink was a creep. And Halle. Nawww!

I'd definitely recommend this to anyone considering picking it up.

Terri says

I love Loretta Ellsworth for two reasons: she is from Minnesota (I have had the chance to meet her several times and she is terrific), and she writes about things no one else writes about (shrouding women, organ donation, great literature, and now synesthesia and photographic memory). I read so much young adult literature with the same tried and true storylines, that something new always (at least initially) grabs my attention. Ellsworth's latest book, "Unforgettable," is her best book yet!

Before I picked up "Unforgettable," I had just finished reading "The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake" by Aimee Bender, which led me to look up and think about the condition known as "synesthesia." So it was meant to be that I would next pick up "Unforgettable" by Loretta Ellsworth, which begins with Baxter Green remembering the day when he was three years old and landed on his head after falling off a swing. This head trauma results in Baxter now remembering every single thing that he experiences. In addition, he associates sounds, particularly the sounds of people's voices, with some other visceral visual image - for instance, the girl he loves in kindergarten sounds like yellow daffodils.

Twelve years later, fifteen year old Baxter and his mother have just moved to Wellington, Minnesota. His mother's former boyfriend, Dink, is being released from a California prison. Dink was in prison because he forced a young Baxter to use his memory skills to memorize account numbers at his place of employment, which he then used for criminal activity. This plot strand adds suspense and drama to "Unforgettable." Another strand involves the real reason that Baxter and his mother ended up in Wellington. Unbeknownst to his mother, Baxter has seen to it that they "chose" Wellington because he knows that the girl with the daffodil voice, Halle Phillips, now resides in Wellington. Ellsworth uses allusions to "The Great Gatsby" to compare the relationship between Baxter and Halle to that of Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan. This plot strand adds romance and its own suspense to the novel. A third strand involves mining in northern Minnesota. Wellington is a mining town on the Iron Range where many have died from Mesothelioma, a cancer known to be caused by taconite, a by-product of iron ore mining. It just so happens that Halle's father is an executive at the mine. More tension is added. Ellsworth weaves the three strands in "Unforgettable" together seamlessly to create a cloth that the reader can wrap himself/herself in and savor.

In terms of characterization, Ellsworth creates multi-dimensional characters who have realistic strengths and weaknesses. We invest in them, particularly Baxter, whose first-person narration allows us into his head, and we root for things to turn out well for them. The antagonists are sometimes a bit over the top and stereotypical - especially in the use of the name "Dink" for the former boyfriend.

There is much here to learn, ponder, and discuss. For those who have read "The Great Gatsby" (in many Minnesota high schools, this is found in junior level American literature curriculums), the allusions to Jay and Daisy add dimension to the story. For others, this might be a turn-off, as it is a considerable element in the story. As a former English teacher, I do appreciate Ellsworth's homage to the classic literature, however. This was similar to her use of "To Kill a Mockingbird" in "In Search of Mockingbird." The theme of harmful work environments, particularly those in the mines on the Iron Range, will be of particular interest to Minnesota teens. More universal themes, such as bullying, being different, being true to yourself, friendship,

learning from your mistakes, being careful what you wish for, etc. will ring true for all teens and give teen readers much to consider.

All in all, this is a fine addition to young adult realistic fiction. I am going to buy more copies for my library. Congratulations to Minnesota author, Loretta Ellsworth!

Jerika Foster says

An interesting take on a modern day Gatsby with exceptional characters and skills.

Mundie Moms & Mundie Kids says

Wouldn't it be cool to never forget anything? I thought so when I first heard about this book, which is about a teenage boy named Baxter who after an accident remembers everything. I mean like every little detail, which at first seemed something that would be pretty amazing, but as I started to get to know Baxter, I realized it's not as cool as I first thought. I can't imagine remembering everything little thing, the good, the bad and the real tragic like Baxter does. What I started out being cool, ends up being more of a burden for Baxter.

Baxter is a pretty neat character to meet. He's also an ordinary guy who has an extraordinary ability. It's not just his ability to remember everything that makes him fascinating, but the fact that he's able to associate voices to smells, colors or objects. This allows him to identify people with things, like the love interest's voice to him sounds like yellow daffodils. Not only was this totally unique to the story, but I've never encountered something like this before. It was quite refreshing to read about this and it made Baxter a really unique character for me to get to know. The author really captured my interest with her book by creating a character I couldn't help wanting to know more about. He's broken, he's strong, and he's an outcast.

Though the flow of the plot is at times slower than I normally like to read, I couldn't stop reading it. I got so caught up with the story, which is richly detailed and allowed me to connect with the feelings of first love, remembering what it was like to try to find my place in the world, and figure out who I was. These are the same things Baxter deals with in his story, and I liked that he's a character who continues to grow and change as the story continues. I think Baxter is a character many readers will find just as intriguing as I did, and will find themselves being able to connect with him when they sit down to read his unique story.

Cindy Hudson says

Baxter remembers everything since he was three. Doctors say a fall from a swing rewired his brain, and now he remembers every detail of everything that has ever happened to him, particularly the events surrounding his court testimony that sent Dink, his mother's boyfriend, to jail.

Elementary school, where he was known as the Memory Boy, was a disaster, and after three years being

homeschooled, he has a chance to start over in a new town where people don't know he's a freak. He's especially interested in renewing his relationship with Halle, a girl he knew in kindergarten who doesn't remember him from before. Trouble is, Dink's out of jail, and Baxter is sure he'll find them and seek revenge.

Unforgettable by Loretta Ellsworth is a great book for mother-daughter book clubs with girls aged 14 and over to read. At 15, Baxter wants what most teens want, which is the ability to have friends, fit in, feel normal and be involved in something he believes in. Baxter is reading The Great Gatsby, and while he sees parallels between his own life and Gatsby's, he desperately needs to believe his story can be different.

Book clubs can talk about the choices Baxter makes and how they influence what happens to him. They can discuss the challenges of embracing things that make a person unique without being ostracized from the crowd for being different. There is also a great subplot about environmental concerns as they relate to industrial safety and how that affects everyone in town in some way. Unforgettable covers multiple issues and Ellsworth expertly weaves the threads of these issues into an unforgettable story. I highly recommend it.
