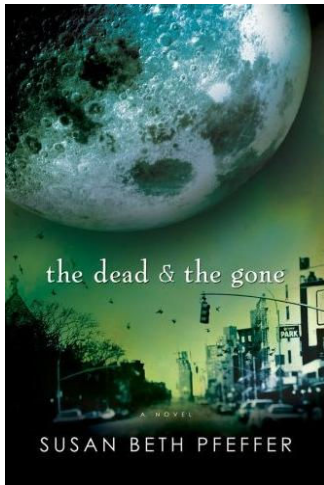


# big house book club book #1



What if an asteroid hit the moon? In Susan Beth Pfeffer's newest novel **"The Dead & The Gone"** it does!

Sure, the moon may not seem very important. But when tsunamis hit New York City and the Statue of Liberty is washed away, things go from bad to worse and aren't going to get better any time soon. It's one disaster after another in a chain-reaction of horrific climate changes.

Seventeen-year-old high school junior Alex Morales is used to working hard for what he wants, and what he wants is to succeed. But his carefully-laid plans for senior year and college are destroyed by this global disaster.

The tsunami hits close to home when Alex loses contact with both of his parents. His mother, a nurse at the hospital, should have been on her way home from work around the time that the subway tunnels flooded. And Alex's father is in Puerto Rico for his grandmother's funeral when the family's small hometown on the coast is devastated by the tsunami. His older brother (Carlos) is serving in the Marines, so Alex and his two younger sisters (Brianna and Julie) are home alone when all this happens. It's up to Alex to find a way to keep himself and his little sisters alive. And that is where the story really takes off!

The planet is rocked by famine, floods, freezing temperatures, and widespread disease. And those are just the natural disasters. Humankind creates its own brand of disaster, and this comes in the form of widespread panic. Gas, food, and supplies are all soon scarce, and people become far less than civilized when survival is at stake. (Not that you can blame them!)

Alex faces chilling moral dilemmas: whether to rob the dead, who to save during a food riot, and how long to preserve the hope that his parents might return. And death and destruction are depicted pretty graphically, making the horror of Alex's ordeal all the more real.

Religion plays a role in the plot, too. As a Catholic, Alex finds his faith in God shaken, but he relies on the guidance, compassion, and sacrifice of church leaders in order to stay alive.

These powerful images and wrenching tragedies will haunt readers. If you want a book that will really make you think long after you put it down, you will need a copy of this book. Natural disasters, food shortages, and world-wide epidemics: this book has it all!

P.S. **"The Dead & The Gone"** is a companion book NOT a sequel to Pfeffer's novel **"Life As We Knew It"**. If you haven't read the first book, you don't really have to (but may WANT TO after reading this one)!

Summary compiled from publishers' and readers' reviews on Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, and DearAuthor.com. [msannakoval/sep08]