

Review of *Away with Words* by Linda Folsom

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Chapter 1 starts with us meeting Charlie, a teenage boy. He's shy but trying to make friends with a popular beautiful African American girl. He ends up going with her and they both get tattoos. They were celebrating the last day of middle school.

In Chapter 2, Charlie's mom needs to talk to him about "something important". His dad wanted to come to visit with Charlie. It was quite short. Charlie then realized that his dad wanted him to come for the summer.

Another chapter described how the principal consider failing Charlie in 6th grade. Charlie was then tested by two professionals. The principal talked to him and asked if he knew what dyslexia was. They discuss not letting him pass 6th grade. However, eventually this is changed, and he does get to go to 7th grade.

Charlie ends up going to his dad's place for the summer. But he misses his girlfriend, Tyler. She insists that he write her every day. He's really nervous about this.

Chapter 6 talks about Charlie packing to go to visit his dad. His mom let him lead the way to show that she trusted him to be by himself. On the bus ride, Charlie pulls out paper and pencils and begins to draw, which is a way he can relax.

At the last station, Charlie gets out and looks for his dad. He can't find him and talks to a "help lady". This lady announces for Charlie's dad to come to where she is. Charlie gets a map, which is useless to Charlie. He finds out his hotel is 4 to 5 miles away. He decides to run the distance, but ends up walking.

There's a chapter about Charlie's problems finally finding the hotel. However, he also is too young to stay in a room alone. He gets a roommate, but they don't get along very well. There's also a chapter about Charlie's girlfriend, Tyler. She describes how their friendship started, which is fairly typical for a teenager.

In the chapter *Roommate* Charlie realizes he's going to be an intern for his dad. He describes his internship job. Chapter 13 continues with a description of Charlie's internship, and he finds that he's enjoying it quite a bit. He runs into a girl, Egypt, and expresses that he's sad that his dad isn't around to talk to. She then introduces him to another man saying, "Charlie here needs a man to talk to. His dad is a dead beat."

Charlie's job is in a theater and eventually it's suggested that he get a part in one of the plays. Roger, the man who befriended Charlie talks to his dad and encourages him to converse with his son. The dad ends up trying to convince Charlie to read a part, called a "table read". Charlie is

very scared to try and do this because of his problems with reading. He just knows that many of his friends don't understand.

Charlie decided to repaint the stage black, and this was an excellent way for him to free up his mind. The physical activity was a real relief for Charlie. Eventually, his friend, Egypt, convinced him that she knew he had a problem and encouraged him to talk about it. He decided he would tell her about his dyslexia. Egypt was very understanding and offered to help him by reading the lines in his script to him, thus giving him a chance to memorize them. When Roger gives the crew a lecture about what it means to be an actor, Charlie hopes that Egypt understood it all and that she can help him with the rules.

During the reading of the play, Egypt cued Charlie with silent motions which Charlie followed. He read his parts well during the 2 ½ hours of the reading time. Afterwards, Charlie's dad walks in and congratulates him saying, "Great job. Like a chip off the old block!"

Charlie doesn't want to tell anyone else about his dyslexia. However, Egypt tries to convince him to at least tell Roger. Charlie is quite annoyed and upset.

Charlie and Egypt both have gotten parts in the play. The next day, the play's writer is joining them and will be making changes. This causes Charlie to panic. When Roger tells him that he'll have new lines, his panic is doubled. Eventually Charlie decides to run home, and he screams at Roger. Roger was very understanding and said that he was going to stay sitting by Charlie until Charlie told him his problem.

Charlie ends up telling Roger that he is dyslexic, and Roger is amazed at how well he performs with this issue. Roger offers to read the new lines to Charlie, and they arrange a time when they can work on this.

Roger also begins to realize that alcohol is a real problem for Charlie's dad, Jack. He convinces Jack to go to a AAA meeting and Roger goes with him.

Egypt read Charlie a long list of famous people who have dyslexia and this begins a super discussion. Charlie was totally amazed that those people were famous, even though they also had dyslexia. The performance of the play went very well.

Charlie's roommate, Dylan, was jealous of Charlie. Eventually, they became friends. There's also a chapter about how Charlie changes the relationship he's had with his dad.

The end of the book made me as a reader feel so very happy for all the characters. This book discusses the impact of dyslexia on Charlie, as well as how he adjusts to interacting better with both adults and others his own age. It was valuable for Charlie to be able to tell some people that he had dyslexia.