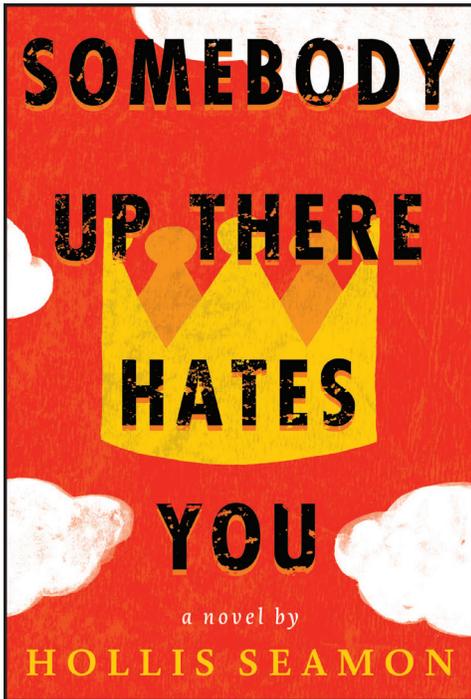


SOMEBODY UP THERE HATES YOU *by* HOLLIS SEAMON



**YOUNG ADULT
HARDCOVER FICTION**

On sale September 3, 2013

Ages 14 and up

\$16.95

256 pages, 5½ x 8¼

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BOOK TALK

Smart-mouthed and funny, and sometimes raunchy, seventeen-year-old Richard Casey is in most ways a typical teenager. Except Richie has cancer, and he's spending his final days in a hospice unit where the only other hospice resident under sixty is Sylvie. Lucky for Richie, Sylvie possesses a fiery spirit and a beauty that shines through even the grim lens of her disease. Over the course of several days on the hospice floor, a sweet relationship blossoms between them in perhaps the last place one would ever expect to see romantic love.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Caring for her own young son, author **HOLLIS SEAMON** spent years visiting a children's hospital, fascinated and touched by the young people she met there, who remained teenagers no matter how ill they were. *Somebody Up There Hates You* is her first novel for young adults. She lives in Kinderhook, New York.



Photo Credit: Teresa Rieder Photography

PRAISE FOR SOMEBODY UP THERE HATES YOU

★ "Even in hospice, a lot can happen in a short time . . . Being near death doesn't mean abandoning hope for the life that remains." —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "Each character is vividly drawn, with a sharp, memorable voice that readers will love and remember . . . A fresh, inspiring story." —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"Heartfelt . . . The language is raw and even profane at times, but hardly inappropriate given the circumstances . . . This novel is respectful of its serious subject matter, yet is an entertaining and heartening read." —*School Library Journal*

"I read *Somebody Up There Hates You* in one great rush. This novel is funny, harrowing, and wildly profane. It had me crying with laughter on one page and then just plain crying on another."

—Will Schwalbe, author of *The End of Your Life Book Club*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The book begins with an epigraph, this quotation from Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius: "Wait for death with a cheerful mind." What do you think of that philosophy? Do any of the characters embody it completely? Who has the most trouble embracing that attitude?
2. Richie calls his disease SUTHY Syndrome, an acronym for "Somebody Up There Hates You." What does this tell you about Richie's attitude toward his situation? About his sense of humor?
3. Why is Richie's nickname, "King Richard," significant? What do you think it says about how other people see Richie, how he sees himself, or the role he plays in the hospice?
4. Phil's drawings of the patients on Richie's floor are not exactly true -to- life. What might Phil be trying to depict in his illustrations? In what ways are his drawings realistic?
5. Why is Kelly-Marie an important character? In what ways does she help Richie?
6. Why does Sylvie believe that she'll get better, even in the face of terminal illness?
7. After Richie upsets Jeanette by staying out too late, Edward tells him, "You got to grow up, man." What does growing up mean in a context where Richie won't age much more at all? Do you think Richie grows up or changes at all over the few days in which the book takes place?
8. Richie's mom and Sylvie's dad have very different ways of dealing with their grief. How do these differences come across? How do you think their attitudes might affect their kids?
9. What do you make of the poker game scene? What does it tell you about the value of time in the hospice?
10. The end of the book is somewhat open-ended. Do you think it's a sad ending, or a hopeful one? Why?



Reader's Guide by Avery Finch

 ALGONQUIN YOUNG READERS

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