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*Tiny Infinities* by J. H. Diehl (review)

Karen Coats

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dame, and she remains a sympathetic and admirable character even as her story grows more shadowy. Josh, bitterly sacrificing his life in the face of his mother's incompetence and his stepfather's physical abuse, is no patsy but an honorable and haunted guy torn between his questioning impulses and his yearning for Chatham. While there's some foreshadowing of the outcome, the real pleasure is in unknitting the tangled skeins of the past, and readers won't have to follow every turn to enjoy the process. DS

**DIEHL, J. H.** *Tiny Infinities*. Chronicle, 2018 [360p]

ISBN 978-1-4521-6335-2 \$16.99

Reviewed from galleys

R Gr. 5-8

After fleeing her house while her father moves out, twelve-year-old Alice finds a little girl named Piper and saves her from being hit by a car. Upon their return, Piper's mother sees that Piper, who hasn't spoken since she was two and seems not to be able to hear either, responds well to Alice. That's how Alice gets a summer job as Piper's mother's helper. Alice also finds a new friend in Harriet, a quirky, hyperintelligent girl new to her swim team, and in Owen, Piper's older brother, both of whom help Alice tackle the mystery of Piper's as yet undiagnosed condition. While the innovative situations keep this plot moving, it's the character portrayals that shine. Alice starts off righteously angry at her adults and stays angry, figuring out ways to avoid confrontations but not shying away from them when they're unavoidable. Harriet and Owen seem at first to be merely distractions for Alice but ultimately mirror her discontent with adults who can't see their kids through their own haze of expectations and assumptions. All of this personal growth is seamlessly and subtly woven into a story that is as smoothly lyrical and full of ordinary wonder as it is realistic. KC

**DOAN, LISA** *Chadwick's Epic Revenge*; illus. by Natalie Andrewson. Roaring Brook, 2018 [288p]

Trade ed. ISBN 978-1-250-15409-5 \$16.99

E-book ed. ISBN 978-1-250-15410-1 \$9.99

Reviewed from galleys

Ad Gr. 4-6

Things may be looking up for newly minted sixth-grader Chadwick Musselman, since it looks like he's broken free of Terry Vance, the bully who's been tormenting him since first grade, and his plan to get closer to Jana Sedgewick by lurking at the peripheries of her social circle seems to be working. Soon, though, it all comes crashing down: Terry is assigned to Chadwick's class and he immediately befriends Jana; he successfully makes himself look sympathetic and Chadwick out to be the cruel and, perhaps, deranged one. This is played for high level hilarity with some underlying truth, but Doan's story isn't up to dealing with the undercurrents, awkwardly blurring the lines between mutual pranking and serious bullying. It's revealed that Chadwick started the conflict as a thoughtless, crayon-stealing first-grader but has refused to ever apologize, choosing instead to mock and demonize Terry for years. Still, Terry is no angel, and he actually does seem to be trying to psychologically break down his rival, even borrowing a book on gaslighting from the library. The battle of wits between the two boys is often cleverly narrated by Chadwick, and occasional black and white line drawings help readers visualize the comically crude pranks involving (fake) severed fingers and spoiled chicken salad,