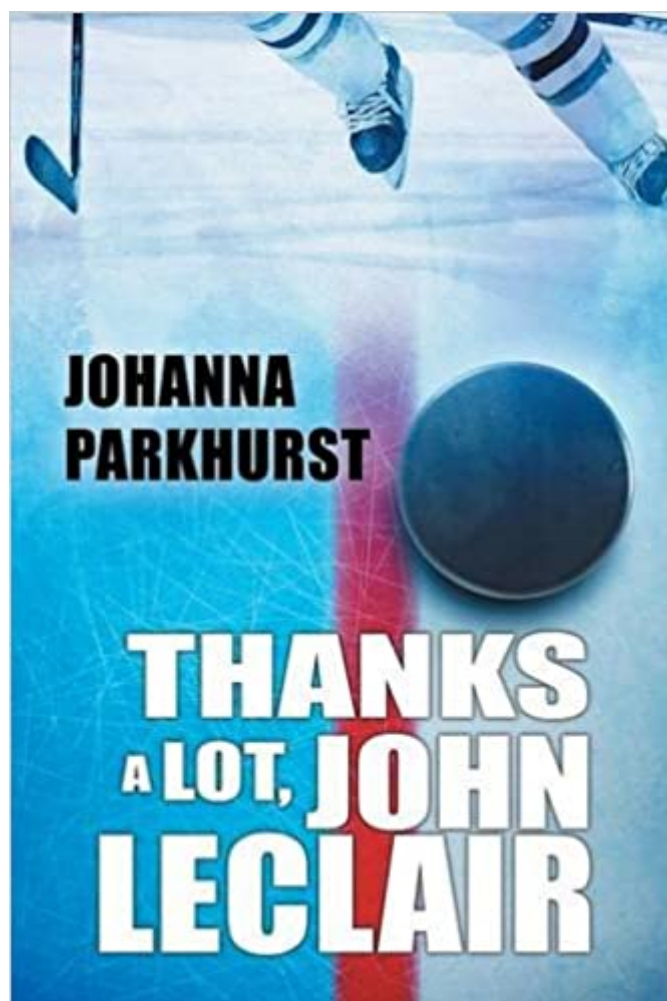


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# Thanks A Lot, John LeClair (Here's To You, Zeb Pike)



## Synopsis

A Companion to Here's to You, Zeb Pike On the surface, life looks pretty good for sixteen-year-old Emmitt LaPoint: he's popular, doing well in school, and he's poised to lead his small-town Vermont hockey team all the way to the state championship and that'll lead to attention from scouts. Emmitt might manage to follow in the footsteps of his hockey hero, John LeClair, who he's been secretly writing to for years. But beneath the perfect facade, Emmitt is struggling. All he wants is to hold on to the two things he loves: hockey and his boyfriend, Dusty. But Emmitt's absentee father has recently returned to breathe down his neck, and not everyone is eager to see him succeed. Few people in town know Emmitt is gay, and it's getting harder to stay in the closet. On top of everything, Dusty seems to be hiding his own secrets.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Johanna Parkhurst grew up on a small dairy farm in northern Vermont before relocating to the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. She spends her days helping teenagers learn to read and write and her evenings writing things she hopes they'll like to read. She strives to share stories of young adults who are as determined, passionate, and complex as the ones she shares classrooms with. Johanna holds degrees from Albertus Magnus College and Teachers College, Columbia University. She loves traveling, hiking, skiing, and yelling at the TV during football and hockey season.

Johanna picks up the Dusty and Emmitt shortly after where book 1 left off. In this book we witness events told through Emmitt. The drama hits full on around the 40 percent mark and we ride it to the end. Surprisingly for me, this book didn't have the same emotional stress that I experienced in book 1. I hope we're treated to a book 3. I'd love to read about Dusty and Emmitt navigate the obstacles laid out in this book. Beautiful writing and beautiful characters (except for Rick!). 4.4 for giving dad another chance.

Pretty fun, cute book with a lot of romance and hockey. :)

Great story!

Sweet book

Actual Rating: 3.5 stars. Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. Thanks a Lot, John LeClair was a very enjoyable read. Emmitt LaPoint is a boy who loves hockey and whose lifelong dream has been to become a professional hockey player, however he is gay and he feels that he can't be himself and have a future in the hockey world, so he decides to hide his relationship with his boyfriend, Dusty, which, obviously, leads to a lot of problems and that is what this book deals with. The characterization is good. If you have read the companion novel, Here's to you, Zeb Pike, you'd have met the characters already (if you haven't, this book fills you in on the major plot points and events of Here's To You so don't worry). I feel that they are tridimensional characters with their own personalities, ideas and flaws, they are very real teenagers. Emmitt is a boy who everyone thinks is perfect and The Golden Boy but, in reality, he is not and the pressure gets to him in the end just like it would with any teenager. I really liked that every chapter started with a letter to John LeClair (an NHL player who Emmitt admires) because we get to glimpse into Emmitt's mind growing up and thoughts during key moments of life, rather than having them as flashbacks stalling the plot. It was, also, very nice to read about events of Here's To You, Zeb Pike through Emmitt's eyes. I was interested in this book because of the hockey, I am a fan of sport and I thought that the games and description of plays were well executed. Kudos to Johanna! Since I am a hockey fan, I am aware of the problems regarding LGBTQ+ players in the NHL and Johanna dressed these problems well. Emmitt is scared of coming out because there is no precedent, he can't know how it would be to be an out NHL player because no one has come out. Yes, there are openly gay hockey players but none of them are related to the NHL. So how does

he know he'll be wanted by the league after his coming out? And as he wonders in the book, the You Can Play Project exists and the organizations within the league say that they will be fine with gay/bi/trans players but nobody is out, why? I believe that is has to do with the toxic masculinity of the sports world and how there are a lot of players who act, probably, homophobic in the locker room and use slurs on the ice (see Andrew Shaw's suspension last year), as well as the homophobic fans. However, this year it seems that the league is making a better effort of changing these attitudes (this month is Pride Month!!), so hopefully we will see some changes. All in all, the issues the book presents really hit home for me and I liked how they were dealt with. And Emmitt's coming out was done well! how he did it in his own terms before that he was forcibly outed to the whole world. I LOVED THAT (Emmitt, also, addresses VERY briefly racism within the his community, not only the hockey community). Here's a quote that hit me hard: "I think I might be gay. But gay guys can't be hockey players, right? I've never heard of a gay hockey player. Ever. So I guess I can't be gay. Because all I want to be is a hockey player." • Emmitt LaPoint, age 11 "It deals, as well, with an absent parent and forgiveness. The prose the book uses is very simple, so if you like books that use Big Words and metaphors and stuff, this is not the book for you. But it makes for a very light, fun and easy read. What i didn't like, though, is how the narrative was repetitive at times, for example, Emmitt would say that X thing was better than the first time he did A, B, C and D. Then, a few chapters later, he'd say that he got angry and how he was angrier than the time D happened or Z or Y, and this type of comparisons would be used again and again and again. Throughout the book, Emmitt mentions events that happened in the other book and it was kind of annoying, but that's probably just me, as i read Here's To You and then immediately started this one. And, yes, I know that this is done so that the people who haven't read the other story, won't get confused. Overall, this was a really nice and light read. And I really enjoyed it!

\*A copy of this book was provided for free by the author in exchange for an honest review.\* First things first, I think you should definitely read Here's to You, Zeb Pike first. You won't be lost, but I think things will make more sense. You'll understand Dusty a lot better and you'll get the whole Rick thing more. I loved reading about Dusty and Emmitt. They felt like actual people, not just how people think teens are. I felt for them. I liked that the romance was age appropriate, they are 14 & 16 yr olds who just like each other. It's sweet and cute. I wasn't crazy about Emmitt's dad, I don't really forgive absentee parents, but as the book continued I started to soften and think he just didn't know how to be a decent present dad, but he loved them. I love Casey (Kind of wondering if in 10-15

years, he'll end up with Dusty's little brother). I loved the letters, was hoping Emmitt would meet John again, but hey, it's better that his idea of him doesn't get tainted and Alek was great.) The hockey was fine, I'm not a fan of the sport, but I like it in books. I really loved Emmitt's relationship with his mother and her pride in him. I'm not thrilled with how the plot with Rick was resolved. GO TO COACH. I don't like the idea of 2 teen girls doing what they did and it being treated as OKAY and ADMIRABLE. It was disgusting and over the line. Getting someone drunk so you can recorded them doing sexual acts(even if the acts didn't end up happening, it was their plan) is never okay, especially a minor. I don't care if the person is a jerk blackmailing your friend. I wish there had been some kind of punishment or talk about how that is HORRIBLE when Jack found out. That aside, I loved this duology, and recommend it for anyone looking for realistic, appropriate YA.

I'm not always a fan of companion novels because they are often the same story from another character's perspective. This book is fantastic and stands well on its own. I loved reading more about Emmitt and learning about his background. Emmitt's problems are realistic and genuine; readers will be able to relate to him and feel for him as if he's their friend. Parkhurst does a great job creating characters that talk and act like real teenagers. This book has enough action and romance to keep readers hooked. I personally love hockey and was really into those scenes, but there aren't so many that it would turn off readers who don't like sports.

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