Steven Herrick, By the River.

By the River is a book that takes place in the past about a boy named Harry Hodby, who has lived through tragic floods that have taken the lives of his best friend Linda and his own mother. Harry oddly was named after Harry Houdini “the escape artist” mainly because Harry has found so many ways to get out of trouble in the town. The novel starts out after the flood and has random flashbacks throughout the book about the flood. Harry talks about how his house is ugly and scary on the outside, but loving and caring on the inside because of all of the memories. Harry has a younger brother named Keith. He is always getting into mischief with him. Every first Sunday of the month, Harry, Keith and their dad will visit their mom’s grave to talk to her.

Harry falls in love with Miss Spencer, the secretary of his school. One day while walking past someone’s house, he sees Miss Spencer through the window kissing someone else. He throws a rock through the window. He runs home as fast as he can run. Luckily, they never find out it was him.

Throughout the book, Harry always dreams of running from town, mainly because so many bad things have happened. But as the book progresses Harry stops focusing on the bad and starts seeing the good! For example, when Harry starts talking o a new girl in class, or when he makes peace with his arch rival Johnny Barlow.

Linda Mahony was Harry’s best friend. A flood came through town and drowned Linda. Harry has spent the time since then trying to figure out how she could have possibly been drowned. Harry never finds out how Linda drowned, but he learned how to deal with his feelings and live his life to the fullest.

I thought this book was pretty good. One reason I liked it was because it was that written in poetry form. It was a little harder to understand because it was written out like this, but it was also an easier read because of this. I would give this book a 7/10.

The book had some interesting Australian dialect. For example, I liked the author’s use of words like pounds and schilling for money terms. Unfortunately, that was as far as interesting went for me. I think this book was kind of dull. Any action or climactic part was short and not as interesting as in most books. If you like books that are calm and serene, this is your book.

To me the book was like a rollercoaster for younger kids. It had some ups and downs and little twists, but the setting stayed mostly the same throughout the book. Even though the book contained a little bit of a mystery surrounding how Linda Mahony drowned in the flood, it wasn’t enough for me to give it a “ten” review.

Throughout the book Harry questions what Linda was doing before she died, why she was where she was when she drowned, and things he missed doing with her. All in all, the book By the River was fairly good.Harry HHH