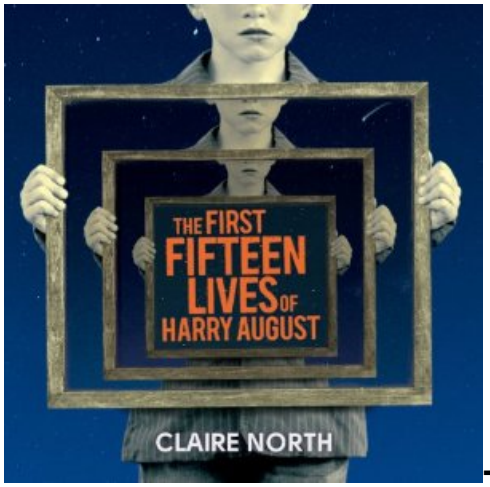
The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August – Book Review



The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August, written by Claire North, is one of those books that I was totally intrigued by and excited to read because it seemed right up my alley. But it was also one of those books that didn't quite meet my expectations. A friend kindly gifted the audiobook to me because she, quite rightly, knew it is the type of book I enjoy. It is definitely not a bad book, and I have heard many people rave about it (though at the same time there are a lot of reviews on Goodreads describing it as a book that is a chore to get through, which sadly, I agree with). I think I listened to it at the wrong time as I was busy and doing other things and feeling flustered. Maybe it is too detailed a book to enjoy when I was not giving my full attention. On that note, I might suggest you read it rather than listen to it, unless you are in a situation where you can focus on it.

The blurb on Goodreads:

No matter what he does or the decisions he makes, when death comes, Harry always returns to where he began, a child with all the knowledge of a life he has already lived a dozen times before. Nothing ever changes.
Until now.

As Harry nears the end of his eleventh life, a little girl appears at his bedside. ‘I nearly missed you, Doctor August,’ she says. ‘I need to send a message.’
This is the story of what Harry does next, and what he did before, and how he tries to save a past he cannot change and a future he cannot allow.

This is a story revolving around Harry, who discovers after his first death that he returns to life each time he dies. As you can imagine, this creates a complex narrative involving the relationships, experiences, emotions and opinions that Harry has. It is an interesting plot, and is written well. However, I did find it to be quite tedious and by the end, I was just willing it all to stop and a meaning behind it to be revealed! It was interesting to see what things change or stay the same in each of Harry’s lives, and to contemplate how big an impact just a small difference could make, and vice versa. There was some good tension built in some parts, and there was definitely a lot of intrigue.

I do have mixed feelings about this book. However, I do recommend it if the blurb interests you. Although it wasn’t the best book I have read recently, it was not bad. There are some books I haven’t enjoyed and wouldn’t recommend, but this one I think lots of people will think is great, even though I did not love it (I did like it though!!). Give it a go!

My rating is 3/5 stars.