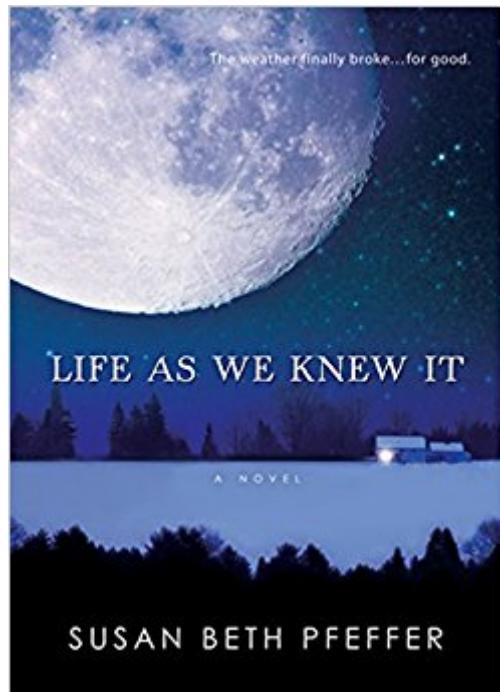


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# Life As We Knew It



## Synopsis

I guess I always felt even if the world came to an end, McDonald's still would be open. High school sophomore Miranda's disbelief turns to fear in a split second when an asteroid knocks the moon closer to Earth, like "one marble hits another." The result is catastrophic. How can her family prepare for the future when worldwide tsunamis are wiping out the coasts, earthquakes are rocking the continents, and volcanic ash is blocking out the sun? As August turns dark and wintery in northeastern Pennsylvania, Miranda, her two brothers, and their mother retreat to the unexpected safe haven of their sunroom, where they subsist on stockpiled food and limited water in the warmth of a wood-burning stove. Told in a year's worth of journal entries, this heart-pounding story chronicles Miranda's struggle to hold on to the most important resource of all—hope—in an increasingly desperate and unfamiliar world. An extraordinary series debut! Susan Beth Pfeffer has written several companion novels to *Life As We Knew It*, including *The Dead and the Gone*, *This World We Live In*, and *The Shade of the Moon*.

## Book Information

Series: Last Survivors (Book 1)

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (May 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152061541

ISBN-13: 978-0152061548

Product Dimensions: 5 x 1 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 799 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #8,995 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > New Experiences #17 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Being a Teen #21 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emotions & Feelings

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

It's almost the end of Miranda's sophomore year in high school, and her journal reflects the busy life of a typical teenager: conversations with friends, fights with mom, and fervent hopes for a driver's

license. When Miranda first begins hearing the reports of a meteor on a collision course with the moon, it hardly seems worth a mention in her diary. But after the meteor hits, pushing the moon off its axis and causing worldwide earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanoes, all the things Miranda used to take for granted begin to disappear. Food and gas shortages, along with extreme weather changes, come to her small Pennsylvania town; and Miranda's voice is by turns petulant, angry, and finally resigned, as her family is forced to make tough choices while they consider their increasingly limited options. Yet even as suspicious neighbors stockpile food in anticipation of a looming winter without heat or electricity, Miranda knows that that her future is still hers to decide even if life as she knew it is over. Veteran author Susan Beth Pfeffer, who penned the young adult classic *The Year Without Michael* over twenty years ago, makes a stunning comeback with this haunting book that documents one adolescent's journey from self-absorbed child to selfless young woman. Teen readers won't soon forget this intimate story of survival and its subtle message about the treasuring the things that matter most—family, friendship, and hope.--Jennifer Hubert --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Grade 6-8  
Pfeffer tones down the terror, but otherwise crafts a frighteningly plausible account of the local effects of a near-future worldwide catastrophe. The prospect of an asteroid hitting the Moon is just a mildly interesting news item to Pennsylvania teenager Miranda, for whom a date for the prom and the personality changes in her born-again friend, Megan, are more immediate concerns. Her priorities undergo a radical change, however, when that collision shifts the Moon into a closer orbit, causing violent earthquakes, massive tsunamis, millions of deaths, and an upsurge in volcanism. Thanks to frantic preparations by her quick-thinking mother, Miranda's family is in better shape than many as utilities and public services break down in stages, wild storms bring extremes of temperature, and outbreaks of disease turn the hospital into a dead zone. In Miranda's day-by-day journal entries, however, Pfeffer keeps nearly all of the death and explicit violence offstage, focusing instead on the stresses of spending months huddled in increasingly confined quarters, watching supplies dwindle, and wondering whether there will be any future to make the effort worthwhile. The author provides a glimmer of hope at the end, but readers will still be left stunned and thoughtful. --John Peters, New York Public Library Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Every now and then a person needs a good disaster movie or book. I've yet to figure out why. I think

it is watching how predictable those in charge cause even more problems and how the human spirit can rise to the occasion in spite of everything. By the way, this one doesn't have zombies. Imagine that! I bought this Kindle book and its Audible companion quite a few years ago and just forgot about it. I don't know what brought it to mind now, but I am glad I found it again. Not only is the story engaging from the very beginning, Emily Bauer's narration keeps it all alive. I love that this particular disaster stays rather calm in the crises as the mother tries to get her family prepared and she fiercely protects them. The story starts with a family that is probably as familiar as our own, divorce included. It shows how love is still there even where the living together failed. And the children of this break up are not less well off, just different. As the world becomes spread out because of the lack of working communication devices, the daughter keeps her diary going. It is through her communications with herself that we learn the story of life after the meteor hit the moon and causes tidal waves, earthquakes, volcanos and more. The global mess becomes personal as this teen tries to adjust from boys and kisses and proms to washing the laundry by hand and staving off hunger. I highly recommend this book. There was a lot to learn here for all of us.

This series is crazy! I love post apocalyptic books and this one was no exemption. It had a unique version of the apocalypse. Instead of zombies or aliens, the moon moved closer to the earth and wreaked havok upon the weather and sea. This series really evoked the panic, the desperation, the misery, the loss, and the fight to keep going. The emotions were so powerful and beautifully written. The characters were relatable and their situations kept you hooked. I would highly recommend this series.

I liked this dystopian novel because it has a different perspective. The main character Miranda lives with her two brothers and divorced mother. It's refreshing to see the mother as the head of the household, stockpiling food and creating the survival plan.

A simple but well-executed apocalypse story, *Life As We Knew It* doubles down on its worm's eye view of the end of the world. Miranda, the teenager whose journal entries make up this story of life in a small Pennsylvania town after an asteroid collides with the moon and moves it closer to Earth, goes through much of the book talking to no one but her family, and we get little detail about what's happening to most of the planet - her world has shrunk to her own four walls, and she barely knows what's happening to her neighbors, let alone other countries. This choice to keep our characters realistically under-informed, rather than give in to the temptation to paint a broader picture for the

reader with information someone in our narrator's position most likely wouldn't have, is typical of the book. Pfeffer is committed to telling a small, well-thought out and painstakingly detailed story of survival and loss, not making a big-budget thriller. The biggest threats to Miranda and her family aren't thousand-foot high tidal waves or marauding gangs of punks on motorcycles - they are starvation, freezing to death, the chimney getting backed up and smoke from the woodstove suffocating them in their sleep. And they're all the more frightening for it. If you're looking for a YA story where our main character finds the hero within them and rises up to change the world for the better, this isn't it. Miranda spends most of the story scrambling to survive, getting weaker and weaker even as she finds an ability to persevere you wouldn't know she had from her pre-apocalypse self. It's intensely bleak, and (view spoiler) But if you'd like a tale about how to survival the impossible from an authentically teenage perspective, this book is worth your time. Downgraded for being at times painfully repetitive - thematically appropriate, we experience the family's decline as slowly as they do, but the book does drag on. Miranda's voice also rings true, but the choice to stick with a recognizably often selfish and not necessarily insightful or central to the action teenage narrator can and does take away some of the depth of the journey.

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