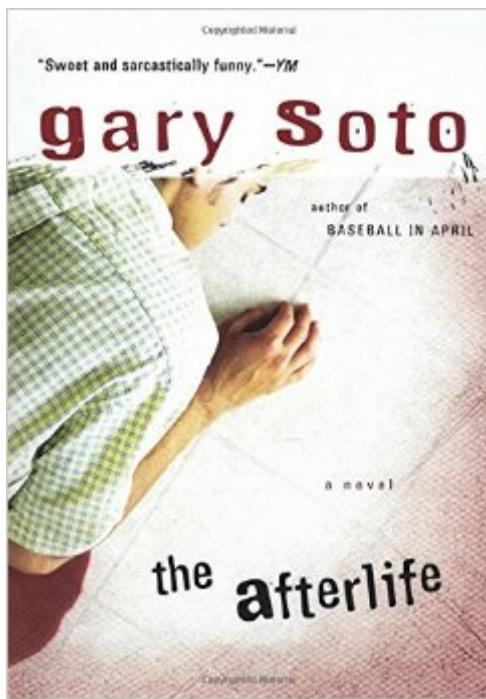


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# The Afterlife



## Synopsis

You'd think a knife in the ribs would be the end of things, but for Chuy, that's when his life at last gets interesting. He finally sees that people love him, faces the consequences of his actions, finds in himself compassion and bravery . . . and even stumbles on what may be true love. A funny, touching, and wholly original story by one of the finest authors writing for young readers today.

## Book Information

Paperback: 168 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (April 1, 2005)

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ISBN-10: 0152052208

ISBN-13: 978-0152052201

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.5 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (45 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #239,616 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 inÂ  Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Horror > United States #280 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Death & Dying #356 inÂ  Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Death & Dying

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Although I find *\_The Afterlife\_* to be a somewhat mediocre (if unique) book, I have had several students in my classes read this and respond with much enthusiasm. It is important to keep in mind that adults are not the target audience here, and there is something that really grabs the interest of male adolescent readers, at least those in my classes who have read this book. As a teacher of often reluctant readers, I am always keeping my eyes open for interesting new books, not just from lists of recommended reading, but by seeking input from my students as well. This is how I was first introduced to *\_The Afterlife\_* by Gary Soto. One of my students read the book and began to recommend it to others. After reading *\_The Afterlife\_*, many students have responded that it is one of the best, if not the best book they have ever read. Several students read the book, then I decided it was time to read it for myself. I was disappointed. However, after reflecting, I could see the appeal for my students. In order to attempt to define the appeal, I need to explain the basic plot. The main

character, Chuy, a young Latino, is stabbed and killed after complimenting another teenager's yellow shoes. His spirit leaves his body, and his spirit slowly begins to pass into the next world. However, he is still able to move around and observe his world without being seen. Along the way, he meets a young lady who has also left her body and become a spirit. If all of this sounds fantastic, it is, but although it can be unusual, Soto never lets his book become sensational. I believe the reason this novel holds the interest of my students is that it focuses on one of the deepest desires of teenagers: the desire to stand back and analyze their world without the world looking back at them, the desire to do good things without considering "image" or the disapproval of their peers, the desire to establish a relationship with a member of the opposite sex without the discomfort of their own body always getting in the way. In fact, although Chuy seems like a good guy before his death, he is better able to define his world, does some of his kindest acts, and forms more meaningful relationships after. By the time we are adults, most of us have established a certain balance in our lives. It only stands to reason that a book like *The Afterlife* appeals less to adults than those who are in the midst of a time in their lives that can seem very unbalanced at times. I give this book four stars based on the average between the three it would receive from me and the five it would receive from my students if they were writing this review.

The book that I read was titled: "The Afterlife" by Gary Soto. It has 158 pages. It's about a high school boy named Jesus, but everyone just calls him Chuy. As you've probably guessed, he dies in the first chapter. The book is about him wandering around as a ghost. I'll bet you're wondering about how he dies. Well, he dies in a bathroom, inside a night club, when he tells this guy, who was wearing yellow shoes, that he likes his shoes. The guy then stabbed him. Yeah, I know. pretty dumb way to die, huh? First, he goes to his parent's house. They were mourning his death. After this, he wonders around Fresno, California. Hey, guess who he sees! He sees the man in yellow shoes. You know, the guy who killed him. So, he does what anyone in his situation would do. He scares the crap out of him. The next thing he does is he goes to his girl friend's house, and as you can imagine, she was very upset with his death. It's here that he realizes that he's slowly vanishing. His feet have already become stumps! After this, he travels down the street, where he spots a girl who is also dead. She has just died. So, Chuy shows her the ropes of being dead, like how to float and other things that ghosts do. He was also kind of showing off. He finds out that her name is Chrystal. When they first meet, he notices that his hands have already started to disappear. Chuy says he has some stuff to straighten out, so they decide to meet there the next day. The next day, he finds out more about his murderer. Later, he also finds out a lot more about Chrystal, like how and why she

died, and how both of them are connected. What will he find out about the man with the yellow shoes? How did Chrystal die? What will happen to Chuy? Well, if you want to find out, you'll just have to read it. I would definatley recommended this book. I enjoyed reading it. I think it would be an excellent addition to almost any library.

I love this story...It talks about a boy who was stabbed and died in a nightclub and how his experience with "the afterlife" affected him...I don't know if some of the facts in this book are real but I was almost killed one night and experience some of the events that happened in this book...I love it! Great author also...love the way he expresses himself and the specific details...makes you feel like you're actually there!!! I definitely recommend this book from ages 14+...Great book...better in hardcover!

Growing up, i always feared death. At night, i would get on my boney, scraggly knees and beg my parents to let me sleep in thier bedroom. Even the thought of dieing and not knowing what would happen after that made me toss and turn all night.In Afterlife by Gary Soto, we learn about Chuy, but only after hes dead. On the second page, Chuy gets stabbed my a misunderstanding and finds himself hovering over his bleeding lifeless body.But the book is more than that. It shows how Chuy realizes that his life only begins when it is acually over. He finds that he cares about everyone that he has ever met with passion. And it tells how he finds the love of his life, well....afterlife, Crystal.This book helped me understand that death is whatever you want it to be, and that in death, there is no fear, only serenity.

I bought these books to help out a class in need. The students enjoyed the story and the lessons taught in the story. It's a book about compassion and a lesson about how short life can be, this the importance to be productive and loving.

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