



*The Difference Between You and Me* by Madeleine George  
Reviewed by Fadila



Stand Alone, Young Adult, Realistic, Queer, Contemporary

### **Give a summary without spoilers!**

Told between two perspectives, *The Difference Between You and Me* is the story of two high schoolers, Jesse and Emily, who couldn't be more different. Jesse is more of a unique individual, posting manifestos all over the school, wearing whatever she wants, and breaking school rules. Emily is on student council, popular, and with the 'perfect' boyfriend. But every Tuesday they meet in the library's bathrooms to make out. Jesse is openly gay, but Emily is closeted, leading them to leave their relationship a secret. Both Jesse and Emily want to make a difference, often getting involved in community matters and taking things into their own hands. But what they're fighting for is where the difference lies. When Emily gets involved in something that Jesse has been fighting against, their relationship is thrown into jeopardy. *The Difference Between You and Me* is a story of two opposing views fighting for compromise.

### **What drew you to this book?**

I was drawn to *The Difference Between You and Me* because I haven't read a whole lot of queer novels. I also really enjoy books where the characters have opposing views, and the lines between who's the villain and who's the hero get blurred. Any story that handles modern issues and involves bashing large corporations instantly gets my attention.

### **Did it remind you of something that you've previously read?**

This book is truly one of a kind. Although it covers many situations I recognized as a reader, I have never read a book that handled issues such as the dangers of large corporations, hidden relationships, and contrasting differences in character, like *The Difference Between You and Me*.

### **To whom would you recommend this book?**

I would recommend *The Difference Between You and Me* to anyone who enjoys realistic novels with realistic outlook endings. This book did not have the ending I was expecting, but a lot of people might enjoy it more than I did. The book is marketed as YA, but I would suggest it to people 13 or older. Anyone looking for a unique reflection of life vs. a

more high reaching reflection of life should read this book. It is a Queer book, but that doesn't mean it's just limited to just Queer readers, allies should also take the time to read this book.

**Overall, did you like it and would you recommend it to others?**

At first, I was really enjoying the plot. I thought I was reading a happily-ever-after comfort book. But as I was getting towards the last 1/3 of the book, I realized the ending was the complete opposite of what I had previously expected. As the plot progressed, and the character's personalities were being built, I found that Emily, while her intentions were mostly good, annoyed me. In my opinion, she seemed greedy, small minded, and two-sided. Her character remains stagnant and unchanging, whereas Jesse evolves into someone new. I almost wish that there was a second book to give me the ending I wanted, but that would mean dealing with Emily again, and I don't know if I can take that. I think I would recommend this book to others just so I can get into heated conversations over the plot and characters. Even though I didn't like the ending, I still believe that *The Difference Between You and Me* was worth reading.

**Anything else that you would like to add to this review? What made you choose it? Did you like the cover? Was it recommended to you? Did you find it at the library?**

I am a huge fan of the cover of *The Difference Between You and Me*. I feel like it gives a summary of the book. Especially after having read the book, it feels almost like a warning. The simplicity of the two different kinds of shoes represents so much more than just the style differences between Jesse and Emily.