



Boy 21 by Matthew Quick

Reviewed by Ariella



Fiction, *Boy21* is not part of a series (but if it was, I would definitely read the whole thing!)

Give a summary without spoilers!

Boy21 by Matthew Quick is about Finley, a high school basketball player in a heavy-spirited town, whose life changes when he meets *Boy21*, an unusual teammate who believes he is from outer space. As they slowly bond over basketball and find common interest, their friendship allows both of them to confront their internal struggles and find hope. *Boy21* is a moving exploration of resilience, friendship, and finding the courage to grow.

What drew you to this book?

The combination of sports, mystery, and emotional themes all contribute to the uniqueness of the story. The way that the novel explores friendship and how beneficial it is to have some kind of friendship with characters who feel real and vulnerable, really adds to the immersion of the book. Another part of the book that drew me in was Matthew Quick's writing style. It is so engaging that it makes it so easy to get invested in the lives of the characters and the challenges they face.

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

Boy21 shares some similar themes with *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky and *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. Like *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, it goes deep into the emotional lives of teenagers who are dealing with trauma and identity and exploring the healing power of friendship. *The Outsiders* has a similar sense of loyalty, resilience, and struggle inside of a tough environment.

To whom would you recommend this book?

Readers who enjoy stories about personal growth, overcoming adversity, and the power of connection will enjoy *Boy21*. Anybody who enjoys sports fiction or plot twists will also find this novel interesting. Additionally, readers who see basketball as more than just a game but instead a path to self-discovery may enjoy *Boy21*.

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

Boy21 is such a beautifully written exploration of life as a teen dealing with trauma and navigating through this life. The authenticity of the characters and friendships that bring them together makes you never want to put the book down. The emotional depth of the book is not something that is seen often in novels which adds to the uniqueness of the book.

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?

Boy21 was a summer reading requirement for me in seventh grade and now that I am in twelfth grade I still refer back to it when I am writing essays relating to similar themes from the novel. As a person who does not enjoy sports, I thought that I would dislike the book (don't judge a book by its cover) but I was pleasantly surprised when the whole book was not just about basketball and sports terms that I do not understand. The cover of the book was also something that drew me in when I was picking it out. The cover is a perfect representation of what exactly goes on in the book.