

Friends with Boys

Faith Erin Hicks

Reviewed by: Anika 17

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Maggie's been homeschooled for most of her life by her mother, so she's terrified when it's time for her to start high school. She looks to her older brothers and father for moral support only to find that they've got their own problems to deal with. Her father is being promoted to town's new police chief and her brothers are in a bit of a feud with each other. Even with her rough start, Maggie manages to make her first few real friends, Lucy and Alistair, both of whom are a bit of an outcast at school. Together they form a relationship that makes Maggie feel more welcome in her scary freshman year, eating lunch together and hanging out. Maggie goes about her school days with her new friends and finding a few enemies along the way. Her brothers do try to look out for her, but she continues to struggle with the departure of her mother and the strange ghostly lady that haunts her everywhere she goes.

I wasn't expecting Friends with Boys to take me by storm. I went in thinking this would be a typical coming of age high school novel, but that isn't all of what happened and thank goodness for that. This well written and illustrated graphic novel was an absolutely relatable and riveting read! Erin Hicks does an amazing job conveying the emotions on every page with her artwork. Her characters were very unique and beaming with personality, so much so that I could believe they were real. I liked the characters to the point I literally wanted to jump into this book myself to interact with them! I guess that really goes to show the power Faith Erin Hick has with realistic writing. The whole family dynamic I saw in Friends with Boys was quite also something I have to say. It's well developed and occasionally gets you in your feels. It's heartwarming to see Maggie learn to let go of the past and grow to accept her family and friends as they are. I also really enjoyed the subplot with the ghost as it definitely gave the novel a sweet supernatural twist.

Friends with Boys does have a few red flags to watch out for. Some of the older characters use some swear words and bad language, which thankfully is not a pervasive element of the story. A violent encounter also makes an appearance, a fistfight, but that is the only instance of violence to be found. And as for overall criticism, I do feel a few questions were left unanswered, especially regarding the whole situation with Maggie's mother and the ghost. The title is also a bit misleading, but that's something I didn't mind too much. For these reasons, I would recommend this novel for readers 11 years and up. Friends with Boys would make a great gift for fans of high school stories and teenage readers.

Recommended Titles:

Comics Will Break Your Heart by Faith Erin Hicks

The Nameless City by Faith Erin Hicks

Pumpkinheads by Rainbow Rowell and Faith Erin Hicks

Nothing Can Possibly Go Wrong by Prudence Shen and Faith Erin Hicks

The Adventure of Superhero Girl by Faith Erin Hicks