

Beast

Brie Spangler

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“Beast” revolves around a 15-year-old boy named Dylan who finds himself in therapy, after falling off his roof trying to get a football. Dylan isn’t a typical teen since he’s over six feet tall and covered in hair. His best friend, JP, has been there since first grade, protecting him from bullies with his good looks and popularity. This all changes when Dylan meets Jamie, a beautiful transgender woman, in therapy. Soon after, Dylan is questioning everything, including his sexuality, his friends, his feelings, and even his relationship between his mother and deceased father. This book covers the complicated emotions of being a teenager, finding love, and even overcoming one’s fears and insecurities.

This book was so real and honest, showing readers the true pain Dylan, JP, and Jamie all faced. I loved how raw Dylan’s emotions were. Never once did I feel like I couldn’t understand how he felt. The book is lacking a better perspective from JP, though. Understanding how Dylan and Jamie felt were easy to comprehend, but JP’s story was hidden away from the audience. I wanted to know why JP did the things he did, and why he didn’t rely on others except for Dylan. Other than that, the book was very well-written. The vulnerability Dylan had when he was in the basement was so tear-jerking. Even Jamie had several moments of vulnerability, which made the characters even more realistic and believable.

I feel this book is geared for teenagers fourteen and older since it does have an intimate scene between Dylan and Jamie. It isn’t too graphic or explicit, but it should just be noted before reading. I would say this book is more of a get-it-for-yourself kind of book, since not every teenager would be interested in reading romance/drama. I would highly recommend it for older teens since this book is an eye-opener to problems. This book is all about supporting teens who are a part of the LGTQ+ community or discovering their true selves. “Beast” covers the emotional stress that teens are put through, and is very thorough on the daily problems that LGBTQ+ teens feel.

Recommended Titles:

All the Bright Places by Jennifer Niven

Simen vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli

What If It’s Us by Adam Silvera and Becky Albertalli