

Spliced

Jon McGoran

Reviewed by: Anika 17

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Sixteen-year-old Jimi has been best friends with her neighbor, Del, ever since they were children. She had always been there for him whenever his abusive father struck out, but something changed in Del. He's become obsessed with chimeras (ki-mir-as), people with animal DNA spliced into theirs. The government and a number of people are fearful of such "inhumane" activity and are desperate to declare every chimera a nonperson. Soon enough, Del disappears after one final straw with his father to become one of them. It completely turns Jimi's life upside down. She sets off to save Del from making a horrible decision. As she searches the ends of the earth for her best friend, Jimi will learn what it finally means to be human and utterly change everything we had ever imagined.

Spliced is such an action-packed and thought provoking read. It's full of shocking twists and turns that definitely kept me on my toes. I really enjoyed the world building of the Spliced and the strange abandoned "zurbs" that pepper the area the book takes place in. McGoran goes so far to develop a history and the people's understanding of Chimeras. There's an entire political atmosphere around the idea of splicing DNA. With groups like Humans for Humanity against chimeras and Earth for Everyone supporting them. Even the characters have some kind of backstory and past with chimeras during their childhood. The bigger overall theme that drew to me though was the concept of human nature and what it means to be human. I feel that was a recurring theme throughout this book that would make any reader stop to think for a moment. McGoran's novel would make for great discussion knowing how it touches on all these different societal issues.

Spliced does have a few things to look out for. There is violence that occurs amongst H4Hers, chimeras, and more. Bloody deaths and gunshots are an aspect of this story. Characters also use vulgar language in charged moments especially in verbal abuse and name calling against the Chimeras. Tense situations arise out of the discrimination Chimeras face as well, which can be upsetting for some readers. In terms of romance, there are relationships among some of the characters. A few kisses are exchanged and nothing much more major than that is present. I do question the scientific accuracy of the concepts McGoran integrates in his story, but that could be a good jumping off point for readers to research more about DNA and biology. For these reasons, I would recommend this novel for readers 12 years and up. Spliced would make a great gift for fans of science fiction and adventure!

Recommended Titles:

Splintered by Jon McGoran (Spliced #2)

Spiked by Jon McGoran (Spliced #3)

All the Wind in the World by Samantha Mabry

Archivist Wasp by Nicole Kornher-Stace

Aurora Rising by Amie Kaufman