

Guantanamo Boy

Anna Perera

Reviewed by: Ryan Eng, 15

Star TeenBook Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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“Guantanamo Boy” is a realistic fiction novel based off of true stories and real-life experiences all combined together to create one story to tell the stories of many. It follows the life of 15-year old Khalid Ahmed, a British Muslim who lives a very normal life in the town of Rochdale. This all changes when his family decides to take a rare trip to Pakistan to visit family that the children (Khalid and his two sisters) have never met. They go to stay with them in the city of Karachi and this is where Khalid’s life will be flipped upside-down and changed forever.

It all starts when Khalid’s father mysteriously goes missing, becoming fearful, the family sends out Khalid to attempt to find him. Khalid runs into an Al Qaeda demonstration (unbeknownst to him) and because of this amongst many other factors (most are made-up), he will soon be abducted from the home that he’s staying at in the middle of the night under terrorist charges (also unknown to him at the time).

From here the book goes on to detail his terrible life spent in captivity, in prisons, in torture, and more. All of this is being done to get a fake confession out of Khalid telling the U.S. government that he’s a terrorist with plans to bomb large cities like London so that they can arrest him, which eventually will happen as they torture him to his breaking point.

This book was very eye-opening for me and I would recommend it to almost anyone to read, maturity allowing (11 and up). Details of torture means that younger readers may not be comfortable reading the novel, although these details greatly enhance the book. It’s very engaging and difficult to put down and to repeat myself, extremely eye-opening.

Recommended Titles

“Night”- Elie Wiesel

“All American Boys”- Jason Reynolds

“The Guantánamo Lawyers: Inside a Prison Outside the Law”- Mark Denbeaux