

Finding Audrey

Sophie Kinsella

Reviewed by: Alyssa Li, 15

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

www.bethestaryouare.org

Finding Audrey is about a 14 year old girl named Audrey Horner who suffers from depression and social anxiety. After her parents find out about the bullying Audrey faces at school, they withdraw her from school and she is sent to weekly therapy sessions with her psychologist. Audrey lives in a bubble, only staying within her household and interacting with her family and therapist. She finds it difficult to engage in new relationships as her fight or flight mentality takes over whenever she encounters any novel situations. However, when her brother's friend Linus accidentally enters her room one day, she realizes that she has a crush. Linus reciprocates the feelings and they begin a romance through paper notes.

Audrey continues to undergo therapy with her psychologist until one day, she abruptly decides to stop taking her medication and decides to visit her former bully. Everyone, including Linus and her family, disagree with the decision because of the fear it could trigger her and pose a setback to her progress so far. Despite this, she visits anyway and her family/Linus prove to be right, as she experiences an anxiety attack and walks to a park, where she falls asleep accidentally for the night. falls asleep at her former tormentor triggers symptoms of her mental illnesses, including an anxiety attack. In an attempt to soothe herself, Audrey takes a walk to the park where she falls asleep. After a frantic night and search for her, her family eventually discovers Audrey at the park and they recover together. Through the incident, Audrey realizes that everyone's healing process looks different and that no matter how small, every step of progress is meaningful.

This book was very enjoyable to read because of the family dynamics that the author creates. Audrey's mother is an avid *Daily Mail* fan who can be infuriatingly fussy at times, but also humorous and lovable. Audrey's dad is less hands-on and prefers to watch *Downton Abbey*. Audrey's older brother is addicted to a video game which causes many arguments with his mom. What I didn't like about the book was its lack of focus at times. Sometimes, the focus on Frank's video game addiction seemed to overshadow Audrey's story. Furthermore, the incident which first triggered Audrey's illnesses is always left a mystery. The book tiptoes around this incident and the issue with the school never taking control of it, but never actually addresses it. I recommend this to readers who are 10+ years old. The book may be either purchased or borrowed from the library.

Recommended titles:

Wedding Night by Sophia Kinsella

Paper Towns by John Green

Lola and The Boy Next Door by Stephanie Perkins