

Book Title: Ghost Boys

Author: Jewell Parker Rhodes

Reviewed by: Daniel Arun Santhosh, 13

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

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“I’d barely turned, sprinting. *Pow, pow*. Two bullets. Legs gave way. I fell flat. Hard. I hit snowy ground.”

Ghost Boys is a novel about a black twelve-year-old boy, Jerome, who is shot by a police officer who had mistaken his toy gun for a real one. He lives as a ghost, looking at what has happened without having the ability to do anything about it. I felt that it was an easy read, and the book was somewhat short. But enough of that, back to the book.

He can also communicate with other “ghost boys” like Emmett Till and strangely, his murderer’s daughter, who can see him. With Emmett he learns how history and or racism could have led to the circumstances of his death. With Sarah, the police officer’s daughter, he sees her. She cannot believe that her father, of all people, would do such a thing.

Ghost Boys is told in alternating perspectives, both of which I enjoyed reading. The book is very blatant with its themes, as it should be. I also like how we learn everything that happened before and after Jerome’s death, filling in the blanks as we go. Overall, I liked the book and can’t wait to read more of Jewell Parker Rhodes’ stories. I would recommend this book for 10 - 12 year old kids to read.

Recommended Titles:

Yusuf Azeem is not a Hero by Saadia Faruqi

The Maze Runner by James Dashner

The Harry Potter Series by J.K. Rowling

Arc of a Scythe by Neal Shusterman

The A Series of Unfortunate Events Series by Lemony Snicket (Daniel Handler)

Afterword: I was shocked to learn that this book was banned in some parts of the U.S. for its political views, and it supposedly made some parents feel that the text would cause white children to feel ashamed of their skin color. To learn more about the ban and the author’s opinion on it, visit: <https://jewellparkerrhodes.com/children/ghost-boys-banned/>

If the link doesn’t work, paste it in your browser.

