

Title:

Author:

## LIKES

- The opening
- The dog
- Accessible for most reading levels
- Multiple points of view
- Well translated and nice to read a YA book in translation for a change
- Short punchy chapters
- Personal connection with epilepsy – good to see the representation and have a different setting/culture
- Rapid shifts between points of view
- Enjoyed the accents in the audio book
- The depiction of Parker re-uniting with Alaska
- Emotional vulnerability of the characters, not just the main characters but adults as well. Engaging and relatable.
- Explanation of Parker's anxiety
- The character of Sven – well-rounded, easy to relate to. His anger an interesting take on how disability could affect you
- The ticking time bomb of Sven's seizures – unusual way to create tensions and gave an insight into his life
- Wolz did a good job of getting inside the heads of different characters
- a positive social message
- a brave, adventurous, self determining female character overcoming difficulties and challenges
- it touched on the harm and in some cases the debilitating nature surrounding social media which would relate to KS3 readers and provide a stimulus for discussion
- The break in to Sven's room - though fantastical - in some ways also believable. Might lead onto interesting discussions around whether students have ever had to break in somewhere. Also:
  - Appealing to a young person's sense of adventure and risk taking
  - Relating to a young person's sense of acting without considering the consequences
  - Offering opportunities to think, discuss and debate the moral dilemmas surrounding breaking into someone's room within in a modern context
- The more fantastical elements also might lead to fruitful discussions around whether they worked in the novel; whether students might like to try writing in a similar way or not

**DISLIKES**

- Didn't like Sven – too cold/a bully
- Parker breaking into Sven's room. Not believable/a bit creepy. If a boy was breaking into a girl's room it would definitely be creepy!
- Some unbelievable elements – lots of coincidences, triangulating the phones to catch the bad guy, he's the only person in the world with those trainers etc
- Setting – would have liked more sense of Holland as a place and culture. Trying to be too universal?
- Wanted more depth – a problem with the dual narrative?
- Lacked poetry, too much telling not showing
- Bit twee at times – didn't need every single plot element to be tied up neatly with a happy ending
- Enjoyed the first part but it tailed off/became a bit repetitive
- Why make it a romance? Seemed a bit forced and would have preferred just a friendship

**PUZZLES**

- Mentioned that in Parkers family there are 4 children with ADHD – why didn't we explore this aspect of Parker more?
- For that many coincidences to be believable it must be quite a small town? But if so, would the robbers stay around?
- Parker going to Sven's bedroom in her balaclava, is she somehow acting out the attack on her parents' shop?
- How come Sven didn't recognise Parker?
- Does the writer have personal experience with epilepsy?

**PATTERNS (Within this book and links to other books and real-life experiences)****Within the novel**

- Links between the narratives – same event from different points of view
- Break ins and balaclavas
- How to be safe, but live your life

**Real life links**

- Family members with epilepsy
- Anxiety
- Starting a new school, trying to make an impression etc
- Bonds with animals, especially dogs
- People are icebergs – a good message for any age group

**Links to other books / film**

- Common themes – the outsider
- The Boy with the Butterfly Mind by Victoria Williamson – preteens with divorcing parents, mental health issues
- Check Mates by Stuart Foster – boy with ADHD
- Wonder by RJ Palacio
- Flush: A Biography – Virginia Woolf tells the life of Elix=zabeth Barrat Browning from the point of view of her spaniel.

**HOOKS**

- Dogs/animals
- Mystery element
- Friendship story
- Budding romance
- A book for a Y6-7 transition project

**READING ALOUD, HAVING IGNITED THEIR CURIOSITY**

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**OUTPUTS FOLLOWING READING (ORAL AND WRITTEN)**

- Research and discussion about how humans use animals: pets; assistance animals; school therapy dogs; animals in service.
- Different perspectives were presented really well and may introduce students to a wider repertoire of literary techniques to imitate and use in their own writing. For example:
  - Tell/write about a real-life event that happened to you from a point of view other than your own
  - Write part of the story from Alaska's point of view
  - Tell part of the story from the point of view of someone else in 1B
- Extracts for discussion on 'Empathy Day' 9<sup>th</sup> June
- An easy read for a new book club
- Make a video to add to the embarrassing stories 1B share to make Sven feel less alone
- Look at extracts from Virginia Woolf's *Flush: A Biography*.

RESOURCES

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OTHER

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