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The Categorical Universe Of Candice Phee



Synopsis

Candice Phee isn't a typical twelve-year-old girl. She has more than her fair share of quirks, but she also has the very best of intentions and an unwavering determination to make sure everyone around her is happy—which is no easy feat when dealing with a pet fish with an identity crisis, a friend who believes he came from another dimension, an age-old family feud, and a sick mom. But she is on a mission. Her methods might be unique, but Candice will do whatever it takes to restore order to her world and make sure everyone is absolutely, categorically happy again.

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Customer Reviews

Candice Phee is a most extraordinary girl. Perhaps fortunately, she doesn't know how extraordinary she is. She is a pure and loveable soul. She is unknowingly witty and kind hearted, and wise beyond her years. She is quirky; and maybe through her people can learn how valuable a trait that is. It has been a long time since I have enjoyed a book so very much.

Delightful, oddball book that should strike the right note with lots of kids. And while Candice is autistic the book doesn't hit you over the head with that theme. Deftly written, and rings true to my ear.

This book uses an interesting device--an alphabetical survey of the narrator's life--to delve into the solitary but often amusing life of a highly functioning autistic girl.

Candice is remarkable. She shines a light on all the ways the world can become a better place. Read her story!

Candice Phee is just as quirky as this book is, and I love them both. I really enjoyed the way the book was organized into chapters for Candice's alphabetical autobiography project - that was a first for me. The part that made me the happiest about this book, however, is how twice Candice is referred to as being autistic or on the spectrum and she just responds with "I'm me". That makes me so happy! Her parents are so imperfect and their emotions (and mother's depression) are so raw - that part of the story will hit home for many readers. In spite of that, there were so many parts of the book that made me laugh out loud - a great balance. I wouldn't say that this book is for every middle grade reader, and I would definitely trend older or least toward more mature readers with my recommendations simply due to the vocabulary and all of Douglas' talk of multiple dimensions and tesseract. I believe the last time I even saw the word tesseract was when I read "A Wrinkle in Time" in 5th grade, and would definitely recommend this book fans of that series. Also recommended for anyone who loves stories about not fitting in and being true to oneself. This is a quick, very satisfying read. **Note: the only thing I did NOT like about this book is the use of the "R" word used multiple times by a classmate taunting Candice. While it is recognized in the story as being unkind, I'd prefer not to see the word in print.

Before I start, it should be noted this book had been released previously in Australia under the title of "My Life as the Alphabet." In addition, I should point out that having read/review three rock romance novels by Nicky Wells, I've already become adjusted to the British spelling and usage of words contained in this book, which for some readers might take a little getting used to. When I first once opened the book and flipped through the pages I immediately got transported to the first grade [or was it Kindergarten] and had a primer to read. You know what I'm talking about; A is for Apple, B is for Boy, C is for Cat. As I read the first chapter of this book, "A is for Assignment," I immediately

began to realize that you need to read as Barry Jonsberg meant it to be read. You need to read coming from the first person POV of Candice Phee herself, as she's the one who's actually writing this story. This came about because her teacher, Miss Bamford, had given her an assignment to write a simple essay consisting of twenty-six paragraphs with each paragraph starting a letter of the alphabet concerning something which had happened to you in the past. However, Candice, knowing she couldn't adequately tell her story in a mere twenty-six paragraphs, decided to write several paragraphs for each letter instead; and even mentioned she'd already written sixteen paragraphs for the letter "A" at one point. And as you might suspect she already envisioned having problems with the letters "Q" and "X." Candice's entire family seems to be dysfunctional as her father's despondent because a certain confrontation which had occurred eons ago; her mother's totally depressed to do a double mastectomy and having lost a child to AIDS. Her now rich Uncle Brian uses his wealth attempting to win other people's affection. And even though she has no idea whatsoever in terms of what she's doing, Candice is continuously trying to fix her family's multitude of problems on her own. It is because of this she seem to be the embodiment of being "quirky" in her personality. As we read subsequent chapter and letter of the alphabet, we see more and more of the episodic existence Candice has to endure to survive. I truly enjoyed reading this, the first of Barry Jonsberg's books I've had the pleasure to read. I feel it would be best suited to be read by children aged ten or more, and in the fifth grade. While the book would be something girls would tend to read more than boys--boys should not be forgotten as part of the audience of potential readers, since some of things Candice did, boys would be usually more apt to do than girls. I believe the US title for this book is more appropriate than its counterpart in Australia and the rest of the world since it more aptly describes Candice's world one letter of the alphabet at a time. I consider myself privileged to have received a free ARC [Advanced Reader's Copy - Uncorrected] copy of this book, which I got as part of GoodRead's GiveAway program. The above has been my honest opinion regardless the manner I've received this copy of the book. And I'm there happy to give "The Categorical Universe of Candice Phee" the 5 STARS it deserves. Robin Leigh Morgan is the author of "I Kissed a Ghost," a MG-YA Paranormal romance novel.

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