



2009

The Julian Game

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Griffin, Adele. *The Julian Game*. Putnam's, 2010. ISBN 9780399284604. \$16.99. 208 p.

Reviewer: Rachel Wadham

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fiction; Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Bullies--Juvenile fiction; Online identities--Juvenile fiction; Interpersonal relations--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

When Raye and her friend Natalya create an online profile for fictitious Elizabeth, they only hoped to chat with some popular boys. But when Raye reveals the profile to popular Ella at a tutoring session, Ella decides that Elizabeth is just who she needs to get revenge on gorgeous Julian who recently shunned her at a party. Soon Raye realizes that Ella's plans are devious and hurtful, and she confesses the whole scheme to Julian. As Julian begins to show interest in Raye, something Raye has been dreaming of, Ella turns her venom on her new betrayer and enacts another vile scheme against Raye by posting revealing pictures and snarky comments online. Dealing with the bullying, Raye must decide if she can stand up for what she believes in, all the while trying to find the boyfriend she deserves.

Although this is a familiar mean girl story, Griffin goes outside the typical structure by creating a main character who follows her conscience and does not fall to the pressures of the popular crowd. The supporting cast also includes a unique best friend who stands by Raye, despite her subterfuge. These features make the emotional development of all the characters feel authentic and help the standard theme of staying true to oneself come through clearly. Even with its simple plot and unremarkable setting, this novel provides just the right twist to make it stand out in its own niche for those looking for a less hardcore novel on the topic of bullying.

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