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You Look Different In Real Life

Aylea Stephens

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Book Review

Title: You Look Different In Real Life

Author: Jennifer Castle

Reviewer: Aylea Stephens

Publisher: HarperTeen

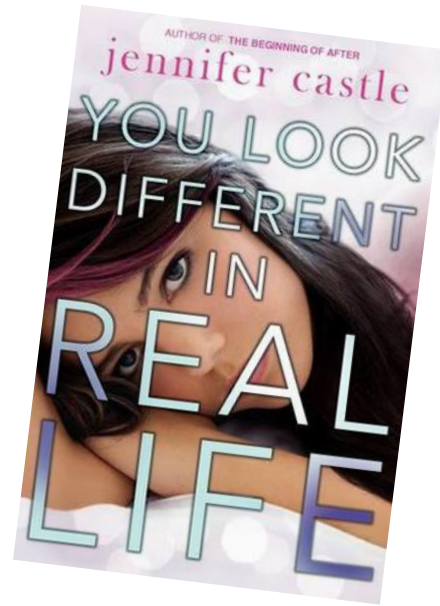
Publication Year: 2013

ISBN: 9780062209771

Number of Pages: 355

Interest Level: Young Adult

Rating: Excellent



Review

Five kids were chosen to be the stars of a reality documentary, showing them in their regular lives doing what they do. It's time for another movie, but Justine isn't sure she wants to do another one. It's been five years since the last movie, but now she feels like a disappointment and like she hardly knows most of the other kids who were so important to her early life. The new movie gives them a chance to reunite again, but after years of hurt and having personal things from their lives being shared with strangers, they aren't very willing to try being friends again. When one of them disappears to go on a journey to find the mother that abandoned her, however, the kids team up again to become friends and realize that sometimes the best way to see themselves is through the eyes of someone else.

The most interesting aspect of the story is not the movie aspect, but the characters. The flashbacks and scenes from the previous movies slowly let the reader know how the characters went from being best friends to not speaking. Each character has their own struggles and challenges, and they all struggle with how to communicate with the friends they used to be so close to. The romance in the end seemed a little bit random, but the gradual progression of each person working through their challenges is interesting. Justine as the narrator was not as likeable as she could have been, but she is appealing as the girl who is the glue of the group and the other characters make up for her shortcomings. While it focuses less on the being famous aspect than someone might be expected from the jacket description, the character interactions are fun to read about.

*Contains same gender attraction, parental abandonment, some mild language.