



2018

Grendel's Guide to Love and War

Taylor Nelson

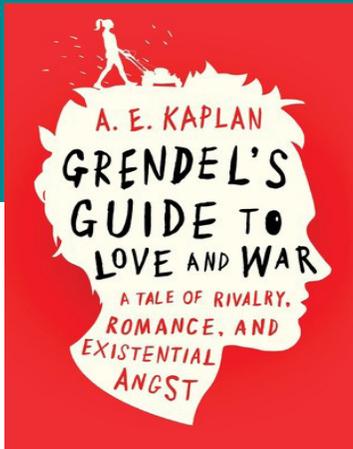
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Book Review

Grendel's Guide to Love and War

Author

A. E. Kaplan

Illustrator

Reviewer

Taylor Nelson

Rating

Excellent

Level

Young Adult

Tom Grendel's whole life is turned upside-down when new neighbors move in and proceed to throw earsplitting parties night after night, wreaking havoc on Tom's father, a veteran with PTSD. To make matters worse, Tom's new neighbors are his arch-nemesis and his longtime crush. Tom comes up with a plan to end the parties for good and win the girl's affections in the process, but nothing turns out quite like he expected. In the ensuing mayhem, Tom has to come to terms with the memory of the life he used to know and reconcile it with the uncertain future.

This book is a great light read with a lot of heart. It could easily have been about a simple prank war that got out of hand, but the emotional value of the story packs a punch. The book handles PTSD and grief in a very respectful manner, and not everything is cured by the romance. The characters are quirky but somehow manage to avoid the typical young adult personifications. Tom's family dynamics feel incredibly raw and real, and Tom's friendship with his best friend is a nice touch. This is an angsty young adult contemporary that sticks with you.

*Contains mild violence.

Pages

320

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Knopf Books for Young

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9780399555541