



2018

Kids Like Us

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Andrus, Meagan (2018) "Kids Like Us," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 39 : Iss. 4 , Article 27.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol39/iss4/27>

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Book Review

Kids Like Us

Author

Hilary Reyl

Illustrator

Reviewer

Meagan Andrus

Rating

Outstanding

Level

Young Adult

Pages

279

Year

2017

Publisher

Farrar Straus Giroux

ISBN

9781626724419

Martin has just moved to France. He is on the autism spectrum and so has grown up believing that he is different from other people. His mom sends him to the public high school in the hopes that he might make some “normal” friends. At first, he struggles to find people who are interested in getting to know him. Thankfully, his favorite book in the whole world takes place in a small village in France. He begins to assign people in his life certain characters from the book and thinks of himself as the main character. Martin slowly learns throughout the novel that these real people in his life are not characters from a book. He is surprised to discover that even someone like him can be loved and respected by people who are different from him, as he forges ahead with his tentative friendships and romance.

This book is an excellent look at what the world looks like according to someone on the autism spectrum. While this book is mostly plot- and character-driven, there are also a lot of moments that leave the reader wondering “What does it mean to be normal?” and “Should we try to change people who not neurotypical, or should we leave them be?” It asks many questions without attempting to fully answer them, letting the reader decide what they think. Hilary Reyl’s characters are realistic and memorable, and the story is interesting and emotional. Fans of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* will love this new look at the autism spectrum, and anyone who likes relatable characters and a sweet romance will love it, too.

*Contains mild sexual content and severe language.