



A Portrait for Shy

Justin Kenneth

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At seventeen, Jared Sedgwick wanted to share his artwork with the world, marry his first love, and get the hell out of Vermont. But he put down the brush when his relationship fell to pieces, and his cracked phone still says it's another cold day in Bennington.

He only opens up to his best friend Stan, the one who's there for him when he feels suicidal, who listens to every word and sits through every heartbreaking detail just waiting for some cat food; Stan never offers much advice. But that's okay now because Jared's got a new story, and her name is Eloise. She's a cat-loving bookworm with a passion for starting over, new in town from California, and she's making him forget that he ever had a past.

It's a fresh romance for both until she questions the whereabouts of his ex-girlfriend, soon to discover an awful truth much worse than cheating.

A PORTRAIT FOR SHY is a twist-riddled narration of undying love in the wake of tragedy, an upper-YA/crossover contemporary. *Mature content novel.

A Portrait for Shy Details

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Author : Justin Kenneth

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From Reader Review A Portrait for Shy for online ebook

Laura says

A quick, fun read with some great plot twists. Well written, but could have used better copy editing as there were enough problems with grammar and syntax to distract slightly from the flow of the story.

I received this book free as a Goodreads Giveaway. Thanks to Goodreads and the author for my copy!

Lori Schiele says

One of the other viewers wrote that "the opening line, There's this game I play with Stan called Scratch-me-if-you-can, where I tap behind his paws until he tears apart my hand, caught my attention right away." and I was the same but probably for very different reasons.

Also, many people that reviewed it got it as a free give-a-way where I actually purchased the book from Amazon, lured in by their description stating: "...He only opens up to his best friend Stan, the one who's there for him when he feels suicidal, who listens to every word and sits through every heartbreaking detail just waiting for some cat food; Stan never offers much advice. But that's okay now because Jared's got a new story, and her name is Eloise."

So, I was expected a book about a troubled young man who has a dependent, yet quirky relationship with his cat and then meets a girl... which is fine, except even though I understand that the cat is an essential piece of the book, it seems apparent the author has never owned a cat, or even spent a single day with one. Yes--I admit it--I was disappointed because I bought the book mostly because I thought there would more about the cat in it and, except for one heart-rending chapter, there just wasn't anything but lame, passing droll banter between guy and cat i.e. "What do you think of her?" "Meow" said Stanwick. and pages of dialogue went that way! It was monotonous and ridiculous.

The other things that annoyed me, even if some of them were interesting, were the tangents the author went on where he had the character tells us some random bits of trivia about plants, or chess, or flags, or even whether or not the tomato is a fruit or a vegetable (spoiler: it's both!) And his 11 page diatribe of nonsensical and pointless dreamscape--the point could have been made in two and saved my eyes from having to suffer through more of the book.

I did finish the book and in a single day, and for that I'm grateful because I wouldn't have wanted to spend more time than that on it.

I do think the author had a good idea for a plot, but just couldn't make it work into a proper novel. That is the only reason I am giving it 2 stars rather than 1.

Roxann says

I received this book free from Goodreads Giveaway.

I would really rate this book at 3.5 stars. This is not the usual type of book that I read but I did find it interesting. At the beginning I was wondering what the heck is wrong with Jared-it was obvious to me things were 'not right' with him. At first I was going to stop reading the book, but I dislike doing that for any book so I kept going. It was an interesting study of a young man's mind after going through a tragedy. The ending

has a little twist to it and seems to give some hope for Jared that things might get better.

Mrs. Schonour says

This book was really hard to get into and then incredibly predictable. I couldn't like the characters or find them believable.

Sharon Huether says

I won this Free book through Goodreads First-Reads.

A kitty mystery.

I was expecting more from this story.

There was no flow to it

Rebecca says

The story wasn't exactly bad... it wasn't good though. The opening was promising enough, but before the first chapter came to an end, I was weighed down with overly poetic writing that just didn't fit. This continued throughout, absolutely saturated with purple prose. Worse was the dialogue, which broke just about every rule of dialogue in writing: it mostly stalled any progression in the story, mimicked real life conversation to the point of boredom, and failed to use dialogue tags so much that even though most of the scenes only involved the same two people, I had to constantly backtrack to figure out who said what.

Aside from that, how was the story underneath? I liked what it could have been, but it wasn't executed very well, and tried to fit in some kind of Shyamalan twist at the end. Some other reviews stated the story got better near the end, but when I got there, I was underwhelmed. The relationships between the characters weren't very believable, except maybe the one between the main character and the cat. I expect that the relationships were the way they were so that there'd be some kind of payoff when the ending twist was revealed, but it was such a chore to get there that it fell flat for me.

Jacqueline Boss says

A contemporary romance with a mystery and an interesting plot twist... or two or three.

The setting was enjoyable- winter in a small town. We only really meet the two or three main characters and Stan the cat. The story follows the emotional pain and confusion of Jared as he grapples with dating and longing for his ex. His love interest, Eloise, seems to be a pretty annoying person and I'm not sure what the attraction is between them, but she chooses to see him through his emotional journey.

A pretty quick read, very happy to have read a book written by a friend!

Chele Kispert says

when you read it, stick with the story, the last 50 pages or so make it worth it.

Yawatta Hosby says

I received a free copy in exchange for an honest review

The opening line, There's this game I play with Stan called Scratch-me-if-you-can, where I tap behind his paws until he tears apart my hand, caught my attention right away. The story was told in Jared's first person point of view, and Stan was his cat. I loved this story because Jared's quirky personality kept my full attention. Picture this book as an indie quirky drama or a quirky romance movie. Something you'd see on Sundance or the IFC Channel.

Jared, Jared, Jared. From the beginning, it was clear he wasn't all sane, but that made him endearing. I felt bad that he couldn't let go of the past. He was in a love triangle with his high school sweetheart Shy, and his new neighbor Eloise. I loved that everyone's backstory was twist after twist. I'm all about mystery.

Even though my favorite scenes were of Jared bonding with Eloise and Shy, I wish there would've been a little more interaction with other people. They lived in Vermont, so I pictured a small town, which the author did a great job capturing Vermont's beautiful landscape. I wanted to get a feel if his neighborhood found him odd or if he just faded in the background. I was happy that he became less lonely when Eloise arrived into town.

Eloise's dialogue used a lot of exclamation points. That made me think she was eccentric or youthful. My favorite line was There was a pause that swallowed. But I closed my eyes, and then I heard her voice. As a reader, I usually have a clear cut couple I'm shipping if there's a love triangle. However, I really liked Shy and Eloise, both for different reasons.

I RECOMMEND this book to read.

Kara says

This was a Goodreads win that I finally got around to finishing. It's a quick read, but life happens and it started to collect dust in my bedroom. I found it again last night and re-read it.

I enjoyed the poetic beginning of Justin's writing, but then when it would disappear and then rhyming would occur again, especially in the end of the story, it felt... weird. It kind of ruined the flow of the story for me.

I felt connected to the two main characters, especially Eloise. She was always so accepting and tolerant of him being such a dick to her sometimes, that I knew something had to be up. I wasn't expecting the end

though, or the side-connection of the swingset. That was heartwarming. But then the end was just kind of... rushed? It felt odd and I wasn't a big fan. The last page left me with a feeling like... um, what? Just very off.

Overall cute, creative story. Honestly, though the story itself was here and there, as I read it and imagined it in my head I could very well see this as a film. With some indie music playing in the background (imagine Fleet Foxes during waterfall scenes). I'm thinking Garden State-y or Elizabethtown-y style. It seemed beautiful, in all of it's happiness and especially sadness. I also feel like with scene flips, the last 50 pages or so could've made much more sense and had a much bigger impact on the watcher rather than reader.

All in all, I would be thrilled to read more stuff by Justin. He's a good writer, just needs more.

Kristyn Stimach says

Not the typical genre I usually read, but I won this through a goodreads giveaway and can say it was interesting. It did take me awhile to really get into the book, but I did enjoy the twist in the end and am glad I did finish the book.

Judy says

Goodreads Win,

Was a book that kept you reading, hard to put down type which I like! Very enjoyable read!
