



## Because You'll Never Meet Me

*Leah Thomas*

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Ollie and Moritz are two teenagers who will never meet. Each of them lives with a life-affecting illness. Contact with electricity sends Ollie into debilitating seizures, while Moritz has a heart defect and is kept alive by an electronic pacemaker. If they did meet, Ollie would seize, but turning off the pacemaker would kill Moritz.

Through an exchange of letters, the two boys develop a strong bond of friendship which becomes a lifeline during dark times – until Moritz reveals that he holds the key to their shared, sinister past, and has been keeping it from Ollie all along.

## Because You'll Never Meet Me Details

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## **From Reader Review Because You'll Never Meet Me for online ebook**

### **Dannii Elle says**

This is the first book in the stunning duology, penned by Leah Thomas.

This focuses on Oliver and Moritz. These two young boys share a unique relationship – one where they can never meet. For Oliver it is due to his rare genetic resistance to electricity. Even being in the near vicinity of anything electrical is enough to bring on a brain-addling seizure. For Moritz, it is the over-abundance of electricity, coursing through his veins, that would cause him to repel Oliver like a magnet on sight. Moritz also suffers from a rare defect where he has not just lost his sight, but was born missing his eyes, in their entirety.

Cast away by both their physical conditions and by society, they find reprieve in each other's stories. Their shared misfortunes means their grief is one both can understand. Their odd friendship is developed over long, penned correspondences, where they two share their sorrows, their secrets and their longing to be something other than what they are.

Aside from loving the gorgeous penmanship and the relatable characters, this story became one I could see mirrored, in some ways, to my own. The book community is one that is thriving online, and I have formed lifelong friendships on sites like Goodreads and Instagram with others, who share the same passion as I do. Our mutual love for books might not be such a drastic and saddening basis for a friendship to form, but it makes Oliver and Moritz's story one which held similarities to many of my own. I found it perhaps easier to understand and to relate to their bond, if not their individual circumstances, because of this.

One thing I certainly could not relate to was the shocking journey this series took the reader on. I thought this book was very firmly one thing, and was very good at being that one thing, and shortly before the end it came very decidedly another. Thomas does not hold back and this story is one that will take you on an unprecedented expedition of both the boys' story and your own emotions.

That is all I am going to divulge here, as not to ruin the surprises in store for readers of this book. Go forth and fall in love.

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### **Jenny says**

This is a very strange book. From reading the blurb, it seemed like a cute story of two friends who can't meet each other, but I didn't think it would be so different and unique. I couldn't believe half of the things I was reading, it's like I couldn't tell if it's real or not. The whole plot is created very smartly – you don't come across books like these very often. The story is very engaging, the characters are well written and memorable.

This is a story of Ollie and Moritz. Ollie is allergic to electricity, he lives with his mom in the woods where there is no electricity. A cellphone or even a small battery causes him seizures so it is impossible for him to go to school or any other place. There are only two people he sees on a regular basis: his mom and his doctor. Moritz has a pacemaker and doesn't have eyes, there is skin where the person's eyes would be. But he is also not blind, he can see through his ears, sort of like a bat. So it's impossible for them to ever meet.

They both live in different parts of the world, and even though they haven't met, they know almost everything about each other. The book is written in the form of letters through which Ollie and Moritz communicate with each other. I really loved this way of writing. There are also scenes and dialogues in the letters so it doesn't feel like you are just reading some story.

It's a moving and heartbreakingly story about friendship, love, and family. And even though Ollie is very optimistic and funny most of the time, his story also has a dark side. This book would have been perfect if it wasn't for the ending. (view spoiler)

Ollie and Moritz changed each other's life just by communicating through letters, it's almost like internet where people become friends with each other without knowing them in real life. I loved this book, and would definitely recommend it if you are looking for a different and unique story.

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### Nicole says

If my friend didn't push me to read this book, and in the end I mean constantly telling me how amazing *Because You'll Never Meet Me* is and how much I need to read it, I wouldn't have picked it up. And now that I did, I'm surprised it didn't get more attention back in 2015. I'm disappointed I haven't heard of it before because the story was great and I did not think I would like it.

It's epistolary between two boys, Ollie and Moritz. One is suffering from electromagnetic hypersensitivity since birth - allergy to electricity and the other was born without eyes and has a pacemaker but can use echolocation. Ollie who lives in the woods somewhere in America is optimistic, at least trying to be, and the German Moritz is cynical and dislikes almost everyone.

My favorite character was the 14 years old boy with a sick sense of humor, Ollie. I **adored** him. He was very likable. He's always doing his best and he was just so lovable! I won't talk much about the plot because I don't want to spoil it but as Ollie and Moritz try to connect with each other and unravel their secrets, we learn so many good and bad things about them and about their dark pasts.

Leah Thomas did an impressive job with the letters, usually, I get bored in these types of books but you don't have to worry, we didn't only know about the two MCs but also a handful of secondary characters, even if they weren't exactly memorable, they were surely well written. I think I should mention Liz here but I really don't know what to think of her. I understood Ollie's affection for her as well as her behavior but Moritz was also kind of right about her.

Vergangenheitsbewältigung!! I learned a new German word, I liked its meaning. Working through the past, something that was necessary for Germany. And for our characters.

While this book wasn't fast-paced, Leah Thomson's writing style was really beautiful, it was smart. She knew how to handle their difficult medical situations, how to give each character its distinctive style and it **wasn't predictable**. I thought it would be LGBT as well, but it wasn't, not exactly. It was about **friendship**. A subject we don't see it handled without romance, usually.

However, while it was certainly an interesting and gripping contemporary, I wondered what happened toward the end. It seemed somehow absurd, I did not know what to expect honestly, but no sci-fi for sure.

That being said, I really enjoyed this book. I recommend it for all contemporary lovers and those who like a **small** lgbt touch in their books. It's a duology, the next book *Nowhere near you* is going to be released in February, I didn't see the need of a second book, personally, so fingers crossed, hope I'll like it.

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### **Emery Lord says**

I remembered my Goodreads password just to post this because it's too long for a tweet! Haha :)

I just wanted to say about this book: it has surrealist elements, yes, but it also- with perfect realism- captures how it feels to be lonely, to feel like an outsider. And, conversely, how it feels to connect. That connecting doesn't mean those friendships are perfect. Sometimes you overstep; sometimes you hold those friendships a bit too tightly. Anyway, I think the fabulist elements support the magic OF realism- the magic of finding your friends- in the best possible way. I could HEAR Ollie and Moritz, and I felt I was among my own.

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### **Rebecca says**

That was super strange, but I liked it! If I could give you one piece of advice before you start reading this, it's to prepare yourself to suspend your disbelief. A lot. A lot more than you would expect for a contemporary read. It seriously seems like a cool scifi/dystopia at times. But it's worth it.

This story starts off with Ollie. He is 14 years old, lives with his mother in a cabin in the middle of the forest, and is allergic to electricity. Boy oh boy would being allergic to electricity suck major balls. Think about it. How reliant you are on electricity. How often you come into contact with electricity every single day. Light bulbs, television, cars, phones, everything.

Then you have Moritz. He is a socially inept 16 year old, lives with his adoptive father, and has a pacemaker. Also it's worth mentioning that he has no eyes. Yep, that's right. He was born without eyes. He just has skin where a person's eyeballs would be. But he's not blind. Oh no, think bats, think Daredevil. He's basically a superhero...only not at all.

Because of this pesky pacemaker that keeps Moritz alive (and the fact that he lives in Germany while Ollie lives in the US), if he and Ollie were to ever meet, Ollie would probably (i.e. most definitely) fry his pacemaker and poor Moritz would die. But what a way to go right?

And so begins their correspondence. Ollie with his unfailing optimism and needling. Moritz with his brooding and brusqueness.

I really enjoyed Leah Thomas' writing style. The two boys had such distinct voices, it was wonderful. The world that she has created for these characters (especially Ollie) is just so captivating and real. And

importantly, I'm a sucker for character development and this book has it in spades.

While I was quite happy with the ending (everything doesn't always have to go the way you expect it to), there was a little thing I didn't really like (or more like couldn't wrap my head around).(view spoiler) But other than that and the weirdness, I dug it. A lot.

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### **Ashley Daviau says**

I loved this book so much that it almost hurts! It was so beautiful and I fell completely in love with it from the very first page. I'm always a sucker for anything written in letter form so when I saw the whole book was written that way, I was an instant goner. And the subject matter was just so captivating, the more I found out, the more I was sucked in! I really grew to love Moritz and Ollie, they were each so different but complemented each other so well and seeing their stories unfold in their letters to each other was incredibly touching and moving! And then the ending just made me into a total mess, it was so perfect and beautiful and I'm incredibly excited to find out a sequel has been released because I absolutely want more!

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### **Sarah says**

When I was about 10% into this book, I was **so** close to marking it as a DNF. I just couldn't get into it but I decided to power through and try harder and look at us now... 4 Stars! I'm going to admit that I only read like half the synopsis before starting this. I knew it was about a boy who was allergic to electricity and a boy born without eyes but I didn't read the part about the lab. Silly me! I thought it was going down a completely different road to be honest. A road with mental illness and less a road about scientists messing around in a lab. I'm glad it took the latter road though, it was quite different.

I loved the main characters. Ollie & Moritz were two different characters that were so fleshed out. They also grew so much as characters from start to finish so the character development was wonderful. It was so lovely to see them win a victory whether it was a small victory or a massive victory. It really felt like we were along with them on their journey. I did get quite emotional at times as I felt quite attached to Ollie & Moritz. The other characters were okay. I didn't really like Liz or Ollie's mom. I also didn't understand why Ollie's mom acted the way she did.

The story was good. Both characters were very interesting and they had very interesting lives so once I got into the story, it was very entertaining. What I liked most about this book was the fact that it's about friendship. The friendship between Ollie & Moritz is heartwarming. The pacing of the story was good right up until the end. I felt like things ended too abruptly for my liking but I'm glad there's going to be a sequel. Maybe the sequel can answer more questions and finish the story in a less abrupt way.

I loved the letter format and I really enjoyed reading the letters. The writing was also really good. It was easy to read, it was different depending on which POV you were reading and it did actually sound like a teenagers POV.

I would recommend this book & I would read something else by Leah Thomas.

\*I received a copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

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## C.G. Drews says

**I'm having a very difficult time right now, because this was an *extraordinarily* good book AND THEN THE ENDING WENT AND RUINED IT.** I don't even know what genre this is. Sci-fi? Contemporary? I feel a little bit tricked because it presents as this heartwarming contemporary...but then squishes in so much sci-fi elements I COULDN'T TELL WHAT WAS REAL AND WHAT WAS NOT. I don't *like* it when books do that to me, okay?!

But first things first..here's what you should know about this book:

- + **It's written in letters.** Which I loved! I *like* letters. And because they're telling each other about their pasts, there's also scenes/dialogue too. Basically the format of The Perks of Being a Wallflower.
- + **It's about two dudes.** I don't know why, but I didn't realise this before I picked it up. There's romance, but it's mostly about FRIENDSHIP which I love.
- + **It's half set in Germany!!** Come on! That's cool!

**I really liked how this book presented.** The voices of the two boys, Ollie and Moritz, are completely different. Ollie is like the sparkling ball of glitter (with dark secrets) and Moritz is like a moody eel (with darker secrets). Seriously, Moritz's first letters are downright *mean*. He's very formal and condescending. Ollie? He's *so darn adorable*. He's 14, while Moritz is 16. OKAY. BUT GET READY FOR IT. They're never ever going to meet. You want to know why?

Ollie is allergic to electricity. It gives him epileptic fits and he fries things. (Which is super interesting because She Is Not Invisible touched on this topic!)

Mortiz has no eyeballs but an out-of-this-world level of echolocation so he can basically "see" *anything* by hearing it. He also has a pacemaker. There's your problem. NO MEETING.

**I loved this premise because it was different and intriguing.** Ollie is trapped in this remote farmhouse with only his mum and no friends. Mortiz has a very tortured past. And their illnesses are *incredibly* intriguing. I wanted to know MORE. I wasn't totally sure how realistic either illness was, but doesn't it just spark your curiosity?! YUS PLEASE.

**Also the writing is incredible.** Not only are the voices epically different and unique, it's totally captivating. And the character development?! IT WINS ALL THE AWARDS. Just *wow*. The growth and maturity was spectacularly done. I couldn't read fast enough, to be honest. I really loved these two boys and I felt so bad for their problems and loved how their friendship grew. There was a ton of mystery the whole time, so I was constantly going "BUT GIVE ME ANSWERS" which is a great motivating pull to read on. Epic, just epic.

...okay, but here's where I come unstuck...

**I really was not okay with the ending.** When the big "reveals" of the mysteries started rolling it suddenly was NOT contemporary anymore. It was border-line sci-fi! We start getting into science and lab coats and experiments and I just...well, it wasn't the direction I thought it'd go. Then I wasn't entirely happy with Ollie's story conclusion because I felt it was unrealistic. I get that we like stories with hope! and happiness! for the conclusions, but not at the risk of turning it into a feels-good-sci-fi-splurge.

Lemme explain. (view spoiler)

**DON'T GET ME WRONG!** I seriously loved this book at the beginning. Sure the ending bellyflopped it for me, a fact I'm kind of sniffling over, but I adored these characters so so much. And good characters make me overlook a multitude of twitchiness. The letters were perfectly written and the story was altogether captivating. **But it's not a realistic contemporary.** I can't really trust any of the facts of the illness that were put forth, I'm going to assume it's like 98% fantasy here. GAH. I just don't know how to *feel* about this book. I still recommend it, because the characters are so captivating. I'm not sad I read it! I just wish it'd ended differently.

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### Larry H says

I'd rate this 4.5, maybe even 4.75 stars.

There are times I think that there are no original stories left out there, that nearly every book is a variation on a familiar theme or a retelling of something that has already been published. And then a book like Leah Thomas' *Because You'll Never Meet Me* comes along to prove that theory wrong. Endearing, moving, unique and tremendously engaging, I'm so glad I stumbled on this story and these wonderful characters.

Oliver is a teenage boy living with his mother in an isolated cabin in the woods. He's deathly allergic to electricity—even the simple act of handling a cellphone or a small flashlight is enough to cause life-threatening seizures. He cannot go to school, and he must live without all of the typical paraphernalia teenagers use—iPods, television, the internet, even electricity. The only people he sees on a regular basis are his mother and his doctor, but he is desperate to know what life is like in the world around him, and he wants to understand who his father was.

In an effort to help Oliver cope and combat his loneliness (in a fashion), his doctor encourages him to write letters to Moritz, a German teenager. Moritz's heart requires a pacemaker to keep it beating, and that's not his only disability. But while the two boys develop a close friendship, they can never meet, since the electricity needed to run Moritz's pacemaker could kill Oliver, and Oliver's electromagnetism could short-circuit Moritz's pacemaker.

This book is told solely in letters between the two, slowly unfurling what life has been like for these two boys who are so different from others their age. The letters uplift, amuse, and inspire the boys, as well as anger, hurt, upset, and confuse them. Both experience periods of desperate despair that the other tries to help combat, as each tries to understand the problems the other faces. And as Moritz begins to reveal secrets about another connection the two share despite living on different continents, Oliver must decide whether to continue to accept his life as it is, or try and challenge it, despite the potential complications.

While obviously there's a little of the farfetched here, particularly in the boys' ailments and disabilities, it doesn't detract from this book at all. I found the characters, particularly Oliver, Moritz, and his classmates, Fieke and Owen, so well-drawn and memorable. While some of the plot is predictable, and at times I feared that Thomas was going to take the story down a path I was dreading, she also threw in some surprises that made me smile. (And yes, for those of you who know what a sap I am, I may have teared up once or twice...or more.)

You never know when a person will walk into your life and change it for the better. And even if they don't physically *walk* in, ***Because You'll Never Meet Me*** is a terrific example of the power of friendship, the sacrifices we make for love, and that facing our fears can sometimes be the most difficult but rewarding thing we do. This book made my heart happy.

See all of my reviews at <http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com>....

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### **Nanna says**

it's so hard writing a review for this book, not because I don't know how to rate it but because I feel inadequate! I hardly think I can give this book enough praise to make people read it but here I go:

5 stars!

I received this book for free but that does NOT impair my judgement of it.

I adore this book. I found it to be one of the most underrated YA contemporaries released in 2015! I had never heard of it until it showed up in my mailbox. I think what made me love the book more was that I read it with my Australian friend, Tanaya! (Like the MC we have a long distance friendship!)

as soon as I started reading it I knew I was going to love it: Ollie's voice just grasp me and would not let go! he is funny, smart, and most of all quirky. he doesn't really have a filter but that's a result from him living in the woods. he's also a really darn good story teller(which is important!).

he suffered from some weird medical condition that makes him allergic to electricity! so he basically has lived life as a recluse in the woods.

the story starts off with him writing to a "fellow hermit" who lives in Germany.

now Moritz! he suffers from another sickness, but he is also blind, sort of. he doesn't have eyes, no, he doesn't have eye holes either. he just has skin where his eyes should have been.

and boy, Moritz was hilarious in his own way! he was such a contrast to Ollie, who was charming, sarcastic, effervescent! Mo was dark and gloomy and very very condescending lmao I loved his replies to Ollie and just made want to keep reading the book.

these two characters were just perfect together and I adore that I couldn't pick who I loved more! they each get to share their story and each made me cry.

this book has that perfect balance of comedy and angst like TFiOS, Everything Everything, & Wonder. but it reminded me most of I'll Give You The Sun because it's a book about the love we have for individuals who know us inside out and still are willing accept us.

since this book will probably go down as one of my all time favorites, I completely recommend it to everyone!

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### **Inge says**

I initially requested this on NetGalley because of the positive reviews, including those of bloggers I'm friends with. The premise certainly sounded interesting -- two boys who could never meet become friends through good old-fashioned letter-writing. One boy is allergic to electricity, while the other boy has a pacemaker and no eyes. One boy is talkative and optimistic while the other one is gloomy and cynical. Each one teaches the other some valuable lessons.

While the idea was really nice, it never really hooked me and I considered DNFing it at several points. I didn't find the letters that entertaining or especially funny or interesting. The boys and their stories didn't resonate with me. And then came the ending, which felt too much like *X-Men* for a story which had seemed like a contemporary up until then.

I wouldn't say it's a bad book, but it didn't give me the beautiful story I was expecting. It just wasn't for me.

*Thank you NetGalley for providing me with a copy*

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### **Dahlia says**

This book is so different, so smart, so well crafted...just, yeah. Everything. Dual-POV where both characters are the same gender is *hard*, but Thomas did an excellent job creating two incredibly different, strong narratives that complement each other in a fabulous way. Friendship books are so rare in YA, but friendship books between boys are among the rarest rarest rarest of all, and this book was just so necessary. Highly recommend for people who loved the quirky literary quality of *Mosquitoland*, especially if you're compelled by the premise of *Everything, Everything*.

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### **Snotchocheez says**

I admire most any attempt to flip a genre upon its head to conceive something new and different. The only problem with Leah Thomas' epistolary mope-fest *Because You'll Never Meet Me*, which in retrospect certainly qualifies as a genre-blaster, was that I didn't realize what Ms. Thomas was doing here was fresh and original until about the 60% mark. By that time I was so utterly annoyed by the two mewling pen pals (with bizarre handicaps only YA fiction writers could possibly dream up) that I could not fully appreciate the originality lurking under Oliver's and Moritz's surface maladies. Still worth a read, if you don't mind cringing through the first half.

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### **Irmak says**

Kitab? sevece?imi biliyordum, en az?ndan arka kapak yaz?s?ndan sonra bunu hissediyordum. Ama bu kadar etkilenmek ? Bunu tahmin edemezzdim.

Ollie'nin epilepsisinden dolay? elektri?e alerjisi var ve bu öyle bir düzeyde ki elektrikli hiç bir ?eyin yan?na yakla?am?yor. Telefon, el feneri, araba. Akl?n?za gelen her elektrikli e?ya. Yakla?t???nda zarar gören ya kendisi oluyor ya da elektrikli aletler.

Moritz'in gözleri yok. Gözlerinin olmas? gereken yerde bir deri tabakas? var. Ama kör de?il. Seslerin sayesinde duydu?unu görme yetene?ine sahip. Birde zay?f kalbinden dolay? kalp pili ile hayatı kal?yor. Bu yüzden Ollie ve Moritz asla tan??amaz. En az?ndan birbirlerini öldürmeden. Kitap boyunca Ollie ile Moritz'in birbirlerine yazd?klar? mektuplar? okuyoruz. Dostluklar?n?, birbirlerine uzaktan bile nas?l yard?mc? olduklar?n?. Ba?ta Moritz karakterini çok eksik bulmu?tum, sönüük kalm??t? benim için. Ama sonradan öyle bir sevdim ki onun bölümlerini sab?rs?z?kla bekler oldum. ?ki karakteri de çok sevdim. ?kisinin de de?i?imini okumak çok güzeldi. Sonlara do?ru sayfalar? çevirirken hayretler içerisinde okudum. Böyle s?rlar beklemiyordum. Ama kesinlikle çok ho?uma gitti. Kitap yazar?n ilk kitab?ym??. Bence ilk kitap için harikalar yaratm??. Kesinlikle tavsiye ediyorum. 2016 favorilerimde yerini ald? bile. HELE DE K?TAP EL?N?ZDE VARSA SAKIN BEN?M G?B? BEKLETMEY?N.

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### Aj the Ravenous Reader says

There is this standout culture that emerged among 2015 writers of contemporary YA fiction. They seem to have boldly neglected the distinction between realism and fantasy and risked mashing up these two genres together successfully creating groundbreaking, diverse novels about characters that have beyond normal medical conditions dealt with the most creative and engaging plot and usually witty, hilarious writing.

Made You Up  
Everything, Everything  
Bone Gap  
Extraordinary Means  
And now  
Because You'll Never Meet Me to name a few.

A lot of said books are debut novels. (Impressive!) This particular novel is written in an enjoyably and adorably smart but genuine correspondence style (that is absolutely fascinating and entertaining) between two unique characters who have the most unusual medical conditions. Cast away by their physical condition and by society, they find reprieve in each other's stories. Even though they may never meet each other, they have changed each other's lives permanently. It's no different from our online friendships made possible by books and Goodreads. Not trying to be mushy but you guys positively changed my life. <3

Despite the flawed plot (which seems common in the books mentioned above), I honestly enjoyed this distinctive novel. I would recommend it to readers who like unique and nerdy reads like me. ^\_^

Thanks to Rupali for leading me to this wonderful book and most importantly, **HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY, my dear friend! I trust you're having a blast! <3**

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