



The Loudness

Nick Courage

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"The Loudness is perfect for Hunger Games and Divergent fans." - VOYA

"I ?absolutely ?loved this book!" - Alyson Noël, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Immortals*

Henry Long doesn't have a heart. He doesn't go to school. He doesn't have a girlfriend. He doesn't have a clue. Two of those things are about to change.

Since the Tragedies, Henry Long doesn't have much: just an annoying low-watt buzz from his makeshift heart transplant, skinny arms, and a dusty library attic from which he charts the reconstruction of the Green Zone, the last habitable neighborhood of his ruined coastal city. While his parents work on making the Green Zone independent from a federal government that appears to have abandoned them, Henry's feels similarly abandoned—that is, until he discovers a refugee artists' colony called the Other Side. When the *federales* don't take kindly to the Green Zone's attempts at secession and kidnap Henry's parents, Henry and his new renegade friends—including one very courageous girl with whom he's shared one truly shocking kiss—are forced from the colorful streets and underground rock clubs of the Other Side to an overcrowded capital city on the verge of collapse.

As Henry uncovers more about the conflicting forces that run his world, he realizes that not everyone is who they seem to be—including himself. In *The Loudness* readers will be propelled into an electrifying world where superheroes emerge from the unlikeliest people.

"The Loudness has all the necessary ingredients for a great read—fast pace, compelling characters, intriguing plot, and an inspiring message that you don't need super powers to be a super hero. I ?absolutely ?loved this book!"

- Alyson Noël, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Immortals*

"I was recently persuaded by one who knows, that blurbs or cover quotes do no good, and I should not write them. So I will not be saying that *The Loudness* is a meticulously crafted and admirable book. Others may say it - I wouldn't be surprised - but I say buy a copy, take it home and read it, and make up your own mind. What am I, a guru?"

- Daniel Pinkwater

"I loved *The Loudness*. The voice, the story, the characterization, the writing... just, wow."

- Carol Lynch Williams, author of *The Chosen One* and *Signed, Skye Harper*

The Loudness Details

Date : Published April 7th 2015 by Sky Pony

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Author : Nick Courage

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From Reader Review The Loudness for online ebook

Yarp Group says

Middle School Level - The dystonia takes a different twist than the other books I have read. This is what makes it very interesting. Younger readers could identify with the different characters.

Danielle says

Super excited to read this for many reasons, not least of which is that I know the author! Scotty got first dibs, so I'm just going to have to wait . . .

Carmen says

This read a lot more slowly than I was expecting a middle grade novel to read. In fact, I was only 60% of the way through when I got to book club where it was being discussed. It was in sore need of an aggressive editor to trim the exposition, revise inconsistencies, and help get the plot to the surface. I'm choosing not to finish it.

Erin says

Disclosure: This author is a friend of mine.

I did not expect anything about *The Loudness*. Every time I thought I knew what this book is about, it twisted, or added something to the pot, or changed Henry's perspective and all of a sudden it was a brand new book. Above all, this is a bildungsroman, charting Henry's growth from a semi-schoolkid in a city struggling to recover from natural disaster, to his discovery of music and art and girls, to his discovery that the world is much better than he ever thought it was, and that isn't always a good thing.

The Loudness doesn't tie up neatly at the end, making me wonder if there are going to be sequels. But as much as I would enjoy them, I would be okay if there weren't, because the book ends with Henry realizing who his community really is, and knowing that whatever happens they are in it together. It isn't going to be easy or pretty, but he has found his place and is willing to defend it.

Also he's a freaking superhero.

Also, I loved Ben's recurring "you have got to be kidding me." Applicable in so many situations.

Liz Hoffman says

Good dystopian. It had a slow start but lots of action toward the end. The abrupt ending left me wanting something a little more.

Ryan says

I really *loved* this book. World building is incredibly important (perhaps the most important element to fiction) to me and I was very impressed with how credible Courage's dystopian society was, and yet even when there were terrible things happening (or that had happened) there was always a thread of hope that you could latch on to.

The Loudness also spoke directly to two of my most passionate beliefs: 1) That music can save lives (see "thread of hope" above) and 2) libraries are the best sanctuaries (Not one but two libraries served that role in this book!).

Well done, Mr. Courage. As a favorite fictional politician once said, I "will watch your career with great interest."

Emily says

[And suddenly the kid had super-powers, and then the book just ended - in a way that reminded me of the ending of the series finale of *Angel*. (hide spoiler)]

Scott Lerch says

The Loudness is a fascinating read that builds up to an awesome climax that left me wanting more. The world Nick created just felt so real and the story always kept me on my toes. At various points I'd think I know where it was going and then it would totally change directions. At times I thought it was about to fall into some cliché or some aspect of the story was completely unbelievable but nope, something would happen or be explained and then I'd be sucked right back into the story. This was the case right up to the end which has an amazing cliffhanger just as the main character, Henry, seems to reach his full potential. I highly recommend this to anyone who likes dystopian novels or really to anyone because who doesn't love a great future dystopian novel?

Kim White says

It's not often that the dystopian world inside a novel turns out to be a place that I actually want to visit. That's the power of the world building in *The Loudness*. I can't help loving all of it--the homesteaders in the green zone, the "school" in an old library that has no teachers and lets you do whatever you want all day, the artsy "other side" with music, dancing, and free food. Excellent food.

The story itself is also delicious. The fiercely independent green zone homesteaders and the outsider artists living beyond the grey zone, form a joyfully imperfect Garden of Eden when seen through Henry's eyes. The

perfect backdrop for a story that explores the meaning of freedom, power, loyalty, and friendship.

Roberto Garcia says

Not what I expected, hard to read, boring...

Amy says

Disclosure: I won a free giveaway of the audiobook version of this book on Audible and I'm a fan of the narrator, Maxwell Glick.

I always like getting the opportunity to read something different from my usual tastes, particularly from independent publishers. In this case, *THE LOUDNESS* is a science fiction novel for middle school-aged children. Hooray! Start them early! What kind of sci-fi books were out when I was growing up? Okay, the *ANIMORPHS* and *MY TEACHER IS AN ALIEN* series were pretty formative for me. But I guess I can't actually come up with any non-alien sci-fi books. Actually, what middle school sci-fi books are out now, other than those licensed by Marvel or DC Comics? I'm struggling to think of a book that isn't more like a fantasy novel or more YA than middle school. So yes, *THE LOUDNESS* is filling that niche genre of futuristic science fiction that isn't about aliens.

The main character, Henry Long, has a disability: he has a battery-powered heart, which causes all sorts of problems. He's in and out of hospitals all the time, he can't use electronics, and he can accidentally shock people who touch him. In his quest to live like any other normal kid, he worries constantly about others finding out about his weirdness. Growing up in a small community like the Green Zone, apart from the rest of the world, fuels his isolation. One day he stumbles upon the artist colony called the Other Side, and in their art and music he doesn't feel as lonely anymore. However, his parents end up kidnapped by the federal government that isn't willing to grant the Green Zone independence, and his once-peaceful world is thrown into jeopardy. But what can Henry do? In *THE LOUDNESS*, Henry finds that in his weaknesses he has the strength to do more than he can imagine.

At its core, *THE LOUDNESS* is a superhero origin story, but a better description of the novel is that it's also about discovery. Henry discovers a new community in the Other Side, he discovers the world of art, he discovers the world outside of his home in the Green Zone, he discovers injustice and pain and war, but also food and music and girls and how special home can be. And on top of that, at the very end, he discovers his powers. As a kid, we learn to grow up in a small sheltered-like world, but this book is about the moment when your world changes into something much bigger and different than you've always been used to. Which I think is a great way for kids to relate to this book.

Of course, the trade-off is that the really exciting part of the book is when Henry has these really cool powers, and the book ends. I'm guessing there will be a sequel -- hope the kids won't have to wait too long.

Alyssa says

Slow, but well worth the read. Waiting on a sequel..

Maxwell // Well-Read Rebel says

3.75/5 stars.

Becky B says

After a series of crazy storms that devastated the world, most people have moved to the cities. The Long family and some others are trying to revitalize part of New Orleans and make it self-sustaining so they can get a charter to be independent of the Federation. Henry (aka Hank) is the son of the mayor of what they call the Green (the revitalized part). He's a pretty average young teenage boy, except that he has a metal contraption instead of a heart to keep him alive. It's not a big deal normally, except that he and electronics don't usually get along well. When Henry's mom and dad go to the capitol to apply for their charter, Henry is initially enjoying the free time to go hang out in the Other Side where all the artists and nomads have started to set up just outside the Green. But when things go wrong in the city, Henry's world is turned upside down.

I was really excited when I first heard about this book. Students have an insatiable appetite for dystopia books right now, and there aren't all that many aimed at the middle grade crowd. But as I read this I was severely disappointed. I don't think any of the students I know will be able to get through it. It was just...boring. Nick Courage's writing is something that college literature professors would love. He approaches the dystopia novel in a very unique way. Imagine if Suzanne Collins had let you spend half of the book with Katniss in normal daily activities for one week, and then introduced the rumblings halfway through, but still kept things pretty quiet and normal until the last chapter and pretty much stopped the book as soon as Katniss volunteered as tribute. Courage focuses a lot on establishing what Henry's ordinary life is like. He infuses the book with subtle Southern flavor. There's no rush, things move slowly as they do on hot humid days, and we spend a lot of time just observing the average and ordinary. Even when a crisis finally arises halfway through the book, he doesn't jump into action, instead there's meetings and a description of a night of sleep and then a long car ride...and then at the very, very end the storm hits and there's some excitement. All that to say, the writing isn't bad, it is just...boring. If Nick Courage had wanted to have this be a high-selling hit, I would have advised him to summarize the first 240ish pages in about 3 pages (easily done), start with Henry's arrival at the city and add those 240 pages after that. Henry's just discovering how his unique heart has enabled him to do some special things, and bang, book is done. That's right where you actually hooked all the middle grade readers finally. They love that kind of stuff. A superhero in a dystopia book?! That's a huge recipe for popularity, but unfortunately it is drowned in hundreds of soporific pages so most kids won't even make it there. So this book will win with the lit professors and those who like unique spins on genres, but missed the boat with the majority of the intended audience. I had one other problem with the plot and that was all the cars. At one point a character mentions that the only fuel left is coal. Ok, so the cars must be electric, right? But then why does Henry have NO problems with any of the cars he's in (his heart interferes with the radio, but not the engine)? And how in the world does the truck drive through the night without refuelling in any way??? Another little thing, but there was so much other attention to little details that this oversight was a bit jarring to me. Unless...the cars have changed supernaturally too and they'll be Henry's superhero sidekicks in the world to come. Ok, now that makes sense.

Notes on content: No language issues that I remember. No sexual content beyond a small kiss. Shooting is mentioned and two people who have names are shot, but no gory details and most of the book has no violence at all.

Amy Reichert says

Absolutely fantastic! I can't wait to share this with my daughter and school librarian.
