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My Most Excellent Year: A Novel Of Love, Mary Poppins, And Fenway Park



Synopsis

Best friends and unofficial brothers since they were six, ninth-graders T.C. and Augie have got the world figured out. But that all changes when both friends fall in love for the first time. Enter Al‚. She's pretty, sassy, and on her way to Harvard. T.C. falls hard, but Al‚ is playing hard to get. Meanwhile, Augie realizes that he's got a crush on a boy. It's not so clear to him, but to his family and friends, it's totally obvious! Told in alternating perspectives, this is the hilarious and touching story of their most excellent year, where these three friends discover love, themselves, and how a little magic and Mary Poppins can go a long way.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 71 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #78,764 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Teens > Romance > Romantic Comedy #125 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Humorous #192 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Dating & Sex

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

In his first novel for young readers, Kluger revisits themes in his adult titles: baseball, romantic sparring, and social activism. Boston teens T. C. and Augie are such close friends that their families acknowledge them as brothers. Alejandra has recently arrived from Washington, D.C., where her father served as a Mexican ambassador to the U.S. Written in multiple voices and nontraditional formats, including instant messages and school assignments, Kluger's crowded, exuberant novel follows the three high-school freshman through an earth-shaking year in which musical-theater-obsessed Augie realizes that he is gay, Alejandra reveals her theatrical talents to disapproving parents, and T. C. tries to make a deaf child's greatest wish come true.

At the center are heart-pulling romances (even a few among adults) and a broadening sense of what family means. A few plot twists will require readers to suspend belief, and the voices tend to sound alike. Still, the appealing characters are bright, passionate, and fully engaged in their lives, and many readers will lose themselves in this original, high-spirited story. Grades 8-12. --Gillian Engberg --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

aThis romantic comedy is pure fun.aa"Kirkus Reviews," starred reviewA welcome gust of fresh air. "BCCB"This romantic comedy is pure fun. "Kirkus Reviews", starred review?A welcome gust of fresh air.? "?BCCB"?This romantic comedy is pure fun. "Kirkus Reviews", starred review"A welcome gust of fresh air." " - BCCB""This romantic comedy is pure fun." - "Kirkus Reviews", starred review"A welcome gust of fresh air." " - BCCB""This romantic comedy is pure fun." - "Kirkus Reviews", starred review

This is a wonderfully uplifting story about 3 friends and the summer freshmen year of high school when they discover who they are individually and together. The book follows T.C. Keller, Augie Hwong, and AlAfÂ© Perez as they battle new feelings, new places, and each other in Brookline Massachusetts. Along the way they find new friends, responsibility, and romance. I have read this book 4 or 5 times now and it never gets old. It's really a go to comfort book to me. Its happy and good and uplifting without feeling cheesy or unrealistic. I am a fan of the epistle style novel and this book takes it to another letter combining journal entries, emails, and instant messages to form a complete picture of these teens lives. I tend to love stories that include good parents and this book does. Not only do you hear from the 3 main characters, but you get fun insights into their parents' lives through emails and other communications. It is a thoroughly enjoyable read.

I discovered Steve Kluger by accident, when I picked up "The Last Days of Summer" at a book fair run by my temple a few years ago. It sat on a shelf for a while, and when I finally read it in 2004 I was knocked out. Since then, I made a point of reading everything by Steve. I was thrilled to hear about the release of "My Most Excellent Year" recently. Only after purchasing it did I realize it was classified as Young Adult fiction. While this book is suitable and wonderful for Young Adults, it's suitable and will be loved by anyone. As in his other books, Steve brings characters to life through little snippets of written communication between the characters. It's a humorous and touching story of a group of teenagers, a younger boy they take under their wing, and their respective families and young love. I was sad when it ended and wished I could follow the lives of these young people as

they grew further into adulthood. (Hey Steve - a sequel or two - or five? It worked for J.K. Rowling...) I recommend this or any of Steve's books for anyone. Incidentally, I've now written to Steve twice and received very gracious replies explaining the inspirations behind the books. He's not only a great writer, he's a great guy.

Hands down one of the best books I've ever read. I fell instantly in love with the author's writing style and found myself completely captivated with each character's individual voice. Books like this tend to not be for everyone, but all of the author's books seem to read like an extremely chipper romantic comedy on speed. Everything is quick witted, laugh out loud funny, sarcastic, and altogether heartwarming in that lovable cheesy way. If you are looking for something with a bit more nitty gritty substance then look somewhere else, but if you are in need of some comfort pie, read this book right now.

SOME SPOILERS CLOSER TO THE END OF THE REVIEW, I WILL GIVE ANOTHER WARNING. When I finished this book, it made me sigh happily and left me ready and eager to reread it as soon as I can. As one of the reviewers already mentioned it is basically a story of three high school students growing up. It is a story which has so much heart. It is a story about friendship, love, kindness to the kids who are your own and whom you decided to treat as your own and yes Mary Poppins pops up for a visit too ;). It is funny, I understand if I think about it that characters are a bit idealized versions of real people, but despite the fact that they all (kids, their parents, their friends) are good, decent, kind people I honestly did not feel that they are Polyanna characters while I was reading the book. I honestly felt that I could easily meet those people in real life. **SOME SPOILERS TO FOLLOW.** Because really, why can't the teenager who treats the deaf boy he just met as his little brother exist in real life? Why can't the father who is upset that his child would not tell him that he is gay BECAUSE he loves his son that much exist in real life? I loved this book.

For the more mature reader - great book told from multiple points-of-view with three high-school friends who are the main characters. They are almost seniors, and writing an English paper on their most excellent year - all three write about their freshman year and the flashback part of the story is told through their journal entries from freshman year English class. I really like the voice and methods that the story was told in with letters and emails and instant message chats and journals. Deals with coming out of a gay character in a realistic and sensitive way. It's a book about relationships and discovering who we really are. Made my top books list for the year. Mini-Review

This was a book that definitely and swiftly made my list of favorites for 2008. It's full of warmth, heart and most of all laughs. After reading it (one-sitting), I knew it was one of those books that you've just got to share with someone, so I lent it out and sure enough, the friend had to keep it. Needless to say, I've bought about 10 more copies for friends and family. In *Last Days of Summer* and *Almost Like Being in Love*, I got hooked on Kluger's writing and his great characters; with *My Most Excellent Year*, I became a full-fledged fanatic. This is definitely one you won't be able to put down, and one you'll wish didn't have to end.

I have now read this book twice and will read it again. (I gave away my first copy; it was too good not to share.) I do not normally re-read books but this one is so charming, quirky, fun, and moving, that I will take an annual "dose" of it. It's written from the points of view of many characters and in different genres: memos, e-mails, instant messenger, journal entries, letters, etc... But creating the book in this way is not a gimmick but rather a clever way to have each individual's personality shine through their written medium. My 15-year old is reading it; so is my 8-year old. *Just know that there is some profanity.

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