



Beyond Clueless

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Marty Sullivan's life ends, basically, when her parents enroll her in a private high school. A private, Catholic, girls-only high school. Meanwhile, at their local public school, her best friend, Jimmy, comes out of the closet and finds himself a boyfriend and a new group of friends. Marty feels left out and alone, until she gets a part in the school musical, *Into the Woods*, and Jimmy and his new crew are in it, too! Things start looking even better when Marty falls for foxy fellow cast member Felix Peroni. And Felix seems to like her back. But the drama is just beginning. Can Marty and Jimmy keep up their friendship? And is Marty's new beau everything he appears to be? Or is Marty too clueless to figure it all out before it's too late?

Beyond Clueless Details

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Author : Linas Alsenas

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From Reader Review Beyond Clueless for online ebook

Katherine Tobiya says

I liked this book but it was super predictable and I didn't like the main character a lot of times. But I did like how relatable and easy it was to read, and I liked the plot :) I mostly related to Xiang because she was pretty much how I was in high school and how strict her parents are. Quick easy read :)

Savannah says

3.5/5

Personally, I'm a fantasy and adventure reader. I love the way those books excited me and brightened up my boring, repetitive days. But when my friend showed me this book, it quickly became one of my favorites. It just hit me in the face how real it was and how many problems people are dealing with that we don't even stop and recognize.

In this book, a fourteen year old-- a very relatable age-- named Marty and her struggles with moving to an all-girl Catholic school, drifting from her best friend, and typical teenage crushes. Throughout the book, the characters change and mature through the experiences, and let me say, the end was very surprising, but also not at the same time.

Many of the reviews I read were pointed very directly at all of Marty's flaws. While I do agree that she could be a bit better of a character, that being flawed as she was makes it even more of a realistic fiction. She's fourteen, for goodness sake! Not twenty-five! Nobody is going to be perfect and amazing just because they're some protagonist for a REALISTIC FICTION, not fantasy. So, from that, I quite enjoyed the book and how it showed that nobody is perfect, and many of us are beyond clueless (get it??) about our current social issues.

This book is completely underrated and barely known, but it's so honest and shows the flaws in society, something not many writers are brave enough to even attempt. This book is so relevant and true it felt almost like an autobiography. A few parts are a bit confusing, yes, but it all comes together at the end to form a good story.

If I were to describe this book in a single word, it would probably be something like "real" or "true" because it isn't something that's considered realistic but it's nearly impossible due to the perfection in it. It's honest and straightforward to the point that it conveys-- No matter what happens, good friends are there, even when they aren't.

Jessie says

So. Bored. Must. Stop. Reading.

I only read the first 100 pages. Does a story develop at any point or is the entire novel just a whiny 14-year-old wishing her friends would pay more attention to her?

Seriously, Marty has got to be one of the most annoying protagonists I have ever had the displeasure of attempting to read. I caught myself rolling my eyes several times. I wanted to like this cute fluffy tale about friends growing up and coming to terms with their sexualities (especially with music theatre being a large part of the novel) but dear god this was boring.

The best part of the novel is the title because the author truly is "beyond clueless" on how to entertain readers.

Sónia Salgado says

This book was a huge disappointment and a freaking mess, here's why:

-> Martha Sullivan. She's a self-absorbed, jealous, selfish and judgmental 14yr girl who loves musical theatre. Now, don't get me wrong, I fucking love musical theatre, but all her flaws made it almost unbearable for me to finish this book. And it takes a lot for me to stop reading a book. I wanted to smack some sense into that girl 99% of the time! She treated everyone like shit! If I ever talked to my parents the way she did, my mother would have slapped me so hard I'd be sporting a permanent red tattoo on my cheek for the rest of my life. What is wrong with her? She's disrespectful af!! And her parents didn't act like parents at all! My sister is 14 and she'd be in a lot of trouble if she did half what Martha did.

-> I didn't really care about any of the characters. The only one I like is Oliver to be honest. Oh and Kate! Felix was obviously a major a-hole and a creep.

-> Jimmy and Martha's relationship didn't strike me as a good one to be honest. At the first problem they just stopped talking to each other? Didn't make much sense if they were supposed to be so close she'd said they were soul-mates.

-> Oliver plot. (view spoiler)

I did like the diversity of the characters, there's at least two POC, in my head Felix is black but it was never specifically said he was so yeah - he was described as dark twice.

And Kate was a pleasant surprise! I was afraid the author would go for the stereotype popular girl.

There are a couple more things that bothered me. The "secondary" characters could have been more developed. I thought some of them acted way older than their age, namely Martha and Xiang. At 14 I had no fucking clue teenagers had fucking sex, I thought it was only in the tv it happened and that it was a grow-ups thing. I remember my crush when I was 12 asked me to be his girlfriend and I said "I do." - yes I know - and then ran away and avoided him at all costs for the rest of my life. And when I was 14 I wasn't at all that bothered that my crush didn't like me back. At the time I just wanted to be friends my boy friends, nothing more, ever. So unless I was oblivious of everything happening around me, I'd say a lot in this book is very unrealistic.

Kristen (kaymaldo) says

[that a true friendship can turn into true love, while insta-lust can turn insta-creepy (hide spoiler)]

Barbara says

Fifteen-year-old Martha (Marty Sullivan) is definitely unexcited about starting school in a private Catholic girls' school, especially since her best friend Jimmy won't be with her. But she does make friends with Xiang, a musician who amuses her with her antics and her own budding romance and she tries out and gets a role in the school musical, *Into the Woods*. Jimmy is in the throes of his own first romance with Derek, but he persuades some of his male friends to help out with the production. When Marty and Felix, one of the handsome actors in the musical, are attracted to each other, they kiss in private and keep their relationship very secret. But Marty senses that there is something wrong, and Felix seems to be moving too quickly for her. The book's title comes from Marty's inability to see the truth about Felix and some of the others in her circle. Fans of drama in both senses of the word will surely enjoy this one although some of the surprise near the end of the book wasn't all that surprising to readers who've been paying attention. Ah, spare me from ever being fifteen again with all the angst, drama, and confusing relationships to navigate. The author captures all the flavors of high school and first loves quite well here.

Alison Meisch says

3.5

I felt like this book too a little too long to reach the climax, and then wrapped everything up in the last 20 pages.

I wish there would have been more on Oliver and Marty's relationship and less about Felix (stupid Felix!!)

I liked how relatable, and sometimes funny, Marty was and overall I found this book to be an easy, quick read.

Angie says

In my opinion I generally didn't enjoy this book very much it isn't bad but it isn't the best. Why ? Well because it doesn't describe much of Marty's high school experience I expected to read well , Marty's high school experience. Furthermore , this book is more about drama. Drama because Marty has had some friendship issues at the beginning of high school and her best friend ,jimmy becomes gay and Marty attends an all girls catholic school which she hates and so since Marty and jimmy don't attend the same school Jimmy has found a new group of friends . Now will Marty be pleased with the fact that Jimmy has new friends? Will Marty then trust her best friend Jimmy anymore ? Well you'll find out once tu read this book .

Jae Park says

"Beyond Clueless" is a book about the main character, Marty Sullivan. She's a girl, by the way. It's also a book about teenage angst, but with very different and interesting versions of it.

Marty is sent to an all girls Catholic school and she isn't very happy about it. She will also be separated from her best friend Jimmy for the first time. She is nervous and unhappy about all of these circumstances.

Marty starts to feel better when she meets a new friend, Xiang. Then Jimmy comes out of the closet, which really isn't a surprise to her, and introduces her to a fun group of guys. One of these new friends is Jimmy's boyfriend Derek. They all have a lot of fun together and Marty is feeling better about life in general.

That is, until she and some of her new friends are cast in her school's musical play. And she comes face to face with Felix, whom she had literally bumped into at the mall previously. Well, she actually bumps into his Nanna. Anyway, she thinks he's hot, and there he is, at her school trying out for the play.

The story takes a few twists and turns, and since I don't want to spoil the ending, I'll just say that Felix is not the nicest guy and leave it at that. It all works out in the end, and I really enjoyed how it all played out. I'd recommend this book to anyone who is dealing with similar situations, or anyone who just likes to read a good book!

Liviania says

I keep passing BEYOND CLUELESS in my Kindle and thinking, "What book is that? It's marked that I read it." Then I open it up and remember. "Oh yeah! That one." BEYOND CLUELESS was a cute little read (with a subplot about sexual assault), but the details just keep falling out of my head.

Marty and Jimmy always thought they'd be best friends for life, but two recent events have strained their friendship. Marty's parents sent her to an all-girls school and Jimmy came out and started making new friends in the local gay community. Marty finds a way to bridge the old and the new by joining her school's performance of Into the Woods. Boys are needed for the musical, so some of Jimmy's friends can be in it and the rest can be crew. And Marty definitely thinks things are looking up when she's cast as Little Red Riding Hood against the very attractive Felix Peroni as the Wolf. (Clearly, she doesn't take that as a symbolic bad sign.)

I liked that both Marty and Jimmy made new friends once they were separated. Jimmy takes to it a little bit better, but Marty does find other girls she can hang with, especially Xiang. I also enjoyed Linas Alsenas explorations of her failures to be socially adept, such as when she ostracizes someone herself even though she didn't mean to be cruel. Her difficulties navigating what other people are feeling felt realistic. So did her trouble understanding and articulating her own feelings, especially when she got something she thought she wanted only to discover she wasn't feeling it at all.

I think BEYOND CLUELESS will appeal to young theater fans, especially since it doesn't ignore the importance of the crew. Jimmy's relatively easy coming out probably holds more appeal than more dated portrayals. Marty's difficulties with her relationship with Felix are handled well. Generally, I can't point to anything in BEYOND CLUELESS I didn't like. Remembering that I read it is the only problem.

Sierra Tennant says

DNF at 7%

I just couldn't stand Martha. She was so stuck up and rude and it grated on my nerves. Not to mention I really was not that big of a fan of the writing style.

Kirsty-Marie Jones says

(3.5) Really couldn't have been a better title. Really.

Lola says

so relatable!! literally loved this book OMG!!! highly recommend reading this its really entertaining and as i was reading this i was actually preparing for a drama show so i really recommend this book!!

Hazel (Stay Bookish) says

Actual rating: 3.5

YES

- ALL THE THEATER!!
- Marty's voice really sparkles with fun
- fruit/vegetable nicknames are the BOMB BERRIES
- all the gay friends!!!
- Oliver and everything he did (photoshoot, signs up for assistant stage manager, drive to the lake)
- even those who are (basically) background characters are interesting (kate, jenny, etc)
- nuns! all girls catholic school! not shaving legs!
- the appreciation for twix!
- socialization/friendship dynamics. hanging out with friends of friends who don't even go to your school.

MEH

- the cluelessness
 - predictability
 - the deciding to hate parents all of a sudden
 - xiang's character confused me, especially the becoming super close to kirby and sort of ditching marty part
 - i put this down for a bit at first because i thought it was taking a while for the plot to pick up but then i realized that that was just it, that's the plot
 - the F person. F him.
-

Jenn says

The blurb had me at "Clueless" and "Into The Woods", two of my favourite things/probably more formative in my life than I should admit! So I was totally onboard to love this, and it IS lovely. Endearing characters, a charming plot, and lots of realistic emotions that reminded me how glad I am I'm not a teenager anymore! And then I got to the end and lay on the sofa kicking my legs trilling "payoooooff!", which is always a good sign. A really lovely, warm and enjoyable YA novel that I've really enjoyed snuggling up in today.
