



The Realm of Possibility

David Levithan

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One school. Twenty voices.

Endless possibilities.

There's the girl who is in love with Holden Caulfield. The boy who wants to be strong who falls for the girl who's convinced she needs to be weak. The girl who writes love songs for a girl she can't have. The two boys teetering on the brink of their first anniversary. And everyone in between.

As he did in the highly acclaimed *Boy Meets Boy*, David Levithan gives us a world of unforgettable voices that readers will want to visit again and again. It's the realm of possibility open to us all - where love, joy, and the stories we tell will linger.

The Realm of Possibility Details

Date : Published May 9th 2006 by Ember (first published August 10th 2004)

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Author : David Levithan

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autumn says

*How to Be Alone
Remember that at any given moment
There are a thousand things
You can love*

this is my favorite david levithan book (which is saying something) and one of my favorite contemporaries. i've read it a million times and every time i appreciate something new!

*Ignoring all the strange roads that led to us
being in the same time and place, there is still
the simple impossibility of love. That all of our
contradicting securities and insecurities,
interests and disinterests, beliefs and doubts
could somehow translate into this common
uncommon affection should be as impossible
as walking to the moon. But instead, I love him.*

Anish Kohli says

26/12/18: RTC but oh this was a delight to read! So so great! Loved it! Shoutout to the crazy ass woman for the suggestion!

Colby says

How to describe this book...

It's about a bunch of people.

Who go to the same school. And they talk about stuff. So much is covered in this book, such as eating disorders, boys who feel the need to be big and strong, sex, homosexuality, and all that jazz. There are 20 different voices, one for each 'chapter'. Basically, the reason this gets such a low rating is that the characters would each talk for about ten pages (which, in verse, isn't very much.) and then it would move on to the next character without me having any attachment to the character at all. Honestly, you don't have much of an emotional connection with any of the characters by the end of the book. Really, the only character names I even remember out of the 20+ are Jed, Daniel, and Pete. That's not a very good ratio. That's because I didn't care about any of the characters at all - the three mentioned were just in the book more often, so I remembered their names.

I thought after reading Will Grayson squared, I would see how this author functioned on his own, and I will try another of his books because I really want to read Love is the Higher Law because of its subject matter, but I now see that John Green is the force that pushed WGWG to the awesomeness that it is. Not Levithan.

So right now, I'm lowering my eyebrows in a suspicious glare at David Levithan. We'll see how I feel about him in a little while, after I've read more of his work.

Tatiana says

I didn't know this novel was written in verse when I borrowed it from my library, but no matter, I love the format and David Levithan certainly has solid poetry-writing skills.

The Realm of Possibility is a collection of 20 stories told by the students of the same school, each written in its distinct voice and style - song lyrics, linebroken prose, free verse, etc.

These stories and lives are interconnected in very interesting and often unconventional ways. It is a pleasant surprise that Levithan didn't resort to writing some sob stories and melodramas. For a moment there I was picturing pregnant teens or druggies and prostitutes à la Ellen Hopkins's shock-inducing/stomach-turning/emotionally manipulative novels, but no, while there are some tales in which teens deal with body image issues or sickness of the beloved family members, most stories are very relatable and emotional in a not-too-sappy way - the pain of a breakup, the determination to step out of an older sister's shadow, the despair of unrequited love, the significance of the approaching 1-year anniversary of 2 boys' relationship. My personal favorites are Cara's story about her desire to become a better person and Anton's, in which he gives us an insight into a mind of a Goth kid in the back of a classroom.

All in all, a very enjoyable and memorable novel. Fans of books in verse will undoubtedly appreciate the quality of poetry. I am excited to read Levithan's *Boy Meets Boy* in the near future.

Caroline says

I don't know how David Levithan does it. But he does.

This book may look odd at first. You flip through the pages and find that it looks more like a collection of poetry than a novel. But that's the beauty of it. The unique quirkiness of it that allows for 210 pages of words floating along a river of human emotions. Or something like that.

I found myself trying to keep track of the name of the character while reading each poem-like prose. But as I went on, I realized I didn't need to try so hard. That will come with re-reading. Reading this book is less about the story and more about the emotions and thoughts. Reading this book is like reading journal entries of individuals bearing their hearts.

This book is beautiful. It swept me away in ways that I'm not sure I have words for. I've read Levithan's *"Boy Meets Boy"*. I'm excited to continue making my way through his books.

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Future readers - I don't want you to get your hopes and expectations out of control. That would only spoil everything. Remember what I said up top. This book may seem odd to you at first. It isn't written like most other books, but if you open your heart you'll get the hang of it in no time. <3

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## Aso says

### 4.5/5 stars

note: I read this in english but to write a review in english need an extra effort so....

Saya membaca buku ini karena lagi butuh liburan dari novel-novel fantasi. Sudah beberapa kali kecewa dengan buku fantasi yang saya pilih, takutnya lama kelamaan saya malah terjerumus dalam reading slump.

Saya butuh sesuatu yang fresh dan tidak lazim bagi saya, dan akhirnya saya bertemu dengan buku kumpulan cerita yang disusun seperti bait bait dalam puisi tapi ternyata tiap ceritanya saling berhubungan ini. Dan saya pusing mau sebut buku ini jenis apa? kumcer? kumpulan puisi? novel?. kata orang sih ini verse novel, tapi gak ngerti juga apa maksudnya.

The Realm of Possibility adalah buku ketiga dari David Levithan yang saya baca setelah Boys Meet Boys dan Everyday, ketiga-tiga nya syukurlah memuaskan saya. Bagi saya format dengan multiple PoV di buku ini mirip dengan Everyday (atau Everyday yang mirip buku ini, gak tau deh), tapi yang membuat fresh adalah, isi buku ini ditulis dalam bentuk puisi, dan saya tidak familiar dengan puisi. Puisi bagi saya, adalah untuk orang yang sophisticated. Namun puisi dalam buku ini sederhana, malah kayak seperti orang yang bercerita. Cocok sekali untuk anak muda penggemar YA.

20 cerita dalam 20 puisi melalui 20 sudut pandang yang berbeda yang terhubung satu dengan yang lainnya bagi saya itu Cerdas. Saya kagum dengan buku Everyday, Everyday tapi saya lebih kagum dengan buku ini.

Tema yang diangkatpun sangat dekat dengan kehidupan anak muda jaman sekarang seperti cinta, bullying, rokok, agama, sex, persahabatan, keluarga dan lain lain.

Di bawah ini adalah catatan catatan yang sempat saya buat di handphone saat membaca chapter semi chapter buku ini. Ini bukan review tapi semacam opini saya sebagai pembaca awam.

#### Bagian 1

Smoking : kisah kasmaran anak manusia dalam tiap isapan asap rokok. I never thought that smoking would be that romantic and leave a deep impression on me.

Tinder Heart : ketika kamu butuh bantuan jangan ragu, jangan takut, jangan sungkan untuk memintanya. Karena orang yang menyayangimu pasti selalu ada untuk membantu.

On the inside : puisi untuk para jomblo yang nasibnya stuck, tidak beranjak dari friendzone, dan hanya bisa menangis dalam hati melihat gebetannya jadian dengan orang lain yang sebenarnya gak pantas buat si gebetan tersebut.

#### Bagian 2:

My girlfriend is in love with Holden caulfield: sepasang kekasih yang marahan gara gara si cewek jatuh cinta sama tokoh dalam sebuah novel. david levithan kayaknya gak suka deh sama novel catcher in the rye. dia menumpahkan uneg uneg ketidak sukaannya terhadap Holden dalam cerita pendek ini, melalui sudut pandang si cowok. padahal ini novel favorit saya loh. cekikikan sendiri bacanya karena yang diomongin

sebenarnya masuk akal semua.

Suburban myths: kumpulan beberapa kejadian yang agak aneh. Saya suka cerita/puisi yang terakhir tentang anak outcast di sekolah yang menjadi stalker.

Gospel : mirip dengan cerita yang pertama Smoking, tapi yang menjadi perekat Anton dan Gail di sini adalah lagu puji pujian di gereja. Sweet dan unik.

lying awake beside you, these thoughts run through my head : Well done David, ini salah satu puisi favorit saya dalam buku ini. Pokoke, Angst to the max. kisah dari sudut pandang cewek yang merasa tidak pantas mendapatkan cinta dari cowok, karena masa lalunya yang kelam. Seandainya cinta seperti nafas, di tiap helaan tidak pernah mengingat masanya yang telah lewat. Pokoknya angst dan quotable banget.

Bagian 3:

Fragments : bagi saya yang awam banget sama puisi, chapter ini simply beautiful. Ada pesan yang dalam di balik kalimat kalimat sederhananya. Walaupun agak agak gak ngerti juga sih.

The Day: ketika tiba di puisi ini saya baru sadar kalau beberapa kisah dalam buku ini saling berhubungan. seperti kisah ini, berhubungan dengan dua kisah sebelumnya, silahkan figure it out sendiri yang mana. intinya sih, bagaimana proses move on nya seorang cowok dari cewek yang telah mencampakkannya. di sini kita bisa belajar pentingnya orang-orang terdekat ketika kita sedang down. dengan dukungan teman Jed (lihat puisi smoking) dan saudara laki-laki nya Zack, Jamie akhirnya bisa move on dari cewek yang ia anggap sempurna sebelumnya, dan ini dikisahkan dengan puisi yang cukup dalam dan panjang dan angst yang meluap luap (?), tapi ditutup dengan manis dan optimis. kamu yg baru saja dicampakkan silahkan baca puisi ini.

Strong : awww i cannot help it, once again awww. this is a sad poetry but at the same time it's so sweet. perfect. Intinya adalah love conquer all. Dalam cinta segala perbedaan bukanlah jurang pemisah namun merupakan hal yang menjadi daya tarik, cieeeeh.

The Patron Saints of Stoner: puisi ini dimulai dengan lucu, kemudian sedih, dan diakhiri dengan manis. Hahaha setelah rokok, lagu lagu gospel, sekarang ganja yang mempertemukan satu lagi pasangan. Ya sutra lah mas David Levithan.

Bagian 4

Writing : "The words that matter always stay." Keren. jangan anggap enteng kekuatan kata kata. mereka bisa menjatuhkan, bisa pula menginspirasi.

Your Sister: tak ada yang paling berharga bagi kita selain keluarga. saudara apalagi kakak adalah seseorang yang selalu bisa kita andalkan. Walaupun kadang menjengkelkan dan berharap mereka untuk hilang saja. namun selalu ada momen di mana kita kangen dengan kehadiran mereka. di kisah ini kita disuguhi kisah betapa sulitnya hidup di bawah bayang bayang seorang kakak yang sempurna. rasa jengkel muncul ketika guru guru dan teman terus membandingkan kita dengan kakak. namun bukan berarti kita harus terus berdiam di bawah bayangan tersebut. kenapa kita tidak menciptakan sinar kita sendiri. dan itu bukan alasan untuk membenci kakak kita sendiri. another happy ending poetry.

Comeuppance : "Being a bitch is easy. It's finding the alternative that's hard". Semua orang bisa menjadi orang yang lebih baik namun itu butuh usaha ekstra. Dibutuhkan suatu turning point untuk sadar bahwa

selama ini kita bukan orang yang baik. butuh shock therapy untuk membuka mata kita. Tapi di mana ada kemauan di situ ada jalan (halaahh).

The Grocer's Daughter : Jatuh cinta sendiri dalam diam. Semua orang pernah merasakannya. Tidak semua cinta harus diungkapkan. Kadang cinta akan lebih terasa jika dipendam dalam dalam dan dinikmati dalam kesendirian. Hahaha. This poetry is a bittersweet one. I like it. Gue bangettt

Part 5

Experimentation: Sex and love and other things. I don't know man, I don't know...

Unlonely : sekali lagi puisi yang "dalem". Kurang ngerti.

Escapede: This. This. I need a friendship like this one. Melakukan hal hal yang ridiculous sampai yang gila bersama. Gak perlu sering bertemu, namun selalu membawa kebahagiaan di tiap pertemuannya, dan kamu bisa mempercayakan hidup mu pada sahabatmu itu.

Possibility : Aaawwww, kalau memang sudah jodoh gak akan ke mana. hehehe. everything is possible.

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## **Ariel says**

Being a teenager is such a time of possibility. You can completely change your philosophy on life every other day and no one will care. In *The Realm of Possibility*, David Levithan presents 20 different poems, from 20 different characters, all illustrating the different problems and thoughts that teenagers have.

This is not the kind of book I would pick up.. I'm just not one for poetry! But this was a gift from a friend (Thanks Jacob!) and I'm really glad that I read something so different. I really felt some of the poems, related to them, learned something from them. Its always really important to look at different perspectives, and this book emphasized that.

Why not five stars? Poetry is just not my thing, peeps. I did enjoy a bunch of the poems, but I also found a lot of them boring and sometimes even pretentious.

My Favourite Poems From This Collection (in order):

- 1) My girlfriend is in love with Holden Caulfield
  - 2) Gospel
  - 3) The Patron Saint of Stoners
  - 4) Writing
  - 5) Your Sister
  - 6) Suburban Myths
- 

## **Emily May says**

I'm not sure what it is about these books in verse that really does it for me but I'm yet to be disappointed by

one. I've read some of those by Ellen Hopkins and Lisa Schroeder and I found that writing in verse only added to the emotions I felt as a reader. Maybe it's because it hones in on the point and it's all laid out within a few stanzas instead of meandering about.

Whatever the reason, *The Realm of Possibility* was no exception and I was constantly pulled through a rollercoaster of emotions - even though I admittedly didn't always get what was going on :)

This is definitely the kind of book that you either love or hate, both for the fact that it's in verse and because David Levithan has a very unique writing style (that I happen to love the more I encounter it).

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## **Rebecca says**

Sometimes I read a book by an author and I find myself wanting to read everything else they've written. That's exactly the case with David Levithan, after I read *Every Day*. I fell in love with his writing style - it's simple yet beautiful, and poetic in a way. One of the first books that came to my attention was *The Realm of Possibility*, which again blew me away with its writing.

I'm not a huge fan of poetry, so at first I was a little skeptic of the format of the book's prose. Written in free-verse poetry, meaning there's no rhyme or other patterns, the book is comprised of numerous small chapters, each told in a different voice. Each character is unique and though I enjoyed some chapters more than I did others, I could appreciate each one in its own way. I'd say that Levithan is one of the strongest writers I've come across at portraying realistic young characters. There were a variety of different situations and character types, and each were realistic and sometimes relatable. The format of each chapter adds to the effectiveness of communicating the emotions of the characters, and was an unique way of telling the story. I particularly liked the connections - whether they were subtle or more significant - between the stories.

Despite its enjoyability, there was also a lot of confusion for me. I sometimes struggled to understand who was speaking, as the names of the characters were printed at the start of each section, rather than above each chapter. There were so many characters that as the book went on, it could be a little confusing trying to remember who was who. While I was reading, each voice was distinctive and I grew to associate them with different things, but I had issues distinguishing them from one another outside of their individual chapters. As much as I did enjoy the book, I wish it would have been told by fewer characters so more attention could have paid to their stories. I found that I often grew attached to characters, only to have their chapters end too soon. However, I loved the fact that it ended as it began, with Jed and Daniel.

*The Realm of Possibility* is one of the first books that I've read that was written in non-traditional prose. While I do prefer the usual narrative format, I was surprised by how much I liked the style of this one. It's definitely inspired me to look into more books that are written in this way. I will also be reading more of David Levithan's books in the future, as I'm still enthralled by his beautiful writing and realistic portrayal of characters.

This review is also on my blog

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## Sophia says

"I often feel I am living in fragments, skipping

Over words, leaving the rest of the sentence

Blank in order to move to the next page.

Maybe there is hope in fragments, that what is lost

Can always be filled in by someone who knows."

Every person is a planet with an atmosphere, that sometimes collides or fuses with other ones. If this book shows anything, it's that we never know what really goes on in people's minds, even when we think we figured it out (like we think in high school, where everything seems predictable). The life in someone's atmosphere doesn't give us the clues we imagine as to what's happening on or in a planet itself.

'The realm of possibility' is a book about the daily life of students, but it's so much more to me. The poetic & thoughtful chapters, a little love & drama, experiments in style & devices; it all adds up to this wonderful image of what's going on in our heads & hearts when we're young.

I most enjoy the lines that paint a picture, where language makes me feel things I've pushed aside for too long, where the glimpses we get of the characters suddenly make me cry.

I understand why people dislike this book, it's not for everyone & it also took me a few tries to understand its full beauty. But the moment I was in the right mindset, ready to be touched & pushed away, then pulled in again - that's when I started to truly love it.

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## Ritu Raveendran says

This book seemed extremely promising especially since it is a David Levithan book, but I am completely done reading about **Teenagers** who believe that their life is terrible(When it is pretty much regular) and go on **Complaining** about it. The issues mentioned here are so goddamn petty that I couldn't help rolling my eyes .

It's hard to believe that I was a teenager just two years ago ! I feel so old and matured already .

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## Claudia says

OMG! Levithan is a genius. This book, a novel in verse, has 20 narrators, all students at the same high school. Each tells his or her own story, and they all are inter-related. Some are friends, some are enemies, some are romantic interests. As always, Levithan includes gay and lesbian characters with respect and affection. Each student has a distinctive voice and we grow to love all of them. To fully see the relationships, I created a chart to show whose story was whose, who they liked and didn't like, who they mentioned...this is such a layered work. I loved it.

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## Yamna Rashid says

Read this book four months ago and *still* trying to think of a suitable review.

But I've decided that I can't.

I just can't.

This book has too many sides, too many stories interwoven to form a lovely nest and too many topics for me to cover in a review.

And that's why I loved it.

I would have called it the best of 2017 but I'm afraid another book has taken its place.

In a high school, you always find questionable characters, lonely people, evil friends, backbiters, depressed kids, suicidal thoughts, bullies, victims and more. It's a place where kids are in the stage of learning the difference between right and wrong. And it's where kids slowly start to accept the reality that soon they will be adults. Where uni life demands more attention and more seriousness, high school life is like living in a trance; you want it to both end and not end.

And to voice out these feelings, the author speaks to us through twenty voices. All kids from the same school, all with several problems, and all with different personalities.

And though it's a hard feat to achieve, David succeeded in reaching the tiniest parts of our hearts through

1. Subtly voicing out what the child within each one of us feels.

***"People called them freaks not because they were identical, but because they were so damn happy."***

2. Making us feel things we do not want to feel

***"Yes, he is dressed in darkness. But my eyes are getting used to the dark."***

3. Getting us to wonder what it will be like to be a teen in love

***"I was amazed by her slowness, by the bones of her pale arms. She was so breakable. I wondered: If I lifted her, would it feel like a wing?"***

4. Voicing out thoughts that make us ponder

***"She was so light, but her emotions were heavy."***

5. Head spinning philosophies

***"Maybe this is what happens when life is no longer about bodies. You find yourself in your own body, and no matter how strong it is, it is separate. It contains its own space. It must find its own way."***

***"We are so used to releasing words. We don't know what to do with them if they stay. Not on the walls. I'm not talking about the walls. I'm talking about what happens when they stay with us. No matter how many times we let them go, they come back. The words that matter always stay."***

6. Igniting a flame in your heart through his words

***"Run outside during a thunderstorm***

***That downpour, that conquered hesitation, that exhilaration***

***That's what unlonely is like***

***The Discovery***

***This is what my voice sounds like***

***I don't need to be talking to someone else***

***To hear it"***

7. Taking a book out of Halsey's Colors to describe people

*"We can go weeks without speaking, and then, when my blue moods threaten to turn black, he will show up and tell me my moods are  
azure  
indigo  
cerulean  
cobalt  
periwinkle  
and suddenly the blue will not seem so dark,  
more like the color of a noon-bright sky."*

8. Aptly detailing relationships

*"Our friendship is made of bendy straws, long midnight letters, my so-called life marathons, sleepless sleepovers, diner milkshakes, apron strings, a belief in beauty, sucking helium, and the most trust I have ever felt for anyone."*

9. And lastly, proving his worth as an author

*"There is always a possibility. The ring marks the realm of possibility  
We will want to know each other  
Years into days  
Days into hours  
Hours into minutes  
Minutes into moments  
Moments into  
Possibility."*

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## Melanie says

See more reviews at [YA Midnight Reads](#)

### Mini review:

Verse books tend to be a hit or miss for me, and in most occasions, I've found myself completely sucked into the story, *The Realm of Possibility* is another one of those verse books that just *work*.

I can't pretend to know what love is. It just is.

*The Realm of Possibility* is a bit like an anthology, for it follows multiple people's lives--a different person per poem. The author particularly focuses the teenagers' love lives and life problems. As expected of David Levithan, what's more is that we are given a diverse array of characters; and I can always trust this author to bring the best GLBTQ+ stories, that are not only authentic but also incredibly touching. Each poem was beautiful and powerful in their own right, and some of these poems have stuck onto me. I particularly enjoyed Gospel which was such a hopeful and empowering piece. In fact, I'd say it was one of my favourites of this collection. There are others that I liked too such as The Day and Tinder Heart, but honestly, all of them touched me in some way, and only authors like David Levithan can seem to do that with verse.

Another thing that I'd like to add is that not one poem follows the same type of free verse. Some poems only have 2-5 words per line, some are have full sentences per line, some use capital letters to show their uniqueness, some are just completely sporadic. I really loved that, because it kept me intrigued the whole way through with fresh ways of presenting the free verse. I guess that's what I love about free verse too, you can do whatever you want with it as there are no rules.

General consensus? I adored this book. If you haven't read anything David Levithan yet, you haven't seen the best of YA verse or GLTBQ+ yet.

*~Thank you Text Publishing Australia for sending me this copy!~*

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## **stephanie says**

this book is a fantastic work of art.

20 separate people, united in this book, tell a story that is more than just about them, but about their school, society, friendship, love, and being a teenager.

i was very skeptical when i picked this up because usually verse-books don't do it for me. however, since this is my trip of reading David Levithan, i opened it. and man, am i ever glad!

it works kind of like a mystery - who is talking to who, who's name is what, how everyone intersects - but it's not overdone to that point - it just is. so many teens write poetry, and it seems to be a perfect way to communicate in this book.

and the writing! the writing is amazing - the voices of each individual are so clear and yet the book is cohesive. it's amazing. and jed! oh, jed, i love you. and charlotte and mary and lia and pretty much every person in this book. it's utterly brilliant.

i can't say enough.

"i am seeing, as if by the light of a match,  
a glimpse of my life  
and having it feel right.

this will linger."

"I'm talking about what happens when they stay with us. No matter how many times we let them go, they come back. The words that matter always stay."

"You think you know your possibilities.  
Then other people come into your life  
and suddenly there are so many more."

**READ THIS.**

