

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

GIRL MEETS BOY

BECAUSE THERE ARE TWO SIDES TO EVERY STORY

EDITED BY KELLY MILNER HALLS

FEATURING:

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

“Love or Something Like It” by Chris Crutcher

- Consider John’s very open acknowledgement of his good looks. Does his sense of self make his character more or less appealing to you? In what ways does his physical appearance make life more challenging for him? In your opinion, would his experiences be different if he were less handsome?
- In what ways does John’s mother’s alcoholism and the dynamics of his relationship with her make him more susceptible to Wanda’s advances? How is his relationship with both of these women similar? Besides her looks, what is it about Wanda that draws John to her?

“Some Things Never Change” by Kelly Milner Halls

- Though John and Wanda’s physical relationship quickly becomes intimate, each of them perceives their relationship differently. How would you characterize Wanda’s perception of their romance? In your opinion, who seems more committed to the other?
- Wanda states, ‘Baby,’ he whispered. Baby. The magic word, like victory flashing neon yellow. It says the game has shifted. Guy, nothing; Wanda, the whole enchilada... But messing with him taught me if I made all the moves, I kept all the marbles.” How is this statement indicative of Wanda’s approach to men? What does she hope to accomplish? In what ways is her behavior an indicator of larger issues at play?

“Falling Down to See the Moon” by Joseph Bruchac

- What role does karate play in the life of Bobby Wildkat? How does Eastern philosophy help him make sense of his place within his community?
- When Sensei Dwight tells Bobby, “You don’t have to be tall to see the moon”, Bobby misunderstands him to say that “You don’t have to fall down to see the moon.” Explain how both of these statements can be interpreted. How are both statements applicable to Bobby’s life?
- What is it about Nancy Whitepath that appeals to Bobby? In what ways are the two of them similar? Do you think they will ultimately make a good couple? Why or why not?

“Mooning over Broken Stars” by Cynthia Leitich Smith

- Though Nancy’s physical size is noteworthy, the strength of her character makes seem larger than life. In what ways is it difficult to have such a presence?
- Though she’s apprehensive of another altercation, Nancy comes to the rescue of Bobby. Why does she do so? Does she make the right decision?

“want to meet” by James Howe

- Consider Max’s apprehension at meeting Alex; though he is ready to move forward with their relationship, what is he afraid of?
- After his initial disappointment in discovering that his online “friend,” Alex, is a girl, Max realizes that he still feels very connected to her. In your opinion, how is that possible? Though there are obvious drawbacks, what are the benefits of becoming acquainted to someone virtually?

“Meeting for Real” by Ellen Wittlinger

- As the story opens, readers observe Alex using a curtain shut over the door to her room as a way to block out the conflict in her home. How does her home environment impact her life? How does her mother’s abandonment of the family play a role in her relationship with the father and brothers? Why is Cal’s presence in the family so important to Alex?
- In your opinion, is Alex justified in tricking Max into believing she is a male? Why or why not?

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“No Clue, aka Sean” by Rita Williams-Garcia

- In what ways is Sean different from the usual boys that are interested in dating Raffina? Why is she attracted to his “cluelessness” when it comes to her?
- Explain Raffina’s delight when Sean asks, “You have a brother in this school?” In what ways does having a popular older sibling prove to be difficult? Consider Raffina’s relationship with her brother. Why does she tell Sean that he will have to meet Gary before she can date him? What can readers infer about their sibling dynamic?

“SEAN + RAFFINA” by Terry Trueman

- Though most girls assume Sean’s shyness prevents him from attempting to date, he is motivated by a much stronger emotion: fear. Why is Sean’s desire to overcome his anxiety about Raffina important?
- Why is it significant that Sean also feels that he must share his interest in Raffina with his family? How do their reactions motivate him?

“Mouths of the Ganges” by Terry Davis

- Though his affection for Kerry is genuine, Rafi chooses to down play his relationship with her. Why does he find himself unwilling to be honest with his family? Do you agree with this decision? Why or why not? Why is he so unhappy with the need to keep his family unaware of the seriousness of his relationship?
- Explain what Rafi means when he states, “Kerry is the one who is responsible for keeping our animals on a short leash.” In your opinion, is this typical behavior for a girl in a relationship? Explain.
- While Rafi’s frustration with his rigid parents is natural, much of their behavior is motivated by care and concern for him. Offer a textual example of this. What about the differences in their cultures makes their relationship so challenging?

“Mars at Night” by Rebecca Fjelland Davis

- Why does Kerry feel so conflicted regarding her affection for Rafi? What part does her grandmother’s play in her sense of guilt and shame?
- How does Kerry’s knowledge of Smithville’s underhanded installation of a hog factory inspire her to fight for the greater good of her community? What makes this endeavor so risky for her? In your opinion, does Kerry make the right decision? Why or why not?

“Launchpad to Neptune” by Sara Ryan and Randy Powell

- Considering their past history, why is it important to Gavin and Stephanie to reconnect? What are each of them hoping to get from this reunion of sorts?
- Though it is the working relationship between their fathers that led Gavin and Stephanie to know each other at a young age, each views his family in a different light. What role does family play for each of these characters?
- Gavin declares that the worst moment of his life was when he chose to ignore Stephanie because he was unsure of what to say to her. In what ways does this event foreshadow the dramatic climax of the story?
- Stephanie/Stephen tells Gavin, “I’ve always admired you. You’re the one person in the world I always wanted to be like.” How does this knowledge impact Gavin? In what ways has their relationship come full circle?

ABOUT THE BOOK:

Twelve of the most dynamic and engaging YA authors writing today team up for this one-of-a-kind collection of he said/she said stories—he tells it from the guy’s point of view, she tells it from the girl’s. You’ll meet a chronic cheater and the sex crazed girl he thinks will help him; a shy native boy and the lady warrior he yearns to know; a lonely gay teen and the online friend he hopes will end his loneliness; a Muslim immigrant and the Iowa farm girl his parents can’t accept; an awkward white boy and the confident African American girl who just might give him a chance; and a high school pair that drifted apart after he asked her to be more than “just a friend.”

You’ll see how all the characters think, and you’ll draw some conclusions of your own. Because there really are at least two sides to every story, whether you can see them or not. **Visit chroniclebooks.com/girlmeetsboy to learn more.**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Kelly Milner Halls is the author of *Albino Animals* and *Tales of the Cryptids*, both YALSA Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers. Her writing has appeared in a variety of publications including *Booklist*, *BookPage*, *Teen Reads*, the *Denver Post*, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, the *Washington Post*, and many others. She lives in Spokane, Washington. **Visit Kelly at www.kellymilnerhalls-ya.com.**

