



The Astonishing Adventures of Fanboy and Goth Girl

By Barry Lyga

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A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year

*“Fanboy’s whip-smart, often hilariously sarcastic voice . . . adds fresh, urgent perspective to age-old questions about how young people cope with . . . being misunderstood as they try to discover themselves.” —Booklist, starred review
“A captivating, darkly entertaining first novel.” —Tom Perrotta, author of Election and Little Children

Fanboy has never had it good, but lately his sophomore year is turning out to be its own special hell. The bullies have made him their favorite target, his best (and only) friend seems headed for the dark side (sports and popularity), and his pregnant mother and the step-fascist are eagerly awaiting the birth of the alien life form known as Fanboy’s new little brother or sister.

Fanboy, though, has a secret: a graphic novel he’s been working on without telling anyone, a graphic novel that he is convinced will lead to publication, fame, and—most important of all—a way out of the crappy little town he lives in and all the people that make it hell for him.

When Fanboy meets Kyra, a.k.a. Goth Girl, he finds an outrageous, cynical girl who shares his love of comics as well as his hatred for jocks and bullies. Fanboy can’t resist someone who actually seems to understand him, and soon he finds himself willing to heed her advice—to ignore or crush anyone who stands in his way.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Starred Review. Grade 9 Up—On good days, Fanboy is invisible to the students at his high school. On bad ones, he's a target for bullying and violence. When a classmate is cruel to him, Fanboy adds him to The List and moves on. His only real friend, Cal, is a jock who can't be seen with him in public. Their love of comics, though, keeps them close friends outside of school. Reading comics and writing his own graphic novel, *Schemata*, are the only things that keep him sane. He dreams of showing his work to a famous author at a comic-book convention and being discovered as the next great graphic novelist. When Goth Girl Kyra IMs him with photos of him being beaten up, he's skeptical. Why does she care what happens to him? He learns, though, that she's as much an outsider as he is. The two form a tentative friendship based on hatred of their classmates, particularly jocks, and her interest in *Schemata*. Fanboy is a rule follower, but Kyra is a rebel with a foul mouth. She teaches him to stand up for himself, and gives him the confidence to do it. Lyga looks at how teens are pushed to their limits by society. Though he toys with such concepts as teen suicide and Columbine-like violence, the novel never turns tragic. His love of comics carries over into all three teen characters, breathing animation into a potentially sad but often funny story. This is a great bridge book for teens who already like graphic novels.—Stephanie L. Petruso, Anne Arundel County Public Library, Odenton, MD

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From [Booklist](#)

"I'm a computer geek, a comic book geek, a study geek. Even in the Fast-Track classes, I'm apart." Fifteen-year-old Fanboy is miserable at school, where he is bullied, and at home, with his pregnant mother and her husband, the "step-fascist." His only relief is the late hours spent creating his own comic book. Then he receives an instant message from Kyra, an enigmatic Goth who seems to be the only witness to the violence he endures, and the two form a cagey, charged friendship. Unlike Daniel Ehrenhaft's *Drawing a Blank* (2006), in which a young comics fan embarks on a wild, fantastical adventure, Lyga's debut novel is a darkly comic, realistic, contemporary story of bullying and a teen's private escape in artistic pursuits. Fanboy entertains plenty of violent thoughts. He carries a bullet, keeps a tally of his abusers ("The List"), and lashes out with sometimes-cruel remarks, which feel sharply authentic. The insider comics details will slow some readers, and the open-ended questions about Kyra's personal story will frustrate others. Yet Fanboy's whip-smart, often hilariously sarcastic voice skillfully captures a teenager's growing self-awareness, and adds a fresh, urgent perspective to age-old questions about how young people cope with bullying and their own feelings of helplessness, rage, and being misunderstood as they try to discover themselves. *Gillian Engberg*

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Review

..."Fanboy's whip-smart, often hilariously sarcastic voice...adds fresh, urgent perspective to age-old questions about how young people cope with...being misunderstood as they try to discover themselves."

Lyga looks at how teens are pushed to their limits by society...His love of comics carries over into all three teen characters, breathing animation into a potentially sad but often funny story. This is a great bridge book for teens who already like graphic novels.

So cool that you might want to wrap it in black fabric and have it delivered anonymously to your teenager... What a find.

... "Fanboy's whip-smart, often hilariously sarcastic voice...adds fresh, urgent perspective to age-old questions about how young people cope with...being misunderstood as they try to discover themselves."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Denise Niemi:

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Dorothy Betancourt:

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David Scott:

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