



Snap

Allen Renfro

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The country is petrified by a rogue criminal known as Killer Ghost who posts videos online of his brutal crimes. Danny, a desperate young hustler, is rescued and befriended by a stranger. As if falling from the sky the stranger he calls Blue Eyes is a dream come true giving Danny a chance to start a brand new life. But happiness is short lived when Danny realizes the stranger who is tormented by horrific events in his past could be the Killer Ghost determined to destroy everything and everyone in his way and avenge a past he did not deserve.

Snap Details

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From Reader Review Snap for online ebook

Katharina says

4.75

A word of caution at the beginning: this is not a romance! If you are looking for anything romantic and lovey-dovey: this is not it. Turn away right this instant.

... Or do not. Because romance or not, this book is worth reading. Just adjust your expectations and get on with it, anyway :)

So, what can I say about this book? It's... brutal. Grimy and dirty. There is a poetic cruelty in every line that makes you shudder and yearn for more. It is like a drug, painful and addictive, like strong remedies, poisonous and healing at the same time. It shows you in insightful details how our view of the world is distorted by our own perception. Snap is not a book of the hero-type bad boys that glamorously seek justice. There is no glamour in this book and no hero. Instead what you will see is the ugly side of this world with mankind maybe being the ugliest thing in it all. You will go to places you don't want to go, that are uncomfortable, but still draw you in like a car crash - you cannot look away and by not looking away you see a face of truth that is frightening and real and you'll find it reflected in yourself.

This story stirred me up deeply because it showed me a part of myself that I'm usually not aware of. As I followed the events and the actions of our anti-heroes, as I listened to their story, saw into their darkness and brutality, knowing that what they were doing was very WRONG, I still found a part of me cheering them on, wishing for a good ending for those two no matter at what costs. I found this potential for being the same as they are, doing the same as they do, saw that it was maybe mere circumstance and sheer luck that I am NOT capable of their actions - but what truth are my ideas and ethics then when they are so fragile, shaken up so easily?

I'm not sure whether this is a book I will reread any time soon, but I'm still very glad that I have read it. It is not easy to swallow, but of a nutritious quality that makes the chewing and choking worth it. And I definitely will skim through it often enough to reread some of the incredible imagery, of the wisdom put in simple words, and the ugly truths that still relieve you, because they are TRUE and we don't have to hide them any longer.

All of that being said, I have to detract a little bit for the (admittedly rather few) grammar mistakes I found - the editing felt a bit sloppy there sometimes.

Elizabetta says

3.85 stars

This is a wild ride, a psychological drama/horror story seen through the eyes of Danny, a 17 year-old street hustler and drifter reduced to tricking for food. We get a taste of Dickens when Danny, at the end of hope, with nothing and no one, is visited one night by his ghost of nightmares past and present. He finds himself rescued (or is it avenged...?) by Matthew, a mysterious and dangerous stranger he dubs "Blue Eyes" or "the monster". Together, they drive around the countryside in ramshackle cars, wreaking havoc. Is Danny headed

for hell or towards redemption?

"I finally asked for something to drink. He (Matthew) cocked his head toward the back seat. "Cooler back there." I turned and looked. There really was a cooler. It would either have beer or somebody's head."

We are drawn to Danny, he is snarky and world-weary but maintains a level of innocence and vulnerability. Street toughened, he's still the small boy afraid of the monsters under the bed and lurking in dark corners. He is wary of the kindness of strangers:

"You're afraid of the dark," he [Matthew] said. "No, I'm not," I said as I pulled the blankets over me. "Let me rephrase," he said. "You're afraid of what is in the dark." "That's where it all is," I said. "Where what is?" "The everything, the anything. All the stuff that eats you alive," I said... He did not seem bothered lying on the floor on his side squeezed between the TV stand and the foot of the bed. I jumped back to the bed avoiding his feet. I admired him. **I could never sleep that close to the dimension known as under the bed knowing the frozen hand of death could reach out and pull me under any second...knowing the somewhere was just under me, peering out with hungry fangs waiting for me to put my feet down on the floor...** The metamorphosis was seamless. From Blue Eyes to the thing under my bed, white fanged, red eyed, claws, waiting, waiting."

'Snap' looks at the ugliness of hate crime from the victim's and perpetrator's sides. Matthew, a modern-day hero/avenger/vigilante dubbed "Ghost Killer" by the media is meting out retribution for wrongs done to him. The twists and turns of Matthew's life and why he has brought Danny into it are what pulls the reader along.

The start of the story is a bit of a mystery -- difficult to parse what was going on and how it fits into the whole (view spoiler). As the action progresses we move into character delving and backstory but it's still very much a mystery unfolding. The writing is at times incredible, like a patchwork of lyrical thickness that moves from prose to almost poetry, descriptive and gritty...

My name is Danny

Silence is cold, silence is a voice, a threat, a decision. Silence is helpless. Silence is I'm sorry. Silence is no. Silence is I'm afraid. Silence is there's nothing I can do. Silence is the one monster we're all afraid of.

My name is Matthew

Silence is warm, silence is a thought, a promise, a wish. Silence is strong. Silence is I know. Silence is yes. Silence is I'm stronger than you. Silence is you can't stop me. Silence is the one guardian we all want beside us.

Silence was Danny, consumed with the dawn of realization. Even something of such great beauty can be filled with the ugly of humanity. Humanity was a lip service to the beast that prowls within.

I really like the bones of this story, it's message; but this was hard reading at times, dense, rough around the edges and in the middle, and disjointed...a lilting waltz that would break into a wild boogaloo. It was sometimes hard to catch the rhythm and that's the issue, it's fun and frustrating. So frustrating to get brilliant content in search of good editing that would have elevated it to stellar status.

"Snap" is intriguing and engrossing work from a fresh voice and viewpoint. I'd shelve this as gay literature and a hard-core coming of age tale, neither a romance nor erotica, but there is love. Recommended, but be patient, the ending is worth it all.

Ross McCoubrey says

Every so often you come across a story that not only demands your attention but challenges your perceptions. Snap, by Allen Renfro, is such a novel.

The author beautifully crafts what could be taken as a sinister concept (vigilante style murder/retribution) and through gracefully constructed prose, reminiscent of Kerouac at his best, has Danny, the protagonist, tell us how his encounter with a supposed trick ended up being a road trip through a kind of silver-lined hell.

Danny uses a stream of consciousness that takes the reader so deeply into his brain that the ideas inside stop forming in traditional ways and we are hit with rapid-fire intuitions and concepts, which the author deftly delivers by eliminating excess commas, making both the story as a whole and the inner monologue of its lead character have a bang-bang-bang delivery which keeps the reader avidly turning page after page.

The way in which Danny thinks about objects as people; cars are grandfather and brother, drugs have capitalized first names, allow the reader to even further appreciate the isolation and desperation that Danny feels in his regular day-to-day existence. From hustling for a hot dog to the story's culmination, we are with Danny every step of the way, not sure if we are rooting him on or waiting with an uneasy trepidation for his imminent fall.

This is a novel that deserves a rating higher than 5 Stars and, like any great piece of art, is one to be returned to for further appreciation later.

Snap by Allen Renfro, I will leave it for you to experience this incredible work for yourself.

Silence was Ross.

Frau Sorge (Yuki) says

I think my all 5 stars for this book are speaking for themselves.

Snap is beautifully written, captivating and heartwrenching work of art. There's no romance and I honestly think I wouldn't like it if there was something lovey-dovey.

Highly recommended.

Crossposted on blog: <http://frausorge.wordpress.com/2013/0...>

Anne says

A very powerful book, unlike any other. Very violent in places and some editing would have made it even better and a little easier to read, which is why it gets four stars, not five. The ending was a surprise, but in a good way.

K.Z. Snow says

4.75

More people must read this book. That is my decree. I know my decrees aren't worth the skin cells I'm leaving on my keyboard, but I'm trying to be emphatic. Sometimes, it's worth sounding stupid to make a point.

Snap isn't without its flaws. Most extraordinary reads are like that; pushing can lead to stumbling. I felt it could have benefited from some judicious editing. The rough lyricism of the prose becomes self-indulgent at times, wandering through thickets of figurative language (kind of like I'm doing now) and taking rambling detours through the World According to Danny (the 17-year-old narrator). I would've appreciated more brevity when it came to the philosophizing, and more punctuation to serve as guideposts. Concepts and syntax occasionally get a little garbled. In addition, a couple of oft-repeated phrases chewed at my nerves.

Still, I adored the vividly realized characters, and the clean but nuanced dialogue, and the plot. OMeffinG, what a plot! More inventive and riveting than anything I've read in years. The ending, too, is satisfying -- a lovely fairy-tale ending, part "Cinderella" and part "Hansel and Gretel," complete with a wicked witch shoved into an oven.

A couple of caveats for fans of gay fic and m/m romance: If you read this, be prepared for some grisly incidents. You'll likely flinch at the graphic violence, but you'll also feel the power of those scenes. Their inclusion is more than justified. Don't anticipate explicit sex or traditional romance . . . but don't let that deter you. The story is, very movingly, about trust and intimacy, love and redemption.

Snap is so far out of the box, it's in its own category. Incredible. I'll definitely read it again.

Check out Brandon Shire's interview with Allen Renfro here: <http://brandonshire.com/author-interv...>

Marcus Slade says

Graphically brutal and candid, the author tackles a subject that most authors I'm sure would not be willing to touch. Even though it's fiction, religion, sexuality and the destruction of the family are topics we talk about in real life everyday. This takes the subject to a new level. When someone is pushed too far there is no way of knowing how they might lash out. *Snap* gives you a glimpse of how horrifying someone's wrath can be. An amazing twist at the end that you'll never see coming!

Jen says

Oh, my. Well, this was definitely a different kind of story. I struggled a bit with the prose - if that's what you would call it. It reads almost like an old movie monologue. I thought for sure that I saw the ending coming from a mile a way, but it definitely didn't end how I expected it to. There were times when I was tempted to not finish it, but I did. I'm glad I did, but it was still a tough read. Very sad. I gave it more stars because of the author's ability to write something that's outside of the norm, but I didn't give it 5 stars because it's not something I'll read again and I had moments where I thought I wouldn't finish it.

Laylah says

Such a mixed bag. There are some neat things going on with the story here, and watching how the layers of lies and stories unfold is fascinating -- but the book really would have benefited from an editor, both at the grammar/sentence structure level and at the broader consistency-of-themes level. There were times when Danny's fanciful metaphors verged on the hallucinatory, and his habit of repetition was practically a litany, which made me want to read him as having some kind of a psychological disorder that affected how he processed/recounted images -- but it wasn't applied with enough consistency for me to feel confident that was the intent rather than just a half-trained writer (see above re: grammar and structure) trying for a poetic effect.

It was an interesting enough effort for me to finish, but I don't think I'd pick up another of Renfro's books unless it had gone through an editor's hands to better shape the raw ideas.

Sylvia says

Violent, heartbreaking, vivid, felt like a road movie. I noticed the lack of punctuation but I didn't mind. It made me work a little harder at the start and I got used to it fast. I like the associative writing.

Brandon Shire says

Loved it, probably one of the best books I've read this year. An eclectic book that gets into the meat and bones. VERY Highly recommended.

Ery says

Freebee-looks interesting. see link for details.

Avivs says

This was poetry. Pure, beautiful poetry.
I never read anything by this author, but I want to read more.
Dark story, complex characters and an original tale.

I didn't love the ending as much as I thought, it wasn't at the same level as the beginning and the middle.

But still, this was poetry, and I feel blessed to have read it.

Emanuela ~plastic duck~ says

First of all, this is not romance.

It's a dark, captivating, frightening, violent story of revenge and redemption. Danny is a 17-year-old hustler with a drug-addicted mother and no one else. One night he is "saved" by an incredibly beautiful man who wants nothing sexual from him. He gives Danny a bed, something to eat. He brings Danny along his quest for revenge. Who is this man? The media knows him as Killer Ghost: he burns churches, he kills people, he makes Danny record his deeds and then posts them for everyone to see. Little by little he shares with Danny his past and what he feels is his mission.

This book spoke to the black heart I sometimes forget about. It's great when an author makes you root for the right people for the wrong reasons and vice versa. I think there is in each one of us a spark of bloody revenge, there is the sense - and disappointment maybe - that sometimes true justice is only achieved if you accept to get blood on your hands or on your conscience. There's this ideal of justice you want to get, and there are the means to it you find repulsive, but at the bottom of that dark heart you find so satisfying.

The ending surprised me in a good way. Also I wasn't hoping for something like that. I don't know if it makes the whole story more or less powerful, but it made me feel good.

The writing works of juxtaposition and repetitions. It helps give a frame and rhythm to the narration. Sometimes I had the impression the author loved it a bit too much, and sometimes it was just beautiful.

It packed a punch. Interesting. Not for everyone. Warning: some parts are graphically violent.

Antonella says

4,5

Like K.Z. Snow (I thank her for recommending "Snap") I wonder why isn't everybody reading this book? It's different from other m/m books, and refreshingly so. Gripping and powerful.

About the missing half star: I have some minor issues with punctuation and with some repetitions. Still, it's

an excellent read.
