



## **Fifteen Seconds of Normal**

*Alex Marestaing*

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“There’s an unfortunate side effect of love, an infinite ache that keeps us up at night.”

In a normal love story, she’d drop her papers, and he’d pick them up. They’d lock eyes, and their forevers would begin...but this isn’t your ordinary love story.

Fifteen Seconds of Normal chronicles the desperate days of three seventeen-year-olds struggling through the worst month of their lives. Kaeya, a transfer student on a quest to hide her Tourette Syndrome. Thatcher, a literature obsessed junior on the edge of a breakdown. And, Sam, an indie film maker with a secret of his own.

When the three meet in their school’s abandoned art gallery, they come up with a daring plan to rewrite the narrative, change the world, and find their fifteen seconds of normal.

A “Perks of Being a Wallflower” for a new generation from EPIC Award finalist Alex Marestaing.

“On par with John Green, with a similar feel to The Fault in Our Stars. My favorite book of the year so far.”  
— Books Direct Australia

“Five Stars. Probably the best book I’ve read all year, and I never saw it coming.”  
— Smada’s Book Smack

“Five Stars. The author’s writing style had me hooked from the start, and there were times when I had to double check to make sure I wasn’t reading some long, lost work by John Green that I’d overlooked before. Seriously, just grab a copy, or ten, so you can share them with your friends.”  
— A Page to Turn

“Alex Marestaing weaves a beautiful, heartwarming coming-of-age tale. I guarantee Fifteen Seconds of Normal is a story you will want to go back to again and again.”  
— Readers' Favorite

## **Fifteen Seconds of Normal Details**

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Author : Alex Marestaing

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Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary

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# From Reader Review Fifteen Seconds of Normal for online ebook

## Katherine Paschal says

Kaeya changed high schools so she can hide her Tourette's, not wanting to be being know as "that girl", and have a chance to be treated just like anyone else. Thatcher is having most likely the worst day of his life, made public by some kids at school. The two of them are forced together by events out of their control, and given an assignment to achieve their 15 seconds of fame. How they choose to do that is up to them.

Sorry if this review is all over the place, and maybe I should not have written this right after finishing the book since my emotions are so close to the surface, but I needed to share my love for this book as soon as I could (in the spirit of the story).

I had no real idea what I was getting into when I started this book, expecting some cute teen story. But that is not at all what I got, in the best way possible. This was an emotional, tear filled (for the characters and me), ride to finding out what love really means. This is probably the best book that I have read this year, and I never even saw it coming. There were sad tears shed for this book, but now that I have experienced the ending, there are happy tears. Gah, I want to own a physical copy of this book so I can randomly hug it and then force/loan it out to all my friends (and even some acquaintances) so they can experience it to.

I know this book is suppose to be about Kaeya and how hard it is with her TS, but can I just say how much I love Thatcher and how he was the best part of the story? He seriously filled my heart with tenderness with his actions towards his sister, his poet's soul, helping his crush when she was ripping out his heart, his desire to be kind regardless of others... I have compiled a large list of what I love about him, too many to name here, but the take home message is that I love him and wanted to squeeze him. Oh and the part about the burning lantern was the absolute best part of the book, a moment of hilarity in the face of heartache.

Yes, Kaeya struggles with her condition and life is hard for her, the author did a good job bringing about her struggles and how hard she battled to attempt to be "normal", the fear of how others would see her, how she uses humor to help in every situation. I think the biggest difference between the two is how Thatcher did not really care about fitting in or being accepted, where as Kaeya dreamed of fitting in and being normal, which she has never had before. She finally realized what love meant at the end, but I wanted her to see so much sooner.

I never saw the impact of this story coming, which probably made it even more so. This was such a well written emotional book and I am so glad I got to experience it. Maybe have some tissues nearby though.

I received this title from the author in return for my honest review.

For more reviews visit my blog at <http://smadasbooksmack.blogspot.com/>

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## **Tessa says**

In case you haven't noticed, normal is pretty overrated nowadays. All the cool people are hipsters who break the mold and those who are brave enough to go outside of society's expectations. But, my heart still went out to Kaeya and Thatcher as they strived for their own version of normal.

Their journeys to "normal" have two different origins. Kaeya has Tourette's syndrome, which causes her to have involuntary movements and vocalizations. For the first time I have read from the perspective of a character with Tourette's, I believe that Marestaing did a fair job. I do not have experience with Tourette's in my everyday life, but to my untrained eye, the representation was good. The novel follows Kaeya's journey to make peace with who she is, regardless of the Tourette's.

On the other side of the romance, Thatcher's family is in rambles. His father has abandoned the home, leaving Thatcher to pick up the pieces for his mother and younger sister. The only thing that could bring him peace is literature, and maybe the cheerful new girl who always seems to be disappearing.

Sometimes, I was a fan of the romance, just as excited as Kaeya. But other times, it seemed too easy and stereotypical. At times, the everything was just too cheesy. I could see exactly where it was going. From the moment I saw the first page, I knew how it was going to end. There was no question of what will happen, or really when it would happen. The novel was ordinary, nothing out of the normal. The characters strived for normalcy so much that the story started to mirror their desires. There is no real thought involved while reading this book, which might not be a bad thing if you are just looking for a fluffy read.

To give a fair warning, there is a love triangle. Even though I have been known to hate all kinds of love geometry, I made an exception for this one because it was never really a triangle, more of a line with another point trying (and failing) to intersect.

From a literary nerd's point of view, Thatcher has to be my favorite character. The poor guy has the worst day of his life, which is documented on the Internet for all of the world to see. But, he uses powerful quotes and the promise of new love to dig himself out of the situation. There were times when I was screaming like a fangirl (inside my head, of course) over the quotes that Thatcher chose to spotlight. I mean, there is nothing more attractive than a boy who knows his literature, am I right?

In the end, the plot was simple and extremely predictable for any well-read romance fan. Despite the lack of originality, the perspective on Tourette's was interesting and worth checking out.

**This review and other bookish shenanigans can be found on my original blog, Crazy for YA.**

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## **BethLee says**

I RECIEVED THIS BOOK FROM YA BOUND BOOK TOURS IN EXCHANGE FOR AN HONEST REVIEW. THIS DOES NOT AFFECT MY VIEWS OR OPINIONS IN ANY WAY.

Fifteen Seconds of Normal was a good and interesting book.

Summary from Goodreads:

Step 1: Transfer High Schools.  
Step 2: Hide your Tourette's.  
Step 3: Find your fifteen seconds of normal.

Kaeya Garay has a plan. And it seems to be working. But when a curious interruption named Thatcher Kelly stumbles upon her "safe" place in the school's abandoned art gallery, her grand plans for normalcy are suddenly derailed.

This book grabbed me as a unique book and kept me reading until the very end. I really liked the explanation of Tourette's in this book. It made me understand what it was and how it affects people.

I liked Kaeya's character. She was nice and simple. I also liked Thatcher. He seemed like a good guy, and not too tough. All of the characters were pretty good.

The Fifteen Seconds of Famous project was awesome. I loved how it was so simple yet so complicated. It made the book so good. Kaeya had the project wrong, and was selfish. However, Sam and Thatcher get the project right. Thatcher took a risk and went to combat online bullying. This is a relevant issue, and it was nice to see someone stand up for it.

Overall, this is a good book.

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## **Keep Calm Novel On says**

The Goodreads group Shut Up & Read (Read It & Reap) provided a copy of the PDF in exchange for an honest review.

Fifteen Seconds of Normal is a refreshing coming of age Young Adult Romance by Alex Marestaing. Sixteen-year-old Kaeya has recently transferred schools and is patiently finding her way. She has a secret and does not want to reveal to her peers that she has Tourette Syndrome. When she feels the need to escape she has been provided with a safe place in the school. Thatcher is living an emotional nightmare. His parents have separated and he is also suffering from negative social media. He is serving an in-school fifteen-day suspension. Kaeya and Thatcher begin to spend time together in the alternative classroom. They are joined by Sam. The instant and genuine connection between Kaeya, Thatcher and aspiring indie filmmaker Sam are heartwarming.

The novel introduces the reader to Kaeya and Thatcher's world. The characters are likeable and real. The short chapters move the story along quickly and the author shares their journey via Kaeya and Thatcher's point of view. Their strong and distinct voices give insight into their lives. Their pain, fears and hope are shared with honesty and integrity. The author brilliantly deals with many issues including but not limited to bereavement, illness, bullying, and divorce. This well-written novel is character driven. Marestaing is a talented storyteller. Readers of all ages will be hooked on this page-turner.

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## Sumedha (the wordy habitat) says

*Note: I received a free copy of this book in exchange of a review through YA Bound Book Tours. This does not affect my review in any way.*

When I first checked out this book on Goodreads after seeing that it was available for reviewing, I was unsure. The book had ONE rating and review, and it was a five-starrer. Naturally, I was suspicious, wondering whether the book is actually good (because many times I've been misled by too many five-stars for a book which doesn't deserve it). But the synopsis sounded good, the cover looked good, and I wanted to give it a shot. I am so glad I did because it turned out to be really good!

I received the e-copy quite later and I had totally forgotten about the synopsis by the time I read it a few days back, so I knew nothing about it when I went in, and that threw me off a little. I didn't like it in the beginning, so much so that I had started writing down notes. A few chapters in, though, I finally figured out a little of what was going on. Kaeya's Tourette problem was revealed and Thatcher's dad leaves his family. It started coming together and I forgot about notes and totally dived into it.

### The Plot

Kaeya has transferred schools to Glen recently and she's working very hard to hide her Tourette's Syndrome (TS). She's also crushing on a guy called Kieran, who is pretty perfect. Her mom has also died a few years back, and that fueled her transfer. When her TS (I shall explain it further down) starts getting bad, she hides in a place called "the Gallery" and the school has given her permission to hang there and skip classes when she likes.

Meanwhile, Thatcher's dad just left his mom for another woman and everyone in the Kelly household are breaking apart. Right on that day when all went down and he did not care to change out of his clothes from last night or even look in the mirror before arriving to school, it's picture day. The worst nightmare ever. Having no choice at all, his picture is taken (with him wearing a Marry me Martha t-shirt), with red eyes and all. His photo is used by the students to make stupid memes and events ensue. Thatcher ends up getting in-school suspension for a long period, during which he's put under the care of Mrs. DeGeau who's office is basically the Gallery. The one sunny side is that he gets to spend time with Kaeya, whom he's crushing on.

And despite how it seems in the synopsis, the book is written in double POV equally.

### What I liked:

Let me say it in a list because, yay lists!

--**Tourette's Syndrome.** I had never heard of TS before and I liked that something new and uncommon was portrayed. It is a neurological disorder characterised by facial grimaces and tics and movements of the upper body and grunts and shouts. (Yes, I copied that from a thesaurus in my phone) Basically, Kaeya makes noises, facial expressions and movements out of the blue because of it. She can't control it and it increases when she's stressed.

--**Thatcher and Kaeya.** I loved these two characters, and I honestly cannot for the life of me pick out anything I didn't like about them. Their flaws and problems and personalities were just right.

--**The parents.** Thatcher's parents had their own problems and they were not shown much but the right amount. Kaeya's dad tries so much to help her and advice her, but being a teenager she doesn't and he resigns

that he can't help it. He's so supportive of her and is a cool parent.

Being a parent is like flying a kite. You build it and you're proud of it, and you take it out and fly every day. And you love that kite like you've never loved anything before. Then one day, the kite starts pulling away and pulling away, until you can barely hold on to it anymore. At first you think it's broken, that you've built it all wrong. And you get frustrated and hold on tighter. But then you realize, kites are meant to fly...and you let go.

--**The quotes.** Throughout the book, from the beginning till the very end, quotes are highlighted and mentioned. Mostly, they're from classics. Thatcher has a diary in which he collects quotes and lines that he likes and finds meaning in. By the end, a couple of his own quotes were shown.

--**Sam.** Sam is a friend of theirs and he, too, hangs out in the Gallery due to some problem, although Thatcher and Kaeya don't know which. He loved movies and screenplays and shoots his own. He also uses lines from movies in casual conversation.

--**Fifteen seconds of fame.** It's a project assigned by Mrs. D to all the three to do something and make a change. Through this, Thatcher takes charge his fame from the meme and turns it into something else completely, and I loved that.

--**POC representation.** As a side character, and I'm sure some reviewers would find another flaw or fact that they don't like (I can't say what it is and spoil y'all) but it didn't bother me. There were POC characters.

## Overall

Except for the beginning which could have been written better/differently, the book was pretty perfect. I can't complain much. I highly recommend reading this. I'm surprised it doesn't have more ratings and reviews, considering how good it is. It's over there with Shuffle, Repeat and Morgan Matson books for me.

More reviews on my blog

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## Haddie Harper says

**Love is a cold night warmed by the voice of a friend.**

I cannot even begin to say how great this book is. A story that shines a bit of light on so many things that happen in life. I think the characters were great. Kaeya's TS and how she is choosing to deal with it is touching. The dynamics of how the story falls into place is different from what I've read. I love how clean the story is. No vulgar suggestive topics, languages is completely rated-G. This is instantly a favorite for me, because something a character does reminds me of someone I cherish. The author's writing style is definitely a change. I like how the characters share the spotlight. Really so good.

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## Aurora - Whoo Gives A Hoot says

*\* Read more of my reviews at Whoo Gives A Hoot \**



*I generously received an ARC from YABound Book Tours in exchange for an honest review...*

When I first started reading this book I was a little apprehensive as to whether or not I was actually going to like it. When I first began reading this book I was slightly confused as to what was really happening, but after a few chapters in, it all started to click and I was hooked until the very end. I thought that the author did an extraordinary job with his character development and I instantly connected with both Kaeya Garay and Thatcher Kelly! Kaeya's Tourette's Syndrome was accurate that it's clear that the author did his research before hand. This is a breath of fresh air because some authors today don't do their research and in the end it makes the story more confusing then enjoyable.

Overall, I thought that this book was well worth my time and I strongly urge everyone to give it a try.

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## **A. Musquiz says**

I was sent an e-copy of this in exchange for an honest review.

The sound of this novel was just something I couldn't pass on. I love the more melancholy type contemporaries, the kind that are perfect reads for a rainy day. I was pretty excited when I had the chance to review it for you all and I'm so happy that I could relax with this read. I was a little surprised that I ended up liking the book a lot more than I expected. Not that it was bad at first, it's just that I didn't expect that much from it. Always a great surprise if you ask me. Here's the review:

I really liked the characters in the book, Sam being my favorite. He was the fun side-character that I couldn't help but love with his bubbly personality and goofy antics. Our main character was a unique one since I haven't seen any characters in any books I've read in the past who suffered from Tourette's. I think that's why I really liked Kaeya, she was a different kind of MC and struggled to keep her TS a secret from as many people as possible except for Sam and Thatcher, who never made Kaeya feel embarrassed about her TS. Thatcher was also a unique subject since he struggles to overcome a cruel meme made of him at school while also dealing with stresses at home and a broken relationship with his father.

I really loved that the story went back and forth between Kaeya's POV and Thatcher's. We get to see what either character was dealing with and the kinds of stresses and emotions they were sorting through and trying to figure out on their own. I think it made for a nice development between the characters and made their growing feelings for each other a little more realistic. The romance wasn't to forefront of the story but merely an element that helped bring Kaeya and Thatcher closer together as they opened up to each other a little more.

The story had a nice pace to it and while at times the romance did get a little cheesy, it was well written. There were equal parts romance, drama, humor, and grief as well as other subjects that were more raw and emotional. It was a bit of a darker and moodier contemporary that I fully enjoyed and at times, the book had me really feeling emotionally attached to the characters. The ending almost had me in tears even. And I NEVER cry while reading books. Like, EVER.

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## **Lily Cooper says**

## Fifteen Seconds of Normal

By: Alex Marestaign

Step 1: Transfer high schools Step 2: Hide your Tourette's Step 3: Find your fifteen seconds of normal  
Kaeya Garay has a plan. And it seems to be working. But when a curious interruption named Thatcher Kelly stumbles upon her "safe" place in the school's abandoned art gallery, her grand plans for normalcy are suddenly derailed. Set over the course of three weeks, *Fifteen Seconds of Normal* is the quirky saga of a literature obsessed teen on the edge of a meltdown and the hope driven heroine who begins to pull him back. Fans of Eleanor and Park be warned. You won't be able to put this one down.

Everyone is familiar with those internet memes? What many tend to forget is that those pictures are of real people. With lives. And Hearts. Thatcher Kelly becomes familiar with this in the beginning of *Fifteen Seconds of Normal*. When his "normal" is snatched away he finds a new one in the hidden art gallery where he meets the beautiful Kaeya Garay. A girl with secrets of her own.

I've met people with Tourette's and I didn't know much about it really until I picked up this book. The storyline begins like any other contemporary read but stretched into the unknown territory about the harsh judgmental society we live in today.

Thatcher Kelly is a sweetheart, honestly, there needs to be more guys like him out there. It almost seems rare now to find one. OR maybe I'm not looking hard enough? Either way, his selfishness and devotion to his sister makes this protagonist a cuddly teddy bear I want to hug every moment.

Kaeya Garay took me a while to be able to pronounce her name. Something about the "e" in the middle just threw me off. But her character and perfect flaws made up for it. She channels the classic teenager in high school. She just wants to be "normal." Which is shown as she constantly tries to jump hurdles that she only needs to walk around. As the reader, you learn along with her about the lesson of just being yourself.

The overall storyline was good, but I feel like the author could have stretched it out a little longer. Add a bit more drama maybe? Allow the relationships to grow and get more intimate? It would make the book a little more longer and add more emphasis to the characters. Because the book flew by way too fast; or maybe I just plowed through it because of how great it was.

Either way, this book is filled with good content, interesting characters, and full of cute little jokes and quirks. I highly suggest it.

[A Review copy was sent in exchange for an honest review]

[Posted on [rosegoldclass.blogspot.com](http://rosegoldclass.blogspot.com)]

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## Cate says

*Fifteen Seconds of Normal* is everything a good YA novel should be. Thatcher is battling to stay normal in the midst of his family crumbling and his social standing being torn apart. Kaeya is battling to become normal through hiding her true self. Their ensuing friendship is beautiful. I miss them both, now the story has ended.

Fifteen Seconds is so much more than a love triangle, a battle for acceptance, a journey to finding yourself. It's quirky, it's fun, and it's heartache.

And given the multiple references to three of my all-time forever favourite movies, You've Got Mail, While You Were Sleeping and Sleepless in Seattle, this novel will forever be in my top ten favourite YA reads.

If you liked Fault in Their Stars, you'll love Fifteen Seconds of Normal.

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## **M.L. Sparrow says**

For more reviews, or to see my favourite quotes from this book, check out my blog at <http://mlsparrow.wix.com/mlsparrow>

Reviewed for Readers' Favorite.

Kaeya moved to a new school with the hopes of being treated like a “normal” teenager by her peers. It’s hard to hide her Tourette’s, but she manages and even draws the attention of the boy she’s crushing on. Unfortunately, that boy’s not Thatcher, who is already half in love with her! The drama starts on school photo day, when Thatcher, totally oblivious to what day it is, comes to school after the worst morning of his life, looking an absolute mess. Needless to say his picture is horrendous and he immediately throws it away, only for someone else to fish it out and create a humiliating meme that quickly goes viral. One thing leads to another and Thatcher ends up being suspended for fighting. It’s in suspension that he gets to know the real Kaeya, who retreats there when her Tourette’s gets too much to handle. However, despite budding feelings for Thatcher, Kaeya’s still set on going to the school dance with her crush and getting her fifteen seconds of normal. Alex Marestaing weaves a beautiful, heartwarming coming-of-age in 'Fifteen Seconds of Normal'.

With complex, relatable and likeable characters ‘Fifteen Seconds of Normal’ is a brilliant read for Young Adults and grown-ups alike. In this day and age, cyberbullying is something everyone is aware of, even if they haven’t experienced it firsthand, and Alex Marestaing has a way of putting you into Thatcher’s shoes so that it really felt like you were going through it with him. The same goes for Kaeya with her Tourette’s. Both main characters were so lovely that it was a genuine pleasure to read about them and I loved how they developed over time and figured out what was really important to them. Also, although it's a teenage story set in high-school the angst is kept to a minimum, which I appreciated because it doesn't detract from the main plot. The layout was also a big plus for this novel; as it flitted between Thatcher and Kaeya's perspective, the paragraphs were short and to the point, which meant I kept saying to myself "Just one more section!", resulting in my finishing it in a day! It's a wonderful story focusing on friendship, love and accepting who you really are. I guarantee 'Fifteen Seconds of Normal' is a story you will want to go back to again and again.

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## **Bobbie Stanley says**

I was pretty much sold on this story from the second I looked at the synopsis, but I've learned over the years that a great synopsis does not always mean a great story. Fortunately, in this case, it did! I fell in love with the characters immediately. Lemme just get really nerdy on you guys for a minute and tell you how much I love 80s movies. Molly Ringwald is the best ever. And the entire point of that is that this story reminded me

of *Pretty in Pink* in all the best ways. Thatcher and Kaeya were incredibly adorable as friends. I loved the way that they simply understood one another and fell into a natural sort of rhythm where they could support each other without even really trying to be who the other person needed. I loved them so much! Throwing Sam into the mix gave us a group reminiscent of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, which, as far as I'm concerned, made it even better. Being completely enamored with the characters basically guaranteed I would like whatever storyline followed.

The author's writing style had me hooked from the start, and there were times when I had to double check to make sure I wasn't reading some long lost work by John Green that I'd somehow overlooked before. That's not to say that the work isn't original. It most definitely is. But readers have a way of getting attached to certain authors and those similar to them, right? So basically, if you love John Green, you're going to fall in love with Alex Marestaing. I'll be totally honest with you guys. I loved this book so completely that the moment I finished it, I went out looking to see what else Marestaing wrote so I could grab copies of those, too! I'll keep you posted when I get a chance to read them because I'm sure you'll want them, too! I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Seriously. Just grab a copy. Or ten so you can share them with your friends. You'll love it!

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### **Linda Romer says**

Fifteen Seconds of Normal by Alex Marestaing

I loved this book! So good, it made me cry. I loved Kaeya, Thatcher and Sam's story. I like the way the book is formatted, the back and forth between Kaeya and Thatcher. Like a train wreck I couldn't stop reading. This is a fast paced story that will tug on your heart strings and won't let go. I would love to read more from this Author.

I give Fifteen Seconds of Normal 5 stars for its beautiful poetic read.  
I would recommend this book to everyone.

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### **Lynda Dickson says**

For sixteen-year-old Thatcher Kelly, "talking to dead authors was an inescapable habit of his, a tribute to the books that had embedded themselves in his soul" and "collecting more beautiful words from more beautiful books [was] another obsessive habit of his." A recent transfer to Glen Canyon High, Kaeya Garay tries to maintain a low profile and keep her Tourette's Syndrome hidden. But an altercation at their school throws Thatcher and Kaeya together, along with film buff Sam, and their lives will never be the same again.

The author's writing is full of beautiful turns of phrase and delightful metaphors and similes that turn the ordinary into the extraordinary. My only complaint is the similarity of the characters' names: Kaeya, Kieran, Quentin. When Thatcher and Kaeya initially bond over Hemingway, you can see that these two are meant to be together. How they get there is the fun part. Sam plays an integral role as a kind of matchmaker, and his movie quotes are a good foil for Thatcher's book quotes. Everything comes together so well. There's even a reference to the school's Emily Dickinson club, no doubt a nod to the author's previous book, *I'm Nobody*. But I was disappointed that we never find out the story behind Mrs DeGeau.

On a par with John Green, with a similar feel to *The Fault in Our Stars*, this is my favorite book of the year so far.

I received this book in return for an honest review.

Full blog post (25 February): <https://booksdirectonline.blogspot.co...>

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## **Zili says**

Fifteen Seconds of Normal is Kaeya's and Thatcher's story. Kaeya is battling her Tourettes and trying to find a way to live a normal teenage life after a huge tragedy. Thatcher is having a particularly terrible day when we meet him. The school photo was like the ultimate nightmare scenario and I felt particularly sorry for him, especially considering what lead to it and with the ensuing carnage.

I loved the awkwardness which seemed to ooze out of Thatcher and Kaeya. It was this vulnerability and general struggle which seem to pull them together and I loved how they began to rely on each other.

This is going to sound a bit odd, but something about the character voices reminded me of Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist (the plot is totally different though). I hope this will make more sense when you read the book...?

It's worth noting the story isn't always easy but that there are real moments of joy mixed in with the more difficult ones.

The synopsis and cover may have initially drawn me to Fifteen Seconds of Normal, but the tone and characters kept me reading this interesting YA contemporary story.

A solid 4 Stars in my Sky!

I received a copy from YA Bound in exchange for an honest review!

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