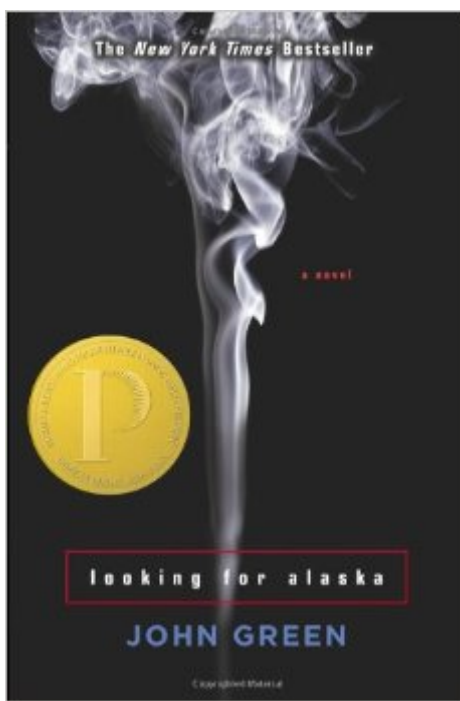


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Looking For Alaska



Synopsis

The award-winning, genre-defining debut from #1 bestselling author of *The Fault in Our Stars* Winner of the Michael L. Printz Award Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist New York Times bestseller *Before I Fall*. Miles "Pudge" Halter is done with his safe life at home. His whole life has been one big non-event, and his obsession with famous last words has only made him crave "the Great Perhaps" even more (Francois Rabelais, poet). He heads off to the sometimes crazy and anything-but-boring world of Culver Creek Boarding School, and his life becomes the opposite of safe. Because down the hall is Alaska Young. The gorgeous, clever, funny, sexy, self-destructive, screwed up, and utterly fascinating Alaska Young. She is an event unto herself. She pulls Pudge into her world, launches him into the Great Perhaps, and steals his heart. Then. . . After. Nothing is ever the same. [Read more](#)

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4,327 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

...and read this book in one sitting. Okay, it's short and incredibly good, which makes it easy to bolt down. But then you are going to feel like an idiot for not savoring the pleasure, and you're going to be bleary as hell the next day (if you finish it at 4 in the morning, like I did). This book deals with the Big Ones: suffering, loss, and grief, but it does so with such compassion and humor that the net impact is uplifting. Even the principal turns out to be a human being. There are no cardboard cut-out characters here. Be aware that the kids in this story do what kids actually do (smoke, drink, and have sex). If that bothers you, read it anyway. There are more important things in life than observing proprieties and pretending that bright kids aren't exploratory. You don't have to approve of these

characters. It is enough to love them and learn from them.

Somewhere between searching for the secret to winning at Texas Holdem in Doyle Brunson's SUPER SYSTEM II, A COURSE IN POWER POKER, and envying a 101 year old lady boat captain in Jimmy Buffett's A SALTY PIECE OF LAND, I found John Green's Young Adult Novel, LOOKING FOR ALASKA. I kept looking at the alluring cover of ALASKA on my night stand and decided that POWER POKER could wait and rushed through A SALTY PIECE. If you have a child going to boarding school soon, goes there now or has gone there, as my son did, you must read LOOKING FOR ALASKA. If you want to understand the loneliness, happiness, mischief, joy, sorrow, sadness and a few other emotions of a teenager, you must read LOOKING FOR ALASKA. If you are convinced your teenager will not mature until much later, you better not read ALASKA. If you are concerned about the experiences that your teenager might have, do not read ALASKA. If you are a teenager, read this book! Need help with a pair of Aces? Simple - see Doyle. Got Margaritaville on your mind? No problem - Jimmy is your man. But if you want to come of age with an extraordinarily endearing group of kids, read this book. My son tells me it is being touted as Young Adult Fiction. I don't know about that. I can only tell you that at 64, I am a younger man for having read it.

Green's debut YA novel follows a year in the life of high school junior Miles Halter, a friendless Floridian who begged his parents to enroll him in the Culver Creek boarding school. Miles dreams of starting anew at his elite Alabama prep school, of finding Francois Rabelais's "The Great Perhaps." At school, he falls in with a prankster of a roommate, the Colonel, and the sassy, sexy, messed-up Alaska Young. For an unforgettable 128 days, Miles learns life lessons in love, loyalty, friendship, literature, and poetry, as well as experiences the thrill of a first girlfriend. When tragedy strikes Culver Creek, Miles is forced to undertake an even closer examination of his own character and relationship with his friends. This is an outstanding coming-of-age novel that has already proved to be a favorite teen read. It doesn't resort to a cop out of a "happily ever after" ending, but the characters each seek closure on their own terms. The characters are well-drawn, witty, and full of individual quirks and spunk. Green even manages to bring in the reality of cigarettes and alcohol without a preachy or over-glorifying tone. This novel has won the Teen's Top 10 award as well as the Printz Award, and Green is well on his way to YA superstardom. I'm looking forward to his next novel.

Though /Looking for Alaska/ is categorized as young adult fiction, it's an enjoyable read for any age.

John Green has a talent for picking out little details in the world he creates, then using those details to remind the reader that this is a world that could have been -- indeed, it's the world we live in, and Green does a good job of convincing the reader of that. The quality of the writing is very high, and the story is in general very good. However, I was underwhelmed by the ending of this book. There is a nice, humanizing climax in the last pages of /Alaska/, but the book sets itself up as deeper and more philosophical than it really is. John Green creates this world of living, breathing characters and sets very realistic events into motion... But in the end, not much is resolved or clarified in any profound way. That's probably a realistic portrayal of life itself, but not necessarily what one would be looking for in a book with a dust cover touting the "indelible impact" of human life. A fun, fast read, but certainly not an "indelible" book and not a particularly deep one -- no matter how young or old an adult you may be.

I am a Native Alaskan. My people have been in Alaska before it was called ALASKA. I was given Peter Jenkins book as an early holiday gift from my Uncle and wondered if he captured my people and all our people, of all groups, because almost no writers/travelers ever have. He even found things I did not know about, like 'mouse trading', from his Deering, Alaska chapter. Lines like this from the book lift me and illustrate his acute powers of perception, "Millie's voice is like a whisper but has incredible strength. I think the Eskimo way of speaking, soft, slow, focused, and songlike, comes from being listened to and from living surrounded by so much beautiful silence and life." Actually he has been to many more places in this 590,000 square mile place than almost any Alaskan I have known. There is hilarious, witty stuff,, like this section title: "These Athletes Eat Raw Meat, Run Naked and Sleep in the Snow." This is one white man that has a caring and discerning heart, this is by far, one of the best books on ALASKA I have ever read. We needed this kind of work here and I want to thank him for hearing my people, the Native Alaskans and all the rest of us, showing us as the alive and vivid world. Since graduating from UCLA I have yearned to be back in my homeland, for a few days reading LOOKING FOR ALASKA I have been.

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