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Just Like The Movies: An If Only Novel



Synopsis

Pretty, popular Marijke Monti and over-achieving nerd-girl Lily Spencer have little in common--except that neither feels successful when it comes to love. Marijke can't get her boyfriend to say "I love you" and Lily can't get a boyfriend at all. When the girls end up at a late night showing of Titanic, sniffing along with the sinking ship, they realize that their love lives could--and should--be better. Which sparks an idea: Why can't life be like a movie? Why can't they create perfect romantic situations? Now they have a budding friendship and a plan--to act out grand gestures and get the guys of their dreams. It seems like fun at first, but reality turns out to be much more complicated, and they didn't take into account that finding true love usually requires finding yourself first.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

It's summer, so I imagine a lot of people are like me and constantly looking for light, fun reads that make you feel happy when you're done. That's what I was in the mood for when I picked this up, and that's exactly what I got. At the same time, there's more than just romance and girls trying to win boys to this one. While, yes, Marijke and Lily are trying to solve their love-life problems through movie scenes, it's their new friendship that shines in *Just Like the Movies*. Marijke is having boyfriend troubles, but she's let everything in her life beside Tommy and track fall by the wayside.

And Lily's been too focused on being an invisible star student to have made any friends. It's in their mutual love of romantic movies and desire to improve their love lives that they're drawn together, but they get friendship out of the deal. Yes, I love a happy, romantic ending, but Marijke and Lily's friendship is the happy ending I loved more. Otherwise, all through *Just Like the Movies*, you're treated to romantic movie mentions and homages. Some don't go off without hitches, but they're fun and a treat to read. Watching Marijke and Lily learn what they deserve and should expect from the guys in their lives is nice, too. Marijke sees that how she's put herself to the side for Tommy is not right and Lily learns that putting yourself out there, fighting for what you want is worth the risk. *Just Like the Movies* is the perfect summer read. It's got cute romantic scenes, new friendship, and enough smile-worthy scenes to leave you a happy goof at the end of the book. I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

If you love movies, especially romantic comedies, this book is for you. Delightfully fun, the story follows popular Marijke and not so popular Lily, that girl who is always there in the background. After meeting at a movie viewing the two come up with an idea: use tried and true movie tropes to make their own lives better. Maybe... This book is a quick read, fun, and romantic. It's the perfect beach or anytime read. Perfect for fans of light-hearted romance, or those looking to take a break from the plethora of paranormal and sci-fi dystopian YA titles out there.

3.5/5 stars If you would have asked me about 75 pages in if I thought I would end up liking this book, I would quickly have said "nope". I was instantly turned off by one of the two narrators (I'll explain why later) and I began dreading her chapters but I finally got past that and I'm glad that I did. I ended up liking this book and I actually ended up rooting for the narrator that I previously disliked. To begin, it takes some big kahunas to act out movie scenes for a guy; whether you are already dating him or are trying to attract his attention, it's incredibly brave. I have to give it to these girls; they made a pact and followed it through. The story revolves around Marijke and Lily, two girls who are strangers until their chance meeting at the movie theater. Now, I am an avid movie watcher/goer which was probably what attracted me to the book and I loved that this all started at a movie theater. Kelly used a good mix of old and new movies as reference points for these girls and I really enjoyed them, especially the frequent 90s references which all made me grin like crazy. I didn't exactly love the way that the movies were tied in, I felt like they could have made a bigger impact, but I enjoyed it nonetheless. Marijke and Lily are an interesting pair, they are complete opposites and strangers before their chance meeting but

throughout the book a strong friendship is forged. This friendship is easily the best part of this book, everyone is so focused on finding a happily ever after that they forgo friends but their quest for love actually brought these two girls together. I'm not saying that it's anywhere as good as the friendship in *Open Road Summer* but that is a nearly impossible standard to compare to. Their friendship was an accurate portrayal of friendships, they changed each other for the better and the worse; Marijke gave Lily a makeover which caused some identity issues but they also taught each other how to communicate and deal with situations. It was a give and take relationship which was interesting to read. Marijke. Marijke. Marijke. I was so frustrated with Marijke's character when I first started this book, I wanted to smack her in the head so many times that I lost count. Her boyfriend Tommy, who can be the world's biggest douchebag, was her world and she ended up trading her identity for that of Tommy's girlfriend, effectively losing herself and her friends. She revolved around Tommy and she didn't even realize that she lost everything that used to be important to her until Lily came into the picture, a true friend who wasn't afraid to stand up to Marijke. It got to the point where I didn't want to read anymore but when I evaluated why, I realized that it was personal. It hit a little too close to home. I was in a relationship and it wasn't good, I was consumed and I couldn't even see. My friends would try to talk sense into me but I would never listen. I was Marijke but less athletic and vocal and annoying, I'd like to think. Since that relationship, I have been an advocate for smart dating and not dating just to date, especially not dating an attractive douchebag. I just took this situation so personally and when she kept forgiving him, I was more frustrated than I should have been. I understand that now. After that, I started to understand Marijke and I was so proud of her again and again, there was real growth in this book. Overall, I did really enjoy this book. It was a light read that went by fast with a great message that was weaved throughout the entire book. I loved the emphasis on friendship and the lessons that both girls learned along the way. There were some questionable things but as a whole, I really enjoyed this book.

First off thank you to the publisher and NetGalley for providing me an ARC of *Just Like the Movies* written by Kelly Fiore. *Just Like the Movies* tells the story of two girls who come up with a plan, "In the end, we come up with a basic goal. We have three weeks before prom, which isn't much time. By then, we do this right, Joe and Tommy will have fallen ass-over-eyebrows in love with us and we'll have Hollywood to thank for it". The plan was simple. Marijke and Lily plan to show Tommy and Joe how they really feel about them. Marijke, the girl that everyone knows, has been dating Tommy for a while, but the word love has never been said. Lily, a bookworm, has been crushing on Joe for

years, but has never had the courage to tell him how she feels. Together these two very different girls form a plan to show their love to the boys via classic movie scenes. Throughout the book Marijke and Lily come up with different movie scenes that will show Tommy and Joe how they feel about them. Hilarious, heartbreaking, and touching this novel shows the power of friendship and what you can accomplish with a friend by your side. Some of my favorite quotes: "Um, pinky swears are promises. And breaking them equals perjury." "Happily ever after just gets sidetracked sometimes." "All I can see is my reflection. Just me, standing alone. Somehow, it seems totally appropriate." "I guess my life is like the movies after all-just not in a good way." "That the movies aren't a solution for problems, but they are a place to forget the problems you have."

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