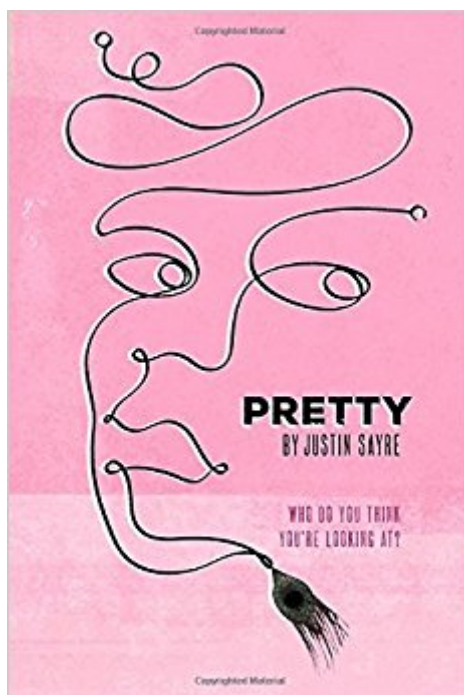


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Pretty



Synopsis

"Coming-of-age never looked so beautiful." - Kirkus (Starred Review)"[A] powerful story of growth and change, brimming with honesty and hope." - Publishers Weekly"Students who might not yet be ready for Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* will find an equally compelling narrator and story in *Pretty*." - VOYA Reviews

Sophie's perspective on what being pretty really means changes drastically in the second adjective-busting novel by the author of *Husky*, Justin Sayre. Sayre details the private and public life of a thirteen-year-old burdened with far more than the middle-school adjective of *Pretty*. Though she appears confident, stylish, and easygoing at school, Sophie lives a nightmare at home. When her mother's alcohol addiction spirals out of control, Sophie's Auntie Amara steps in to help. She teaches Sophie new lessons about her family and heritage, while also challenging her to rethink how she feels about friends, boys, and even her sense of place in the Brooklyn neighborhood where she lives. Sayre, a master storyteller in the coming-of-age genre, asks readers to confront superficial assumptions about gender and beauty, and breathes new life into the canon of middle-grade realistic fiction.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Sayre once again proves that he understands the complexity of growing up. His confident story tackles race, sexuality, wealth, beauty, and faith as he revisits the characters and Brooklyn location of his first novel. This will encourage readers to press in to the difficult questions and look for the truth beneath. Coming-of-age never looked so beautiful." - Kirkus Reviews, *Starred

Review" Sophie's voice is an important one; she revels in her uniqueness but is still learning to be comfortable in her own skin. Her gradual realization that being 'beautiful' is so much more important than being 'pretty' is a sentiment that all teens need to hear. Students who might not yet be ready for Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give will find an equally compelling narrator and story in Pretty." - VOYA Reviews "Sayre's engrossing second novel takes place in the same Brooklyn neighborhood as his debut, with Davis, Husky's protagonist, playing a supporting role, along with their eclectic friends . . . It's a powerful story of growth and change, brimming with honesty and hope." (Publishers Weekly) "Even though Sophie immediately resents her Auntie's intervention in her life, she eventually learns to trust her, and discovers that learning about one's heritage through a loving family member can make you feel 'beautiful' inside. The characters are well-developed, and although the emotions relate to sensitive subjects, many students will be able to relate. This is a well-written story and readers will not be disappointed." (School and Library Connection)

Justin Sayre is a writer and performer, appearing regularly in New York City and Los Angeles. His debut novel, Husky was deemed "a superb addition to the middle grade literary cannon" by VOYA Magazine and called "[a] moving journey of self-discovery . . ." by Publishers Weekly. In addition to being an author of books for young readers, Sayre is a television writer for 2 Broke Girls and appeared in Lisa Kudrow's The Comeback.

I read the first, Husky, in 2 days via audiobook. I read the second in about 7 hours while doing yoga, cleaning the kitchen, and crying at seemingly random intervals to the outside observer. the book is 6h8min long in this format, but, shavasana. I can't speak to the accuracy of the portrayal of a girl like Sophie. Shes 13, I'm 32. She's mixed race, I'm white. She's she, I'm he. she's from the city, I'm from a strip mall turned into a small city. etc. I *can* say that the tears came from messages I didn't know I'd always craved (or TOTALLY knew, but cried to hear them anyway), but which made absolute sense to the characters' contexts as well. The two books together are interconnected coming of age stories that make the difficult parts of life actually less difficult by dispensing with euphemism and sugar coating. I highly recommend them. Pretty, and her Husky predecessor are both Beautiful.

Pretty is a book that sneaks up on you. Told from the perspective of a teenage girl, Sophie, it reads almost matter of factly, allowing for the illusion of emotional distance. But as the reality of the Soohie's situation starts to sink in, and the casualness with which she confronts her everyday

nightmare begins to buckle, her trauma will have wrapped itself around your lungs, and all you'll want to do is keep reading until you know that she will be okay; so you will be okay. I found myself verklempt reading this several times this week, usually on the bus... It's not what I expected, and I don't think it's what Sophie would have expected, but I'm glad I experienced it.

I really identified with Sayre's Husky, feeling like he really understood something about the adolescence of a child who is earnest, quirky, and struggling to come to terms with his sexuality. With Pretty, Sayre proves that he truly understands the private struggles of a child coming of age in a dysfunctional setting and struggling to make sense of social relations. With ample humor, pathos and insight, Sayre draws characters that are real and relatable. I highly recommend Pretty as well as Husky.

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