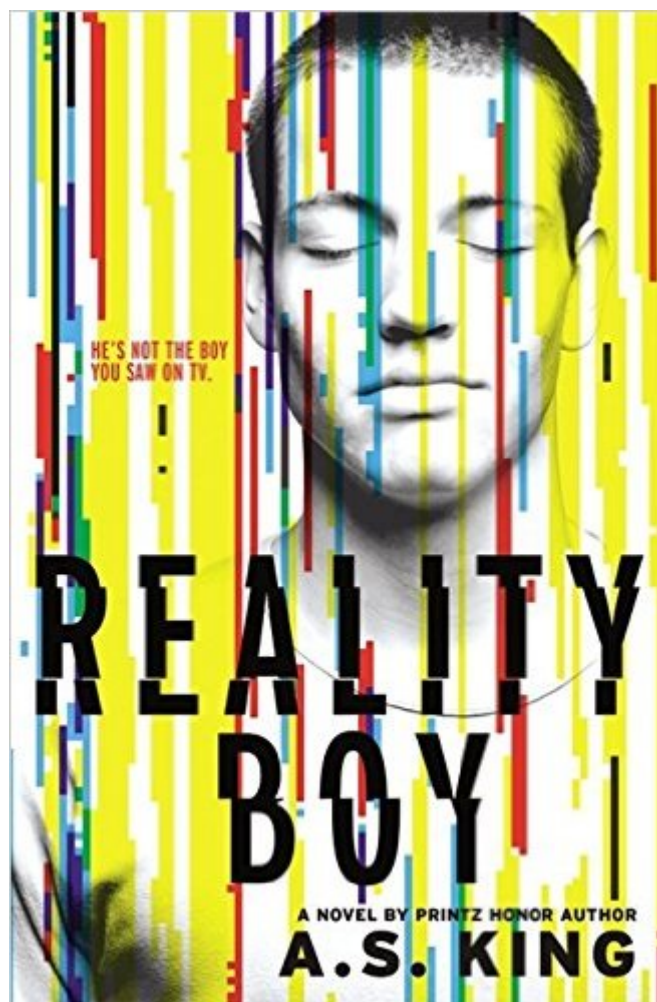


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Reality Boy



Synopsis

In this fearless portrayal of a boy on the edge, Printz Honor author A.S. King explores the desperate reality of a former child television 'star' struggling to break free of the oppressive anger he's felt since he was five years old. Twelve years later, he's still haunted by his rage-filled youth - which the entire world got to watch from every imaginable angle - and his anger issues have resulted in violent outbursts; everyone is just waiting for him to snap. And he's starting to feel dangerously close to doing just that - until he chooses to create possibilities for himself that he never knew he deserved.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (65 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Some books are great to read, they have action, adventure, great characters, but they don't really make you think. That's ok because that's not what those books are meant to do, they are written for entertainment and that's what they do, they entertain. Realty Boy is not one of those books. Realty Boy is a terrific book, but it's terrific in vastly different ways. It will make you feel shocked, horrorstruck, and even blessed for your own life. Most of all it will make you feel. Realty Boy is also beautiful in its own way. There are not magic fixes, this is not a Disney movie where everything is fixed and there is a montage of happy scenes in the end. But it is an incredibly poignant novel about a boy who lives in an abusive household and the struggles he has in taking control of his life. In fact these realization points are some of the most disturbing/shocking/beautifully written events in the book. All in all A.S. King is a master wordsmith and anyone who is looking for a book that makes you feel a whole range of emotions should read

this book. It is not for everyone as it has highly mature topics, but it is strong, well written, and leaves you feeling raw, as a great novel of this sort is supposed to.[...]

Gerald's angry. His older sister's an actual psychopath, his mother wished she'd stopped at one, and his father offers him drinks to connect. The one sister he loves left for college. Oh, and everyone knows him for crapping in his mom's shoes on reality TV when he was five. Where do you go from there? One hopes up, but that's a lot to process, and King doesn't easily let Gerald off the hook. His anger in all its manifestations are much easier to understand with access to his inner monologue, and King shows us in the reactions of other characters how bizarre his efforts to cope look from outside. That's how it is, too -- we're all the star of our own story. Sometimes we forget to let others in on the prologue. -- Rita Arens, author of contemporary YA novel THE OBVIOUS GAME

When I first began seeing status updates and reviews coming in from friends about Reality Boy, a surprising number of them dropped the book because it was a book they had to be in a certain mood for. After having read it, I now see what they meant. Reality Boy is definitely a book you have to be in a certain mindset and place to be able to read and fully appreciate. Gerald's justified anger at his dysfunctional life is almost tangible and very visceral in several scenes. King's writing really shines the brightest during the moments when he's triggered and angry and upset and needing an outlet. Admittedly, the first hundred or so pages are difficult to read because of his anger and his abusive home life. He deals with it in unhealthy ways and his narrative style reflects it. It's worth sticking with it to see how Gerald grows from the person he is in those first few hundred pages, and how his story unfolds. I especially liked how we got flashbacks of sorts to the taping of the reality show he and his family were on. It really added a good layer in figuring out exactly how screwed up his family is, and how much it screwed him up in turn. Gerald was a great character. However, in turn, for all that I felt like I really knew him as a person and got to see all these layers and depth to him, it rarely felt like I could say the same for the secondary characters. Tasha, his abusive and possibly bipolar sister, is reduced to pretty much just as she is. There's also a very high level of slut shaming put into her character, and I've noticed this is becoming a theme with King's female characters. The main one is always great and exempt from being called a slut for doing the exact same things the female characters who get called sluts do. Frankly, Tasha was a detestable enough character that this really wasn't needed. Hannah, Gerald's love interest, did have moments of being interesting, and at the end I did enjoy her relationship with Gerald though it was very tumultuous. But in the end she toed the line of being one-dimensional and I never felt like I knew her as well as I

knew Gerald. But on that note, King's portrayal of Gerald's family was very effective and felt real. It was understandable why Gerald had so much anger at his family because they were just so dysfunctional, all he could do was react in anger towards it and how they treated him. Overall, while I did get engrossed in Gerald's narration and the excellent technical writing, there were some things that did hinder my enjoyment of the novel overall. King is still one of my favorite authors, but I'm getting very tired of the slut shaming in her works and Reality Boy, while good, won't be my favorite of hers.

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