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A middle school boy's life is changed when Jessica, a girl disfigured by burns, starts attending his Catholic school while receiving treatment at a local hospital.

Firegirl Details

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Author : Tony Abbott

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From Reader Review Firegirl for online ebook

Jen says

I knew a burned guy. He was 5 or 6 years older than I was, and it happened while he was huffing gas. And it's true, whether it's the young kids in Firegirl, or the people I knew at the time when that guy got burned, there's some sick thing where people want it to be the person's own fault, something specifically deserved, so it couldn't *just happen* to anybody.

Like Tom's friend Jeff in the book, kids were cruel even about this guy I knew. I remember my cousin who went to school with the guy's sister showing me in his yearbook where someone had scribbled "Hobby: Roasting marshmallows on her brother's head" next to the sister's picture. A few years later, I worked with the burned guy at a call centre and I thought about what a relief it must have been for him to answer a call from a person on the other side of the country, and to have a conversation with someone who can't see that his face and body are completely burned and scarred and gruesome, and, yes, scary to look at.

Firegirl was so true in portraying the feelings and reactions that go along with encountering someone like Jessica. I loved the story and the audiobook reading is especially great.

Prince William Public Library System says

"Firegirl" by Tony Abbott

Firegirl is a beautiful story where to different people come together and impact many of lives including mine because once I read this I became more out there and I taught my siblings not to stare because you don't know what there life was like. So this book it's awesome and inspiring.

-Grace, PWPLS Teen Reader

<http://librarycatalog.pwcgov.org/pola...>

Haley says

It was great. Very inspiring especially since I read it when I was younger, but it's still a great read.

Kendall 2/3 says

2.5 stars

Not bad, it just seemed very young to me, for the characters being in like 7th grade. It was too short, the plot was somewhat boring, and it overall seems too much like Wonder.

Jessica, who is one of the main characters (but not the narrator) was burned in a fire, and her face looks very different and unappealing, everyone makes fun of her and teases her, and nobody wants to talk to her or touch her.

Extremely. Like. Wonder.

Tom, the other main character and the narrator, was not a very strong character, and honestly I disliked him. Basically: A shorter, less powerful, less moving, and way less GOOD version of Wonder, with some elements changed.
Basically: NOT MY THING

Mrs. Barrett says

Firegirl is a fantastic book and a quick read. Tom is a great character who is easy to relate to. You really find yourself rooting for this protagonist and the "Firegirl."

Minli says

At first, I couldn't stop rolling my eyes because Tom and his friend Jeff were the kind of boys I knew when I was, say, ten, and really didn't like. Rambunctious, show-offy, really annoying--yeah, those ones, the ones who would pull on the pig tails of a pretty girl or dare each other to snap the bra strap of another.

But then Jessica Feeney joins their seventh grade class. Jessica has been burned so badly that her face and body are supremely disfigured, almost heinous to look at. She's enrolled only because the hospital where she's getting long-term treatment is close by. Some of Tom's other classmates--including Jeff--start speculating about what happened. They say, maybe Jessica was playing with matches and set her sheets on fire. They say, they would rather have died than look like she does now. It's cruel gossip, and only Tom tries to see something beyond Jessica's burns.

Guys, I got the heartstring tug at the end. Abbott doesn't make it too cutesy, it is what it is. There's no Moral of the Story and no Grand Revelation. Best of all, he never writes his Tom as something he's not--he's still a twelve-year-old boy, still insecure about a lot of things... but his knowing Firegirl, however briefly, tilts his life a little askew.

If I had one small criticism, it would be that, man, this book reads YOUNG. Like, I would have put these kids in fifth grade instead of seventh.

Meagan says

This is a great book for helping kids think about what it means to be an outsider. The book is narrated by a Catholic school boy, and tells about the short period of time when Jessica Feeney, a young girl who'd been terribly burned, joined the class. The book doesn't flinch away from hard truths and doesn't lecture or condescend to younger readers. The book openly acknowledges that Jessica, with her hard experience and terrible scars, is not the same as her classmates. It explores the fear and gossip that her differences inspire in her classmates. And finally, the book points out that in spite of all her differences, she is still just a girl, and could get lonely behind all those scars. It's a challenging read, at times touching, and can help start conversations about how to face our unfounded fears when we meet someone like Jessica.

Sumayyah says

Rating - 3 Stars // Recommended for anyone (IMO).

I really don't even know if this deserves three stars because even though I was satisfied with the story I thought the characters were just the worst. The main character Tom, was okay but he definitely had some jerkish qualities. And his friend, oh my God, I hated him at first I felt a little bad for him because I felt like he had some neglect issues and he was just really trying hard to be noticed but he was awful and that's no reason to bully someone. I really don't understand why the author made the 7th graders seem like 3rd graders or something they use language like 'it was so dumb I know but...' basically I felt like they were just no characters that I could really like besides Jessica the one who had the burnt skin cuz I just feel like none of the reactions that the kids gave or actually something that a legitimate seventh-grader would give and that the author was just making the kids seem like younger than they were. Sorry if this seems like a rant but I am currently recording my voice which is like why it sounds like I'm talking, and it is so convenient I recommend anyone try it.

Shreya Jupelly says

This book is something I thoroughly dislike for many reasons. If you wish for your sanity to remain intact, do not read this book.

Katie Altomonte says

I chose to do this book for book club. It was amazing!!

Bethany says

What an interesting story. I actually listened to the audio book on CD, and thoroughly enjoyed the narration.

The story is about a boy, Tom, and how he and his class of 7th graders react to a new girl at school who has suffered severe burns all over her body.

The descriptions of Jessica - Firegirl as Tom's so-called friend Jeff calls her - do make you cringe and cause you to identify with what Tom feels and observes in his classmates.

But Tom also thinks the class's treatment of Jessica is wrong, and even though it makes him terribly uncomfortable, Tom tries to make friends with her.

A very moving, and thought-provoking story.

John Stroup says

This book is very touching and has a good theme in it. It talks about a girl named Jessica Feeney who has been in a fire and survives. When Jessica comes out of the fire her face is deformed. People don't treat her as the everyday average person she is. Most people are scared when they look at her face and that's hard on her. A seventh grade boy named Tom has a heart of stone and he helps Jessica gets through her struggles. I think this book has a great message to not judge a book by its cover. The author emphasizes not to judge somebody by what they look like and treat others the way you want to be treated.

Eleni says

I like this book because it talks about a girl who really likes this boy but when she makes a friendship line with everyone in her classes and someone burns her picture by the boy she likes and she tries to find out who did it also towards the end she feels like not going to school because she's afraid of people teasing her and other stuff's going on in school. I recommend this book to people who has a friendship with a boy and they wanna know why their friendship isn't working.

Ella Kaback says

this book is truly inspiring, if you love the book's wonder and any other similar book, then this book is for you.

Joanna says

For a young adult book, I can't imagine this book has had much success among young people. It's a heavy read, with little action to move the plot forward in a compelling way, and the narrator is not a very convincing seventh grade boy.

The story - about how a young girl who has disfiguring burns is placed in the narrator's class - works best as a coming of age fable - a tale about the moments when a young person moves closer to the person they would like to be as an adult. Becomes compassionate, becomes serious, becomes whatever they are eventually going to make of themselves. In that way, the book is a success at relating this story of a few weeks in one boy's life.

But as a novel, it falls short on dramatic tension. Tom's actions are not entirely convincing. His fantasy life is far more interesting than his daily interactions at school, or his interactions with Jessica. It is a sad story, and the ending does not leave you feeling like resolution has been achieved.

If the moral of the story is that it is better to be a kind person than not, or that sometimes we find what we most want in unexpected places - that's a fine thing. If only it could have been rendered in a more interesting way, the book might be a more worthwhile read.

Isabella Schmitz says

Firegirl, written by Tony Abbott is a story about friendship, bullies and fitting in. Much like Wonder this story is about finding who you are on the inside and not who you are on the outside. The theme of this book is people come and go so quickly out of your life, so take advantage of them while they are there.

It all starts with when a girl named Jessica Feeney walks into Tom's class at St. Catherine's School. Without a doubt the entire class knew right away that Jessica was different. Her face looked mushed up, dried up and well a little scary to all of her new classmates. Tom was just like the rest of them, horrified. Tom was a shy average seventh grade boy. He talked about school, sports, cars and well, girls. He never thought that one day he would be talking about a girl like Jessica, but having her in his class!? This seemed insane to Tom at the time. Soon he discovers that there is so much more to Jessica than what she looks like. He learns that she was burned in a fire, and used to look beautiful. Tom and Jessica soon become close friends. However after only one month Jessica has to move again. She is still in treatment from the fire and has to move to a place where they have a better hospital. Tom is heartbroken. However he knows that he will never ever forget Jessica. The girl that changed his life forever.

I really enjoyed reading this book, and I believe that this book is about friendship. There is a lot about friendship in this book. For example, Jessica and Tom becoming friends, Jeff and Tom's friendship falling apart and Tom and Jessica's friendship at a risk because of Jessica moving away. I do believe that the theme of this story was people come and go so quickly out of your life, so take advantage of them while they are there. I believe this because Tom had to take advantage of Jessica while she was there because she came and went out of his life so fast. One thing the author did extremely well on in this book was creating the characters. Tony Abbott made each character unique and different from Jeff with his stubborn, slightly mean nature and Courtney with her pretty and kind nature, and so on. I was able to imagine the characters so much more deeply when they were all unique and fun and different. The author really makes the characters come alive, but I was a bit disappointed that Abbott did not do the same for the setting. Not once does he explain what Tom's classroom look like, or the hallways or anything! That was a disappointment.

I recommend you to read this touching, emotional book and fall in love with this story of finding out who you are on the inside and not just on the outside.

Kathy says

It took me a couple chapters to get into this book and then I ended really enjoying it. It's short, I read it in one evening while watching a movie with my kids. A good message on how little things we do can make a difference to others.

Miss_Nelson says

I read this book because I was looking for Wonder read-alikes. Although this has some similar themes because a girl named Jessica with severe burns temporarily joins a high school class, it doesn't have the depth of Wonder, or the humor. I think it might work well for teens who like problem fiction. The main character works through issue of peer pressure and figuring out the kind of person he wants to be. Jessica gets some cold reactions from her classmates, even though some try to engage her in a conversation at some point. So, I would say it's a thought-provoking book that will interest some readers and introduce discussion topics. But I wouldn't say it will have the draw of a book like Wonder. Grades 7 and up.

Kristina Cardoza says

Firegirl is a touching, sad, and memorable novel. It may sound like a book about a superhero, but it's nothing like that! It starts when the new girl, Jessica Feeney, who is "badly burned," comes into Tom Bender's 7th grade class--but only because she needs to go to a infirmary in that area. Everyone is afraid of her--except for Tom. When everyone (including his friends) keeps making fun of Jessica, Tom tells them to stop, but even so, they keep going and that results in him just not being their friend anymore. Meanwhile, he starts to form a friendship with Jessica... He becomes a changed person when she departs... read it to see how.

This is an unforgettably sad and moving novel, primarily because of the lesson learned: do not judge a book by its cover. Jessica may have looked strange on the outside, but on the inside, she was a friendly, understanding girl. I'm going to go read it again now. Bye!

<http://reviewsbykristina.blogspot.com...>

MizziQ says

SPOILERSPOILER***SPOILER***SPOILER***SPOILER***

This was so surprisingly amazing! Amazing writer that puts the enormous feelings of wanting to be excepted in public view in a simple-to-understand way. This is such a precious book. Tom has a best friend whom he has been friends with for almost 4 years now. They hang out together all the time...until a new girl comes to class and seperates them, without anybody really realizing it until it's too late. The new girl is named Jessica and the two friends are at odds with each other. Tom feels sympathy and compassion for her. He even wants to be her friend...but that IS NOT all right with his friend. Tom's friend even goes as far as to miss a very special planned excursion on an AMAZING car that Tom loves and humiliate Tom in front of his friend's uncle. By the time Tom gets to know Jessica he basically has no friend, no OTHER friends (his former friend stole his other friend...the nerve), and no one to talk to. Jessica becomes his soul mate, for a while. Then the class elections come up Tom could not work up the courage to nominate Jessica. Everybody already doesn't know who he is, why do something that would get him on their badside unneccesarily? Then Jessica learns she has to move...again...for diffrent treatments. She has no hard feelings against him. She is only appreciative of the time they were able to spend together. It ends with a heartbraking but sweet goodbye with no hope of ever seeing each other again. Tom lost his best friend, gained another one, lost that one, and now is left alone. Now this is the amazing part of the story. It has no sugar coating. No happy ending. Just a hopeful one. Reminding readers that even the smallest gesture can change a life, for better, or for worse. What was the moral? That part is really up to you. What it amounted to was a touching masterpiece that I will never forget.
