

Just Like Click: A Superhero Story for a New Era

Sandy Grubb

Fitzroy Books (Apr 16, 2024)

(188pp)

978-1-64603-439-0

A daring and kindhearted boy becomes his town's everyday superhero in the warm adventure novel Just Like Click.

In Sandy Grubb's inspiring novel *Just Like Click*, a daring boy assumes a secret identity to help those in need in his small community.

Nick's father wants him to become a soccer star and befriend the jocks, but the meek eleven-year-old would rather hide under his covers reading and writing comics. Upon learning that his father's job is at risk and that his family may have to move cross-country from their Oregon home, Nick decides to transform his obsession with Superman into reality. His first goal is to stop those who are plundering his father's workplace and save his father's job. But during his nightly escapades, Nick also stumbles upon a trapped raccoon, a neglected house that's a fire hazard, and a misbehaving, misunderstood pet dog. Each challenge spurs him to act.

As Nick helps his neighbors, rumors about a nocturnal hero gain traction. In turn, Nick grows more desperate to keep his secret. When Celia, a chatty fellow Superman fan, begs to join Nick on his adventures, he learns that maybe his interests aren't so pathetic after all.

Nick's heroism is fed by his steadfast sense of responsibility and by the fact that his maturity outperforms his fear. Though he is anxious about what others think of him and worries about being caught, his courage, compassion, and wisdom compel him to continue. He asks himself "Can a guy dream about the good old days when he's only eleven?" and wonders about the definition of bravery. His potential friends—including Celia; a sporty new student, Patrick; and the elderly neighbors Nick cares for with the help of his great-grandfather's money—offer dimensional support in addition to dealing with their own family complications.

The prose is precise, capturing how Nick's bumbling desire to be who his parents want him to be grates against his compassionate spirit, which is his true strength. His daring feats are pulse-pounding, as when he and his new friends scare off a wild cougar, or when he spies on the lumber thieves. These are complemented by the book's charming heart-to-heart conversations, which round the book out: for example, popular Patrick reveals his surreptitious respect for Nick's heroic deeds. Single-page excerpts from Nick's comics featuring his alter ego, Click, adorn the start of each chapter, injecting humor in form of a goofy raccoon sidekick. They're also a keen glimpse into Nick's sense of self-worth, courage, and untapped cleverness.

Just Like Click is a heartwarming novel in which a boy learns what it means to be a hero—not with superpowers, but with supportive friends.

AIEMEE JODOIN (August 9, 2024)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.