

The Fight for Midnight

Dan Solomon

Flux (Jun 20, 2023)

Hardcover \$19.99 (288pp)

978-1-63583-086-6

In 2013, a Texas teenager is swept up in the filibuster over an abortion bill in Dan Solomon's novel *The Fight for Midnight*.

On the last day of a political filibuster, Alex takes a call from Cassie, a classmate of his. Cassie asks him to come down to the capitol and rally with her. Alex has a crush on Cassie, though—until the call—they haven't spoken since the fourth grade. Hoping to get closer to her, Alex goes to the protest—where he realizes that the filibuster and the abortion bill stand to impact other people in dramatic ways too.

Alex—who is bullied in school, has been sentenced to community service, and lost his best friend to a drug overdose—is a flawed, empathetic hero. He grapples with guilt, feeling that he could have done more to prevent his friend's death. These feelings factor into his decisions as the filibuster winds down: he has to choose a side, and he has to take a stand.

The sensitive nature of the bill is handled with great care. At the capitol and elsewhere, Alex hears different perspectives from unexpected sources, including the man to whom he reads fantasy books as part of his community service and an ex-friend whom he'd lost contact with. His selfish worldview expands, even as he faces the reality that, in less than a day, the filibuster will end. He becomes more thoughtful as he works to decide what "right" means; he learns the importance of compassion, understanding, and allowing his experiences to shape and guide him toward the person he wants to be.

The Fight for Midnight is an emotional coming-of-age novel in which a heady political debate pushes a teenager to speak up when it matters.

JOHN M. MURRAY (May / June 2023)

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