



We Contain Multitudes

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Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe meets **I'll Give You the Sun** in an exhilarating and emotional novel about the growing relationship between two teen boys, told through the letters they write to one another.

Jonathan Hopkirk and Adam "Kurl" Kurlansky are partnered in English class, writing letters to one another in a weekly pen pal assignment. With each letter, the two begin to develop a friendship that eventually grows into love. But with homophobia, bullying, and devastating family secrets, Jonathan and Kurl struggle to overcome their conflicts and hold onto their relationship...and each other.

This rare and special novel celebrates love and life with engaging characters and stunning language, making it perfect for fans of Jandy Nelson, Nina LaCour, and David Levithan.

We Contain Multitudes Details

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Author : Sarah Henstra

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From Reader Review We Contain Multitudes for online ebook

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

pen pal guys who fall in love in the face of homophobia. god bless.

Max says

dvuhco

Stephanie says

This book made me feel many things.

Marisa says

Good realistic fiction M/M romance story.

I believed that Kurl and Jo were fully realized characters. Some of the secondary characters were 1 note, or weren't fully realized, like Jo's sister Shayna. She raged and spiraled down and then just literally locked everyone out; I didn't believe the events and set up at the party at Bron's house.

Interesting concept of 2 strangers (sophomore and a senior) writing letters to each other for an English teacher, but it grows into so much more. I'm not a huge fan of poetry and this had Walt Whitman completely woven through. I did think that the book could've been edited down, it dragged on. But then, the difference between a comedy and a tragedy is when the story ends.

Sana says

This sounds positively devastating so of course, I want to read it bad

Leslie Gallager says

Rarely has a book affected me as this one has. I wanted to race through it and while at the same time, slowly savor each sentence. It is a shimmering love story with a brittle core. I cried more than once and may have been reading this at my desk during the day... Unforgettable.

Jessie_Book says

I don't know how to feel about this book.

I loved a good bit of it. Like five stars would recommend to everyone loved it. The characters were fun and portrayed being gay in a heartbreakingly realistic way. It was written well, though the letter format of the book did hinder it a bit and grew a little thin at places. I was excited every time I picked it up to see what was going to happen next.

But its the last hundred pages that I can't get behind. Not going to spoil it, but some big issues come up between several characters. And instead of talking about the problem and resolve them, or at least start to resolve them, they just keep going about their days. They don't really even bring up the issues for the last hundred pages, then the book ends and it feels like it was meant to be a satisfying ending but it wasn't. I felt short changed and it kind of left a bad taste in my mouth.

Sara says

I 1000% loved this book for the 1st 3/4ths. It's this really beautiful romantic epistolary novel about 2 teenage boys who fall in love and discuss Walt Whitman and salamanders and their own sordid lives. It's lovely. But then some hardcore drama happens 3/4ths in and it was really overwhelming in its intensity. I almost whipped the book across the room, tbh. I needed Imogen Heap to come in with some ooooooh what you says to cut those dark feelings. Haha. But also for real.

So yeah, the motivations behind all the dramarama make sense and some of it wasn't surprising and like everyone is broken, but sometimes it's just too much to be reminded of our capacity to hurt each other, ya know? It grinds the soul. The tone shift tho, it just kind of ruined the book for me. And the neat ending didn't work either.

Ugh, I have no idea how to rate this. It's somewhere between a 2 and a 3 because of the drama, but everything before was a 5. I'd recommend if you love character driven realistic romances with a lot of hardcore intensity. But there are some hella problematic aspects too, just fyi.

P.s. I just read another of the reviews on here and someone compared it to Jeff Zentner's The Serpent King, which is indeed apt in my estimation as I think I literally whipped that book across my bedroom. I don't like books to betray me when I'm not ready.

Kelsie Pates says

When Adam and Jonathan are paired up as pen pals in their high school English class, neither is prepared for the relationship that blossoms out of their correspondence. Embracing the confidentiality that comes with letter writing, the boys open up to each other about everything and nothing all at once- things they wouldn't say to one another in person. Like how Adam's uncle hurts him, and how Jonathan is afraid to stand up to his bullies. The more they share, the more they fall in love...and the harder it is to keep their relationship a secret from the world outside of their letters. This is a gorgeous, romantic story that celebrates the written word and the preciousness of first love.

Kai says

2019 is the first year where I think that I won't be able to keep up with all the promising lgbt+ releases and that makes me want to cry

Stephanie says

Hard to believe I could enjoy a book so much that had no characters explicitly described as BIPOC. More racial diversity is the only thing that I can think of right now that would have made this book better!

*****SPOILER ALERT*****

The part with the sister really bothered me and I wondered if it was necessary.

Cathy Outten says

Jonathan and Adam are an unlikely pair assigned to write to each other by their shared English teacher. Jo and Adam "Kurl" start off as barely tolerant of each other, forced to communicate for their school assignment. They are different from each other in every possible way including age, social status, interests and family life. Over the course of writing each other they become first friends and eventually lovers. This is a lovely and compelling LGBTQ love story, however telling the entire story through letters that these two teenage boys are writing to each other felt very forced at times and it was hard to overlook the awkwardness.

Jamie says

This. This. This.

I don't want to write about what this book is about. I don't feel the urge to write about how beautifully drawn Adam Kurlansky and Jonathan Hopkirk are. How their voices are so distinct. How their story is so universal and unique. I don't want to write about that. I want to write about how much I'm feeling right now.

This is two days in a row of me reading YA books with gay boys at their center. And both have completely wrecked me.

But this one might have wrecked me the most. I was destroyed by this book. But it's a delicious sort of destruction, the kind where I know I will pick this up and thumb to passages just to remind myself of their beauty. That's not hyperbole - when I have insomnia I go to my shelves and find a passage of book that will soothe me to sleep, and honestly Kurl and Jo are going to be my go-tos for a while.

I wish I could give this more than five stars. I want to give this five stars with hearts on either end. Five stars with a broken heart emoji. A heart that's so full it's bursting emoji.

I haven't been this affected by a book since THE SERPENT KING. This is so romantic. So heart wrenching. I feel so FULL from this book.

You all, I don't want to oversell this; if anything, I feel like I'm underselling it. I truly, unabashedly loved this book.

"Let's not be the type of people who are scared to live because we might die."

I am all the things right now. Thanks, book. You've ruined me for other books for a long long time and I am not mad at you.

K says

Well, my heart was prepared for exactly none of this.

Benjamin says

2019 is rocking with all these new gay releases!
