



Going the Distance

John Goode

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Looking like the perfect all-American boy—tall, handsome, and athletic—makes it easy for Danny Monroe to blend in with the in-crowd of a new high school. It's a trick he picked up moving with his father from one Marine base to the next. When you aren't going to be around long, it's better to give people what they want. And what they want are his quick hands and fast feet on the basketball court.

On court, he can be himself and ignore certain strange developing urges. Everyone knows you can't like boys and be a jock, but for Danny his growing attraction is becoming overwhelming. At the thought of losing the only thing that matters, Danny starts to panic and realizes he has a choice to make: happiness or basketball.

Going the Distance Details

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From Reader Review Going the Distance for online ebook

Ptdog says

I hate having to wait for the next book in a series. Even more, I hate not getting an ending I like to a story I've read. Even more, I hate not getting an ending at the end of a book, but instead, a cliffhanger, and then having to wait some exorbitantly long period of time to get to read the next book - which will probably have another cliffhanger. I hate this book! I hate this author! I hate the freaking publisher who put this book out! I hate my friend who told me he was going to read it so I did too! READ THIS BOOK! I LOVED IT AND RESENTED ANY MOMENT I HAD TO PUT IT DOWN! I CANT WAIT FOR THE NEXT INSTALLMENT.

Kaje Harper says

This YA/NA series first book introduces us to Danny, a teenager whose single father is career military. Danny has moved around the world with him, changing schools. As he reaches his teens in Germany, his developing height and skill with a basketball begin to give him a focus, a purpose, and a way to get the approval that he craves.

At the same time, he figures out he's attracted to other guys. But a difficult experience, and the fear of being gay in the world of sports, make him not only try to hide the fact, but also muddy his internal self-image until he's not sure what he is. Between a fear of disappointing his father, a goal of making the professional leagues where he doesn't dare be gay, and the pressures of fitting in with new groups of guys, Danny's sexuality is a matter of stress and confusion. He doesn't always deal with that well. Danny's a nicely-flawed character. But he's also an interesting one. This first book has a tentative ending, although not a cliffhanger, and I don't think it makes a fully satisfying read on its own, so I immediately picked up the next one.

Bev says

ARGH!!!! John, you can't keep doing this to us, these cliffies will be the death of me...and since when has there been a 'Kyle Stileno Foundation to Minimize the Number of Asshats in the World'?? And why wasn't I invited to join, hmn?? 5 Golden NBA stars from me, for this unbelievably good...just AMAZING piece of fiction.

Daniel Devin Monroe. You will KILL me. You are NOT a freak!! It's not about living up to everyone else's expectations; it's about living up to your OWN, and being happy in your own skin. So what if people expect you to be straight, normal...whatever THAT is?? Who gets to say what's normal and what's not in this crazy world we live in, and WHO put them in charge anyway??

Basketball, pfft!! Yeah, know next to nothing about it. An extremely well-paid version of netball if you have the skill, with quick hands and feet..and a brain to match. I get that for some people it's like a

religion (football fan here), I really do BUT there are limits, there MUST be limits surely as to what they, the coaches, can reasonably expect of you as far as your personal life is concerned (cos you know, you're BOUND to perv on everyone in the changing rooms, start sprouting boners and 'infect' everyone with your gayness....).

Nate.... I luvs ya. Anyone who can say things like.....

'You're a great guy, Danny, and if I could be gay for you, I would.'

'You think you're broken, Danny? I see my brother everywhere I look. I see someone his age, and I wonder if that's what he would look like. I see brothers fucking around, and it's like I lost a limb but can still feel it ache.'

'You're not messed up at all, Danny. So you like guys; that isn't messed up, that's the way God made you. I don't think there's a thing wrong with it, and neither should you.'

'Dude, we're all freaks inside. Normal is just the lie we all agree to tell the public.'

...just turns me into a puddle of goo...oh and tears, there were plenty of those.

Liza says

John Goode has an uncanny ability to completely blow me away with every book he writes. I love his Tales From Foster High series, it's one of the best and most emotional stories I've ever read. This book is almost as amazing. I love Danny and his teen angst, the reality of struggling with his sexuality while trying to be the star of the basketball team. It was so true to life, nothing overblown or unbelievable, even the lack of an ending, while slightly frustrating, was just like life. The cast of characters were wonderful and I saw a little of my own friends in each one. I hope book 2 comes soon because I want to know what happens next in Danny's life.

Teri says

I don't know how to link it but I HIGHLY recommend y'all read Julie's review

So 5 star fabulous!

In general I have to say that I think its remarkable that John can create such life-like characters, they are so real. I love them like friends/children, etc.

Danny was too adorable. I loved that he was awkward and shy and sweet. My heart broke for him on more than one occasion. I wanted to defend him and protect him and yes, there were a few times when I wanted to shake him. I think that's the measure of great writing--feeling the entire rainbow of emotions, that's what real life is like. I think this one hit me a little different than the others I have read, I think someone else--maybe Julie? mentioned this as well...that as a mom, this is tough to read.

It's especially hard to read about a child feeling like they have disappointed their parent or that their parent is disappointed because of who they are and the intense desire to just be anything other than who you are for fear that you will let someone down, or have to give up something you love or just in general be shunned. It kind of took a toll on my poor little heart. Danny's dad, though at first a real ...ugh...turned out to be pretty

fantastic. And Nate...gah! Where can I find one of him? Absolute best kind of friend to have, just loved it. I think readers will definitely run through every possible emotion when reading this, but even when disappointed in Danny's decisions--and he made a few I wasn't fond of, you still love him and want him to be happy.

The cliffy's are KILLING me John! KILLING ME!!! Have you no sympathy for momo?

Waiting patiently for the continuation.

Anita says

Though I got angry at the lack of an HEA or HFN, I had to remember that this is a chronicle of a young man's life and his struggle with his sexuality and where he is in the world. That this is just part 1 of Danny's journey from birth until the end of high school. The writing is superb did elicit some strong feelings from me about Danny and his dad. I was angry at his dad but then understood this very young man in the military who lost his wife when Danny was quite young who didn't know what to do with his kid who seemed "different." Wanted to hug them both. Very emotional read. Still just so upsetting that kids struggling with puberty also have to struggle with their sexuality and how that doesn't fit what society deems as normal. Eagerly moving onto book 2.

Fritz42 says

The reading of this book was my summer gift to myself. After reading lots of YA books this winter and spring in order to be able to recommend them to students, this was the book I chose to read on my first days of summer vacation. And what a perfect book to start out my summer reading spree.

Can I just say that I love Danny? That little glimpse of him in 151 Days was just enough to pique my interest, so when I heard about this book I got grabby hands. There is so much to this young man. We get to witness his life from shortly after his mother is killed in a car crash, where he and his military father have to struggle to pick up the pieces of their lives without her.

They are stationed in Germany, where Danny has all this anger and difficulties adjusting to his new life. He gets in with the wrong crowd, but it's an unfortunate discovery and betrayal that defines how Danny sees himself. After this, the lengths he would go to in order to hide his sexuality from others – and frankly, from himself – were understandable, but damn, they made my heart hurt.

Initially, I didn't think I was going to like Danny's dad after his reaction to the one incident in Germany, but damn, I grew to love that man. He was the one that introduced basketball to Danny, giving Danny his passion in his life. His love and understanding for his son came through with what he did for Danny and some of the advice he tried to convey to his son. If only the two of them could bridge some of the communication gaps with each other.

This book covers Danny's tween and teenage years. I understand that book 2 of the series covers Danny's college basketball years, and book 3 his young adult years. All I can say is hot damn. We get two more books in this series. Just pardon my grabby hands.

Jules Lovestoread says

I enjoyed the beginning of Danny's story so much. <3 Can't wait to read the second book!!!

Paul Monroe says

This was a tough one for me. It was very raw and dealt primarily with Danny's state of mind and whether he can/will live as a gay man. We are witnesses to him growing up. I hated his dad and then I liked him but damage was already done. I think this book is one of the realest out there when it comes to gay teenagers and their inner thoughts about being gay

Tina says

When we meet Danny for the first time he's barely a teenager and struggling with a life that doesn't handle him with kid gloves. After losing his mom when he was just 5 years old he is used to spending his childhood on different military bases. He refers to himself as the typical base brat... and not in a good way.

Scared that his dad will leave him like his mom did he struggles with his feelings. He wants to fit in, he wants to be normal, he wants to like girls and hates himself because he can't. He is attracted to boys and his first encounter with a boy on a base in Germany ends disastrous but with a new beginning as well. Danny discovers his love for Basketball, a love that becomes a vital part of his life.

Oh, I was struggling with my feelings for this boy. At first I suffered with Danny, later in the story I felt the urge to kick his ass and set him straight (pun intended). :)

Btw, I'm a big fan of John, Danny's dad who loves his son with everything he has. If only Danny would follow his advice...

"Things work out the way they want to.

We can push and pull and fight every second of our lives,

but there will always be things that are out of our hands.

All you can do is the best you can and let the chips fall where they fall."

Near the end of the book Danny is 18 years old and he is blessed with a father who understands and loves him... and still he does anything to prove to himself, his dad and others that he is straight. At this point I was truly tempted to hunt Danny down and choke him with bare hands. Damn, I was so angry with him!

"I know I'm not what you wanted in a son—"

"What?" he said, cutting me off. "Are you serious?"

His voice was angry, and normally I would have been taken aback by it,

but all it did was make me feel worse.
“I know you would have liked someone who wasn’t—”
The word refused to pass my lips. “—who wasn’t wrong.”
He stopped and stared at me with an intensity that made me think
he might go off and hit me for a second.
In a halting voice that cracked with emotion, he asked,
“Did I make you think that? That you weren’t right?”

Anyway, as far as we are in Danny’s life I’m not his greatest fan, can’t he see what he is doing to himself? Please John, let him get his shit together in the future books!

As always John’s story telling is strong, powerful and engrossing, the story, and most of all the dialogues kept me on the edge of my seat. I eagerly anticipated getting to the next scene yet I hesitated as I was afraid of what would come. John has a special way with words that drew me right into the story, his writing is like painting pictures - vivid, intense and complex.

Let me end my review with one argument that broke my heart into a thousand pieces:

“But you wanted me to be straight,”
I said, my voice sounding like I was about to cry too.
He (Danny’s dad) half sobbed.
“No, son, I wanted you to be happy.”

If you don’t like to read stories that end with a cliffhanger, don’t worry. Going The Distance has an open ending, after all it’s the first book of a trilogy that accompanies Danny through his child- and young adulthood, but it doesn’t end with a cliffy.

Highly recommended to those who love reading coming of age- and young adult books.

4 out of 5 stars... we need some room for improvement, right? :)

Mel says

Phew what a ride!
What a true and heartfelt story.

I don't know where to start and how... I'm just so overwhelmed... With love and compassion for Danny. With despair about the choices he makes. Gosh, he is so, so lost. He is so out of it, so far away from reality, so contained. He's a mess, really.

But I love him and I need him to be happy, to find his true self, to let go of the lies and self-hatred. And I am sure that he will. Eventually ;-)

There is no one who can show me real life better than John. His stories and characters are so true, they are living and breathing, they become more than a story on a page. He makes me connect to the world. And I think that is what everyone should have, at least once in a while. We all read for entertainment, and that is good. I'd never judge that. But I feel it is so very important that we don't forget what we are reading

about. M/M is a great genre. But it's about real people, about our friends. It's not just something we can read and feel good about. Danny is real. He lives on this earth. It's important we don't forget.

I highly recommend this book! I advise to read the Tales from Foster High series first, since this is a spin-off, although it can be read on its own.

Thank you, John. Don't ever stop writing. Please.

4.5 stars

BWT (Belen) says

Three things you should know before I start this rant:

1. This was beautifully written.
2. John Goode is a master of his craft.
3. I hated this story so much I am finding it hard to describe just *how much* I HATE IT. It should have been titled "Abandon All Hope".

This is *extremely* difficult to rate - because it deserves a 5 star rating for how well done it is, but I want to give it 1 star for how it made me feel.

Oh, John Goode...*why*?

@36% Finished...Man, I wanted to put this book down. I even tried to put it aside. But I *had* to pick it up again.

Damn you, John Goode, for not writing badly so I can quit you and your freaking heartbreaking stories. Because John Goode's writing draws me in like a Venus fly trap.

reads while pouting

Why would you want to stop reading this you ask, when I have clearly been engrossed up until this point? Because I hate unhappy endings. There. I said it. I'm a sucker for a happy ending, or at least not a miserable soul-sucking ending. Not that I know if this does or does not have one of those! Let's just say I can see the writing on the wall and it might as well be "REDRUM", ya hear me?

I only realized at 36% (so feel free to call me *slow*) that *this* is the story of the guy who showed Brad around at A&M who was in the closet and totally miserable about it.

What did I *think* I was reading about, you ask? Well, for some reason I got confused and thought this was the story about the kid who showed up in class and declared he was gay at the end of *151 Days*. Turns out that dude's "Jared Fisher"...so, yeah, my bad.

This is about Daniel Devin Monroe, and all he's ever wanted to do is play basketball and ignore the fact he likes guys.

Danny's first sexual experience when he is eleven years old is met with such anger from his father, (not because of the act, but because the other boy claims Danny touched him while he was asleep because the other kid's father walks in on them fooling around) that it shapes the self-loathing Danny feels for himself throughout the story.

No matter who comes into his life and says being gay doesn't matter, Danny's complete self-loathing for his desire for other men drowns out any of their words or deeds.

When Danny meets Cody and they like each other I thought, maybe now he'll stop loathing himself for what he wants? But no.

I was hopeful when Danny meets Nate, the big-brother he never had, and Nate is so accepting I thought maybe now...but no.

When he meets Sam...but no.

When he meets Father Mulligan and is so buoyed by his sermon I thought, "Wow, this is great! It'll *finally* turn around now!" But once again, Danny's self-hatred rears his head and he uses the Bible like a knife to cut away any love and happiness from his life.

Killing your own happiness to make some else proud of you is the stupidest fucking reason to do anything.

Then I thought when Danny's dad **finally** gives his speech about loving him no matter what, that now, *now* he'll STOP and just *be* himself...(view spoiler)

(hide spoiler)]

...but no.

I just...Oh my *God* **the self-loathing in the story killed me. Killed. Me.**

Also, it ends...without an ending. Just sayin'.

I mean, we know from *151 Days* that Danny goes to school at A&M and continues to hide who he really is...and that just makes me unbelievably sad.

BTW, this is what's written in the notes of the book:

There are three books in this series: the one you are holding now; the next one, which is him in college; and the last one, which is him as a young adult. This I promise you, because I know some people don't like to invest their time in a book series unless they know it's going somewhere.

sighs

This is an excerpt from *151 Days*, which, if you haven't read the Tales From Foster High stories, why not? No, seriously. Get on that.

TFFH Brad's POV and talking with Danny, who is the MC of *this* book - *Going The Distance*: (view spoiler)

(hide spoiler)]

So, yeah, this makes me inordinately sad because I know there is no HEA (or even HFN) at the end of this story.

Damnit to all to hell, but I'll be one of the first in line for the others in the series.

This review has been cross-posted at Gay Book Reviews.

Marcie says

Convoview brought to you by Paul & Marcie.

Paul: ...yeah. So tell me what you thought of the last %.

Me: I was sad. The choices he made... :/ I mean, I totally get how and why he did and thinks the way he thinks. I just wish he wasn't in those situations. I wanted to be there & talk to him- shake some freaking sense into him: Don't [spoiler ;)]!!! But I get it. His choices, his thought process. Life is hard. Life as a teenager even harder. Life as someone who is trying to find himself, his identity must be overwhelming.

I wished he would of took the opportunity there at the end with his dad and [spoiler ;)] But things always seem easier than what they really are. Especially for people who are on the outside looking in.

But yes, I enjoyed it!

Paul: Yes. I totally agree.

You should put that in your review.

Me: You think so?

You know my struggles with reviews. But when talking things over with you...stuff just comes out.
#mymuse ;)

Paul: Yep.

Just copy and paste our entire conversation about it ;)

[.....]

And there you have it folks. He didn't need to tell me twice ;). But in a nutshell: I liked Danny (and Nate (& basketball))! I enjoyed the book! And I'm looking forward to the series.

**Paul, thanks for the (spontaneous) BR and keeping the excitement in our relationship going.
;-P ;-***

Elsbeth says

bumping it up to 5 stars cause of John Goode

Preparing for Edge of Glory. It has been 2 years since I read Danny's story but rereading his story has been even better!!!

first read 2014, November 28th

4,5 stars

I should probably from now on write my reviews right after when I finish the book.
When the emotions have not yet reduced!!

So this is how I'm feeling now...

I loved Danny from the start... His clumsiness, his difficulties accepting his body for being so huge... It was

kinda sweet and heartbreaking sometimes!!

I disliked his father in the beginning for rejecting his child and giving his child the feeling not being good enough!!

This really influenced Danny throughout his teens. Danny always felt he was letting his dad down.. Letting Danny think he was (view spoiler)

There was only one way I was going to be able to change my dad's opinion of me and make him proud of me once and for all. An action that would redeem me in his eyes and end my own internal questions in one fell swoop.

I needed to find myself a girlfriend.

When Danny and his father move back to the US, Danny goes to a public highschool where he can practice good basketball and become the best he could be.

It's there where he becomes good friends with Cody and he is confronted again with "his being different"

The story continues with Danny's struggle with his identity, coming out for his sexual preference as an athlete... It shouldn't have to be such a big deal.. I really hate that it's anyone's business at all...

Danny keeps being into denial and feels the needs to prove to everyone and especially himself – that he's straight..

(view spoiler)

Again, I loved Father Mulligan!!!

"The church is not a sports team. We are not one side that is arbitrarily picked to be against another. You see perverts, and I see sick people who need to be healed. You see murderers, and I see fallen brothers and sisters who have never needed love more in their lives. And you see faggots, and I see a group of God's children being hated for just being. And you say you are faithful Christians, and I see a group of hateful people masquerading as children of God."

I reeeally loved the Nate/Nathan. Sigh.... He was such a supportive friend/brother for Danny. I really wished Danny would have listened to him...

When Sam was introduced, I was excited for Danny.. Should this be the one.. But I reckon it's all too soon for Danny at this moment..

He has a long way to go, accepting himself so I'll be rooting for him in the continuing series!!!

Sonia ~Ruber's fiancé in Crystal Court universe~ says

reread 01/07/2017 - EXQUISITE!!

Hi!

Ok, so here it goes: this was not what I expected.

"Why?" you ask? Well, although while reading the book you can feel John's unique touch with the descriptions, the funny one-liners, the ridiculous comparisons that make your snort water through your nose (thank you for that btw, John *narrows eyes* :P) you won't meet a Kyle who wants to save the world or a Kane who follows his love into a different universe just to be with him..

No, you meet Danny: he's not perfect, he struggles with his identity, with his sexuality, with being a good person, but most importantly he's scared of disappointing his father. It was hard being in his head, reading about his pain, how hard he tries to be "normal" (notice the quotation marks). I just want to hug him.. and also slap him a little (you know for removing head out of ass purposes :D).

I understand why Danny's story had to be this way, it's not easy being a gay athlete and although more and more people don't care about this anymore, it's still such a big deal coming out in sports. SUCH A BIG DEAL! It's always "breaking news", there are always tons of discussions, everybody on the planet feeling like they deserve the right to comment about someone's sexuality, someone's identity.. Why? Why is that? It always brings tears to my eyes; thinking someone can't do the things he/she loves most in the world because some closed minded people care about what they do in their private life.. it makes me sick..

So I get it, I get why this is not just a 'boy meets boy and everybody's happy' story.. I loved the fact the subject of religion came about (oh how I loved Father Thomas Mulligan's speech, that was EPIC!!), because this is the main excuse ignorant people use to throw rocks at LGBT athletes (or at everybody for that matter). I liked the way it evolved throughout the story and how it affected Danny (the wrong way, but it's how the world works).

Regarding Danny and his *romantic interests* .. *sigh* that was so difficult.. I may have cringed a little at times (view spoiler) and (view spoiler) and I'm not really sure what's going to happen next.. Not sure what to think about Sam (view spoiler).

I did *luuuuurve* Danny's father and Nathan! Both were such good supporters (even if they did make some mistakes at first-->I'm looking at you Mr. Danny's father!), they tried really hard to make Danny accept himself and make good decisions.

And of course **I love Danny** (flaws and all) and hurt for him! *heavy sigh* Looking forward to reading more about his life (soon would be good *bats lashes at John*) and hope there will be more romance stuff in the next one :D

Hugs!
