

My Year Zero

By Rachel Gold





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Lauren thinks she has a pretty good life—so why is it that she feels crazy most of the time? She figures it's nothing she can't fix by getting her first girlfriend and doing better at school. But how is she ever going to find a girlfriend in Duluth, Minnesota?

When she meets a group of kids who are telling a science fiction story online and gets invited down to the Twin Cities, she gets more attention than she ever expected, from two very different girls: charming Sierra and troublesome Blake.

Blake helps Lauren understand that she's not the crazy one in her life. But Blake's attention—and insights into life and living with bipolar disorder—threaten to destroy everything Lauren has created for herself, including her relationship with Sierra.



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My Year Zero By Rachel Gold Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 10 Up—When Sierra breezes into Lauren's quiet life in Duluth, MN, she sets off a year that will change everything. The gorgeous and interesting college student seems like a hallucination to Lauren, especially when Sierra invites Lauren to be part of an online writing and role-playing group. As Lauren's involvement with Sierra grows, so does her attraction. When Lauren convinces her strict but emotionally absent father to let her spend spring break in the city with Sierra and her friends, things get even more intense. The other members of the writing group are diverse, experienced, and open in a way Lauren has never experienced before. Including frank depictions of sex, mental illness, and emotional trauma, this uneven novel follows Lauren through a year of turbulence and self-discovery. The time spent on Lauren's life before she becomes wrapped up in her new friends falls flat, with the glimpses of her life as a practicing religious Jewish teen being the most interesting and relatable aspects. Unfortunately, that thread disappears early on. The inclusion of obscure pop culture references and the unusual structure of the online writing group further stilt the first half of the book. The work eventually finds its footing with a narrower focus on the characters. The emotional breakthroughs are touching and genuine but make for slow plot points. With most of the actual dramatic events taking place late in the book, readers who fail to connect with Lauren early on will be bored. VERDICT An additional purchase for collections needing more mature LGBTQ stories.—Amy Diegelman, Vineyard Haven Public Library, MA

About the Author

Raised on world mythology, fantasy novels, comic books and magic, Rachel is well suited for her careers in marketing and writing. She also spent a decade as a reporter in the LGBT community where she learned many of her most important

lessons about being a woman from the transgender community. When she's not working on her novels, you can find Rachel online checking out the latest games.

For more information, or for resources about any of the issues in this book, please visit www.rachelgold.com.

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