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The Astounding Broccoli Boy

By Frank Cottrell Boyce

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The Astounding Broccoli Boy By Frank Cottrell Boyce

From Frank Cottrell Boyce—the beloved, award-winning, New York Times—bestselling author of *Millions* and *Cosmic*—comes another hilarious, heartbreaking, and completely original middle grade novel.

Rory Rooney likes to be prepared for anything. That sort of planning pays off when you're the smallest kid in your class. Rory is even prepared (mostly) for Tommy-Lee, his nemesis, who starts most days by throwing Rory out of the back of the school bus. *Don't be scared*, his favorite book says, *be prepared*. And Rory aims to be. What's more heroic than that?

But Rory *isn't* prepared when he suddenly and inexplicably turns green and finds himself stuck in an experimental hospital ward. The doctors are just as baffled as Rory is, and that's when he begins to wonder: What if this isn't caused by his genes, or a virus, or something he ate? What if it's something even more extraordinary? After all, more than a few superheroes' careers began when they turned green. Could this be a sign that he's meant for something greater? Rory is going to find out—and that's going to start with escaping from the hospital.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 4–6—When Rory Rooney, the smallest boy in his year and sadly the target of bullies including Grim Komissky, suddenly turns green on a class trip, he is blamed and ridiculed before a helicopter whisks him to a London hospital. Fearful he could be contagious, doctors aren't taking any chances while the "Killer Kittens" virus is ravaging England. Rory is dismayed to learn he is stuck in quarantine, being watched like he's a fish in a bowl, with the only other known sufferer of the mysterious green affliction—his arch nemesis, Grim (real name Tommy-Lee). Hoping their greenness means they are secretly superheroes, Rory and Tommy-Lee become convinced they have acquired superpowers. Rory is positive his brain now works at 200% capacity and that he can "slightly" teleport, while Tommy-Lee seems to be able to unlock coded doors while sleepwalking. Boyce has woven a quirky and madcap adventure full of resplendent British humor and colloquialisms. Rory and Grim band together, escaping from the hospital during the evenings, encountering loyal penguins, becoming entangled in an unfortunate royal hostage situation, and uncovering another green child—Koko. As the trio work to discover the cause of their mysterious color, they also learn what makes a true friend. VERDICT Humorous and fast-paced, this distinctive tale with well-developed characters will appeal to those readers who have ever searched for their own superpowers.—Michele Shaw, Quail Run Elementary School, San Ramon, CA

Review

"Humorous and fast-paced, this distinctive tale with well-developed characters will appeal to those readers who have ever searched for their own superpowers." (School Library Journal (starred review))

"Boyce provides readers with a fast-paced and hysterically funny adventure while also exploring the nature of fear, friendship, and family." (Booklist (starred review))

"A lengthy novel told in short chapters, it also offers up a message worth embracing: 'The thing that makes you different,' Rory concludes, 'is the thing that makes you Astounding.'" (Publishers Weekly)

"Cottrell Boyce, of Millions, mocks neurotic adults, the quinoa craze, and media fearmongering in this funny, sentimental, thematic smorgasbord of a novel that serves up equal helpings of satire and compassion." (Kirkus Reviews)

"Rory's superhero conviction is . . . gently humorous, and the kids' wild adventures through the city, culminating in an epic rescue at the top of the city's famous Shard, are comedic and exhilarating. A solid original adventure." (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books)

"Boyce's mash-up of comic-book tropes and coming-of-age struggles is funny. . . . Race, identity, individuality, courage, friendship—Boyce's young heroes tackle these serious themes, too, offering up wise-beyond-their-years takeaways like: 'The thing that makes you different from everyone else—that's your superpower.'" (The Horn Book)

From the Back Cover

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Frank Cottrell Boyce, the acclaimed author of *Millions* and *Cosmic*, has written another modern classic, a funny, whimsical, and heartwarming story about the ways in which so many of the things we see in others are rarely only skin-deep.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Martha Wilson:

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Stan Whitley:

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Robin Millard:

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Jesse Eriksen:

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