



Friction

E.R. Frank

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Most well-known for her devastatingly poignant teen tales of urban desperation and redemption, renowned young adult author **E. R. Frank** switches gears and narrows her focus to the pivotal events of one 8th grade classroom.

The progressive petri dish of Forest Alternative's middle school is stirred the wrong way when sophisticated, tongue-ringed Stacy makes the scene. Almost immediately, Stacy takes advantage of the school's relaxed and experimental atmosphere to start a little excitement.

For reasons known only to herself, she begins to insinuate that Simon, the 8th grade's idealistic, good-looking young teacher, is in love with Alex, *Friction*'s mild mannered first person narrator. Embarrassed and infuriated, Alex tries to squelch the gossip, but only manages to make herself look more guilty to her classmates. When she finally confronts Stacy, Alex is horrified when Stacy tearfully admits that the reason she's been spreading the rumors is to draw attention away from the fact that Simon is actually molesting her. Confused and half caught up in Stacy's stories herself, Alex makes the mistake of trusting her shifting feelings instead of what she knows to be true, irreparably harming her admired teacher in the process.

Friction is a provocative, deadly accurate portrayal of puberty, in all its manipulative, perplexing, unmanageable glory. Alex's quest to discover the definition of truth is a journey every teenager makes, and teen readers of *Friction* will take great comfort in the fact that a trusted author, who clearly hasn't forgotten adolescence herself, is helping to chart the path. (Ages 12 to 15)

Friction Details

Date : Published November 1st 2004 by Simon Pulse (first published May 1st 2003)

ISBN : 9780689853852

Author : E.R. Frank

Format : Paperback 208 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Realistic Fiction, Sociology, Abuse, Contemporary, Teen, Fiction

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From Reader Review Friction for online ebook

Thomas says

"Friction" is about twelve year old Alexander (Alex) who attends an urban private school that only has one teacher - Simon. Everyone is doing well until the new girl Stacey comes in and starts spreading rumours about Alex... and Simon.

I really didn't like this book, but I just can't bring myself to give it one star. Mostly because the ending actually wasn't too horrible. It's just that the characters, the plot, everything was wrong. I know how a thirteen year old should act, and the author was portraying it all wrong. The dialogue, the emotions, it was just off. I can't describe how stupid I felt reading this book, like - do adults really think we act like this? Because we don't.

Tiana says

In the book Friction there is a lot of drama, but there are a lot of serious moments as well. The book takes place in Forest Alternative Middle School. The main character Alex was asked to show around the new girl Stacey who is older than everyone else in the class. As time goes by Alex starts to find out more things about Stacey that she doesn't really like and she doesn't really want to be her friend anymore. The other students in the class start figure out things about Stacey as well and they don't really like her either. Things get said and the other kids don't know who to believe Alex or Stacey? Friction was published on May 1ST 2003 in New York by E.R Frank.

There were a few strengths of the book, one strength was that the author was talking about real things. Sexual assault and harassment are real they happen all the time, more than they should but it's the truth. The author E.R. Frank didn't really talk a lot about why Stacey was being the way she was but once you finish the book it kind of makes since why she was lying and acting out. Another strength of the book is that it talks about how words DO hurt and how they can destroy someone. In this book there wasn't really mean words said to the other kids by people but there were mean words said to the teacher and about him. There was a lot of lying done by Stacey and the last lie she told got so serious that it made the teacher and another student Alex get investigated. The teacher ended up leaving his job and moving away even though they proved that he didn't do anything. Saying things that are mean and not true can ruin someone's life.

In Friction there was also a few weaknesses of the book as well. One weakness was that this book is about middle schooler's and some things that were mentioned in the book I don't think they should've talked about when talking about 12-14 year old's. Another weakness is that one minute the characters were talking about one thing and a second later they were talking about a completely different topic. It jumped around a lot I guess you would say.

This book has good and bad things about it but personally after really thinking about it I really liked it. The book teaches you so many things and so many life lessons if you really think and pay attention to what you are reading. I'm not saying this book makes you think and is confusing or stuff like you could read it with out going into detail and doing the extra thinking and still understand what it's saying. But if you really want to get deep into detail like how I did you might want to try reading in between the lines, really think about what you are reading. In Friction I like how real it was and I also like how it felt like I was a character in the book.

As soon as I opened the book I was in a different place. Also I haven't read any books in a long time and reading this book made me remember why I would use to read all the time. You fall in love with the story, you become another character in the book, you go into a new world when you read. I really missed that and this book made me remember all of that. There was one thing I didn't really like about it. Also I liked how the book has a lot of real life lessons in it but they also added some other things in it so it's not so sad and depressing through out I mean it is about middle schooler's after all. The ending wasn't my favorite it just ended there wasn't any lead up to it or anything it just stopped.

Over all I would recommend this book to my friends that like to read especially about real life things that happen everyday.

Stephanie (the nerdy princess) says

Review to come

Tatiana says

this book is really good and has a lot of curies stuff. it is really good and is full of life

Ava White says

Okay...

#1: I think the age to read this book should be for mature teens and from about 13 and up.

#2: Sometimes I was so annoyed with some of these characters throughout this book.

#3: I loved that Alex and Tim... I think became a couple. Well, they kissed.... so shouldn't that mean ablest something?

Casle says

This was good. I was mostly reading it to be sure it wasn't too graphic, like America, which was great but not defensible in our library.

It's about a confused, abused girl who lies about a teacher touching her, and Alex who knows it isn't true.

Casey says

I realize that sometimes my "children" bookshelf is a bit misleading. For the most part, I actually mean young adults. I think you can deal.

I couldn't decide if I liked this or not. I think it was well-written, and I liked that the author resisted a neat and happy ending. The narrator, Alex, was a character I related to, even as an adult. My major problem with the book was that I just could not stand Stacy. She's one of those characters that are meant to come in a stir stuff up. I get this. However, I found her so obnoxious and frustrating (sort of like the best friend in *Born Confused* that it really kept me from liking *Friction* completely. I will say this, though: the author does a wonderful job of teaching the lesson that words matter, that they can be powerful and destroying, and must be carefully kept.

I would certainly recommend this to mature teen readers, but teachers, if you have touchy parents, get approval first. This one is fairly brutal.

katyjanereads says

1. I'm a librarian and at our library this book is in the juvenile section (around ages 8-14.) I know these kids are 12 years old, but I'm considering moving this book to the young adult section because of the content. Having said that, this book is important and should definitely be in the library. Kids need to know about this sort of thing but I would like for them to ask me and I can show them rather than accidentally stumbling upon a book that's out of their maturity range. (I'm especially thinking of my ten year old niece who reads from the juvenile section.)
2. Stacey's are real people. There was a girl I knew in high school that told everyone she got a hysterectomy, but the next week she told everyone he was pregnant. She also said her dad lived next to the rapper Nelly. She was the type of person that you knew was full of crap, but you never knew exactly where the lies started and ended.
3. This subject also hits home for me because my husband is a young middle school teacher and the girls could do or say anything to get in this position and it shows how careful teachers have to be.
4. It's sad that it had to end with Simon leaving but Alex being confused is a very real emotion, especially given the circumstances (however odd or unrealistic they may have been. Camping trips and McDonald's runs? Far fetched, but still.)
5. What the heck kind of school were they at? Definitely a lawsuit waiting to happen. If it wasn't this situation it would have probably happened anyway.
6. Please, God, let Stacey's dad get caught. She was an obnoxious liar who I wanted to punch in the face, but I really hope she's ok.
7. I like that instead of "says" the author used "goes." It sounded more true to a 12 year old voice.
8. Tim and Alex get married. The end.

Emma says

An amazingly well written book. I got it from my school library and I read it in less than a week. I'm a really slow reader too and when I really can't keep my eyes from a book, you know that it's good. Some language and adult content is in the book but, it adds to the story quite well. The book is about this new girl named

Stacy comes in and starts spreading vicious rumors about the main character, Alex. Stacy is saying that Alex's teacher Simon has feelings for Alex. The class is on a camping trip and there is a storm so, Simon comes into the kids tent and squishes between Alex and the tent wall. Stacy also lies and says that he liked Alex in an inappropriate way. The book get more interesting when their gang (Alex, Tim, Sebastian, Marie and a few other friends) are down at the creek and Stacy is running and she trips and breaks her arm. Simon carries her back up to the school and takes her into the office. She loses a lot of blood and has to go to the hospital. When Stacy gets back she says that Simon molested her and she reported it to the police. Alex knows that Simon would never do something like that and speaks to the detective. Right before Stacy and Simon go to trial, Stacy's family moves at the last minute. Stacy makes up a lie and says it's because that her father doesn't like the town anymore. Alex has to write a letter to Simon because she was too confused to let the detective know that Simon was innocent. There was no evidence to prove Simon guilty so his punishment is only an ankle tracker. Alex says that it is too painful to go to school there anymore so she transfer to a different school and it is also because Tim, Alex's best friend is transferring to an all boy's school and she can't go with him. I loved this book and I recommend that you read it. Thanks for reading!!!

Olivia says

I really enjoyed this book because it shows a HUGE misunderstanding and it also shows ho bad child sexual abuse can be. I felt bad for everyone in that book except for Stacy's dad. That is so messed up? Why didn't she tell her mom? Her dad, sorry if I offended you by saying this, a JERK. Stacy must of been terrified, horrified, and, maybe, embarrassed. Alex, unfourtunately, has to deal with the hurt of Satcy lying.(Her favorite teacher left.) This book, I beleive, will tell teens and older kids, tell an adult. Even if your 21, you shouldn't let a grown man/woman touch you like that, nor anyone of any age. Tell an adult before things get bad!!! I really enjoyed this book.

Kaleb says

Friction by E.R. Frank is a three out of five star book; I enjoyed the plot line and character development, but didn't think that the book was as well written as it could've been.

I wanted an easy page turner that I could pick up before bed and read a chapter or two before I got too tired to keep reading. I have to say this book wasn't that. It was an easy read with an interesting plot, but the fact that it was told from the perspective of a 12 year old made it too simple, and often plain. I understand that the author was going for that type of writing, but that just isn't what I was looking for. Apart from being a simple read, I enjoyed the plot and was able to get sucked into the story. I laughed at the funny scenes and cringed during the awkward moments that appeared often. The author did a nice job at evoking certain emotions, and creating a setting that you could put yourself in. I gave this book 3 stars because I was able to read and enjoy it, but it was too simply written for my taste. If you like stories that follow an unoriginal exposition, rising action, climax story arc, then this is the book for you.

Mehak says

Teen fiction is definitely not my cup of tea. However, this book delivered a very important message... facts don't always coincide with the truth. Your heart knows the truth and you should believe in the truth that echoes inside you, no matter what.

Xiao Mei says

The book "Friction" by E.R. Frank is about Alex, a 12-year-old girl. She goes to an "Alternative" middle school and is the only girl on the school soccer team. Everything is going right until the new girl, Stacy arrives. Stacy becomes friends with Alex. Stacy is a trouble maker and spreads dirty rumors. She says that their teacher, Simon, "likes" Alex and that she likes him back. She makes people in their class believe her, even Tim, Alex's best friend.

This book was good. However, the ending wasn't that great. The ending could have been better if the author talked about what happened to Stacy. Besides that, the book was filled with details. It was descriptive. I think people whose interested in books about teen drama would like this.

Aimee says

I liked this book better than I thought I would, but not really because it was entertaining. It was not particularly exciting, but it raised serious questions and portrayed certain issues from a different angle than they're usually portrayed.

Alexandra is a well-off, well-behaved eighth-grader in a tiny, alternative classroom for other well-off, well-behaved kids. They're taught by Simon, a young, "cool" teacher whom they all admire and like. The students seem very insulated and sheltered in their little classroom until Stacy arrives.

Stacy is worldly, charismatic and manipulative. She's much more socially aware than the other kids, and she's smart enough to realize this and use it to her own advantage. Almost right away, Stacy begins planting seeds of distrust and suspicion among Alex and her friends. She insinuates that Simon is attracted to Alex, and Alex, who may or may not already have a little crush on Simon, begins wondering if it's true, and also starts to worry. Stacy's lies drive a wedge in between Alex and her best friend Tim, whom Stacy seems to like better than anyone else in the class.

The situation escalates to the point where Alex is actually afraid of Simon, even though she has known him for years and he has never done anything before to make her uncomfortable. Alex is confused and depressed and feels her parents are too busy to really listen to what she has to say.

It all comes to a head when Stacy is badly hurt in a rappelling accident on a school outing and at the hospital it's discovered that she has been sexually abused. Stacy points the finger at Simon, and though he is quickly cleared of official suspicion, (which promptly falls on Stacy's father) Simon feels betrayed and as if he can no longer trust the students he cared so much about. He particularly blames Alex because she should have known that what Stacy said about him was not true, yet she didn't tell anyone about it, and just continued to believe Stacy. Simon leaves his job without really even saying goodbye to his students.

When Alex confronts Stacy about her lies, Stacy shrugs them off with "Nobody believes you when you do tell the truth." This is where the story begins to fall flat. That sounds like something Stacy picked up from a public-service announcement or something and is parroting it to get herself off the hook. And obviously she knew that her lies were being believed, and I suspect she had caused trouble in her previous schools as well; she was far too smooth and experienced a liar to have truly thought her lies wouldn't be believed.

I also found it a bit unbelievable that Simon and the school's principal-equivalent, Maggie, didn't get all the students and their parents together and discuss what had happened. That seemed very out of character, and downright unethical, for any school, even more so for a close-knit, hands-on alternative school like this one. What I did like was that the book offered no happy endings, no neat wrap-up. Simon may have put a little too

much of the blame on Alex, but his anger and hurt are completely understandable, and I think that his allowing her to feel guilt about her actions or lack thereof without an apology from him was also realistic. And I do think she needs that guilt and regret.

Stacy was something else that was portrayed more realistically than it usually is. She's a victim, but a thoroughly unlikable and unsympathetic victim. Her lies don't seem to have been a cry for help; rather, she seems to be the kind of person who stirs up trouble and pits people against each other just because she enjoys it and has gotten away with it. Not very PC, but I was glad to know that Stacy's abuse was not being used by the author as an "Aha, this explains it all! Poor Stacy, now we understand."

I would have liked to see Stacy face some real consequences for her actions, but that lack of closure is also realistic, as is the fact that we don't know if her father was ever punished. (Very un-PC of me to say, but I think having to put up with Stacy at all was a punishment in itself.)

Emely says

The book Friction by E.R Frank published in 2003 is about 4 major characters Stacy, Alex, Tim, And Simon. It starts when Stacy transfers schools and enters Forest Alternative. A school that Alex and Tim both attend and the school Simon teaches at. Stacy a young 14 year old girl who has a careless personality spreads rumors about Alex and Simon. Rumors that both Tim and Alex and other minor characters are starting to believe. Alex sets out on a journey to figure out the reason Stacy lies but once she figures out the truth. Alex can't help but feel sorry for Stacy.

The novel has its strengths and weaknesses one strength is that she is able to describe characters with the way they act and through their personality but one of the weaknesses this book has is that she does not include descriptions of other main characters. she also struggles with keeping the reader interested with events that I believe are not necessary. which brings me to an incredible strength she has which are the ideas of the important events in this book she describes them so well that it feels like you're apart of the story. The character believably is okay i thought that maybe the characters should have been a little older like maybe making them all 14 instead of having them be 13 and 12 years old. As for the story line it is inspiring and motivational. I believe the story line is that behind every lie there is some truth hidden in it.

I did enjoy the book it was motivational but i would've liked to have imagined it more with descriptions of the characters and better descriptions of the actions. The only thing i disliked was how the author left me wondering on what happened to the characters. Also the age range of the characters in the novel, i thought the characters ages should have been older. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys reading about mature topics. Also anyone who enjoys realistic fiction because almost everything that happens in the book has happened in the real world. I also recommend reading with an open mind because it won't make you squeamish when reading about topics you are not used to hearing or reading about.
