



# Jumped In

*Patrick Flores-Scott*

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## **Jumped In** Patrick Flores-Scott

Sam has the rules of slackerhood down: Don't be late to class. Don't ever look the teacher in the eye. Develop your blank stare. Since his mom left, he has become an expert in the art of slacking, especially since no one at his new school gets his intense passion for the music of the Pacific Northwest—Nirvana, Hole, Sleater-Kinney. Then his English teacher begins a slam poetry unit and Sam gets paired up with the daunting, scarred, clearly-a-gang-member Luis, who happens to sit next to him in every one of his classes. Slacking is no longer an option—Luis will destroy him. Told in Sam's raw voice and interspersed with vivid poems, *Jumped In* by Patrick Flores-Scott is a stunning debut novel about differences, friendship, loss, and the power of words.

## **Jumped In Details**

Date : Published August 27th 2013 by Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)

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Author : Patrick Flores-Scott

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# From Reader Review Jumped In for online ebook

## Emily (Book Jems) says

There are some books that take awhile for you to decipher your feelings towards. Other books you know immediately that you are going to dislike. Then there are the little gems that you connect with from the very first page. For me, *Jumped In* fits into the third category. From the first mention of Nirvana--my favorite band, if you didn't already know that--I knew I would love this book. This was a fantastic debut that made me believe that this is an author to watch.

Sam has mastered "slackerdom." He knows how to get by in school, and in life, without attention. He spends his times in the sounds of grunge classics and reminiscing about the days where he was happy with his mom and his two best friends, Dave and Rupe. When his English teacher pairs him up with Luis Cárdenas for a poetry assignment, the facade that Sam built slowly starts to unravel and he must rewrite everything he's come to believe.

This book was not what I was expecting, and I loved it. Sam's voice is the best part of this story. It's raw, and real enough to pass emotions onto the books readers. I, myself, teared up at the end. This is a truly powerful story that had me bound. *Jumped In* teaches its readers a lesson that is invaluable, especially in the world in which we are a part of today. The author excellently weaves a contemporary tale that nails the nitty gritty, and leaves us feeling hope. The book moves at an excellent pace. It's an easy book to read through, and it's even easier to enjoy--it helps that there are constant references to the greatest grunge band of all time (and nothing anyone can say will ever make me change my mind about this).

*Jumped In* is one of the few stories that doesn't have a focus of romance, or a main character even really thinking about romance, that has been able to hook me. Sam's a very realistic main character, I believe. He's afraid, and unsure of himself. He has trouble dealing with reality, which makes it impossible for him to do more with his life. He is very set in the past, which is why he acts the way he does. He's a smart kid, but he's lost. His emotional journey throughout this novel is breathtaking. It's one that I'm very glad I was able to witness because what Sam goes through is something to which everyone can relate. This is really a novel about growing up, and finding yourself through the blender into which life throws you. The minor characters tied in wonderfully, and each fulfilled their purpose in helping Sam complete his journey.

I would definitely recommend this book to those who like their contemporaries a little edgy, and very heartfelt. This book is more than just a story, it has a deeper meaning that will hit its readers in their very core. It's gorgeous, and real, and even after more than a week later, the message still lingers. There are a few minor exaggerations, but they are easy to look past as this book really pushes its lesson. *Jumped In* tells us that there is more to a person than just their outer appearance. What matters is the person inside, and you can't know that until you take a chance and speak up.

*I received an ARC of this novel from the publisher for my honest opinion and review.*  
**This review can be seen here on my blog as well.**

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## Eden says

Gosh, *Jumped In* is a very mixed bag. Sam's voice is moderately authentic, at least in his narration. This was

one of the rare cases where I found the swear words used judiciously, realistically. However, when we get to dialogue, too often Sam or other characters sound (well, read) awkward, stilted or simply phony, especially once we hit the exclamation marks. Combine this dichotomy with a great structure—short chapters that work fabulously to keep up an otherwise-draggy pace, interspersed with Luis’s poetry—and the overall reading experience is somewhat bewildering.

Luis is perhaps the best-developed character due to his poetry; Sam’s character arc feels unbalanced since he doesn’t really require much growth to turn his life around, at least not compared to Luis’s problems. Adult characters are all developed superficially, enough to placate but nothing to really satisfy. Together, the wide cast attempts to make up for quality by quantity, and depending on your pickiness it may succeed.

Like Sam’s growth, the plot feels unbalanced: he and Luis become friends very quickly and there is a marked lack of conflict throughout the majority of the novel, especially since his (perfectly valid) teenage angst is always in sharp relief with the troubles Luis faces. Flores-Scott does manage to send his point home in a relatively moving way, though, ensuring the reader gets something at the end:

I’m so pissed at myself.

Pissed for having been angry with Luis. Pissed at myself for thinking the worst about him. I can’t get the image of the scar out of my head. Not just the scar, but all the crap I imagined about it.

I hate myself for the time I spent thinking those things.

Mostly I’m upset that my first friend in a long time is so sick that he might die.

Couldn’t he have warned me? Couldn’t he have said, *Don’t get too close and please don’t care about me because I might not be around for long?* (p.253)

Okay, let’s talk about the poems, because they are SO. LOVELY. I’m no poet, but they connect with you, with their rhythm and imagery and reality, brutal truth cloaked in harsher words, and they made me ache for Luis Cardenas who comes loaded with a history and legacy which Sam couldn’t ever understand. But he does his best, and Flores-Scott doesn’t hesitate to call out his protagonist:

They introduce themselves. Tre and Quintel. They tell me how long they’ve known Luis and his mom and how, along with Leticia, they organize the Viking Glen trick-or-treating and the block watch and all that kind of crap.

“We look out for each other around here,” Tre says. “So we been trying to figure out what’s going on with Luis and his mom. And worryin’. That’s why we overreacted on you. We straight?”

I feel like a complete racist dumbass for what I’d been thinking about them. For the reasons I ran. “Yeah, that’s fine. I’m sorry I ran away from you.” (p. 229 – 230)

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## Rachel's Book Reviews says

We studied poetry, I sucked.

I always respected it.

But could never write it well.

An inmate given keys,

This book spoke to me  
Lou is hero  
Sam is lost  
Just Go  
READ.

~

In depth review:

I love this novel. How I got it, is by pure miracle. I was holding it, at the Macmillan booth at ALA 2013 in Chicago. I'd waited an hour to get in the booth, to purchase a book I'd had my eye on all weekend. But sitting there at a table, there were about 9 ARC's. I decided to pick up the one nearest to me, to read the back.

Then, there was a revolt. The 40 some odd people in line decided that they weren't going to wait their turn. They rushed the booth, swept all the books in to their bags and purses, and left without paying for their books.

I was left with the few books in my arms, and this little gem.

I stayed to pay, thankyouverymuch.

But I was looking forward to reading that one little book that I just happened to be holding when I was crushed in to the side of the Macmillan booth.

I got the news that I had to go to the hospital (to be admitted for at least 5 days, for extreme antibiotics and lung samples to be taken. I've been through it before, but I hate hospitals with a passion. Even if they have saved my life on more than one occasion.)

So, there I am, being poked and prodded and given every student in the building to come ask questions for practice (I try not to be bitter, I really do.) and lo and behold, I read this book.

Awww...

It's so good! Usually 'gangland' novels, or generally brooding novels don't fly with me. I live see it all around me, and I'm generally one that reads to let my mind go elsewhere. Also another thing that I usually protest is cursing. But, by the time I finished the novel, I really didn't care much about the language.

This was one of those graced novels that caught my attention, and even better, it kept my attention. Like I mention in my little Nonet at the top, I studied poetry, and I really loved it...but I sucked at it.

I pretty much 'passed' and moved on. I love poetry that turns things around.

And boy, was this book full of it.

I also, have a little side recommendation.

AFTER you finish the novel....go backwards and read the poems. NO, don't go back to the front and read the poems.

Start from the back.

You'll feel the punch harder that way. I promise.

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## **Dan William says**

I loved this book!! It was such a great read - and I am excited to read more by Flores-Scott!!

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## **Amy Fournier says**

\*Actual rating 3.5 stars

I'm not a big poetry person, but this sounded really interesting so I decided to give it a try. I'm really glad I did. I actually loved getting to know Luis through his poems, and I loved seeing Sam open up a little and finally let people in. This book tackles many different issues. Stereotyping, friendship, family, and learning to find yourself. This was a book I was very unsure about and ended up really enjoying. It was a pleasant surprise.

Sam is the type of person who keeps to himself. Abandoned by his mom, and expecting her to return to bring him back to his old home, he never wanted to get close to people. Didn't want to form relationships with anyone if he was just leaving soon anyways. After it was apparent his mom wasn't coming back, he just didn't care to be friends with anyone. It's easier for him to just be by himself. He won't have to ever subject himself to that feeling of loss again. It isn't until Luis becomes an unexpected and unwelcome part of his life that he starts to see things differently. He finds an unlikely friendship with Luis. He discovers that his stereotyping may have been wrong, and that people aren't always who they seem on the outside.

I found the writing in this to be fabulous. At first I wasn't sure about hearing Sam tell us a bit about what is happening, then getting a poem written by Luis, but soon it really flowed and I was flying through the book. I wanted to know more about both of them, about where their story was going. I loved that this tackled the issue of stereotypes in such a cool way. I loved that everyone was so much more than meets the eye. Besides Luis and Sam, I loved all of the characters. I thought they were all well developed, especially their English teacher. Every character had a reason to be part of the story. There were no side characters just for the sake of moving the story along.

Upon finishing this book, I was surprised how much I felt. I started off not really feeling any sort of connection or emotions at all, and I'm not sure when they developed, but by the end I was aware of all the feels I had. It really caught me off guard, and I love that! This book was just so well rounded. It covers so many issues, it's so real, and it also gives a few little lessons on poetry that I found really cool. I think this is the type of book that all high school (or even middle school) kids should read. I am so glad that I decided to read something different from what I usually do. This was a great book.

\*An advanced copy of this book was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review. I did not receive any compensation.

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### **Mia Searles (The Muses Circle) says**

A book that totally caught me off guard. Made me laugh and made my cry. REVIEW COMING SOON

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### **Brenda Ayala says**

Well.

I don't really know where to start with this. I suppose it would be prudent to say that I really wasn't expecting much from this novel. I'm not a particularly big fan of poetry, don't own any poetry books. The story sounded basic enough that it didn't warrant an immediate reaction of *I have to read this* from me. I did love the cover though. It feels chaotic and unpredictable, much like how the plot of this story went for me. I

will say that I think if the man on the cover is meant to be Sam, I imagine that his shoulders would be hunched over more.

Despite my initial indifference to the book in the beginning, it blew me away. I'd like to say one thing: I'm not a shy person. In school, I was much more like the go-to girl Julisa than Sam. I didn't mind speaking in front of the class, and I would try to help out the teachers when I saw that the class wasn't responding (with the exception of math--I'm useless in math). *Jumped In* made it possible for me to see inside an introvert's head in such a way that I could understand it. Sam's reactions didn't seem crazy to me once I got to see in his head. There were many times where he panicked and did something that easily could have embarrassed him, like running out of the classroom. But I could understand it, and I could see why he did it. It was a beautiful thing for me, to be able to see inside his head like that. To feel those emotions that he felt.

The relationships that developed among all the characters, particularly among the last twenty pages or so, was by far the best part. I'll admit it, I cried. Quite a bit. I can't really gush about the book without giving some things away, so I'm just going to say screw it and give some things away.

The effect that Luis had on everyone is astounding. It felt honest and real, and when the reasons behind his behavior is revealed it's logical and makes sense. It made me sit down and reflect on the relationships I had in my life, and gave me an appreciation for the loved ones I have. Luis' effect on Sam was obvious and grew in such a natural way that it didn't feel forced.

In fact, I could say that about all the relationships. None of it felt forced, and none of it felt like it was merely a gimmick, or a moment to just push the plot along without any real purpose. It all had a purpose, and it was downright beautiful.

I'm highly impressed with this novel. I'm feeling quite glad that I have a signed copy that I get to keep and share with others.

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### **Andrea Mullarkey says**

Sam lives with his grandparents in Des Moines, Washington a suburb of Seattle. What starts as a short visit while his mother goes off to get herself settled at the end of a bad relationship turns out to be a relatively permanent situation for Sam, one he is not thrilled about. He is determined not to get close to anyone at school or attract the attention of his teachers. He wants to suspend his life in a haze of the grunge music he loves until he can move back to the coast where he imagines his life will begin again. But an inadvertent interaction with the notorious Luis (everyone knows he's a gang banger) and a poetry slam assignment in his English class shake him out of his slacking. What happens between Sam and Luis, each of them struggling to find their voice, is only the start of a complicated situation. The tension builds when Luis disappears after a tense fight at school and the mystery of where he's gone and if he is safe takes over the story.

This book tackles issues of identity, stereotyping and self-expression through two vivid voices that are not always heard from. Sam is an under-achiever struggling with staying present in his life. Luis is a tough kid from a tough family and his reputation precedes him at school. But they each have a more complicated back story and more things to say than they are initially prepared to share. The story is told primarily in prose by Sam but chapters are interspersed with Luis's poetry. Strong imagery, accessible language and plenty of plot make this an easy recommendation for young people interested in words as well as those looking for books with a diverse cast of characters although some more mature themes like violence and gangs may put this

book outside the reach of middle school readers.

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## **Lara says**

Reviewed by Janelle S., 6th Grade Teacher Extraordinaire

Sam is in a state of depression. Left by his mother at his grandparents', he feels abandoned and lost. He misses his buddies and their love of grunge music now that he lives with his willing-to-try, but very old grandparents. When a new student, Luis Carderas, shows up, things change. This tough looking guy, who is rumored to be a gang-banger and has a thick scar and an attitude to match, decides that he wants Sam to be his partner in the upcoming poetry slam. As the two boys work on their poetry, they learn more about each other and find a rhythm and connection that Sam doesn't expect. Suddenly, Luis is challenging Sam to "let it out," pushing him to speak, to slam. As the day of the poetry slam dawns, Luis is not at school. Rumors of a race fight between some gangs run rampant and Sam is both worried and mad. However, Luis has left a CD of his part (and an apology note with a promise to explain) in the office and now Sam has to perform alone with only Luis' voice on a CD to encourage him. But he does it, and he does it well. Sam is encouraged and begins to do better in school, but still no Luis. Days pass. No Luis. A week passes. No Luis. Sam discovers that he has more friends than he thought as people band together to try to find Luis and his mother.

I LOVED the book up to the point of the poetry slam and the hunt for Luis. When Luis' disappearance was explained, it reminded me too much of the hokiness of some of Lurlene MacDaniel's writing. I just felt that there wasn't any evidence in the plot line to really make the climax gel. A plot twist with little support makes everything seem underdeveloped. The writing reminded me of *Twisted* (Laurie Halse Anderson) or *Fade to Black* and *Breaking Point* (Alex Flinn). There was a lot of language, but it was realistic for a teenage boy.

Recommended for gr. 8-10.

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## **Kristen says**

At first, this book moves along at a fast past and you think, "Hey. This is a nice book about a two boys becoming friends." And I liked that--there aren't a lot of books out there that are, at the core, just about two teenage boys becoming friends. Sam is a white, grunge-loving slacker whose mother abandoned him with his grandparents. Luis is a Hispanic, possible-gang-banger with mysterious scar and a secret love a poetry. They both try to fly under the radar in school but pair together to work on a writing project. Simple, right?

WRONG. WRONG. WRONG. WRONG. WRONG. WRONG.

I was reading along, content in my opinion of this book when BAM! Blindsided. Oofta. It goes from kinda-touching-realistic to mysterious to gut-wrenching in a matter of pages. I was an emotional wreck by the time this one was done. Wow.

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## **Tara Ethridge says**

There are so many things I loved about this book--just so many things. The slackers who are truly deep



thinkers just waiting to be heard, the teachers who ROCKED and cared so much, the poetry strewn throughout the book, and even smaller characters were so meaningful. A student recommended this to me and told me I would cry, and he was so right. There were even a few audible sobs from me whilst reading. For middle schoolers, this is a great book for both genders, but both main characters are boys. A bit of coarse language, but other than that, it's remarkable.

#YALLA peeps, Teagan recommended this, and it rocked my world! It makes me want to have a poetry slam night at school.

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### **Laine sanders says**

At the end of this book I almost because of what happened to Luis. I feel that Sam is a good friend for going through all this trouble just figure out a tragedy. I feel that this book showed to never judge a person by what they look like and by rumors.

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### **Beth says**

Oh the tears. Thank goodness I wasn't out in public when I was reading this. The last 40 pages of the book had me weeping incessantly.

I would love to make this a read aloud in my classroom, but I fear I won't be able to get through the ending. Plus there's a fair bit of language, which could get awkward with middle schoolers. Would be a good high school read aloud though.

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### **Jennifer Kinney says**

This was such an excellent book. I loved the character of Luis immediately. I could not put this book down. It was so heart wrenching at the end. I cannot stop crying for the goodness in the character of Luis. What a fabulous read!

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### **Cody Zimmerman says**

Jumped In is about a boy named Sam who comes from Aberdeen but eventually moves from his friends and his past town. If there is anything you need to know about how to slack off, Sam is your guy to turn to. He has plenty of rules set up to get you through your high school classes without raising expectations of teachers. In this book, I really enjoyed how it put past things into the present, such as the band Nirvana. It also relates a lot to high school students, we all had a dream about being rockstars or police officers, this book follows that line. Also, I enjoyed how fast it was to relate to the book and really get into it. On the other side of things, I did not enjoy how boring it got in the center of it. Also, the ending was very unexpected and was not a good way to end it in my opinion. Overall, I really enjoyed this book, once I got into it I could not

put it down, and I'm never like that with books. It is very relatable to high school students, we all go through some moments that Sam goes through. I would give it a 7 out of 10, it was a very good read, however, the long middle stretch of boring, and the ending brought down my level of likeness I had in the book itself. I would recommend this book to anyone that likes really large, unexpected twists in novels, and anyone who has had to move away from their old life because this book will relate to you.

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