



Prince of Pot

Tanya Lloyd Kyi

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Isaac loves art class, drives an old pickup, argues with his father and hangs out with his best buddy, Hazel. But his life is anything but normal. His parents operate an illegal marijuana grow-op, Hazel is a bear that guards the property, and his family's livelihood is a deep secret.

It's no time to fall in love with the daughter of a cop.

Isaac's girlfriend Sam is unpredictable, ambitious and needy. And as his final year of high school comes to an end, she makes him consider a new kind of life pursuing his interest in art, even if that means leaving behind his beloved home in the Rockies and severing all ties with his family.

For a while he hopes he can have it all, until a disastrous graduation night, when Sam's desperate grab for her father's attention suddenly puts his entire family at risk.

Prince of Pot Details

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From Reader Review Prince of Pot for online ebook

Aryaman Iyer says

This book is a great story about a boy who deals with a hard choice: To stay with his secretive and secluded family and work on their marijuana farm, or leave the isolated grow-op and pursue an art career in the big world. Along the way, he meets a girl named Sam and makes a best friend out of a client. These two people influence his choices and take him on a wild adventure of self-discovery.

4.5/5 good read.

Enid Wray says

In these days of newly legalised cannabis... come this oh so timely and delightful read.

Poetic and heartbreak, this is a lovely light hearted coming of age story about a young boy whose family lives on the fringes of acceptability. While the family dynamic may not be the norm, or what most potential readers can relate to - it rings true, authentic. Even the ending... sadly.

This novel covers a lot of serious ground without being - or becoming - at all 'preachy' in the doing so (i.e. marijuana debate, gender based violence, the Vietnam War). It's also not hard to enjoy the way in which the author highlights the Arts - as an immersive experience and as a way to find your path to your future.

And then there are the bears. No more to be said about this - spoiler territory - but oh... the bears!

The big takeaway from this book comes straight out of the mouths of babes: Don't be so hard on people... We're all muddling through (p63). Be gentle on yourself. We're all just doing our best, and sometimes that's all we have, and that's good enough.

Elaine Tucker says

An interesting story that takes place in British Columbia. It is about a family who have a grow op in the forest, a carefully guarded secret. The teen boy Isaac goes to high school in the town, art is his favourite subject as he is a born artist. As we leave this story the family has collected their belongings and as much equipment as they can to start over somewhere else leaving Isaac behind.

Lisa says

See my review on The Hub:

[http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2018/...](http://www.yalsa.ala.org/thehub/2018/)

Kelly Oliva says

I chose to read this book because it's set in British Columbia, where I grew up. And contrary to what most people think, until this year, pot has never been legal in the province. In fact, this story hinges on the fact that pot is illegal to grow and sell in BC. Issac and his family live off the grid in the rugged terrain of Creston. Issac, his mother, father and grandfather secretly (and illegally) tend to several acres of government land that are perfect for pot growing, and they live very simply in a one-room cabin. Issac is a quiet loner whose closest friend is Hazel, a large brown bear that he's raised since she was a cub, and it's Hazel who starts a string of events that will change Issac's life forever. One afternoon as Issac is walking in the woods, he meets Sam, the new girl in town who is terrified when Hazel comes out of the trees to follow Issac. Issac appears to scare off Hazel which impresses Sam, and at school the next day, Sam can't stop talking about how Issac saved her life. Issac is uncomfortable with the attention--he's always flown way under the radar, in part so as not to draw any attention to his family--but he's attracted to Sam and soon starts to imagine a life for himself off the grow-op. The kicker is that Sam's dad is the newest cop in town, and he's suspicious of Issac. Issac must decide what he's willing to sacrifice-- his romance with Sam or his connection to his family.

While I was particularly interested in the idea that bears can be (sort-of) domesticated, and I was thrilled to read a book set in my home province, the story didn't stand out to me. It's a familiar plot-line without much to rave about.

Katie says

Thanks to the @kidlitexchange network for the review copy of this book – all opinions are my own.

I loved this engaging, original, coming-of-age novel from Tanya Lloyd Kyi.

Seventeen-year-old Isaac Mawson is in many ways your typical teenager – he's on the cusp of adulthood, trying to figure out what to do with his life. He loves his art, is navigating his first real relationship with a girl, and feels pressure from his family to live up to their expectations. Yet Isaac's life is anything but normal: he lives with his family on an illegal marijuana grow-op in British Columbia. His best friend is a habituated brown bear named Hazel. Getting from town to his remote cabin requires an ATV ride and a hike on foot, and he's constantly on the lookout for strange cars or footprints that shouldn't be there.

I loved Isaac's story, and though his experience is so very far from my own, I found him to be so very relatable. I felt for Isaac every step of the way – his life is anything but simple or easy, but he so clearly loves and feels intense obligation to his family and their way of life. I loved the cast of characters and the gorgeous mountainous backdrop. The book is extremely well-written, moving, heart-rending and hopeful. Highly recommend for mature YA and up.

Norma Charles says

I LOVED this book. I'm amazed at how the author was able to get right inside the mind of Zac, a teen living

way up in the bush on an illegal marijuana grow-op with his family. His best friend these days is Hazel, one of the bears who guards the property in exchange for occasional bowls of dog food. That's until Zac falls for the beautiful Sam, a newcomer at school. Unfortunately, Sam's father is a cop who's on the hunt for local illegal grow-ops. And Zac's feelings for his new girlfriend puts his whole family in terrible danger. Believable characters, excellent dialogue and rising conflict kept me reading to the final dramatic, heartbreak, but satisfying end.

VictorS says

Issac is a 17 year old high school student that drives a pick up truck. Issac is very outgoing but does not like the attention. His family is also very isolated from the real world, he is very different and has 3 pet bears with his ill grandpa. Issac meets this girl named Sam, they fall in love and start to date. There is only one problem, Issac's parents run a illegal grow up that no one knows about. Issac's father wants him to be the third generation to grow the op but Issac wants to be a painter. Issac cant risk getting caught and putting his family on the line. Sam wants to do things with I They live on a mountain and always on the lookout for helicopters and uninvited guests. Issac's parents are later forced to leave him and be on his own.

This book was very good as it was always packed with action and excitement. Sam and Issac always bring action packed as they almost get caught by her dad, police and almost in jail. I recommend this book as it likes to foreshadow whats gonna happen next. As you go on a journey with Issac and Sam they explore new places and are in love till one night changes it all. The book has different views and overall is a good book for young adults as it is very shocking

Jennifer says

A moving coming-of-age tale about a boy balancing his family secrets with his teenage desires. Isaac struggles during his last few months of high school as his first ever girlfriend, Sam, pesters him about his future. Does he want to continue the family business, living practically as a hermit? Or, is it time for him to explore the world and maybe even go to college? As Sam's love for the spotlight and taking risks stirs up trouble, some of Isaac's choices are threatened to be made for him.

While heartbreak in moments, this novel celebrates resilience and determination of youth and family.

*Thank you to Netgalley for the free eARC.

Sarah Valerie says

I am very impressed with this book.

When I first started reading, if I'm being honest, I wasn't expecting too much. The plot, based on what I got from the summary, sounded intriguing, yet cliche in its own right. The writing felt a bit too simple for my tastes.

But its something about the narrative that derived from my original expectations. I can't quite put my finger on it. Isaac was a wonderfully expressive character to dig into the mind of, and I completely resonated with

what he was going through. I think that's what brought a lot of strength into this story: Isaac's voice.

I also expected the story to be heavily driven by the romance. And while it is quite a big deal, this book is so much more. It's about family; questioning what one's place is in the world, and I respect this book quite a lot for this.

The writing is quite good as well; it's expressive, it's intricate and while not very poetic or metaphoric, it doesn't need to be. And by this, I mean that complex "mature" type of writing I'm so used to seeing. At first I judged this novel for not being that, but as I said, it doesn't need to be. The writing is quite descriptive and I love how it allows me to feel what Isaac is feeling.

I would've liked to have seen more descriptions of scenes, in general. Often times scenes go by quickly with a lack of description for the atmosphere or actions the characters may be doing. I believe this would've helped much more to allow the reader to have a clearer image of the setting. For example, during scenes when Sam and Isaac spent time together, it felt awkwardly short, and in my head I'd instead image them doing a lot more between the lack of description.

Also, perhaps a bit nit-picky of me, but there are quite a lot of awkward line breaks during dialogue. The rule, typically, is that quotations continue in the same paragraph where a character begins speaking, so long as the same person is talking. Sometimes, the author breaks these apart, making it hard for me to tell who's speaking in the scene (hope that makes sense).

All in all, I really enjoyed this novel. As a senior student myself, who loves art and is also trying to figure out life after high school all while dealing with family issues and romance, I related to this book **a lot**. I like the direction this story took, it being atypical and quite original.

4/5 stars

Thalia says

Pretty good book. The love interest was completely pointless since they don't even end up together. Wtf. Honestly Isaac and I are completely different people. Near the end, he was so tired of losing people that he forgave his friend for telling the police/RCMP where his family was, forcing them to move and kill their bears. Fuck that was so traumatic. I shed a tear. Poor Isaac. His reaction to Hazel's death made me tear up. Ugh.

Samantha (WLAPP) says

Pro: I loved Isaac's voice. He was honest and real, and well developed. I liked discovering all the different parts of him.

Pro: Isaac's family was different, but there was a lot of love. There were many events which clearly showed how much this family cared for each other. They were not best communicators, but their actions clearly showed how much affection they held for each other.

Con: There is this really traumatic part that happens with the bears at about 93% through. Fair warning - it's brutal.

Pro: The interactions between Isaac and his sister, Judith, were some of my favorites. They had a special sibling bond, and it was probably largely related to their unique upbringing.

Pro: Kyi did a fantastic job immersing me in Isaac's struggle. Most of this book centers around Isaac trying to decide if he should be a third generation grow farmer of Draft Dodger Dark or if he should chase his own dreams.

Overall: This is quite an interesting coming-of-age story, which I found filled with humor, honesty, and love.

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Anna says

I received this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

In many ways a run of the mill almost cliche YA coming of age story. Isaac is a character you've seen before, and Sam is a manic pixie nightmare girl. Isaac's family has an illegal grow-op in BC. Isaac tries to balance his "normal" life as a regular high school student and his secret life of pot growing. Isaac's family lives deep in the woods outside of town, they're growing pot on government land and are constantly worried about the helicopters flying overhead and the RCMP by the trailhead to their cabin. As interesting as the scenario is, and as interesting as it was to have a setting like this, not much was made to make it different enough from other books about young adults growing up in atypical situations.

Isaac's family is poorly developed. His mom is the stereotypical quiet submissive woman in a house dominated by men. His father is one of those broody quiet guys that refuses to let people know what he's thinking or why. People should just know and do as their not specifically told. Isaac's father recently suffered from a stroke and the family is dealing with the repercussions of that. Isaac's sister recently left the family's cabin for a converted bus in town. And she is exactly how you'd imagine a person who grew up in the situation she did for so long would be.

It's definitely a book that makes you wanting for more. Why would Isaac's mom leave the town life she grew up in to live a cabin in the woods with little electricity and an outhouse? How did Isaac's parents even meet? How has this life affected Isaac's school work/life? How has the marijuana business changed over the years? How/why did the family end up growing pot?

Really just a lot of questions for a book that deals with an interesting topic, but just not enough to completely satisfy.

Kate Olson says

Completely and utterly original, this YA captivated me from page one.

Thanks to House of Anansi Press for the review copy of this title.

I have said again and again recently that I'm starting to rate more and more on originality and this book NAILED the quintessential feel of quality YA wrapped in a completely new storyline. I was fascinated with the premise of this book and couldn't stop reading. It is a story with a TON of heart about secrets, family and growing up in a very, very unique setting. Anyone who has ever had to keep a secret or take care of an elderly relative will relate to this story so closely. Personally, growing up and living in rural wilderness areas make me able to relate to this one on many other levels as well. I cried and I ached for Isaac as he tried to find his place in the world, but wasn't left with a feeling of despair. And the BEARS. Oh, those bears.

Highly recommended for mature YA collections.

Alicia says

It certainly represents a voice of the marijuana industry that isn't completely accepted nor is it the demon it once was, this tells the story of Isaac who lives remotely in Canada on his family's pot farm with all of the dangerous secrets that entails. And it's not allowing him to be all he truly wants to be (case in point, he's an artist, won a competition, but couldn't claim the prize because of the privacy of his family's business).

Absolutely a coming of age story that while had a unique element was a bit cliche as well, especially when it has to deal with a romantic coming of age as well. Neither loved nor hated this one. Completely average.
