

# Looking for alaska- review

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“ I go to seek a great perhaps,” were the last words of French writer, Francois Rabelais.

It is also one of the most famous quotes from John Green’s first coming of age novel Looking for Alaska. Famous last words take a part in the novel in more ways than appear; other than famous last words John also touches the points of growing up with depression and falling in love. John talks about these points extremely well, and he really gets into the head of a teenager. This is most likely because he based some of the events in the book on his experiences in life. Although this is John’s first fictional YA novel, it is beautifully done, and is one of the most existential books ever to be written. The book starts with Miles “ Pudge” Halter, a high school junior who loves famous last words and the girl down the hall.

He is starting his first year at a new boarding school, which is based off of the one John himself attended when he was in high school. Miles is looking for what he calls his “ Great Perhaps,” which he wants to find before he dies, unlike Francois Rabelais. In the wake of his search he meets a new group of friends; however the girl down the hall will either ruin his chances of finding his Great Perhaps or make him work harder to get it. Reading this novel it’s hard to tell that it is John’s first. It is perfectly written with very well developed characters.

John says the saddest things in the most ineffable way, and it isn’t that noticeable how sad it really is until the end of the sentence. He has a way of bringing the characters to life. He really makes it easy for the reader to relate to the characters: they go through real life problems, they have actual

backstory, and they aren't perfect. This is all very surprising considering it is his first novel. The most character development can be seen in Miles; he goes into the school year not really knowing what to get out of life.

He has a set perspective of the world and who's in it. By the end of the book the reader will have learned just as much about finding themselves as Miles does. " I'm just scared of ghosts, Pudge. And home is full of them," this is said by Alaska when Miles asked why she doesn't go home for vacation. Most, if not all fears, start at home; this is one of the many things I learned from this book. Most of these things are said by Alaska herself, including another very famous quote about the " Labyrinth of Suffering.

" Which also takes just as big of a part in the story as last words do. Alaska doesn't only make Miles think, but the reader as well, which is something that you don't get that often out of a YA novel. Since this is a YA novel, it's full of cliches, beautiful, and sad endings. It relates well with a teenage audience as it deals with the struggles of teenagers everywhere: love, stress, and peer pressure with alcohol and smoking. The way John reaches these points with such extent makes it seem like he would be younger than he actually is.

It's as if he's living the story as he writes. Most YA novels tend to hopscotch around the idea of teenagers actually conforming to these things, but John doesn't. He jumps right into it, noticing that it does happen and knowing how it affects them. This is a book I and many of other people would recommend that teens around the world should read. " What sings and soars in this

gorgeously told tale is Green's mastery of language and the sweet, rough edges of Pudge's voice.

Girls will cry and boys will find love, lust, loss, and longing in Alaska's vanilla-and-cigarette scent," Kirkus, Starred Review. John Green's beautifully written existential first novel is one that should be read by people everywhere. It'll prove that no matter how far into the labyrinth of suffering you are, there is always a way out.