

The Real Boy

Anne Ursu

Reviewed by: Krista Holmstrom, 16

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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For those of who love books about magic and supernatural experiences, this one is for you. Anne Ursu provides the perfect balance between magic and reality in her book *The Real Boy*. It is magical without being too far-fetched and realistic without being too close to reality.

Oscar is a young orphan who has been chosen by a powerful magician to come work and live in his shop. Oscar lives in the cellar and prepares goods to be sold upstairs in his master's shop. When his master begins to travel and no one else is left to look after the shop Oscar must take on his master's responsibilities. Oscar has a peculiar way of interacting with others and therefore is made fun of by the townspeople. He begins to believe that he is not wanted, not a real boy. One day Callie, an Apprentice from the city comes into his shop and notices that he has trouble communicating with his customers. They make a deal which brings them together on an unexpected journey.

Overall, I enjoyed this book, however it would not belong on my list of all time favorite novels. Personally, I am not huge on magical books or books too far from reality so from the start I knew that this wasn't going to be one of my favorites. That is not to say that if you don't like fantasy books you won't enjoy this one. I appreciated how the characters interacted and how despite the content being fantasy they possessed relatable human traits. I enjoyed the way that the author used some vocabulary that is not typically used in books for young teenagers. She presented new words in a way where the young reader could still infer what they meant. I appreciated the writing style of Anne Ursu and the way that she displayed her characters in an almost lifelike manner. Despite the fact that the book was not one of my favorite genres, I thoroughly enjoyed the read.

I would recommend this book to kids age 10-12 because it is a fairly easy read, however it contains some higher-level vocabulary. Personally, this is a book that I would check out at the library rather than give as a gift. The book was good, but it was not one that I would need on my bookshelf at home.

Books to read after *The Real Boy*:

Harry Potter and the Sorcerers Stone by: J.K. Rowling

The Lightning Thief by: Rick Riordan

Savvy by: Ingrid Law