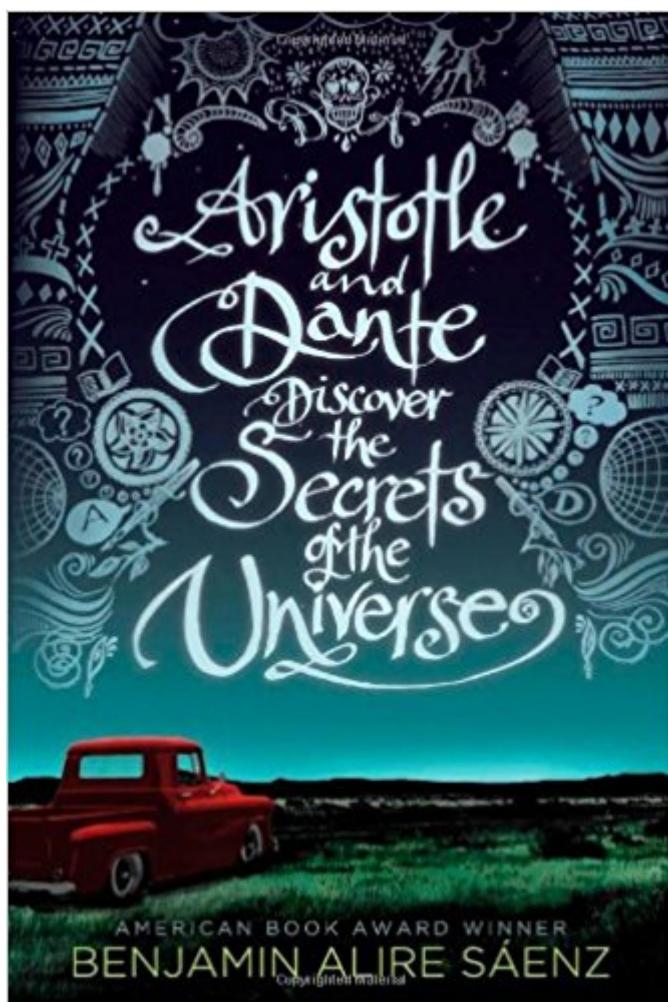


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Aristotle And Dante Discover The Secrets Of The Universe (Americas Award For Children's And Young Adult Literature. Commended)



Synopsis

A lyrical novel about family and friendship from critically acclaimed author Benjamin Alire Sáenz. Aristotle is an angry teen with a brother in prison. Dante is a know-it-all who has an unusual way of looking at the world. When the two meet at the swimming pool, they seem to have nothing in common. But as the loners start spending time together, they discover that they share a special friendship—the kind that changes lives and lasts a lifetime. And it is through this friendship that Ari and Dante will learn the most important truths about themselves and the kind of people they want to be.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 634 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #76,731 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #97 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Gay & Lesbian #170 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Being a Teen #302 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship

Customer Reviews

When Aristotle and Dante meet, in the summer of 1987, they are 15-year-olds existing in “the universe between boys and men.” The two are opposites in most ways: Dante is sure of his place in the world, while Ari feels he may never know who he is or what he wants. But both are thoughtful about their feelings and interactions with others, and this title is primarily focused on the back-and-forth in their relationship over the course of a year. Family issues take center stage, as well as issues of Mexican identity, but the heart of the novel is Dante’s openness about his homosexuality and Ari’s suppression of his. Sáenz (Sammy and Juliana in Hollywood, 2004) writes toward the end of the novel that “to be careful with people and words was a rare and beautiful thing.” And that’s exactly what Sáenz

does he treats his characters carefully, giving them space and time to find their place in the world, and to find each other. This moves at a slower pace than many YA novels, but patient readers, and those struggling with their own sexuality, may find it to be a thought-provoking read.

Grades 9-12. --Ann Kelley

* "A tender, honest exploration of identity and sexuality, and a passionate reminder that love—whether romantic or familial—should be open, free, and without shame." (Publishers Weekly, starred review)* "Authentic teen and Latino dialogue should make it a popular choice." (School Library Journal, starred review)* "Meticulous pacing and finely nuanced characters underpin the author's gift for affecting prose that illuminates the struggles within relationships." (Kirkus Reviews, starred review)"Saenz writes toward the end of the novel that "to be careful with people and words was a rare and beautiful thing." And that's exactly what Saenz does—he treats his characters carefully, giving them space and time to find their place in the world, and to find each other...those struggling with their own sexuality may find it to be a thought-provoking read." (Booklist)"Saenz has written the greater love story, for his is the story of loving one's self, of love between parents and children, and of the love that builds communities, in addition to the deepening love between two friends." (VOYA)"Ari's first-person narrative is poetic, philosophical, honest and skillfully develops the relationship between the two boys from friendship to romance." (The Horn Book)"Primarily a character- and relationship-driven novel, written with patient and lyrical prose that explores the boys' emotional lives with butterfly-wing delicacy."--Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books"Saenz is a master at capturing the conversation of teens with each other and with the adults in their lives." (Library Media Connection, Recommended)"This book took my breath away. What gorgeous writing, and what a story! I loved both these boys. And their parents! Don't we all wish we had parents like theirs? The ending - and the way it unfolded - was so satisfying. I could go on and on...suffice it to say I will be highly recommending it to one and all. I'm sure I'll reread it myself at some point. I hated having it end." (James Howe, Author of *Addie on the Inside*)"Benjamin Alire Saenz is a writer with a sidewinder punch. Spare sentences connect resonant moments, and then he knocks you down with emotional truth. The story of Ari and Dante's friendship widens and twists like a river, revealing truths about how hard love is, how family supports us, and how painfully deep you have to go to uncover an authentic self." (Judy Blundell, National Book Award-winning author of *What I Saw and How I Lied*)"I'm absolutely blown away. This is Saenz's best work by far...It's a beautiful

story, so beautifully told and so psychologically acute! Both Ari and Dante are simply great characters who will live on in my memory. Everything about the book is absolutely pitch perfect...It's already my favorite book of the year!" (Michael Cart, Booklist columnist and YALSA past president)

How to review this book...I liked it. A lot. I have no regrets in buying it. Ari was easy to empathize with and Dante was adorable (almost too good to be true at some parts). I was reminded of my teen years while reading this -- the angst, the confusion, the question of identity. I did somewhat see the end coming, and over all I'm satisfied with it although I thought the revelation of why Ari's brother was imprisoned was a bit cliche. But I'm able to forgive that. This is a YA book after all, and they tend to be chock full of cliches; in fact, as far as YA books are concerned, this one is rather low on them, so I don't have much room to complain. I was put off by the grammatical errors (there were a bit more than I'm used to seeing in published works), and I admit I have a harder time overlooking them; however, the story itself was engaging enough to keep me from giving up on it and tossing it into my get-rid-of pile. All in all, a pleasant read. 4/5 stars.

The writing of the book was a bit over simplified for my liking, but I could appreciate the undertones of what the story was capturing and the end of the book was the most beautiful part. A storyline rarely discussed about knowing your own truth and the journey toward finding it.

It is easy to dismiss Young Adult literature as being a genre reserved for less sophisticated readers. To dismiss this piece of writing would be a tragic error. Saenz gives us a story of self discovery, courage, and love couched in the telling of a high school friendship that is familiar but also beautiful in its development. Anyone who felt the desire for isolation, the pain of loss or the confusion of finding ones true identity as a young adult will see themselves in this story.

can't decide if its 4 stars or 4.5 stars. 4 is from my brain and 4.5 is from my heart? the thing about this book is that it's beautiful and unique, it's poetic but not too much, it's realistic and not too heavy or cliche. the book centers around the main character's inner world which is very very rich, but not much is going on outside of his world. there are dramatic events but like, maybe 3 in all of the book. some people would find this boring but i like that. personally, as much as i enjoyed this book i felt very unsatisfied because there was so much more to explore that wasn't explored, and i felt like the 300+ pages

could have been maybe 150. when i finished it i was like, this is all? cause i loved it! and wanted more, but also the end wasn't very "end" for me? the author said on twitter he is working on a new book from dante's pov, and also maybe a sequel, which is AMAZING, so I do hope the fact I was unsatisfied is going to change when I read those books. but I still think that if there is a book in a series you need to kind of wrap things up in the end, and leave only a little mystery so the reader will be curious for the second book. this book just isn't "wrapped up" if you understand me (I'm not a native speaker, sorry). It is also pretty repetitive towards the end. I wanted to be amazed and I wasn't, but at the same time I couldn't stop reading and fell in love with the characters? So I'm confused. I hope the other book(s) would be better. this is the review i wrote with spoilers just as i finished reading. you are totally welcome to come to my ask box and talk to me about this book! <http://montythegreenbean.tumblr.com/post/129774332559/ive-finished-aristotle-and-dante-discover-the>

I don't know if it was how the book was formatted or the story being told but - ok wait - it was definitely the story, but the formatting helped - with those short short chapters - it was like running a marathon and having a hundred short goals to meet. And the story!!! What beauty. Two neighborhood boys who had zero friends. They were both uniquely different. The way sentences were written - pulling you into the moment and smacking you upside the head. I found myself reading with tears pouring down my face over a dead sparrow. WTF. Maybe it wasn't so much the bird, but a lot of Dante's love getting into my heart. Ari and Dante, two really good friends who find love at different speeds. 5.0 for desert stargazing in the bed of a classic truck.

An excellent coming of age novel about young men discovering their sexuality. If you are looking for a book that addresses LGBT issues, and gives you the warm fuzzies, this is the book. It's placed in the 1980's, and the relationship that blossoms between Ari and Dante is a little bit overly-simplistic, and fantastical in that they both have supportive parents and good friends. It's the way coming out should be, but usually isn't. Especially back in the 80's.

I can already tell this will be one of those books that I'll think about long after I've finished. Who could not fall in love with Dante....? I mean....GAH! This book just had so many great lines and I felt like it did really well with handling the complicated emotions that come with growing up and learning who you are. The fact that the characters were able to laugh even in the hardest times was something that I found real and lovely. Getting the book from Aristotle's point of view was a blessing

too, because while Dante was often an open book, Ari struggled to show or even understand his own feelings about the world around him and the people he cared about. All around Great!

I adore this book! Similar to Eleanor and Park in tone. It takes place in a time before Internet and cellphones, where children had to make an effort to keep in touch with each other. It's a beautiful story of understanding oneself and those around us, best friends, true love, growth, and experimentation. This book was so intense and went into so much depth that I felt like I lived through it. There were a lot of surprises in there that kept me on my toes as I was reading. I really enjoyed it. The ending was a bit odd in my opinion, and it seemed to come out of nowhere, but I still really like it!

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