

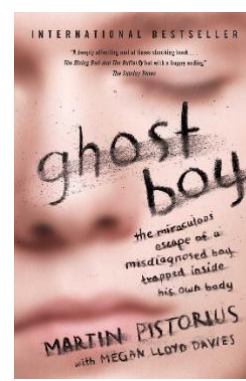
Ghost Boy

By Martin Pistorius

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Star Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Ghost Boy features the true story of Martin Pistorius in Johannesburg, South Africa. At the age of 14, Pistorius began to lose his voice and lose control of moving his body with his mind. This unknown disease terrified the family, suggesting that he may die with the little time left in the world. However, labeling him in a “vegetative state,” he remained aware of his surroundings, yet could not communicate or move. Years later, he regained his sense of purpose: starting a business, discovering the love of his life, Joanna, and the strength of love and resilience beyond his physical limitations.

I loved the genuine, gnawing reality of the author’s mind swirling as he notices every slight change or gesture anyone creates around him. His journey of love and faith gave a poignant touch of humanity throughout the novel to display his awareness and growing consciousness. Martin proved that no matter what mental or physical state one currently stands in, it will be resolved with the determination and will to overcome it. He challenges societal norms on disproving that patients with disabilities are set in stone. Additionally, he builds a powerful story highlighting his determination to feel understood with interactions from his speech therapist and managing to speak through the alphabet table.

There were not many negatives other than not including additional context before he got diagnosed into his unresponsive state. I wish it explored more into his condition rather than repeating about his silence and numbness to comprehend more about his condition. On the other hand, it shows feelings of isolation as the author used first-person point of view, creating a darker environment that lures readers into what he underwent. That being said, he continues to show the bright side of overcoming his struggles and reaching the light at the end of the tunnel in a bright ending.

This book could be recommended to ages 11 and up as there are some elements that may best fit for middle school readers. It can assist students who may feel that their disabilities are their weaknesses, although that is NEVER true. The novel absolutely stands by the quote, “It is not disability. It is a different ability.” For the students who feel alone, misunderstood, or even *trapped*, *Ghost Boy* may shine with positivity upon the patients that need support now more than ever. It can be the perfect gift to put a smile and reminisce their hard-earned effort to be seen and heard in this judgmental society.

Recommended Titles:

The Quiet Room: A Journey Out of Torment and Madness, by Lori Schiller

My Left Foot, by Christy Brown

Boy: Tales of Childhood, by Roald Dahl

Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's, by John Elder Robison

Still Alice, by Lisa Genova