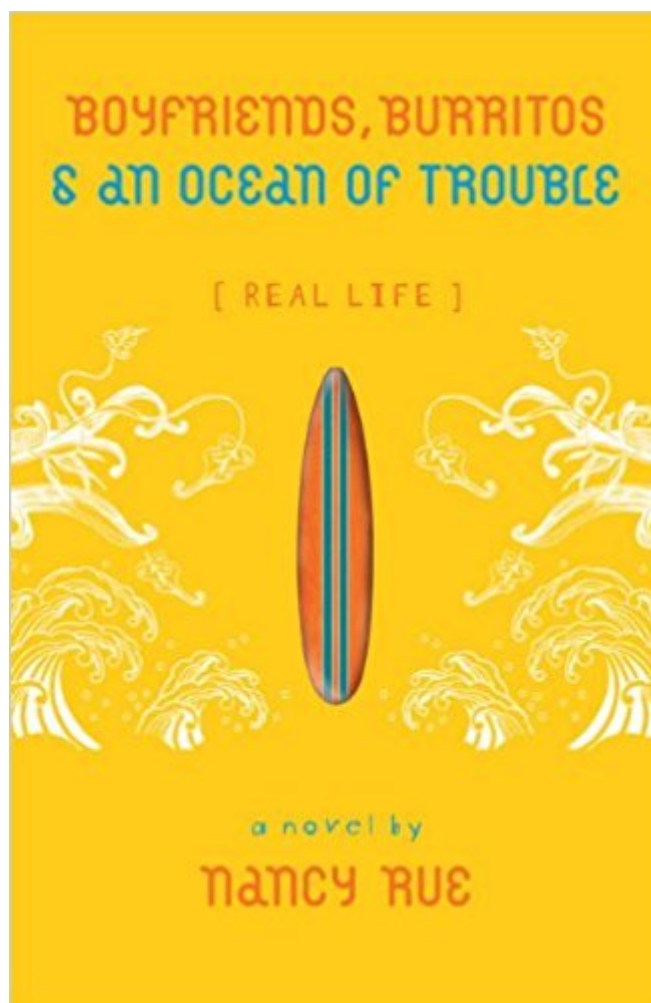


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Boyfriends, Burritos & An Ocean Of Trouble (Real Life)



Synopsis

Secrets? Bryn O'Connor is good at keeping secrets. But when a car accident reveals her boyfriend's abusive behavior, the truth is unleashed. And it starts a tidal wave of trouble in Bryn's life: enemies who were once friends, a restraining order violation, and her world unraveled. If that weren't enough, her grandmother Mim arrives, attempting Mexican cuisine and insisting that Bryn try surfing. It's all too much! Even Bryn's habit of daydreaming won't offer an escape this time. But could a mysterious book she found hold the secret to riding a tsunami like her life?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Romance goes terribly wrong in this second book in the author's Real Life series. Bryn, 15, is assaulted by her gorgeous boyfriend, Preston, and she tries to hide her bruises and deny her shame until her father discovers the abuse and makes her press charges. The court hearings drag on, and Bryn just wants to make it all go away. Meanwhile, Preston threatens her, and his in-crowd friends call her a drama queen and send her ugly text messages. Bryn finds help from her hip grandmother, who teaches Bryn to surf wild waves, and also from Jesus, who speaks to her from a contemporary version of the Book of Luke. Will she ever trust a boy and fall in love again? Romance does return when Bryn gets close with Sean, a cool surfer who supports her. Rue folds in quite a lot for one YA novel, but the secrets will grab readers, and the dialogue is right on target. Grades 8-12.

--Hazel Rochman

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"Boyfriends" was somewhat disappointing ONLY because it wasn't the fun read that "Motorcycles, Sushi and One Strange Book" was. "Motorcycles" was enjoyable to me because I could really relate to the character's AD/HD and the events in her life. "Boyfriends" is a first person story about a teenager girl with an abusive boyfriend. It was good for me to read because I was able to better understand how and why that kind of abuse happens. As a mother and a friend to many, it has information I may need, but it was not "fun" to read. I would definitely recommend "Boyfriends", I just wish I had paid more attention to what the subject was before I picked it up. I love Nancy Rue's approach to the Bible and the messages and strength that the Bible offers. Thank you.

The last thing Bryn wants is for someone to know. But when taken to the hospital after a car accident, her secret is revealed. Her boyfriend has abused her. A number of times. What is Bryn supposed to do with her father pressing charges, her boyfriend's friends

threatening her and a grandmother coming over to help that insists Bryn learns -of all things- how to surf? Is there any way out of this mess, with or without this strange book that seems to talk directly to her? As usual, Nancy Rue has written an amazing book. I loved *Boyfriends*, *Burritos and an Ocean of Trouble*! The issues dealt with are serious and are real problems that teenage girls face daily. RL-the book that helped her- is basically a modern-day paraphrase of the Bible and can mysteriously open to the pages that Bryn needs to read. Although a book that talks to you isn't really there, Nancy does show us that the Bible can speak to you too. This is the second of the Real Life series for teens. The others are "*Motorcycles, Sushi and One Strange Book*", "*Tournaments, Cocoa and One Wrong Move*" and "*Limos, Lattes, and My Life on the Fringe*". They can all be read as stand-alones, since the only thread is the RL book.

I'm 31, so I'm not the target audience for this book, but I have yet to read a book by Nancy Rue that I didn't like, so when it was available for free on my Kindle yesterday, I eagerly snatched it up. I didn't realize I was reading the second book in a quartet, but it didn't seem to matter as I read the story. This is an excellent book on the theme of abuse in teen relationships. Nancy manages to handle a heavy topic in a way that entertains while imparting important messages for teen girls to seek help and support if they find themselves the victim of an abusive boyfriend. While certainly a Christian novel, the faith never becomes preachy, but Nancy allows the character to ask difficult and honest questions, and provides answers without becoming fake or trite. I felt myself bolstered in my faith by reading it, despite having never been in such a situation myself! The characterization, as always in Nancy's books, was excellent. No cardboard people here. She created a protagonist that was believable and showed growth. The antagonist was so real - and so despicable I would have hauled off and slugged him myself if he was a real person. Nancy did a good job of representing the thought processes behind Bryn's actions - I never had a moment where I thought "Why would she do that?" Perhaps the only unbelievable thing was the name of a character - Fielding Hyatt. At first I found this jarring as an obviously made-up name, but over time I came to love it. It's just very Nancy Rue. I would compare this book to the Christy Miller series by Robin Jones Gunn, for its realistic portrayal of teen life, and similar setting of the beach and surfing. I enjoyed this book so much I have already finished it by 9:00am today after purchasing it yesterday afternoon. I will be reading the others in the series.

The Real Life Series deals with some hard issues. In the first book, Nancy Rue dealt with a young girl dealing with her mother's mental illness while living with a father she didn't know. In the second

book, the teenage protagonist is healing from the abuse heaped on her by her "perfect" boyfriend, and the resulting fallout when she is forced to admit that he hits her. I think there are problems with this book. Grandma comes for a visit soon after the accident that triggered the events of this novel, and she only stays for two weeks and already the main character has learned the basics of surfing, started dating a new guy, become brave, and has been through a trial for the physical abuse case. The time-line is too fast. But I still love the book. The characters are real with real problems. Grandmother Mim isn't a loved person in Bryn's life. She hasn't seen her in years, and her grandmother made her cry. Mim admits to the mistakes in the past, and she does her best to make up for them in the novel. And Bryn isn't proactive. She's forced along until finally she decides to take charge. And while the problems Bryn is facing feels like they are neatly wrapped up at the end, the character knows that there will still be some fallout from the book's events. It is a Christian-themed book. I believe all of Nancy's books are, but I haven't found any in the various free downloads that I thought were too preachy.

I picked this book up on a whim when it was offered for free through Kindle. I read it in one day and loved it. I should say that I am much closer to my 40's than my teens and I still found the story to be very engaging. I like that the author kept it "real" instead of sugar coating. Being a Christian does not mean you escape real life and live happily ever after instead you live in real life dealing with real issues as a Christian. I have a 7 year old daughter and will discuss dating abuse with her in the future because of this book. If she were a teenager I would definitely have her read this book.

I got this for my daughter of age 15 for Christmas and really enjoyed this series. I would recommend it.

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