



★ **Euphoria Kids**

Alison Evans

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In Alison Evans's fantastical novel *Euphoria Kids*, three LGBTQ+ teenagers learn about the magic stirring in the forest around their Australian home.

Babs is made of fire. When she was small, she was cursed by a witch. Now, she is often invisible. Lonely Iris was born from a seed. Saltkin, one of the fae that lives in their mother's garden, gives them a rose quartz with a spell to find friends. On the bus, Iris sees Babs for the first time. The two are soon joined by a shy new boy in school who does not yet know his name.

As the friendship between the three teenagers grows, they begin to explore their own powers. Their faerie friends warn them that there are cold fae moving in the forest, and that the witch who cursed Babs has returned. But the three are undeterred. They set out to learn as much as they can, and to come to terms with their magical lives.

Euphoria Kids is a remarkable story. Its focus on its young LGBTQ+ leads, who navigate perilous situations in the process of self-discovery, is directed by positivity. All three characters are loving, gentle, and accepting. They are sensitive to one another's feelings and prove strong, brave, and willing to own the truths of who they are along the way. Likewise, their parents and teachers treat them with kindness and respect. Entertainment comes in the form of the book's dryads, faeries, and magic spell books, but its important message about individuality and acceptance is what will most resonate with other young adults.

Euphoria Kids is a wonderful fantasy novel whose diverse cast learns an important, real-world lesson.

CATHERINE THURESON (May / June 2021)

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