

The Secret Science of Magic

Melissa Keil

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Opposites attract in *The Secret Science of Magic*, a charming and witty story of individuality and what brings people together.

Joshua is an indecisive, magic-loving teenager. On the brink of being thrust into a world he isn't ready for, he chooses to focus on his crush, whom he attempts to woo with magic tricks and long-distance flirtation.

Sophia knows what it's like not to feel ready for life beyond your comfort zone. Despite her favorite distractions—*Doctor Who*; the mysterious tricks she's sent—she can't help but torment herself with thoughts of college and concerns that her best friend is pulling away from her. It doesn't help that, whether she's in drama class or talking to her peers, she cannot seem to empathize with others, despite her efforts.

Both characters are awkward, but there is a clear chemistry in their interactions. Their back-and-forth makes for an engaging, smile-inducing read. Theirs is a realistic relationship; even when their social ineptitude threatens to stifle their budding interests, it allows for further engagement.

Joshua and Sophia's desires to stop time and never advance beyond high school are extremely relatable, as is Sophia's craving to be accepted for who she is. Young readers will certainly be able to see themselves in these young leads.

Combining elements of science and magic in a spectacular way, this unconventional love story brings two atypical teens with very typical needs happily together.

HANNAH HOHMAN (March/April 2018)

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