Girl, Hero by Carrie Jones

Hero Material!

After landing a lead role in the high school musical, freshman Liliana Faltin is hoping for some stability and happiness in her life. But her moms live-in boyfriend has a thing for booze, touching, and telling dark family secrets. And the other people in her world aren't exactly role-model material, either. Her unreliable father cries a lot, wears blue tights, and drives a little beige car. Her backstabbing best friend cares more about being popular than being real. And her older, married sister is showing up with big purple bruises on her face. Then there's Paolo, who's cute and nice and makes Lily want to recite romantic movie lines.

To deal, Lily writes letters to John Wayne. Sure, he's a dead movie cowboy, but at least the Duke knew about doing the right thing, about being a hero.

Now, Lily just needs to figure out how to be a hero herself.

Praise for Tips on Having a Gay (ex) Boyfriend and Love (and other uses for duct tape):

Provocative . . . The authors poetic prose ably captures her heroines emotional upheavals.—Publishers Weekly

...honest, earthy, and appealing. —KLIATT

An emotional story thats true at heart. —Kirkus

My Personal Review:
Liliana's (or Lili, as her friends and family call her) world is slowly falling apart.
Her mother's new boyfriend is a freak who has a nasty alcohol addiction and creeps Lili out as he stands silently outside of her bedroom every night. Then there's her father, who is a little emotional and very forgetful, who Lili loves a lot, but just can't seem to like. To top it all off, her sister is in an abusive relationship and the one person she can turn to for relief, her best friend, Nicole, has all of a sudden become a two-faced backstabber.

All Lili wants in her life is a hero. Seeing that there is no one in her real life to turn to she writes letters to John Wayne. He may be a dead cowboy, but at least he is a positive influence in Lili's life and knows what it takes to become a hero. When Lili befriends Sasha, a resident thespian, she convinces Lili to try out for the school play. Thinking there's nothing to lose, Lili goes for it, hoping for the best. Along the way she meets Paolo, a wildcard in her foul hand of cards. He is sweet, caring, and extremely hot! Paolo, along with Sasha and a few others, help Lili on her quest to becoming a hero.

How to tell you about this book??... It is powerful, hardcore, and utterly breathtaking. It made me cry and laugh and scream. Carrie Jones doesn't hold back and makes us realize how lucky we are to have a life that isn't infiltrated with hardship. This was one of the few books that actually made me cry. The situations that the characters were put into were told with such emotion that I couldn't help but get all worked up. When I felt the characters did something stupid I screamed, when the teens were up to no good I laughed, and most of all I cried to think that someone as sweet as Lili had to endure such pain.

The whole story is told through Lili's letters to John Wayne, so we're able to really get to know the true Lili. She didn't hold anything back in those letters where she was searching for a hero. Not only was Lili's character great, but I loved how she found herself. Even though she suffered from unimaginable heartache, she was still able to find it inside herself to be the best possible person that she could be.

Overall, GIRL, HERO was an outstanding book that dealt with some of the hardest subjects. There was abuse, friendship, loss, and love, which all combined to form one heck of a poignant and beautiful novel that I will never, ever forget.

Reviewed by: Tasha

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