


★★★★★ **Funny, Perfect for Tweens and Teens**, April 19, 2011

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This review is from: *In Front of God and Everybody (The Confessions of April Grace)* (Paperback)

April Grace is 11 years old, the year is 1986, and the summer brings a lot of changes to her neck of the woods (aka the Ozarks). As the story follows her through five weeks of the summer, we meet her new neighbors (Californians getting "back to their roots" after losing their home), her current neighbors ("old hippies" who eschew showering and deodorant), her grandmother, parents, and 14-year-old sister.

The book reads easily, told from the point of view of April Grace (though with a bit more maturity than the average tween). April Grace's parents are raising their family in the Christian faith, and occasionally have to remind April Grace about forgiveness and such.

[The rest of this paragraph may contain mild spoilers, so stop now if you truly like to be surprised...] The book has a little bit of mystery, as April Grace is fairly observant, and doesn't give up easily. Her sister battles an eating disorder (though this is handled subtly and not glorified). And while there is no vulgarity and such, there is plenty of name calling and sibling squabbling.

There are quite a few references to 1980's pop culture (Cosby Show, breakdancing, and the like), which will likely be lost on the book's target audience. For mothers, aunts, and others who pick up the book, however, these serve as a little wink from the author.

It appears that there is already a sequel to this book in the works, which allows young readers to follow along (and perhaps grow up with) April Grace. The book should appeal to young female readers, probably age 9-14 or so (though at more than twice that age, I enjoyed the book myself!). April Grace is certainly a likable character, and since her family is filled with more "characters" than most of us have ever known, it is fun to follow along with her adventures.

[Please note that I received this book at no charge from BookSneeze, in exchange for an honest review.]

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