



Geekhood: Close Encounters of the Girl Kind

Books Reviewed:

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[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Curiously, having just re-read *Adrian Mole*, I find myself reviewing a book which has striking similarities. Archie is living with his mum and her boy-friend, whom he can't stand. A self-confessed and self-conscious Geek, he is into dungeons and dragons and war gaming, spending a lot of his time lovingly painting his own gaming figures for hours in his bedroom, interrupted only by trips to the local gaming shop and weekly games with his mates. This relatively ordered existence is exploded by the simultaneous separate attentions of Sarah, a beautiful Goth schoolmate, and Jason Humphries, the school bully. In pursuit of love, Archie abandons gaming and his Geek mates in favour of a dubious American self-help manual, pressed on him by Sarah, only finally realising that love and this newly acquired you-can-be-what-you-want-to-be philosophy are both mirages. Andy Robb mixes up standard young adult plotlines with originality and humour. A war gaming geek himself in his youth, his descriptions of Archie's dedication to his art have the conviction of someone who has been there and done it. Funny as the book is (and the dialogue between Archie's exterior and interior monologues is clever), it started to unravel for me in the second half. Why should Archie give up war gaming if that was what prompted Sarah's initial interest in him? I couldn't help but feel that the book, at over 400 pages, outweighed its subject matter. Shorter, it might have been both funnier and more poignant.

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