



Angry Young Man

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In Angry Young Man, award-winning author Chris Lynch takes us into the mind of a boy whose journey of self-discovery leads to the unthinkable.

Angry Young Man Details

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Author : Chris Lynch

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From Reader Review Angry Young Man for online ebook

Jarod Whaley says

I read *Angry Young Man* by Chris Lynch which is about a lowlife family struggling to get by. The mother has two kids, Alexander and Robert. They both have different dads but are only a year or so apart in age. Roberts dad who makes steady visits to the family, has a grudge against their mother and finds ways to disrupt their life as much as he can. Robert, the perfect child, the one who has it all together and Alexander, the kid without a life, the loser, who doesn't know where to go with a rough background find themselves stuck in Alexander's mess. There are two factories in town which Alexander and his friends want to end at least one of them. Going out every night to what the family thinks is a visit to his girlfriend's quickly turns into an illegal operation to help the world with a "good cause". Does Alexander and his misfits cause the world to be a better place or will everything erupt right in front of them? I liked how the book described the family and the kids situations but that led to the book going along slow at points. It gave an accurate representation of how a family can live in this world with similar characteristics. I give it a 3 out of 5 stars because it can be slow, but overall is a nice, exciting, and unpredictable book.

Marilyn says

I'm surprised that so many goodreads readers didn't like this book. I found it funny, insightful and compelling. I thought the brothers' relationship was complex and true to life in that complexity. And there is a scene describing a soccer match that is probably the best description of soccer play that I've ever read. Some language, violence and talk of sex.

Alexandria Godina says

WOW- i couldn't believe this got such bad reviews. I loved this book, read it in a day since it was so intriguing and short-which was really nice. I felt like i could easily recommend this to any reader especially those who like a little darker stories. Yes, there were sudden plot endings but you can only expect so much from a short book and i think that is okay sometimes you don't want to read a 400 page book. I enjoyed reading and learning about the dynamic of the brothers relationship and how different they were, and the struggles of their family but how regardless of everything their bonds came before everything else.

Karen says

Angry Young Man is the story of two brothers. The elder, Robert, is our narrator. He's the popular, assured one with the cool girlfriend (Babette), the community college plan, and future goals to be a kids' sports coach. Xan, on the other hand, is the misfit of misfits. It's hard to describe Xan. You really have to read him to get him. He's awkward, super sensitive, socially floundering, and his intensity about injustice rules his life. The book begins with Xan putting on a pair of amber sunglasses that conceal his eyes. Since the eyes are the windows to the soul, Xan doesn't want anyone looking in. You can't help but like Xan, but you know from page one that life has to be an ongoing source of trauma for him. Robert mercilessly but lovingly gives Xan a hard time. All the time. Yet Robert, who never protected his brother adequately in high school, now wants to

see Xan figure out his life. The boys both live with their mother. She works all the time, spends much of her life exhausted, yet she insists on sit down dinners with her sons at least once a week. This is a close family. A loving one. And one now tormented by a slimy debt collector who's hounding them over the mother's unpaid credit card bills. When Robert brings Xan with him to his community college classes, and Xan starts attending a social worker's beginning course, Robert little realizes that Xan is going to take a turn for the truly troubling. Suddenly aware of even more injustices plaguing the world, Xan takes up company with a local group of young students whose acts border on terrorism. And there is Xan, the sensitive, misled young man, fulfilling the increasingly dangerous wishes of the group's militant leader. Robert fights to save Xan from the group and from himself (Xan, that is) while at the same time trying to stave off the harrassment of the debt collector. Things begin to spiral out of control, leaving the reader wondering if everyone is going to meet an unpleasant downfall.

Sounds heavy, right? Parts are, though nowhere near as heavy as Chris Lynch's novel from a few years back, *Inexcusable*. This new book, despite its conflict for the characters, is full of humor. Lynch writes about brothers who fight but love one another, from the point of view of a very funny, if angry, narrator. It's the way the narrator speaks and sees the world that makes you like him so much. Robert and Xan are polar opposites, bound by blood. Even when Robert is giving Xan the worst treatment, you know he loves Xan. This is a brief book, but don't let that fool you into thinking there isn't a lot within its pages. Is this the best teen book of the year? Well, I'm not sure of that yet. The ending seemed a trifle abrupt to me, although I also found it very satisfying.

Peep (Pop! Pop!) says

Let's get this straight - I didn't hate the book. I know I gave it only one star, but I have my reasons.

First, I **LOVE** the cover. It's kind of simple but it just tells me so much. It just tells me that this book will be about an angry young man and there will be trouble. Yes, trouble. I'd rate this as one of my favorite covers because I think it says so much while being so simple.

I liked the story about meeting his father. I thought that was pretty funny though it didn't have much to do with the rest of the book.

I like the way it was written. I liked Robert as he did seem like a typical big brother. I thought it was realistic how he behaved towards his brother. Annoying, loving, rude, sometimes clueless, and slightly protective.

We weren't inside Alexanders head so I don't know why he did some of the things he did. His need to wear his tinted glasses made me think that there was something more to him but for the most part he just was the same guy throughout the book. I felt bad that he felt so left out and young all the time. I had a hard time remembering that he was an older teen and not much younger.

I don't get it. Yeah, he's a hothead at times but I got the vibe that he was more weird than anything. That didn't work for me. I didn't get "angry", I got a crazy mix of mentally unstable and weird. I saw some stupid and impulsive things. I felt that the whole cause for him being angry was just silly. I felt like the book was going somewhere and that the Cause was preparing for this dastardly deed but ultimately they came off as pranks. Not anything angry, just something you'd see on a prank show or Jack***. Scratch that, these are pranks that I'd see in a YA book for younger kids. I guess the cover just built me up and I expected more.

About the ending, I didn't feel like it matched with the rest of the book. I thought to myself, "Is this a joke? Is this really happening?". I did not get the jump from A to Psycho.

My biggest problem with the book is the total lack of responsibility for their actions. There was a need to punish others but no need to be accountable. For example, the mom just swept everything under the rug and brushed off her problems. Here's a thought - you got yourself into this mess now try to work it out! Her lack of stepping up almost cost her her kids. That made me so mad. Why not face it and own up to it? Either way you look at it, your boys are involved. They are old enough to help so let them. Instead it gets crazy and ridiculous and everything "works out". Ugh. Am I wrong to think that what they did was SERIOUS?!?! After the "incident" in the end, we get treated to a prologue of sorts that I felt was extremely out of place. Hey, let's do this "incident" but it's okay now. I was hoping there would be some mention of therapy or something. Ugh.

Jules Hucke says

Last I checked, people use contractions when they speak. The fact that the characters didn't in this book threw me so much that I could not remotely get into the flow of it. Add to that the weak plot, the lack of depth, and the dullness of the narrator, and this was a doozy of a flop. Only saved from one star by an interesting-ish brither character (who could have been so much more). This book reads like it was written by a tenth grader.

Zoë Danielle says

I'd actually been meaning to pick up *Inexcusable* by Chris Lynch for the past few months, but when I had the opportunity to read *Angry Young Man* I decided to make that my introduction to Lynch instead. *Angry Young Man* is the story of two brothers, told from the perspective of the older brother Robert, who lives in a small apartment with his little brother Alexander and his mother. The boys have two different fathers and their mother has never married. Robert is taking classes at the local community college, working to help out his mom, and spending a lot of time with his girlfriend, while Alexander mostly just spends time in his room. When Alexander does the unthinkable Robert has to decide how far he'll really go for his little brother.

This book took me awhile to get into, which is kinda significant when you consider it's under 200 pages so taking 100 to catch my interest is over half the novel. The issue I had was that *Angry Young Man* only develops a plot in the last quarter of the book. I've repeatedly said that I don't mind novels without plots (hello literary fiction) but this is a young adult book with fairly basic characters and writing so it just doesn't work without any plot driving the reader to turn the pages. It was really difficult to even try to give a synopsis of the story without giving away spoilers, since the story doesn't even really start until three quarters into the book. I did find it nice to read a novel written in a masculine voice for a change as I seem to mostly pick up YA with female narrators.

My favourite thing about *Angry Young Man* is the relationship that Lynch portrays between Robert and Alexander. He shows that even when people love each other, they can still sometimes do heartless things, like ignore their younger brother when he is being bullied. The way the brothers interacted felt very believable. On the other hand, I couldn't care less about all the relationship drama the book contained including Alexander going out with a girl Robert once dated.

The major problem I had with *Angry Young Man* was not only that there wasn't a plot for most of the book, but that when it did occur I really didn't buy it. Of course, the book is written from Robert's perspective not Alexander's so it is impossible to really get inside his head, but Lynch made him become suddenly "angry" and it just felt odd. I never truly felt Alexander was even actually angry, he seemed more jaded and a bit of a

loner, and his sudden transition to extremist felt awkward and unbelievable. Angry Young Man is a book which is definitely attempting to appeal to a specific audience- that of angry young men- but I think from a literary perspective it would mostly be appropriate for younger teens who might not notice the gaping flaws in character development.

Jaime says

When I first started reading this there was a quality banter between the siblings and I thoroughly enjoyed them picking on each other. I didn't read the full synopsis before reading so I wasn't sure what to expect. Right about when they were at the vegan restaurant is when I started becoming disinterested. From that point on, the story just seemed dull and the whole "good causes" shit was not my cup of tea. I hated every aspect of it. I like to think of myself as an open minded person but I really hate reading about people who think they're "doing a good cause" when in reality, they were hurting more than helping.

The doctor with the illegal alien shit really pissed me off. Yeah, let's hurt this person because they hurt that person and so on and so on. Because that's how justice works, right? As if that doctor learned anything??? Even after he was poisoned, or whatever was put in his drink, he still CLEARLY viewed the world the same way. So WTF was the point?

The story ended poorly. I hate books like this, when the beginning captures you and as the story goes on you're just like....why did I waste my time. Disappointing.

John says

The first few pages aren't particularly good, but it gets better, then takes a wrong turn with the introduction of cartoonish animal rights advocates.

I thought this whole thing was going to be about toxic masculinity--about deconstructing it, pointing out its flaws, starting to build something more functional in its place. But no. It's about how toxic masculinity is bad as long as it challenges the status quo. Toxic masculinity is fine, according to this book, as long as it's aimed at unpopular people making your life difficult, even if they're ostensibly doing something legal--because, hey, deus ex machina, they're also mafia! And stupid. So very stupid. Deus ex, waves wand, happy resolution. Never mind if you just sent the mafia after someone innocent, because they're probably annoying too, or at least not family and so not actual people who matter.

Yeah. This book. So very disappointed. [sigh]

Brian Kelley says

Of the tall stack of YA books I've read since early November, I struggled the most with Chris Lynch's Angry Young Man. I just couldn't read through a chapter without feeling like I was wasting my time, but I pushed through the book anyway to be fair. At times it took me two to three sittings per chapter to move through it; I found other distractions easily...such as filling the dog's water dish.

No offense to the author intended, but I really felt like I wasted my time with this novel.

(Note: I can't speak about the book without including a spoiler here, so if you intend to read Angry Young

Man you're better off leaving my review now and experiencing it for yourself.)

The story itself: a pair of post-high school brothers try to find their way in a house barely kept afloat by a single mother struggling to make ends meet. A bill collector intrudes on their house and family, pounding on the door, calling on the phone at all hours of the day and night. One of the brothers spends a lot of time with a local militant hell bent on causing damage and inflicting harm to making the world a better place one night at a time. It all meets at the end where the brothers take a homemade bomb and place it under the bill collector's desk (to prove a point?)--and then think better of it as they leave. They run back in, convince the guy who is just doing his job to chase them (which saves his life as the building goes boom), and live happily ever after because the bill collector suspects someone else and these two kids get off clean...everyone in their family maintains a job and they bond as a family, making it work one day at a time.

The story didn't speak to me on any level--as a reader, teacher, admirer of good story telling... Written in first-person narrative the story contained a lot of summary. I never felt any emotional connection with any circumstance. Their angst, anger, frustration, deviance, love for their mother or each other fell completely flat and ineffectual.

The reader is kept at a distance from a plot which never really sorts itself out. At the moment that you might start to believe that the younger brother is lost in the seedy underbelly of a homegrown terrorist then story conveniently ends with all is well.

I thought a writer's job was to be brutal with his/her characters. Raise the stakes. Raise the what next factor. Lynch totally bails his characters out and left me wishing I bailed when I first suspected a problem existed. For all of the huff and puff of the terms "terrorist" and "bomb" this book delivered as much disappointment as a hollow chocolate bunny.

I do not recommend this for your classroom library--there is too much going on in the world of YA literature to settle for this novel.

<http://walkthewalkblog.blogspot.com/>

Beth says

4.5 stars.

Chris Lynch, you still have it in you!

After being thoroughly disappointed by INEXCUSABLE and wanting to hug SINS OF THE FATHERS for the rest of my life and being thoroughly confused by FREEWILL and not in a good way, I wondered if there was a more inconsistent author than Lynch.

But Angry Young Man is quite the wow book. The humanity of the writing is almost unbearably beautiful. A surprise of AYM was how lovely the female characters were - both Babette and Carly. Babette especially, but Lynch had sensitivity for Carly, the Christian fanatic. After the overwhelmingly unlikeable Gigi in Inexcusable, I was starting to wonder if Lynch's thing were his male characters, while his female fell by the wayside. AYM disproves this. But what I loved about AYM is Lynch's ability to take a not wholly sympathetic character as his main one and give him such a rhythmic, extraordinary and compelling voice. Robert is the kind of character who would be a secondary antagonist in most YAs - the bullying perfect older brother, under whom the younger brother feels lost and overshadowed. And Xan? What did he do with Xan

was equally special. Xan is a disturbed person, but Lynch's writing of him made him so real and awkwardly relatable that it actually made me feel sick throughout the book. What was going to happen? What was Xan going to do? What was Robert going to do? Oh holy shit, was it all about to go wrong?

More, please, Chris Lynch.

Half a star taken off because the storyline felt underdeveloped in parts, especially Xan's bond with Harry. I have an extreme amount of admiration for Lynch's ability to take a secondary character as the main character, but, in all honesty, he wasn't 100% successful. I would have liked to see Xan's relationship with Harry get deeper and darker, and I felt that we needed to see more of it to understand how Xan could be so enthralled by someone who even Carly admitted was dangerous.

Also, don't think that this is 100% depressing. It's not. It has moments of humour that had me scoffing and laughing to myself, and the scene where Robert verbally kicks Wayne's ass is glorious.

Leigh Collazo says

This book does have a positive message about turning your life around, even after you have royally messed up. I like how close the brothers are, even though they are quite competitive and Robert does not initially seem to realize how much his teasing affects Xan. Xan and Robert are well-drawn characters that evoke reader sympathy.

A slice of life story about a family in hard times, this short novel just didn't move me the way it should have. Nothing much really happens. Xan definitely gets in over his head with the radical group, but aside from an arrest for a minor crime, he really suffers no major consequences. I am still scratching my head over which brother truly is the "Angry Young Man." Considering Xan's deep-rooted emotional problems, the book's ending seems trite and way too easy. A dark and explosive front cover and strong central characters are barely enough to sustain the slow-moving plot. While I do think some reluctant readers may relate to the brothers and their declining neighborhood, for me, Angry Young Man is not something I'll really remember a month from now.

Alycia says

2 stars

I would have liked it better if the story had been from Xan's point of view. Some parts of the story dragged a little bit. I would have connected more to the characters if I knew more about the main character's psychological distress, I would have enjoyed the read more.

Robert's point of view was interesting considering the fact that it's a family member dealing with his brother distress.

Tatiana says

2.5 stars

A menacing cover, a title promising darkness and danger... and the story itself just doesn't deliver.

What kind of person becomes a terrorist? Violent? Crazy? Not necessarily. Lynch offers a very convincing portrait of such a person - a teen without a father figure, sensitive, vulnerable, tender, easily influenced, unable to fend for himself or fit in, inevitably bullied and, yes, sympathetic.

The strength of *Angry Young Man* is in characterization. Troubled Alexander (Xan) as seen through the eyes of his older, more confident brother Robert - is a highlight of the novel. He is an epitome of a displaced, disenfranchised youth who falls for the wrong cause.

The whole first part of the books builds tension, laying ground for something really bad to happen, but then gets off the rails, culminating in a too neat and comfortable ending. I would also like to know who this *Angry Young Man* is that is alluded to in the title, because Xan certainly wasn't.

A disappointing story, but I still stand by my recommendation of Chris Lynch's earlier, more superior work *Inexcusable*

Meredith Holley says

Beautiful. I woke up on the morning I started reading this book and went down to my first breakfast at the new resort I was staying at for the last leg of my trip to Zanzibar. The girl I was with slept fourteen hours every night (hi, Miranda!), so I always had the mornings to myself at that resort. I went up to the waiters to find out how to order breakfast because it was never the same at any of the hotels.

The mustachioed waiter said, "This is where you write your order," and showed me the sheet of paper.

"But what are my options?" I asked.

The non-mustachioed waiter said, "Optionsssssss! You have many options!" and then grinned at me conspiratorially because we were already kind of friends. I had a Spanish omelet, which they guaranteed me was the best. I got to the table and pulled open my Kindle to take a look at the first couple of pages of *Angry Young Man*. My plan was to move on to something else if it didn't catch my interest. I was immediately hooked, though, and spent the rest of the day inside of this so beautiful story.

As a sibling story, this reminds me of J.D. Salinger's and David James Duncan's writings. It has that cadence of family lingo built from years of affection and harassment. One brother is the sensitive one in this story – the Seymour Glass, Holden Caulfield, Irwin Chance, or Bill Bob Orviston – the magic brother. The other is the more mainstream brother, who has ancestors in the Salinger and Duncan stories as well. The mainstream brother tells the story, but with so much love for the heartbreak of the sensitive brother that I fell for them both a little. It seems more similar to *Brothers K* than the Salinger books because it pokes fun at the drama of the sensitive brother, even while sympathizing with him. Salinger takes the anger and alienation more seriously.

I think that this book has the potential to be controversial like *Catcher in the Rye* is controversial, though. The other day, a friend of mine posted a quote on facebook that made me think of *Angry Young Man* and

Catcher. "Ultimately . . . any text speaks through its reader. . . . Consequently the meaning of the text is often only as moral as its reader. If the reader is intolerant, hateful, or oppressive, so will be the interpretation of the text." It's from Khaled Abou El Fadl in an article titled "The Place of Tolerance in Islam." It's easy to blame books for violence, and this feels like a book that will get blamed for violence. I don't think it should be, though.

I just found out that my financial aid for this term of school is set to be about one-fourth of what it was last term, and the aid office is being very frustrating about it. And it makes me so angry! It is so infuriating to have people be cavalier with your livelihood. I don't think we're intended to endorse or condemn the boys in this book, but they seem so realistic to me, so like how you react when your family and home is threatened. I get who they are and why they do what they do, and I am them right now, shaking my fist at the financial aid office. And they're realistic in this lovely way. Lynch tells you just the right things about who they are and what they do.

Also, there are some great women in here, even though it is not about them.

Despite the ultimate seriousness and social relevance of this story to American society, which contrasted weirdly when I was reading it with drinking soda and cider in a tiki hut down by the beach, it was sort of wonderfully lighthearted and entertaining. I guess it kind of reminds you that most of us are somehow displaced and imposed upon by the injustices of the world. It made me look at the waiters, both mustachioed and non-, who worked from 6:30 a.m. to 10 or 11 p.m., and wonder if they don't feel something like the brothers in this book. Like you can't just not do something about so much injustice.
