



Modern Monsters

Kelley York

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Vic Howard never wanted to go to the party. He's the Invisible Guy at school, a special kind of hell for quiet, nice guys. But because his best friend is as popular as Vic is ignored, he went...

And wished he hadn't.

Because something happened to a girl that night. Something terrible, unimaginable, and Callie Wheeler's life will never be the same. Plus, now Callie has told the police that Vic is responsible. Suddenly, Invisible Vic is painfully visible, on trial both literally, with the police, and figuratively, with the angry kids at school. As the whispers and violence escalate, he becomes determined to clear his name, even if it means an uneasy alliance with Callie's best friend, the beautiful but aloof Autumn Dixon.

But as Autumn and Vic slowly peel back the layers of what happened at the party, they realize that while the truth can set Vic free, it can also shatter everything he thought he knew about his life...

Modern Monsters Details

Date : Published June 2nd 2015 by Entangled: Teen

ISBN : 9781633750029

Author : Kelley York

Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Romance, Mystery, Young Adult Contemporary

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From Reader Review Modern Monsters for online ebook

Kisses A says

3.5*

The author did choose a pretty serious topic to deal with and is is definitely one of a kind. I think it was pretty well done by there are definitely some flaws. I am really glad it was short because if it was any longer, it would have become boring. One complaint though is that nothing really happened in the book. At the beginning Vic is accused of rape and then he is badly treated and gossiped about. A girl stands up and tries to help him find out who really did it and a romance starts to brew. However it was realistic and satisfying enough for my liking. Definitely recommend it.

Pixie/PageTurners(Amber) C. says

If I had to use one word to describe Modern Monsters it would be gut-wrenching; it broke my heart over and over. What happens when you do the right thing and it backfires? That is the basis for Modern Monsters.

Our main character Vic is shy, a bit weird, reclusive, respectable young man from the "wrong side of town"; his best friend is Mr. Popular, star athlete - this relationship works for Vic. He can be his invisible self, but still spend time with his childhood friend without "fitting in". Vic does get talked into uncomfortable situations from time to time - which is what happen the night he helps Callie.

Vic was dragged to a party by his best friend - while Vic is being a "wallflower" he notices a girl from school puking in the bushes. Vic does what he thinks is the right thing to do, he takes her up stairs finds a room and puts her in a bed. Vic leaves her there - we know that he did nothing to hurt Callie. Unfortunately for Vic he is the last person Callie remembers being with her, the night she was raped.

Like I mentioned above, Vic is a bit weird and he really wants to make sure Callie is okay - he does some things to him that seem normal, but to everyone else it makes him look guilty. One of the hardest parts of the book to read is when his mom is told what happens and she too believes her son is the rapist. She completely turns her back on Vic, she wants nothing to do with him. As a parent this broke my heart into a million pieces.

Vic finds solace in an unlikely friendship; Callie's best friend Autumn, believes Vic when he says it wasn't him - so together they team up to find out what really happened that night. As issues from Vic's past start to unfold he will learn a lot about himself and what really happened that night.

I am speechless(wordless)...I cannot gather my thoughts enough to tell you how much I loved this book. Modern Monsters needs to be in every high school library, classroom. In my opinion it should be mandatory reading for English.

Portia Lynn (itsportiasbooks) says

I received this ARC from Entangled Teen through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

This book faces a really tough, sensitive subject.

I really, really loved Vic's character. He really grew so much through the course of the story, while facing incredibly hard to deal with issues. You really feel so bad for him, and what's worse, is knowing that things like this can happen in real life, and have happened.

What I also loved about this book was the fierce loyalty that the friends had for one another. Whether between Callie and Autumn, Vic and Brett, or Vic and Autumn, it was refreshing to see that kind of commitment to one another and protectiveness that they all seemed to have for each other.

This book is also a large reminder that you may never really know what people are capable of, no matter how they appear. But it also reminds you that sometimes it is possible to love someone and still hate them, and that sometimes happiness can be found in dark times.

The reason I didn't give 5 stars is mostly because I immediately knew who to blame. I don't know why, or maybe it's just a good guesser in me, but I knew. Immediately. But I can't pin point a specific thing that made me feel that way. But as with any book with an unknown bad guy, you try to figure out or build an opinion about who it is. So guessing it from the beginning took away some of the air of mystery and the shock factor for me. But for someone who doesn't try to figure it out, it would definitely be surprising and sad. So I advise going in without trying to figure it out.

Overall, this book was very well written and dealt with the issues in a great way, and from a great perspective.

Sarah says

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to Entangled Publishing, LLC and NetGalley.)

“I’m detective Sherrigan and this is Detective Carter, Waverly Police Department,” the man says. “We came to ask you about a party you were seen at Friday night.”

This was an interesting mystery story about a boy accused of rape.

Vic was quite a shy boy, and he seemed to always have other people's best interests at heart. It seemed quite unfathomable that he could have possibly raped a girl, and I felt really sorry for him when he was accused.

“Do you know a Callie Wheeler?”

The storyline in this was about finding out who raped Callie, and we were kept guessing right up until the end. I did find the pace a bit slow, and I did get a bit frustrated that the answers weren't coming quicker, but I wasn't able to guess who the culprit was.

“No, Victor, she’s not okay.” Carter dips her chin and peers over the top of her sunglasses. “She was raped.”

There was a little bit of romance in this, and I thought that Vic was really sweet to the girl that he liked.

“It’s a lingering kiss.”

The end to this was okay, and I was glad that we found out who the rapist was.

6.25 out of 10

Abbie says

(I received a copy from Netgalley, In exchange for an honest review.)

Actual rating - 3.5

I felt sorry for both Callie and Vic in this. What happened to Callie was awful, but what Vic had to go through wasn't very nice either.

I had a feeling that I knew who the rapist was early on, so it wasn't really a surprise when it was revealed. It didn't make the story any less enjoyable though.

Overall, Predictable, but a decent read.

Kim says

One of the first things that struck me about Modern Montsers was the voice, that of a teenage male and something that there is not enough of in YA literature. And that voice was convincing and empathetic.

Vic is not the stereotypical YA hero and I LOVED that. His best friend is one of the more popular guys, but he is not. He has a stutter and, largely because of that, he is rather socially awkward. He isn't portrayed as the shy, socially awkward guy who is secretly a brilliant guy either. Instead, he barely scrapes by academically. But what he is is loyal and kind, unable to turn his back on anyone that needs help. Unfortunately, this can also get him in trouble... and it does.

His heart is in the right place and he has the best of intentions when he sees a classmate at a party, drunk and sick. He helps her and finds a place for her to sleep it off. Later, she is attacked and his face is all she remembers. One thing leads to another, and he is suspected of attacking her. His own mother believes the worst of him, leading to an interesting subplot. His best friend's family takes him in, the father defending him, when his own mother can barely look at him. Then he finds an ally in the most unlikely of places... Callie's best friend Autumn.

I love Autumn and her role in the story. She is intelligent and she thinks for herself. She is skeptical and thoughtful and loyal and she sees beyond the surface, really looking to discover who people are for themselves, not for what others make them out to be.

The interesting thing is that there are almost two main plots in the book. The mystery of what happened to Callie and the romance. Neither one overshadowed the other; both of them equally integral to the story and character progression. The romance was beautiful, often funny, and always sweet. And the mystery parts of it were twisting and turning. The story there was intriguing, and all too realistically probable.

There were moments when I just wanted to jump into my book and alternately hug on Vic and throttle his mom and others for how they treated this genuinely nice guy. The story line was gritty and real, and extremely well handled.

My Recommendation

In its own way, this book was beautiful. Yes, there were story lines of betrayal and assault and neglect, but the emotions behind it all were what made it beautiful. There were themes of emotional neglect, peer pressure and pressure from family, themes of bullying and acceptance, friendship and loss. And all of these things were woven together to create a wonderful story!

Morris says

It has taken me some time to process “Modern Monsters” and decide how best to review it, as I have very conflicting feelings on the book. I wish there were a 3 1/2 star option, but had to settle on 3 since it is not a full 4, in my opinion.

Kelley York needs to be commended on tackling such difficult subject matter and managing to do so from a seldom examined side. Without lessening the traumatic impact of the rape on the victim, she examines the side of the person accused of the rape. How does it feel going through the system? What if you are innocent? Is there a specific profile that can make it easier to identify rapists? All of those questions are tackled, while also including a subplot that shows the consequences on the family, past and present, of a rape victim. It is a crime and violation that goes much further than devastating one life, and it was handled with unflinching reality.

The main character, Vic, is thoroughly developed and has multiple layers that are slowly revealed throughout the course of the book. The various relationships in his life were also solidly established with every secondary character being more than a one-dimensional “prop”. My only issue with the characters is that at times the dialogue was stilted and not very realistic. It was jarring and pulled me out of the story quite a few times.

As far as plot, it is a difficult one to read, as it should be. All of what I wrote above is true and makes it a worthwhile read. In fact, I'm impressed that it took such difficult subjects and made them resound on a reading level that any middle grader could understand. I just wish the conclusion were not quite so predictable. That took away from the suspense, which ultimately led to there being a bit less of an emotional impact than there otherwise would have been.

Overall, in spite of the couple of things I did not enjoy, I still recommend "Modern Monsters", especially to those with 7th-9th graders in their lives. If you read it together it will make an excellent starting point for very important, but difficult, conversations.

This review is based upon a complimentary copy provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Max Baker says

Thank you Netgalley for providing me a free review copy in exchange for an honest review

I have been a fan of Kelley York ever since I read and loved *Hushed*. After that book, I was instantly in love. Her writing was so dark and her characters so twisted, I couldn't help myself. And when I heard she was coming back on the scene with another book, this one about rape, you bet your ass I wanted it.

York is a born storyteller. Everything I've read of hers is dripping in gorgeous prose and dark twists, so when I started reading *Modern Monsters* I was expecting more or less the same thing. However, I didn't. Her main character Vic was so different from her past characters, I wasn't really sure what to expect from him. Even the writing was different. The tone wasn't as malicious as her previous works, so for someone who fell in love with her for those reasons, I wasn't sure how much I would love this book.

In the end, I FREAKING LOVED IT. It's so different from her other works, but it's suppose to be. Her dark writing and characters are still there, but their much more subtle. By page ten I accepted the style and was completely blown away.

Modern Monsters centers around Vic, a socially awkward teenager who becomes the suspect in the rape of a girl named Callie. This book is what I wanted *Fault Line* by Christa Desir to be. A deep emotional book about a deep emotional problem, but on someone who's not the victim. Unlike *Fault Line* I felt the emotion from not only Vic, but from Callie as well. I saw how the rape affected her. I felt her anger through Vic. Hell, I felt Vic's anger as well.

While a lot of rape books take the angle of victim blaming, this one takes the angle of how quick we are to jump a suspect. Vic is only a suspect because his name is the only one Callie remembers. She knows he didn't do it, but the police, along with everyone else, grill her for any name, whether or not it's correct. It shows how willing we are to rush such a horrible crime, just because we want it to be over. Of course Vic didn't do it, so he, Callie, and her best friend Autumn resolve to find out who did.

As much as I want to, I wouldn't bill this as a detective story. The characters don't do much detective work, in fact they do more breaking and entering than anything else. But this book is more of a character driven novel than anything else.

While the main plot of the book is Callie's rape, the subplots are beautifully done as well. Vic not only has to overcome the accusations, but also has to deal with not knowing his father, his mother's aloofness, and a borderline unhealthy relationship with his best friend Brett.

If you don't know, Kelley York is the Queen of Unhealthy Friendships and that's exactly what Vic and Brett have. It's dressed up as this awesome bromance where both are willing to protect and better the other, as the novel progresses it becomes apparent it's a lot more one sided than Vic realizes. It's a great subplot woven into an already emotional story.

The characters in this story are pitch perfect, not only for the tone of the book, but the overall themes as well. Autumn has got to be one of the best friends anyone could have. She's fiercely protective of Callie and will go to the ends of the Earth for her. Her characterization perfectly complements Vic's own. I also have to applaud York on the parallels between Autumn/Callie and Vic/Brett friendships. He would do anything for Brett, just as Autumn would for Callie. But whereas Callie will do the same for Autumn no matter what, Brett is a different story.

The only fault in my opinion is the missing father subplot. I just felt that it wasn't needed. There was enough drama in the story as is, and I really don't think it added anything to Vic's character when he wanted to go searching for him. But other than that, this book was amazing. The writing, the characters, the plots, is all done beautifully.

Demi says

Rating: 3.5 - I was expecting more from this book, to be honest. I did enjoy the plot and characters (except for a few certain ones...), but it was overall really predictable in my opinion.

Allie says

Digital copy provided by Entangled in exchange for an honest review.

Actual rating 2.5 stars

First and foremost, *Modern Monsters* deals with a very sensitive and sometimes harmful topic, so please don't read this if rape or emotional trauma is a trigger for you. While the conversation about rape is being held and explored in this novel, it is not from a survivor's point of view. If that is something you're comfortable with, you might want to try this title.

With that being said, on to the review!

The main character in this story and the POV is from **Vic**. Victor is a pretty shy kid who prefers to blend into the background and let his best friend, **Brett**, be the focus. That is until Vic goes to a party with Brett and is later accused of raping a woman named **Callie**. From there, his entire life begins to change for a crime that he did not commit but feels guilty for anyways.

"No, it still isn't processing. Me, the guy who has flown under the radar all his life, the designated driver, the nobody..."

My main problem with Vic is that I don't think he was developed enough. While York succeeds in making him a nice and honest person, I don't feel as if he's developed enough. Literally, there's nothing else to him except being nice, having a stutter, and being Brett's best friend. There are times when Vic even announces that he has no interests whatsoever. No hobbies, nothing he likes to do. Nothing. Except going to parties with Brett occasionally when he's asked. Hey, you can be a shy person with little involvement socially and still have tons of interests and dreams and desires. Vic really didn't have any of that. Which made him pretty flat to me.

While this novel revolves around Callie's rape, she has very little involvement in the actual plot. Her best friend, however, is a huge player and is one of the more interesting characters. **Autumn Dixon** is fiercely loyal to Callie and hellbent on finding out who really harmed her best friend. After Vic's name is cleared, they team up to help catch the real criminal and hopefully put him away. I enjoyed Autumn for the most part, but she was a bit stereotypical for me as well. Also, the romance that developed between her and Vic was just a little strange. I understand that Vic did help Autumn a lot when it came to finding the real rapist, however Vic was the first person accused and Autumn did originally believe that he did it. I just find it hard to believe that as Callie's best friend, she would be able to dismiss those accusations and the suspicions quite quickly. While that was bothersome, they did have a slow and relaxed pace towards a relationship, which is always a nice change in YA. Likewise, Autumn did help Vic grow a lot as a character and helped him become more of his own person.

"I marvel at this. All of this. At her. At the fact that someone as sharp-tongued, fierce, loyal, and beautiful as Autumn Dixon would ever have been lonely like me, would ever have any interest in someone as under-the-radar as I am, and how something so horrific could possibly bring something so incredible into my life."

In the end, I found the plot entirely **too predictable** for me to really get into this story, as I guessed who the rapist was within the first couple chapters. Likewise, the pacing was just a bit too slow for me. But, *Modern Monsters* isn't a bad read and it's really quick, so if you're looking for a mystery and a unique POV, this may be your novel.

Aditi says

"The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off."

---- Gloria Steinem, an American feminist, journalist, and social and political activist

Kelley York, pens her new young adult contemporary novel, *Modern Monsters* that revolves around a dangerous crime destroying the life of an innocent teenager, and also threatens to snatch away his quiet yet

successful future, thus it forces him to embark upon on a road where he can clear his name, but little did he knew that this road to truth can be a real bumpy one.

Synopsis:

Vic Howard never wanted to go to the party. He's the Invisible Guy at school, a special kind of hell for quiet, nice guys. But because his best friend is as popular as Vic is ignored, he went...

And wished he hadn't.

Because something happened to a girl that night. Something terrible, unimaginable, and Callie Wheeler's life will never be the same. Plus, now Callie has told the police that Vic is responsible. Suddenly, Invisible Vic is painfully visible, on trial both literally, with the police, and figuratively, with the angry kids at school. As the whispers and violence escalate, he becomes determined to clear his name, even if it means an uneasy alliance with Callie's best friend, the beautiful but aloof Autumn Dixon.

But as Autumn and Vic slowly peel back the layers of what happened at the party, they realize that while the truth can set Vic free, it can also shatter everything he thought he knew about his life...

Vic is an unpopular nerd yet he had a heart of gold, but surprisingly, his best friend was the most popular kid in the school, hence almost every other weekend, Vic ended up at a corner in a very happening party. But one party changes his life drastically when he sees a drunk girl throwing up and likewise his kind-heart rules it over by helping her to a room where he tucks her in to the bed. And when Monday, everything changed, when he found out that particular drunk girl named, Callie is raped and the last person she remembers is Vic's face. Against all odds, when his own mother too turned her back on her own son, Vic stands strong with his best friend's support, and along with Callie's best friend, Autumn's help, he plans to clear his own name from this mess.

The writing is very flawless and the mood that she set in with the confusing and dark tome is something really alluring to read. From the very first chapter itself, Vic's demeanor drew me in, although he was a complete geek, still his kindness pulled me like a magnet. The author depicts a sensitive topic through this story which the author have compassionately unraveled. The mystery is so deep that it immediately made me hooked on to the story. Although at some point, the strings of the mystery loosened, and it became easy for me to predict the real culprit.

The evocative narrative style and the way the dialogues are kept closer to reality kept me engaged till the very end. The pace of the book is very fast and an eloquent prose proved that the author knew what she was doing with this story. The characters are all strongly developed and sound very real through their narration. Vic, Brett, Autumn as well as Callie are the strongest elements of this book and which makes the story even more gripping.

Vic is an unusual character compared to his age, since the author helps him to transform and grow into a mature person who could stand against all the negativity around him. Brett and Autumn proves that there are still those friends who could die for us. And Callie surprisingly doesn't make herself feel sorry for her situation, she voices her opinion against this crime, yet she too fights with Vic and others to help him clear his name. The friendships depicted in the book are quite unique, given the fact that Vic and Brett's friendship is only an one-sided affair, while on the other hand, Callie and Autumn can die for each other.

And the author have done a great job in etching out these characters with depths with all their flaws and shortcomings. There is also a lot of chemistry in the book and at times, the storyline diverts to that direction and that annoyed me a little bit since there is lot of other issues that runs parallelly in the background and with the progress of the story, the author lost touch with those issues thus hanging us leaving with a big question mark. The climax of the book is very satisfying and is justifies according to the storyline.

Overall, this is an emotional story of not only Vic but also for Callie and Autumn, which is sure to touch quite a number of teenage hearts!

Verdict: *YA readers will find it appealing since this book covers a lot of teenage issues like acceptance, bullying, teenage rape, parent problems, unusual friendships etc.*

Courtesy: *I received this book for a blog tour.*

Nicole Edwards says

Review also on AwesomeBookNuts.blogspot.com.

I was really wary about this book. It's about rape. The book starts out at a party and shortly after that we learn that a girl was raped. So I was expecting some graphic details and disturbing imagery and lots of drinking and drugs and cursing. But there wasn't. Kelley York handled this subject so incredibly well. We hear this story from the perspective of the boy who is accused of raping the girl, but he's innocent. So we see what happens to him as a result of being wrongly accused and how this storyline plays out with police and reporters and kids at school and friends. It's heartbreakingly enlightening. And beautiful. And, mostly, it's hopeful. Yes, horrible things happen. Yes, there are terrible people in the world. And there are good people who make awful mistakes. But we can gather ourselves up again and keep moving, keep going, find happiness. Especially for being such a serious subject, this book was actually really uplifting that way.

I loved Vic's voice. He was such a sweet, kind, just all-around good guy who gets put through so much crap for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. I just wanted to reach into that book, wrap my arms around him and protect him. He felt like he needed protecting. Especially with the whole mother storyline which, btw, I totally guessed from the beginning and she just made me hate the world. Her and the father. Seriously, every scene she was in, I was kind of annoyed by the way she treated everything. Made me mad. And sad.

Then there was Autumn. I liked Autumn as a character, as a loyal friend, as the fiesty girl that she was. Which was why I didn't fully understand the connection she made with Vic. I just didn't see that happening naturally. It made the story, for sure, but I just didn't think it would have actually happened in a real-life situation. That's all.

The end of this book broke my heart. I saw it coming and it was still tragically sad. I really did just want to jump in there and protect Vic. That poor guy. But this book was lovely. Tragic and realistic and hopeful. I loved it. Thank you, Kelley York for handling such a delicate subject so carefully and tastefully. I will definitely read more books by this author.

Sexual Content: Mild (amazing, considering the entire premise of the book!)

Language: Moderate

Drugs/Alcohol: Mild

Violence: Moderate

Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says

Modern Monsters was a very pleasant surprise for me, a fairly short and exciting novel that can be read in one sitting. It's very tightly written and compulsively readable and it gives us a convincing male voice, something we don't get nearly often enough in YA fiction. Vic is not your average hero, YA or otherwise. He is a loner, a shy, antisocial boy with a stutter. He only has one friend, the very popular Brett, whose future is vastly different from Vic's. Vic is used to being dragged around by his best friend and then abandoned in a corner when there are more shiny toys to play with. So when he follows Brett to yet another party and ends up sitting outside alone, he accepts it as just another fact of life.

Vic's inherent kindness won't allow him to turn his head from someone in pain, so when he sees a drunk girl throwing up in the bushes, he helps her to a room where she can sleep it off. He even worries about her over the weekend, and with good reason. Monday brings the news that the girl was raped, and the only person she actually remembers approaching her is Vic.

Vic is a character who jumps right off the page, with all his pain and insecurities. We watch him as he tries to defend himself, abandoned by everyone but Brett. Our heart breaks with him as his mother turns her back on him, easily convinced that he's a rapist and not the boy she raised to respect everyone, especially women.

Even while we follow Vic, we see Callie in the background and we witness the strength of her spirit in face of such a mindless, brutal attack. I loved how she refused to be a rape victim, choosing instead to face her schoolmates and retake control of her life.

Although it seems strange, romance was the highlight of this book, but it never became more important than Vic's journey to find his own strength. Callie's accusations, his mother's distrust, police investigation, Autumn's romantic interest and his best friends support all served to make him realize his own worth and stand on his own two feet. Modern Monsters may be heartbreakingly at times, but the feeling it leaves you with is overwhelmingly positive.

The message this novel unobtrusively tries to convey is a worthy one, and a decent reward for the few hours you'll spend reading the book. Modern Monsters is clearly the work of an experienced author whose work I'll keep an eye out for in the future.

Jen La Duca says

Modern Monsters is the story of Callie, a high school senior who was raped one night while at a lake house party for both college and high school kids. What makes this story so utterly different and unique compared to any other with this subject matter is that it's not told from Callie's POV as the victim. This story is told

from Vic's POV; a shy, introverted teenage boy who is wrongly accused of raping Callie. It was this change in POV that made me want to read Modern Monsters, I had a feeling that Vic's story was going to not only be great but also important. The reality is that these things really happen and as tragic as raped is, what can be almost as tragic is a young man being wrongfully accused because let's face it, once that word is associated with someone it's not a stigma that will just go away with a not guilty verdict. We can be quick to pass judgements without having all the facts, especially teenagers and this is exactly what Vic experiences and goes through.

I went into this story prepared for the onslaught of what Vic might experience while dealing with the police and kids from school. What I was NOT prepared for was the reaction of Vic's mother. As a mom fiercely protective over my children, I found it disturbing to read the interactions between Vic and his mom. I understood why she was traumatized by the situation and I couldn't even begin to grasp the amount of strength it would take to get through a past such as her own but what she does to her son is so brutal and so, so wrong! Her mistreatment of him was going on long before he was even accused of anything. I swear, I just wanted to reach through my Kindle and strangle the woman, she disgusted me! The way she treated Vic was abusive and neglectful and the poor guy had no idea what he had done wrong. My heart broke for Vic as I imagined a young boy waking up one day to find his mother's love replaced with hatred. His mom should have gotten her shit together and sought counseling when she started to feel the way she did.

I loved Vic and was fascinated by his character! He is such a sweet, gentle and kind soul; even after all the crap life throws at him he never loses sight of who he is. Autumn was a perfect match for him; I just loved the two of them together. I wasn't expecting a romance in this type of story and at first was a tad disappointed when I saw it heading that way. Thankfully, their feelings for each developed slowly and realistically which in turn made the budding relationship completely believable and I ended up loving it.

The mystery of who actually raped Callie IMO wasn't too hard to figure out but that didn't bother me or detract from this story. This is about Vic's journey to find the truth and clear his name and it was completely believable that he didn't know the truth behind the rape until the very end. I am so glad that I had the opportunity to read Modern Monsters, this is the first book I've read by Kelley York but it certainly won't be my last! Because this story is told through Vic's POV there isn't anything graphic surrounding the rape, he wasn't there. Due to this, I believe this book is suitable for YA's age 16 & up, as long as the subject matter in general isn't a trigger. My daughter is 16 and I've already told her I want her to read this book, there are several very powerful messages here that would be great for teens to read. Kudos to Kelley York for showing us a different side of tragedy we don't normally think about!

Thank you to the publishers, Entangled Teen and to NetGalley for the complimentary, advanced reader copy of this book in exchange for my honest review

mith says

3.5.

I liked the book, and I loved the characters, but I thought it was a bit predictable. For the most part, the plot was pretty good, but again, kinda predictable. I think what bothered me the most was that, despite Vic wanting to find out who the real crook—rapist—was, he and Autumn spent more time just hanging out and getting closer than doing detective work. That wasn't necessarily *bad*, seeing as how she's integral to the story and to the growth of Vic's character, but I thought it lessened the importance of finding Callie's rapist.

I wanted a bit more of the mom in the story. I understand her reaction to Vic's getting blamed—I'm blanking out on the word here, of course—and even though I don't agree or like it, I do see where she's coming from. Given what she's gone through and what I myself know about family is that... Not everyone is the picture perfect, dinner-at-the-table, happy-go-lucky lot. It's hard and it's complicated, and, for lack of better words, often fucked up. What Vic and his mother had to overcome was something huge, and while there was a respectable amount of acknowledgement on the subject, more light would've been appreciated, because it's something very important. But I'm glad, for the most part, of how they ended up.

I thought the writing was okay; I can't say I'm a big fan of it. It's one of those stories where you actually need to pay attention to each word because you might miss something otherwise. It's straight from this to that, in the span of a few words, not the step-by-step ordeal. Personally, I don't really like that style because it's just too quick. If you're the kind of reader that reads in a skimming kind of way, like me, you'd have to pay a lot more attention so you don't go "wait, what??" or reread the previous line/paragraph again.

I liked the romance. I wished it wasn't so important, but whatever. However, I can say that it wasn't *the most* important thing and that, for the most part, it's pretty gradual. Sort of.

As I've said before, I really liked the characters. I thought that Brett was a true friend, loyal to the core; I liked what he did on Vic's behalf because, on some regard, he truly cares for Vic. I'm a fan of good girl friendships, but good guy friendships are just as important.

Despite what I said about the romance, I loved Autumn. She, too, was a loyal friend—both to Callie and Vic. Naturally, Autumn couldn't stand the sight of him, but she gave Vic a chance, and what I *really* loved was that her honesty came into play in the book. She's someone who speaks her mind, and I respected that. She outright says she doesn't trust/like him, at first. She goes through the process of trusting, too, which was a neat, two-in-one deal. In addition, she was a supportive friend, and helped Vic kind of come out of his zone. She showed that he doesn't need to be Brett's shadow, that it's okay to be himself, it's okay to think for himself, too. I think they're good for each other, with Autumn boosting his ego and Vic cancelling out her sassy attitude.

I thought Vic was an absolute sweetheart. I found his stutter adorable and his anxiety relatable. The way he dealt with the situation—especially given how his mother reacted—was amazing. And he honestly doesn't seem like the type of boy who would do such a thing. Given the reputation—or lack thereof—you wouldn't think he'd get bullied for the accusation (THAT was the word I'd forgotten! Oh well, too late to go back and change), because it would seem ridiculous. Or, maybe you would...

Wait.

You know what, actually no. Cross that whole sentence out because **that's the thing about rape**. In a situation like Callie's—drunk, barely conscious—you have no idea what you're facing and *that's* the scary part. You'd never expect it to be the quiet guy or the one that's going somewhere, the golden kid. That's irritating as hell and I see how I'm a hypocrite for practically writing that thought out before. Yes, in this case, it isn't actually the quiet boy who did it, who's only the scapegoat, but regardless. I just hope I managed to get across what I meant to say... It's just so horrifying that people would push aside the thought that someone so obviously *good* can do an act so atrocious—**despite it being common as fuck and OVERLOOKED DUE TO HOW OFTEN IT HAPPENS**—just so they can sleep at night. They'd rather have the innocent person behind bars instead of the disgusting creature that did the act. It's a horrifying world we live in.

(Also, that previous paragraph *may* minor-bordering-major spoilers, even though I was generally speaking. Still, sorry!)

This book kind of shows you that. See, I wasn't thinking that up until writing this review thing. The meaning may have been buried—or I'm just not a critical reader and need to go on a rant before actually figuring that out (it's most likely the latter)—but it's there. And I'm glad for that because it needs to be brought into light. Overall, I liked it. It did have some ups-and-downs and it may not be a book I recommend to everyone, but it was still pretty good.

If you're worried about it being too gritty, don't be, because it honestly wasn't. (I'd recommend *All The Rage*

for that, and checking out Navessa's review (which I'll hopefully link once I'm on my computer) for it.) *Modern Monsters* is a lighter side to a dark topic.

So yeah. **3.5 stars overall.**

I really want to start reading this because I just got it but I have a million other books and I can't get to it :((