Teens Read & Review

Violeta Edwards Salas reviews Not Here to Be Liked by Michelle Quach

“Because everyone loves a girl boss until she tries to tell you what to do”

Eliza Quan has been working to get the position of editor-in-chief of her school newspaper for 4 years. She ran unopposed until the day of the speech when popular former athlete Len DiMartile decided to go for it as well. Even though she’s more qualified, Len is chosen since he just SEEMS to be more like a leader. Obviously enraged, Eliza writes an essay about sexism and someone publishes it on the front cover of the paper. One thing leads to another and Eliza unintentionally starts a feminist movement in her school. Things start getting even more complicated when she begins to fall for the boy she has deemed the head of patriarchy.

Not Here to Be Liked by Michelle Quach is an extremely accurate telling of today's high school dynamic. It does a deep dive in both the villainization of feminism and in contrast to the villainization of femininity. I really appreciated this much needed insight about the complexity of female relationships and the disparaging of women inside and outside of the workplace.

If you liked To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before and Moxie but wanted a more diverse cast of characters, this is the book. I loved following a story about challenging sexism and racism from the perspective of an Asian American immigrant girl. Quach portrays a realistic immigrant family, giving a real insight into Chinese–Vietnamese culture and how culture affects their view of feminism.

The strengths of this book lay with Eliza and the portrayal of feminism. I found her unapologetically-herself attitude and headstrong nature endearing and relatable. While the romance is pretty standard and even a bit unrealistic, to the point I wish we hadn’t spent so much time with Len and gone into Eliza’s friends more, overall I highly recommend this book to everyone.

Violeta Edwards Salas is a freshman at Haldane High School. She is a member of the Butterfield Library’s Teen Advisory Board, and, at school, Model U.N., Student Council, the Varsity Tennis team, Drama Costume Department, and the JV Basketball team. You can read some of her articles in the Highland Current newspaper as part of their student journalist program.