

<https://blogs.slj.com/teacozy/2011/05/31/review-real-live-boyfriends/>

Real Live Boyfriends by E. Lockhart

Which brings us to the fourth Ruby book, **Real Live Boyfriends**. Ruby is a senior and has a real! live! boyfriend! One thing I like about Ruby is how she projects and reacts to things and doesn't always see the full picture. While the reader doesn't know why Noel starts acting differently around Ruby — or, rather, stops acting in the way Ruby expects a real live boyfriend to act — the reader can see that some of what is going on is that Ruby has a clear vision in her head of what should be and what should not be. Which can be a bit tricky for those who aren't in her head. Ruby has to work out two things: one, speaking up about what is happening inside her head and vocalizing her fears and disappointments instead of pretending everything is OK, as well as realizing that how she processes things and interacts with people is not the same way others process and interact and that is OK.

What really struck me with **Real Live Boyfriends** is how much I'd been taken in by Ruby's boycraziness and loneliness and wanting friends that somehow I had stopped viewing Ruby's panic attacks as something serious. This book really hit home that what this quartet of books is about is teens and mental health. This may be one of the few young adult novels out there that honestly addresses mental health issues in a way that is not message-driven and does not make the mental health issue the point of the book. Ruby's panic attacks are part of who Ruby is, not the sole thing about Ruby.

As is obvious from the start of this, the Ruby books are best read in order. Not because of them being sequential and building on one another, which they are and do; but, rather, because combined they tell one story, of Ruby, as she matures and grows over the course of three years. It's a true coming of age work and as I closed the book I wished that there was an award for best series, because the strength of some stories are not in their individual volumes but rather in the complete story. I don't mean to say that the individual books aren't strong — they are wonderful — but the true magic and genius of what Lockhart has done is revealed by looking at Ruby over the course of the entire series.

And now, for some quotes because I just adore Ruby's voice:

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/8013391-real-live-boyfriends>

Real Live Boyfriends: Yes. Boyfriends, Plural. If My Life Weren't Complicated, I Wouldn't Be Ruby Oliver

E. Lockhart

3.97

5.970 ratings572 reviews

From E. Lockhart, author of the highly acclaimed, *New York Times* bestseller *We Were Liars*, which John Green called "utterly unforgettable," comes *Real Live Boyfriends*, the fourth book in the uproarious and heartwarming Ruby Oliver novels that finds Ruby Oliver as neurotic and hypervocal as ever as she interviews her friends for a documentary on love and popularity and while doing so turns up some uncomfortable truths.

She's lost most of her friends. She's lost her true love more than once. She's lost her grandmother, her job, her reputation, and possibly her mind. But she's never lost her sense of humor. The Ruby Oliver books are the record of her survival.

Genres **Young AdultRomanceContemporaryFictionChick LitRealistic FictionTeen**

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225 pages, Hardcover

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Real Live Boyfriends: Yes. Boyfriends, plural. If my life weren't complicated, I wouldn't be Ruby Oliver (Ruby Oliver Quartet) Paperback – December 27, 2011

by [E. Lockhart](#) (Author)

[4.3 out of 5 stars](#) 89 ratings

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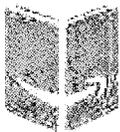
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