

ATPE **BOOK** of the month **CLUB**



The Secret to Lying by Todd Mitchell

(Grades 9–12)

(Summary taken from School Library Journal)

In his old high school, James, 15, was unremarkable and “the guy no one noticed.” When he’s offered a scholarship to a public boarding school for intellectually gifted students, he accepts. He is done being a dull, boring nobody and sees American Science and Mathematics Academy (ASMA) as a chance to reinvent himself. How hard could it be to impress a bunch of overachieving nerds and geeks? With purple spiked hair, grunge clothes and a few little lies, James has most of them convinced he’s from the wild side, a street-fighting punk with pyromaniac tendencies. His scars help propagate the tough-guy image, though they are real, and self-inflicted. James’s character is compelling as he straddles the line between fantasy and reality, builds friendships, pulls off outrageous pranks and deals with the angst of first love. He and his friends are real teens—funny, intelligent and still a bit vulnerable. Sensitive readers will make an emotional connection with James and root for him to overcome his demons, both real and imagined.

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