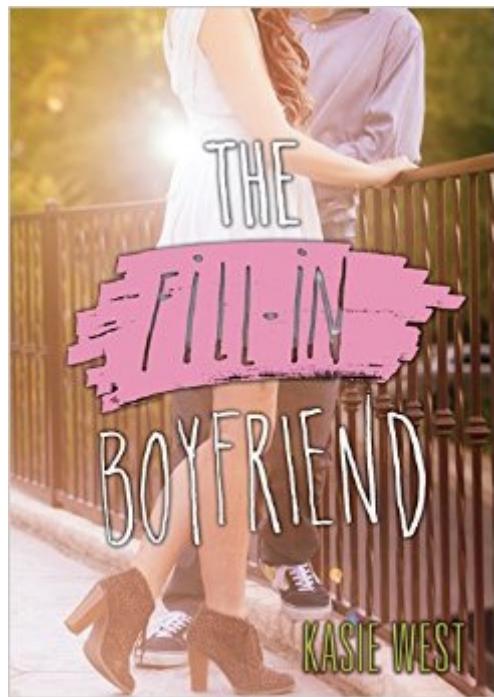


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The Fill-In Boyfriend



Synopsis

When Gia Montgomery's boyfriend, Bradley, dumps her in the parking lot of her high school prom, she decides to do the unthinkable—convince the cute guy waiting to pick up his sister to pretend to be her boyfriend for the night. The task is simple: two hours, zero commitment, a few white lies. The problem is that days after prom, she can't stop thinking about her fill-in boyfriend. But can Gia turn her fake boyfriend into a real one without exposing her lie and possibly destroying her friendships and her newfound relationship? Smartly observed and wonderfully romantic, Kasie West's talent shines in this tale of one girl's unexpected quest to find love—and possibly herself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have grown to be a HUGE Kasie West fan. I just loved the Pivot Point duology and have been head over heels for her contemporary books so far. As soon as I heard about THE FILL-IN BOYFRIEND, I immediately pre-ordered the book and was lucky enough to grab a copy when I was at ALA Midwinter in Chicago this year! Although THE FILL-IN BOYFRIEND isn't my favorite of hers so far, there's nothing bad to be said about this book and it's just as delightful and fun as I had hoped it would be! The book wastes no time introducing the situation at hand with Gia and how she ends up having a fill-in boyfriend—and their interactions are just plain adorable. I didn't relate to Gia as much as I have with previous Kasie West heroines but I do admire that she's not really afraid to ask for what she wants, and when her boyfriend leaves her in the parking lot at prom (what a jerk, right?) all she wants is to save face in

front of her friends because her frenemy is pushing the idea that he doesn't exist. Fortunately, she finds a Fill-In Bradley and he is too adorable and willing to play along to help out a total stranger. The relationship that begins to form between the two just totally worked and I just really loved the dynamic between Gia and Fill-In Bradley. (Yes, he does have a real name but it's not revealed until later in the book so while other reviews may mention him by name, I'm going to leave you guessing because it was fun for me not to know until Gia did!) They really played off each other quite well, with Gia being a bit more head strong and unafraid to say what was on her mind and FIB being a bit more reserved. They balanced each other out and FIB helped Gia see a different side of herself that she wasn't able to see around her friends. The friendships in this book were really interesting and I loved seeing so many different types of friendships! Of course we see Gia and FIB start to become friends out of nowhere and because the way that they met was so wacky and unconventional, they don't really need to hold back in any way. Gia also ends up talking to a girl in one of her classes who is very much on the opposite side of the social realm. Bec is a bit anti-establishment, definitely not one of the popular kids like Gia is, and unlike most people in the school, doesn't really care what Gia thinks or what anyone thinks, really. She's able to tell Gia like it is and dish out some of her own medicine and their sort of mutual dislike starts to transform into a solid friendship (especially since Gia is the type of person who doesn't like to have people dislike her). Then there's the frenemy story line, which isn't something I'm usually interested in but Kasie West totally makes this one work. Gia's best friend is also best friends with a girl named Jules who for some reason seems to have it in for Gia but at the same time, remains in their friend group. Gia struggles with questioning why Jules seems to want to turn her friends against her or if she just feels threatened and is making the situation out to be much worse than it really is. I just really loved all of the different ways these characters come together (or are pushed apart) and am once again so impressed with how well Kasie strings these all together! The romance, of course, was positively adorable. I love some good banter in books and Gia and FIB just really played off of each other so well. Then of course, Gia starts to develop the FEELS and who can blame her? This guy is seriously cute and I love that he's a sort of nerdy type and totally not what Gia thought she would be into. I sort of love unexpected romances like that so I was all for the two of them eventually falling in love! Each character has their own past and skeletons in their closet when it comes to relationships (although clearly FIB knows Gia's) so naturally, things become complicated, especially when trying to maintain a fake relationship meanwhile wondering if it really is real. All-in-all, THE FILL-IN BOYFRIEND was exactly

what I had hoped it would be and I just loved it! I think I connected more with other plots and characters from previous Kasie West books so this one didn't take over as my favorite of hers but that doesn't mean I didn't love it all the same! I'm always so impressed with her storytelling and how she brings characters and plot to life.

When your popularity is threatened every time you turn around and you can't really talk to your parents, what do you do? This is the situation facing Gia Montgomery. When new girl Jules, moved to town, she started systematically hijacking Gia's two best friends and now she doesn't know how to act around them. Then her boyfriend, who she met at the college where her brother goes, breaks up with her in the parking lot on prom night. She's more worried that Jules will trash her because she's hinted all along that Gia has been lying about said boyfriend than heartbroken, so now it's panic time. When she notices a guy sitting in a truck, reading a book, her desperation becomes stronger than her embarrassment and she asks him to be her fake prom date. He agrees and after the semi-disastrous night is over, something magical, but extremely unsettling hits Gia. By the time the dust settles, Gia has been through a giant emotional rollercoaster ride, had to look in the mirror and not particularly like what she sees, as well as discovering some new truths about the nature of friendship and her family's problems in communicating with each other. Best of all, she's discovered that fake boyfriends can be pretty awesome once you get past the your part of the fake. I'm a big Kasie West fan and read this within hours of receiving it. It's a good book for teens of both sexes who struggle with popularity, self-esteem and honesty issues. Definitely a good book for any library caring about providing good books to their YA readers.

Super cute! I love Kasie West's squeaky clean just a couple kisses. Source: Purchased

Gia Montgomery is All That. She is put together. She's popular, president of the student body, the leader of her posse, dating a junior in UCLA. But all of that will start to unravel on prom night. What she discovers about herself is that she really doesn't know herself at all, can't have an opinion that is not validated by her friends and everyone else, pushes hurtful things to the back of her mind where she forgets about them instead of dealing with them and can't cause any waves to the perfect family her parents have constructed. Truth be told, Gia made me angry and there was no way I would have wanted to be friends with her when I was in high school. She's not a mean girl per se, but she is by association, but not standing up for what is right and not censuring her so-called friends when they are cruel. She expects the world to

be handed to her and it is. But that was before Prom. Before Bradley dumped her. To illustrate her character, she was happier that he looked incredibly hot so she could make her friends jealous that she was to see him. And when he dumped her, she was more indignant about the fact that he did it before the prom and not after so she could show him off, but that is exactly why he dumped her. She was shallow, selfish and obnoxious. But that was before Hayden. After Bradley dumped her, she saw Hayden sitting in his car reading. She went over to his car and basically demanded he take her to the Prom, to stand in for her date, and felt like she was doing him a favor. At first, he was resistant to her pleas, but something about her swayed him. So, he went home, changed into a suit and came back to the school to be her date, but not as himself. She wanted him to pretend to be Bradley. Gia just couldn't face her friends if she had to tell them the truth. They didn't really believe she had a boyfriend at UCLA and she was afraid that if she didn't show up with Bradley after talking about him for the past few months, they would not believe he existed. And she was afraid of losing her friends. So she told a lie. She had never even found out Hayden's real name, so in her mind, she called him Fill-In Bradley.

Hayden's performance was flawless. He really turned on the charm and wowed her friends, but her one friend, Jules, was determined to get any dirt she could. Jules kept prying, trying to dig up information. Anything inconsistent in Gia's stories Jules would jump right on. And it wasn't just prom, it was all the time. She was constantly trying to discredit Gia every chance she got, to steal away Gia's best friend. So in order to protect her friendships, she didn't tell them what happened with Bradley and lied about who Hayden was. There was more trouble as Hayden's sister goes to Gia's school and was at the prom and she was not happy about the charade. In order to cover up why he was talking to her when Gia's friends were watching from a distance, he made it seem as if he had been cheating on Gia and that she broke up with him. Once he left the prom, Gia thought that would be the end of it, but she couldn't stop thinking about him and was curious as to why he agreed to help her in the first place. She obsessed about it all weekend long. Come Monday morning at school, she finds that Hayden's sister, Bec, is actually in one of her classes. When she tries to enlist Bec's aid to help her get in touch with Hayden, Bec refuses. But aid comes in the most unlikely of ways. Bec enlists Gia's help to be a Fill-In date for Hayden to a graduation party given by his ex-girlfriend. The girl played head games and cheated on him, but Bec is afraid Hayden may want her back. So she coerces Gia to help telling her that Gia owes Hayden, but Gia readily agrees because she wants to understand his motives for helping her and closure. But things rarely go according to plan and turn out the way they are planned and Bec finds herself entangled in all

the lines she's told to her friends, her family, but mostly to herself. When she's perpetrated the lies for so long, is she even able to come clean and can a fake relationship turn into the real thing?

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