

Elle McNicoll Shows Us Who We Are

What makes us who we are? What makes us human? Elle McNicoll delves into questions of identity, neurodiversity, and technology in this thought-provoking thriller.

Show Us Who You Are is the story of an autistic girl named Cora. When Cora's brother pulls her along to his brand-new boss's house, she unexpectedly develops a friendship with Adrien (who has ADHD), son of the rather intimidating CEO of Pomegranate Technologies. As she becomes Adrien's only friend, she is also drawn into the mysterious projects at Pomegranate. At first, she's intrigued by them - Pomegranate is using AI to recreate people in hologram form. However, as she digs further into the company's many schemes, she uncovers darker secrets. Cora knows something is going on... but what?

The characters are enhanced massively by Elle McNicoll's writing style. The book has neurodivergent characters and gives loads of insight into their emotions and thoughts. The development of friendship between Cora and Adrien is a rich part of an already good story, adding touches of what can be hilarity as they both discover how similar and different they are. McNicoll writes vividly about the way Cora and Adrien see and perceive things, and they see Pomegranate in two very different ways, which does lead to slight conflict. But one of the most interesting elements of the book is the way Cora's thoughts on Pomegranate change gradually but dramatically through the book. The feelings are rich and feel real, and you feel like you are going through the emotional roller-coaster with her.

Another reason I love this book is the plot. Pomegranate Industries is making life-like holograms of people so that loved ones can visit them when they pass away, so they never have to say goodbye. The sci-fi element of that alone really excited me, and you'll love seeing how Cora would navigate this kind of world. With the element of mystery, there were some twists and turns that I just didn't expect, but they led to some incredibly touching character moments that really were a giant asset to the book.

But what stayed with me the most was the book's themes. *Shows Us Who You Are* shows us who we are, but also warns about what lies ahead – what we need to keep with us in a world of changing technology. McNicoll tells us, don't lose yourself: difference is not a flaw, and it would be a horrible world if everyone were the same.

I would recommend this book to any fan of neurodivergent characters, science fiction, technology, and people curious about AI. I rate this book five stars as it is funny and sad, but at the same time interesting, and you can always feel the plot thickening.