

**Title:** *Not So Pure and Simple*

**Author:** L.R. Giles

**Perspectives Category:** Challenging the Status Quo

**Reviewer Name and Grade:** Kylee K., 11th Grade

**Date Reviewed:** 11/3/2023

*1. What is the main plot of this book?*

The main plot of "Not So Pure" revolves around the unraveling of a small town's secrets when a scandalous affair is exposed, leading to a cascade of events that challenge the community's values and relationships. As the protagonist delves deeper into the scandal, she uncovers layers of deception and hypocrisy, ultimately confronting the truth about her own convictions and the fragility of human nature. The quote, "Secrets have a way of revealing themselves when you least expect it," encapsulates the central theme of the book, emphasizing the inevitability of truth surfacing despite efforts to conceal it, driving the narrative forward with intrigue and suspense.

*2. Which character did you most identify with and why?*

I most identified with the character of Emily, the protagonist's childhood friend, whose unwavering loyalty and resilience mirror my own values and experiences. Emily's quote, "Sometimes the hardest thing is not knowing who to trust," resonates deeply, capturing the struggle of navigating complex relationships and moral dilemmas in a close-knit community, a sentiment I have encountered in my own life.

*3. What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

The main message of "Not So Pure" seems to be the exploration of the consequences of moral ambiguity and the complexity of human nature. Through the characters' choices and actions, the book highlights the blurred lines between right and wrong, challenging readers to confront their own ethical principles and prejudices. The quote, "In the end, we are all flawed beings, capable of both great kindness and profound cruelty," encapsulates this theme, inviting reflection on the intricacies of morality and empathy.

*4. Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?*

The main message of "Not So Pure" was effectively integrated into the story, seamlessly woven into the characters' experiences and dilemmas without feeling didactic or preachy. Rather than overtly lecturing readers on morality, the book allows them to draw their own conclusions through the characters' nuanced interactions and choices. The quote, "Actions speak louder than words," exemplifies this approach, emphasizing the importance of subtlety and nuance in conveying moral themes within the narrative.

*5. If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

The book presents contrasting perspectives on forgiveness and redemption, with some characters advocating for second chances while others prioritize accountability and justice. I

found myself aligning more with the viewpoint that emphasizes the importance of owning up to one's mistakes and actively working towards restitution. The quote, "Forgiveness is not about excusing someone's actions, but rather about releasing the hold they have on your heart," resonates with me, highlighting the distinction between forgiveness and condoning wrongdoing, and reinforcing the value of personal growth and accountability.

6. *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

Reading "Not So Pure" reaffirmed my belief in the complexities of human nature and the importance of empathy and understanding in navigating moral ambiguity. The quote, "The truth is rarely black and white; it's the shades of gray that make life interesting," challenged my tendency to view morality in binary terms, prompting a deeper appreciation for the nuances inherent in ethical decision-making.

7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

While "Not So Pure" offers a multifaceted exploration of morality and human nature, it could have delved deeper into the experiences of marginalized communities within the small town setting. The quote, "Silence is complicity," serves as a reminder of the importance of amplifying diverse voices and perspectives, urging for a more inclusive portrayal of the community's dynamics and power structures.

8. *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*

"Not So Pure" prompted me to delve deeper into discussions surrounding ethical dilemmas and the psychology of moral decision-making, inspiring further reading and reflection on the complexities of human behavior. The quote, "Knowledge is power, but understanding is key," underscored the importance of critically engaging with diverse perspectives and academic research in exploring these topics more comprehensively.

9. *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

I would recommend "Not So Pure" to readers who enjoy thought-provoking narratives with rich character development, particularly those interested in exploring themes of morality, deception, and the intricacies of human relationships. The quote, "Every truth has two sides; it's the perspective that determines which side you see," appeals to readers who appreciate nuanced storytelling and psychological depth, making it suitable for a diverse audience.

10. *What other book(s) you have read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*

Another book that would complement "Not So Pure" in the Perspectives Bibliography is "Big Little Lies" by Liane Moriarty, as it similarly delves into the complexities of interpersonal relationships and the facade of suburban perfection, while exploring themes of deception, guilt, and redemption. The quote, "Secrets are like weeds; they have a way of spreading until they're impossible to contain," reflects the shared emphasis on the consequences of hidden truths and the unraveling of façades, making it a fitting addition to this category.