

Booklist Review

Books For Youth - Fiction - General Fiction



The Secret Science of Magic.

Keil, Melissa (author).

Apr. 2018. 352p. Peachtree, hardcover, \$17.95 ([9781682630143](#)). Grades 7-12. **REVIEW.** First published February 15, 2018 (*Booklist*).

Joshua is a master of card tricks. Sophia is a math prodigy with an eidetic memory and an obsession with *Doctor Who*. Since seventh grade, Joshua has

concealed his crush on her, but as high-school graduation approaches, he finds a way to express his feelings, gently and via magic—slipping playing cards and other things surreptitiously into her locker, backpack, and so on. When Sophia is overwhelmed by anxiety after they kiss, Josh goes with the flow and devises a magic trick that resonates with her. Don't look for a romance filled with hearts and flowers here, but rather one that is sweet and built on respect and understanding. The story features a refreshing number of South Asian characters, Sophia's father is Sri Lankan, and though the dialogue can be overly snappy and clever, it works within the world that Joshua and Sophia live. Readers struggling with social and personal interaction issues, awkwardness about fitting into their community, and uncertainty about where their future may take them will embrace this novel. — *Jeanne Fredriksen*



Booklist Editors Recommend

Titles similar to *The Secret Science of Magic*

- *Eleanor & Park*
- *Girl against the Universe*
- *100 Days of Cake*