

# Boys' Purposelessness Pandemic-Chicago Author's Novel Scores BookLife Reviews Editor's Pick & Readers' Favorites 5 Stars

*Praised for humor & heartbreak, Promising Young Man by Elias Axel drives south & southwest with struggling teen seeking love & guidance in modern America.*

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Promising Young Man, a contemporary novel by Elias Axel, published February 11, 2025, narrated by witty, defiant 18-year-old Oscar Danielsson, tells a heartbreakingly relatable, often hilarious story of a misunderstood, mistake-riddled teen looking for love and purpose in modern America with a "classic road films" vibe.

Awarded BookLife Reviews Editor's Pick signaling "outstanding quality" with straight-A's for production, Readers' Favorites 5-stars, and Kirkus Reviews "Get it", Axel's novel also claims a spot in the Indie Illinois "IAP Select" collection, an honor reserved for the "best of the best" in ebooks offered to participating US and Canadian libraries.

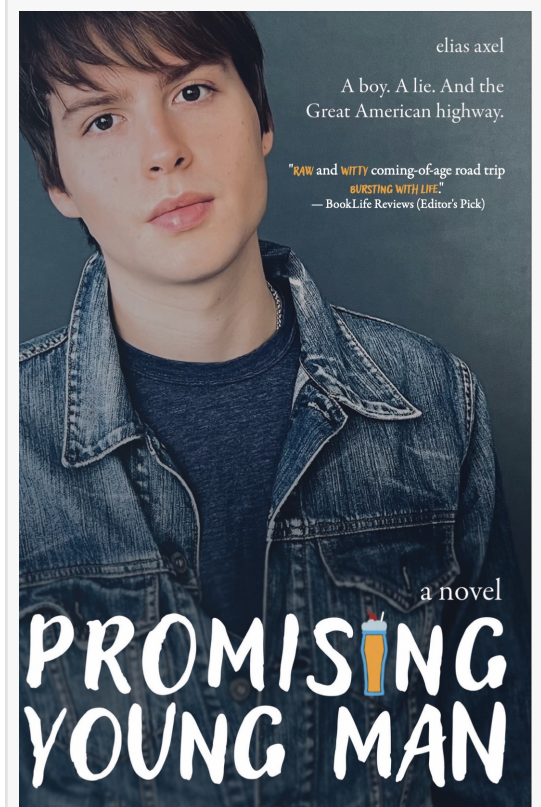
"Axel debuts with a sharp and poignant novel of coming-of-age on the road, with a story of intergenerational bonding that captures the messiness of young adulthood—and also some insights into adult grieving—with humor and heartbreak." — BookLife Reviews (Editor's Pick).

“

Books like Promising Young Man need to be on school curricula.”

*Readers' Favorite (5-Stars)*

Oscar's story sheds light on issues many young men face today, including depression, loneliness, and suicidal ideation. "Too many guys are struggling—lacking purpose, and the guidance or encouragement to pursue one—and feeling clueless about their direction in life," Axel says. "Oscar has hopes and dreams, but he's been so beaten



Promising Young Man by Elias Axel

down, he's not exactly sure what they are."

#### AN UNDERDOG YOU CAN ROOT FOR

Axel's novel stands out with a male protagonist that defies the guy trope through a well-developed interiority and complex emotional life, who saves the day with wit, profoundness and inner strength, not shallowness or bravado.

Lauded as "...a deft portrait that sidesteps stereotypes with sensitivity and skill..." by Kirkus Reviews ("Get it"), Axel also portrays the often-misunderstood and brutal reality of living with ADHD that's 80% below surface level. "Oscar's a real guy. Faults and all, he wants love, to feel strong and worthy, and be useful."

"Axel's writing crackles with energy and hard-won insight, capturing Oscar's inner monologue in a way that feels both authentic and deeply relatable." — BookLife Reviews (Editor's Pick)

#### A MESSY TEENAGE EXISTENTIAL CRISIS ROLLED INTO ONE UNFORGETTABLE ON-THE-ROAD ADVENTURE

On the cusp of high school graduation, Oscar Danielsson isn't ready for the real world—yet. But he's 18 now, and everyone has expectations. The sharp-witted, mistake-prone teen struggles with self-doubt, his future, and an ADHD diagnosis he'd rather ignore. When a scrape with the law he's too out of it to remember upends his life, Oscar embarks on a wild road trip with his eccentric Grammy, leaving behind his beloved dog Enzo, a budding romance with Bette, and self-destructive habits that kept him afloat. As he races across America to repay his debt, he discovers a family lie that forces him to decide whether to give up entirely or accept a painful truth that might keep him going.

"RAW AND WITTY COMING-OF-AGE ROAD TRIP, BURSTING WITH LIFE." — BOOKLIFE REVIEWS (EDITOR'S PICK)

Promising Young Man is a raw, witty page-turner that will appeal to fans of Jandy Nelson and



Jennifer Niven. A bittersweet story of survival, resilience, and hope that will stick with readers, young and old, and leave them reflecting on their own journeys of self-discovery and finding purpose.

If you fell for Theodore Finch in *All the Bright Places*, Noah Sweetwine in *I'll Give You the Sun*, or Charlie Kelmeckis in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, Promising Young Man's Oscar Danielsson will melt, break, and then repair your heart.

#### ADDITIONAL PRAISE FOR PROMISING YOUNG MAN:

"Axel delivers a story that is messy, tender, and often darkly funny, a gripping read for anyone caught between adolescence and adulthood—or who wants to recall that moment." — BookLife Reviews (Editor's Pick)

"...a journey that is both harrowing and beautifully poetic...a damn good read." — Dr. David George, Ph.D. Professor of Modern Languages Emeritus Lake Forest College

"... deeply moving, sharply observed ... With its candid, absorbing, and often witty intergenerational plot, Promising Young Man is truly enjoyable and will appeal to readers of all ages." — Sarah C. Maza, Member American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Professor of History Emerita Northwestern University

"I love this book. It's a page-turner. I found myself looking forward to bedtime to read it." —Jill Wine-Banks, author, *The Watergate Girl*; MSNBC legal analyst; co-host, Webby-winning #SistersinLaw Podcast

"At times funny, at times raw, at times so poignant you'll find yourself tearing up, Promising Young Man provides a glimpse into what it means to be a boy on the cusp of becoming an adult in the world today ... this is your first step to understanding their hopes, their challenges, and their profound and often troubling reality." — Maggie Smith, award-winning author of *Truth and Other Lies* and *Blindspot*

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Title: Promising Young Man

Author: Elias Axel

Editor: [Julian Josip](#)

Pub Date: February 11, 2025

Publisher: My Delightful Life Press, LLC.

Length: 240 pages

ISBN: 979-8-9920656-0-2

Genre: Coming-of-Age (Contemporary Realistic Fiction with elements of Humor)

Distributors: Ingram & [Amazon](#)

Universally relatable themes: Self-Acceptance, Finding Purpose, Intergenerational Relationships, and The Power of Second Chances.

List Under: Best Books for Guys, Road Trip Reads, Happy-Cry Books, New Releases 2025, New Adult Fiction 2025, Books for Parents of Teens, and ADHD Fiction

Promising Young Man Audiobook narrated by Julian Josip coming in 2025

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