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# Hero

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Moore, Perry. *Hero*. New York: Hyperion, 2007.

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“Once in a while, life gives you a chance to measure your worth. Sometimes you’re called upon to make a split-second decision to do the right thing, defining which way your life will go. These are the decisions that make you who you are.” – page 273

Thom Creed is an outsider. Even though he volunteers at the town rec center, works shifts at a cafeteria, and is a star on the school basketball team, Thom doesn’t have many friends. Thom’s father, once renowned superhero Major Might, was blamed for a catastrophe that killed thousands of people, left him disfigured as well as a social pariah, and led to the disappearance of Thom’s mother, Invisible Lass. But beyond the stigma of simply being his father’s son, Thom doesn’t have many friends because people sense that he is different. Thom has recently discovered that he has superpowers, but the biggest difference between Thom and those around him is a secret that he can hardly face himself, and along with the secret of his healing abilities, it is one of many that Thom is keeping from his father.

Thom’s latest secret from his father is that he has been asked to attend superhero League tryouts. At tryouts, probationary superheroes are divided into teams; Thom’s team of misfits – Golden Boy (who has superspeed and a serious dislike of Thom, who he blames for his demotion from the League’s A-Listers), Miss Scarlett (who can burst into flames and has an attitude problem to match), Typhoid Larry (an unhealthy-looking kid who can make anyone around him fall ill), and Ruth (a little old lady who can see into the future) – are not exactly save-the-world material. But when two superheroes are found dead and Thom realizes the League has apprehended the wrong villain, Thom’s team may be Earth’s only chance at survival. Thom will have to face his biggest secret, and that will be just the beginning.

*Hero* is a unique coming-of-age story set in an alternate, but relatable reality where superheroes and supervillains are the norm. The story is told from Thom’s perspective; his sincere and often snarky reactions pull the reader in while lending credence to an already believable setting and plot. Thom’s host of issues, including his struggle to harness his superpowers, his struggle to patch up the strained relationship he shares with his father, and his struggle to accept his own sexuality are skillfully woven together and parallel the problems of friendship, love, and self-acceptance faced by readers today. Although the pace is a little slow at first and there are a few mistakes in the writing here and there, *Hero* is a book for every reader – regardless of superpowers or sexual orientation.