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Review of *Exclamation Mark* by Amy Krouse Rosenthal

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Exclamation Mark
Rosenthal, Amy Krouse
Illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld
New York: Scholastic Inc., 2013
987-0-545-43679

The story of an exclamation point, who has lived his whole life trying to be a period, finally discovering who he is meant to be. When he meets a question mark, Exclamation Mark begins to discover that there are others who don't fit the neat mold of a period. Gradually, he finds out what it means to be an exclamation point. This quick, endearing read, with simple illustrations incorporated into the text itself, is a story of growing up and discovering oneself. It handles Exclamation Mark's feelings of awkwardness and of being out-of-place with grace, appealing to the child who might feel the same way. Instead of placing Exclamation Mark in a hostile environment (the odd-man-out in a world of conformist bullies), as most stories of this theme tend to do, he is instead surrounded by others who are comfortable doing what they're meant to do, being who they're meant to be. They are supportive of Exclamation Mark as he discovers himself, too – a welcome and encouraging change from stock bully characters. A great book to be read with a student, but a little too dependent on reader interaction with the pages/text/illustrations to be read aloud to a large group. Recommended.

Courtney Raymond, Centennial Library Intern