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Before You Break



Synopsis

Two sisters. A haunting tragedy. And a past that won't let them go . . .

Everyone has secrets. Lux McKenna certainly does. So did her mom, before she killed herself. So does her dad, dying alone in his hospital bed.

Probably even her sister, rushing home to fix everything like always. But not even perfect, responsible Lena can fix this. Lux did a bad thing. A terrible thing. Now she's spinning out of control.

Nothing can erase the darkness trapped inside her head. Not her sister. Not those little white pills. And certainly not handsome, dangerously charming Reese.

Some say the truth will set you free. But they're wrong. The truth can break you.

For fans of John Green's *Looking for Alaska* and Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why*, *Before You Break* is a haunting novel exploring the enduring bond between sisters, the legacy of mental illness, and the courage it takes to live after devastating loss.

Trigger warning: Deals with themes of suicide, mental health, and drug abuse. Recommended for 16+

Previously published as *Who We Are Instead*.

"I loved this book. It was truly amazing." -Lit This & That

"If I had to sum this novel up in two words it would be these: descriptive masterpiece." -Wandering Thoughts Reviews

"A well-written, moving tale that provides a candid look at troubled family relationships." -Cassidy's Bookshelves

"As gripping as any thriller." - reviewer

"Just buy this book. Seriously." - The treatment of mental health issues is vivid, empathetic, and hopeful." - reviewer

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This was a surprisingly uplifting book even though it dealt with two sisters' troubled childhoods and their struggles to cope with their emotional scars. I found both characters sympathetic and very realistic, and while this is definitely a character-driven story rather than an action-packed thriller, it was as gripping as any thriller. The author's writing style is suited to this type of story. She deftly weaves similes and metaphors into the narrative, capturing the characters' viewpoints and emotions. Her use of descriptions that add a sense of place as well as an emotional tone to the scene is remarkable. Few of us can say we've had perfect childhoods, and most of us carry emotional baggage that can be destructive. We all have memories we should hold onto, as well as some we should let go. This book was a pleasure to read, and I guarantee it will touch you.

Finished Reading Add a dateReview Absolutely excellent. this book deftly threads the needle of addressing mental health issues and abuse without either excusing them or softening the blow too much. There's subtlety and complexity here, and excellent use of visual themes, but it's never forced. The descriptions are beautiful, the emotions genuine. Lux and Lena are heartbreakingly real and relateable, and the destruction of a family is traced inexorably to its conclusion. Readers who liked Looking for Alaska but want something more mature will probably really enjoy this, as will fans of Miriam Toews (A Complicated Kindness, Irma Voth). It tackles diversity pretty well, and there are a lot of great little details in the supporting characters' lives. I kind of wish a couple of plot events had happened differently, but that's just because I feel bad for the characters--not the fault of the story. A few of the teen fashion references were a little off, but I don't think that'll bug most people. I received a pre-release copy of this book for a beta read, but this review was my own choice and was not required. I wanted to make sure other people knew how good this book is. I will be keeping track of this author's future works.

I don't typically read stories like this one because it focuses too much on real life, however, once in a while I need a reality read. The writing is almost flawless and I didn't want to stop reading once I

decided to give it a chance. I'll definitely read more works from this author although I'll have to have some light reading in between. If you enjoy books with mental illness and dysfunctional families with a sprinkle of romance than this is for you.

I purchased this book because I read Kyla Stone's debut novel, "Beneath The Skin," and loved it! "Who We Are Instead" was an equally enthralling journey into family dynamics, mental illness, and coping with tragedy. The characters had such depth and uniqueness; I was mesmerized by Lena's mother, mad at Lux (in the beginning), and delighted by Lena's blushing. Ms. Stone delicately balanced the struggles with awareness, hope, and healing. I definitely recommend this book!

This is a skilfully written story told from the alternating points of view of sisters Lux and Lena. The writing is vivid and emotive with a distinctly different voice for each one of the sisters. The difficult topics of suicide and living with someone with bipolar disorder are handled with honesty and dignity. At times I wanted to scream at Lux to stop her on her path to self-destruction. While at times the content of the novel is depressing, the overall message is a positive, life-affirming one. I highly recommended this book and look forward to reading more from this author.

Another brilliant book by this very talented author. I read this book in two sittings after buying it on sale last week. What a find! I'm looking forward to watching Kyla Stone shine!

Just buy the book. Seriously. This is my first read from Kyla Stone, and I was drawn in immediately. The characters ring true in every moment, every conversation. I suffer from bipolar disorder and her treatment of mental illness is vivid, empathetic, and hopeful. I'm hooked, and headed over to buy the rest of Stone's novels.

Good book about family relationship and dynamics. Touches a lot on mental illness and how that affects the family members.

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