



When We Were Friends

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Lainey Carson and Sydney Beaumont were the closest of friends—until they reached high school and Sydney’s burgeoning popularity made it easy for her to leave the contemplative, ungainly Lainey behind.

Eighteen years later, Lainey, who lives at home caring for her mother, is an artist who’s never found the courage to live her dreams. When Sydney shows up on her doorstep with her infant daughter, insisting that Lainey is the only friend she can trust, Lainey reluctantly agrees to take temporary custody of the baby to protect her from an abusive father.

But that very night, Sydney appears on the evening news—claiming that her daughter has been kidnapped. Unsure of whom she can trust, Lainey is forced to go on the run with a child who is not her own—but whose bond with her grows stronger every day they spend together. In search of a safe place to stay, Lainey befriends a man who, concerned for their welfare, offers them a home. But as the two grow closer she starts to realize that he may be harboring his own secrets.

An utterly riveting story that will keep you turning the pages, *When We Were Friends* asks how we define motherhood and family, whether we ever truly overcome our pasts, and what friendship really means.

Look for special features inside.

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From Reader Review When We Were Friends for online ebook

Claudia says

After years of not seeing your BF from high school and the two of you left on a bad note and one day you see your BF at her job. Would you have turned back around or would you stand there and had conversation with her.

This happen to Lainey with her to nice self...she was pulled in by her BF Sydney once again. She tells her a whole lot of lies to get her to take her baby girl Jacqueline for some days. She agrees to this and turns on the television to find out that Sydney has reported her daughter as kidnapped from the mall. After feeding her the lies of abuse by the hands of her husband Derrick. But once she seen the burns on the baby body she takes things in her own hands and pack up and run for the hills.

The first place she hits is a bed and breakfast of this kind lady that puts them up for days. In the mean time she is keeping in touch with Sydney to see what's the next move or ideal she has came up with. Now she has to compromise her identity until she comes up with a plan or is catch by the law. In the mean time this guy name Alex appears at this place and comes to her rescue, just when her car breaks down. She finds the attraction there but she knows that she can't risk him finding out who she really is. But for some reason he will not take "no" for an answer. The secrets were wearing her down but in the midst of all that was going on she wasn't the only one with secrets of deceit.

It's a page turner but you have heard this story over and over again but it's the point of reading about it, in the details and adventure that you go on as a reader to find out the truth behind the lies of Sydney.

If you would like to see the book video of the review you can find it at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4ahlQ...>

Allison says

I almost put this book down twenty pages in because it hadn't hooked me yet. Re-reading the back blurb inspired me to keep going, and I'm so glad I did! Despite a slow start, this book is worth reading. Lainey is thirty-six, still living in her hometown, still living in *her mother's house*, barely making ends meet as a painter. When her gorgeous, chic friend Sydney comes back into her life, Lainey is forced to face reality. This reality includes how badly Sydney hurt Lainey in high school, as well as how dissatisfied Lainey is with her current situation. When Sydney asks Lainey to take her baby away from her abusive husband, Lainey gets pulled into a situation more dramatic than she'd ever imagined. But also, she's finding her true self, despite being buried in lies. The twists in this book are shocking yet just-right, not over the top or overly dramatic. I'm eager to read more from this author.

Tiffany says

OMG! This story is ridiculously good! Seriously when people ask about book recommendations this is the first one that comes to mind. What would you do if one of your closest friends you hadn't seen in years comes blowing into town, with a story of domestic abuse, asks you to watch her baby while she gets things taken care of (mind you you haven't seen her in forever, hell you didn't even know she had a baby!), then next thing you know that baby is posted all over TV as a missing child!?!? You go on the run with the baby because your girlfriend is obviously a nut job! Yup, total page turner, like falling asleep with the book and waking up to read more because it's so good. Pick it up. Read it. Right now. Why are you still reading this and not the book!?

Tonya says

This book is the reason I love to read! If you only read ONE book in 2011, this is the ONE you should read. What a gripping story of a woman in her thirties, living with her mother because her mother needs her. She has agoraphobia; the fear of going outside, or open spaces the definition says. She is an artist, painting murals for people, just existing. When she runs into Sydney, who used to be her best friend in grade school before things changed in their friendship, a domino effect happens. What seems like chaos to Lainey, is really a plan to Sydney who really has some serious problems. Or is it?

You will have to read this wonderful story, that only gets better and better, and just when you think it can't get any more better, she hits you over the head and you will NOT be able to put this book down. All the characters are developed so well, I don't have a favorite. Lainey is just a wonderful person, and you cheer for her the whole time.

Lainey's mother, Star, is a real hoot. I feel for her and her disease. You will be rooting for each one of these people, in all sorts of different ways. Just remember to read this book and recommend it to everyone! You won't want to miss out on this one!! Keep an eye on this author, she is what we readers crave every day!

Natasha says

Lainey and Sydney were best friends until high school when Sydney made fun of her to get in with the popular kids.

18 years later, Lainey is taking care of her agoraphobic mom Star and painting murals. She comes into contact with Sydney and Sydney tells her her husband has been abusing her and her 1 year old daughter Jacqueline. Then she leaves her with Lainey to keep her safe. Then Lainey turns on the news and finds out Sydney has gone to the cops, claiming Jacqueline was kidnapped. She tells Lainey she didn't give her name, she freaked out and made up a story because she was scared of her husband. Lainey and Jacqueline go on the run and end up meeting Alex, who takes them home to his home in remote New Hampshire. There is a big twist near the end.

CoffeeTimeRomance andMore says

Where do you begin with this emotional roller coaster of a book? When We Were Friends packs an emotional punch where it is sometimes hard to choose sides between what is right and what is morally wrong. Author Elizabeth Joy Arnold has written a story that ropes you in from the get go and keeps you hanging on till the last page with a storyline so moving it is hard not to enjoy and embrace this book.

Matilda

Reviewer for Coffee Time Romance & More

Full Review: <http://coffeetimeromance.com/BookRevi...>

Allison Relyea says

This was such a good book. At first it was a bit slow, but I thought it was great. This book, I found, related to my life on many different levels. It is about these two friends who were best friends as young girls, and as they grow older they start to drift apart until one of the friends asks the other to watch over her young daughter. A big mess unravels and the friend with the other's daughter goes into hiding and it starts to get very interesting. This was a well-written book and was a good story.

Cathy says

I really enjoyed this book. It was given to me as a gift, so I thought I'd try it. I was pleasantly surprised and what a page turner it was. There were parts of this book at the beginning that I had a hard time trying to believe but thought to myself...take it with a grain of salt and keep reading. I'm so glad I did. This story had so many twists and turns in it, right up to the very end. I had no idea how this story would end. Thank you Dawn for the gift and I will definitely look up this author again.

Denise says

3.0 out of 5 stars Predictable melodrama..., March 8, 2011

This review is from: When We Were Friends: A Novel (Paperback)

This novel, the first I've read by this author, was a fast-paced but predictable and totally unbelievable story. Two women who were best friends as teenagers before they had a falling out in high school conspire in a plot that involves kidnapping, accusations of child abuse, infidelity, and a love triangle.

Lainey and Sydney were "blood" sisters during childhood. During their high school years, Sydney turns on Lainey and puts her down in order to be part of a popular crowd. Years pass. Sydney marries, has a baby, and Lainey is left behind at home to care for her mother who has some psychiatric issues that include agoraphobia. Lainey is an artist painting murals for a living when she runs into Sydney when hired to do a

mural at a local occult shop. Sydney seems overjoyed at their reunion and suggests that the two become reacquainted. During the get together, Sydney relates tales of abuse that she and her daughter Jacqueline have experienced and expresses a fear of her husband. She proposes the most outlandish plan -- Lainey should take the baby and hide her until Sydney can get things together and leave her husband while retaining custody of her daughter. Needless to say, the idea is poorly conceived and completely preposterous, but Lainey acquiesces, takes "Molly" and departs -- thus begins the rest of the novel.

Where does Lainey go? Who does she meet along the way? What connection, if any, does this man have with her friend and what are the "bad things" he has done? No spoilers here, but the novel bumps along in a very predictable fashion with no surprises. The characters are not particularly interesting and I thought they were definitely unlikeable. I read on to the conclusion without much interest in the outcome as I knew full well what it would be. I wouldn't say this was a novel about friendship. I doubt that any sane person would do what Lainey did. Hmmm.

Ho-hum novel, borrow it if you want to read it.

Georgette says

Lainey and Sydney are best friends all the way until high school, when Sydney betrays her trust in a big-time way in front of the entire school. Seven years later, Lainey goes to an occult store and finds Sydney as the clerk behind the counter. They get together to have coffee, and Lainey is stunned to find a beaten-up Sydney. Sydney then tells Lainey she's caught up in an abusive marriage and she fears for the life of her one year old daughter, Jacqueline. Through a series of highly manipulated moves, Lainey ends up taking care of the child. She's further stunned that Sydney continues to lie to the cops and put Lainey in danger- even after she's defended Sydney and her care of the baby. Lainey, aided by her emotionally fragile mother Star and her best friend Pamela, flees the town with the child, even going as far as to change their appearance and names. She ends up in West Virginia, where she meets a lonely, caring man who rescues them when their car goes down. Lainey starts to fall for him, and further falls into the charade that she's the mother of the child. The lies continue to build on Sydney's end, and Lainey spirals closer and closer to a breakdown based on all the lies she's told to protect the child, and ultimately herself. Then the story takes three very unexpected turns and you are literally left stunned by what transpires. This ends up being one of those books you're still talking about to people years later. It was emotional, realistic, shocking, and ultimately, the ending will completely stun you. I loved this book.

Niki says

Enjoyed it! This book, that seems like it will be so very predictable, surprised me at many turns. It definitely made me keep reading, not wanting to put it down because I had to know what happened next.

It will make you relive high school friendships and question them. It will bring out your motherly instincts and the romantic in you. And it will make you think..."What would I do?"

Sharon says

I've loved Elizabeth Joy Arnold ever since her first book, *Pieces of My Sister's Life*, and this novel was every bit as engaging. Her characterizations are so realistic, dialog is sharp and funny, and the book (like *PoMSL*) was full of twists and suspense which swept me away into this other world and often had me on the edge of my seat. I also liked that the book had a set of interview questions, where she talked about her writing process (which I as a writer especially appreciated), and where she got the ideas for this story. Can't wait till her next book!

Tina says

I'm about halfway through the book and can't wait to see how it ends. The characters are interesting. Lainey seems desperate to create a new life for herself & is a bit delusional (I think) in beginning to think of "Molly" as hers. Sydney seems to be just a big bitch, but who knows what lies under that. And who knows what Alex's agenda is. I think that he knows more than he lets on... for a while, I thought he was some kind of plant from David or Sydney to keep an eye on Lainey & Molly??? But, who knows.

Finished the book - good ending... some mystery... not my favorite, but it was a good read.

K.E. Garvey says

I've read this author before and I enjoy her style and voice.

The positives: The story doesn't drag as some do, it's progression feels natural. Characters interact naturally with each other and come off as believable.

The negatives: And this is just me, but I like epilogues even less than I like prologues. I realize that not everyone would agree and who knows, maybe one day I will find myself in the position to have to finish a novel that way, but until that time, did I mention I r-e-a-l-l-y hate epilogues? It makes me feel like what began as a good solid book took a short-cut to cross the finish line first. That's just me.

Again, if you generally like this author, you won't be disappointed with this book.

Sofia Galvez says

Too over the top for me.
