



## Not That Kind of Girl

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Natalie Sterling wants to be in control. She wants her friends to be loyal. She wants her classmates to elect her student council president. She wants to find the right guy, not the usual jerk her school has to offer. She wants a good reputation, because she believes that will lead to good things.

But life is messy, and it's very hard to be in control of it. Not when there are freshman girls running around in a pack, trying to get senior guys to sleep with them. Not when your friends have secrets they're no longer comfortable sharing. Not when the boy you once dismissed ends up being the boy you want to sleep with yourself - but only in secret, with nobody ever finding out.

Slut or saint? Winner or loser? Natalie is getting tired of these forced choices - and is now going to find a way to live life in the sometimes messy, sometimes wonderful in-between.

## Not That Kind of Girl Details

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## From Reader Review Not That Kind of Girl for online ebook

### Emily May says

In short, this book is about high school, sexuality, girl power, challenging the "slut" idea... to say I wanted to love it would be an understatement. This book gets right down to the issues I am interested in and I appreciate any attempt to remind young men and women that, at the end of the day, most of us just really are *that kind* regardless of gender or sexual preference. As long as it's done with safety and consent, I don't think teen sex is a bad thing.

And I would love, I repeat *love*, to give Siobhan Vivian the benefit of the doubt and assume I know exactly what she was trying to say with this book, and yet I would be lying if I said I was actually sure. In fact, I'm slightly bewildered by all the mixed messages flying around in this novel and I'm tempted to go search out some author interviews to see if I can shed some light on Ms. Vivian's point here.

At the beginning, the protagonist - Natalie - reminds me of the radical feminism that destroyed the US in The Handmaid's Tale. She believes that when girls wear revealing clothing to get boys' attention they are objectifying themselves, she also notes from experience how boys can ruin a girl's reputation if they become too involved. She seems to believe that the only way a girl can stay independent and focused on education/careers is to avoid boys completely during high school. Natalie also regards another girl's behaviour as slutty when she does a sexy dance routine in the hallway.

This other girl - Spencer - is the complete opposite. She believes slut-shaming is sexist and that girls should be allowed to express their sexuality anyway they want. I'm rather inclined to agree, and yet the moral of this story regarding Spencer's behaviour doesn't seem to be a positive one - (view spoiler). I feel like I'm back in the land of Ten Things We Did again, where the author seems to be making an important statement about female sexuality and then she just goes and throws a spanner in the works.

One small thing that annoyed me was the sudden rush to forgive Mike Dombitz. Everyone seemed to suddenly believe that he'd been treated unfairly even though he was the one who started all the disgusting, petty crap. I thought Spencer's revenge was brilliant and not too far at all. Though I will say now we're onto the subject of male characters, I think they are very lacking. The only remotely nice guy is Connor - who seems way too good to be true, by the way - and the rest are sex-obsessed monsters. It doesn't seem to matter whether you're on the anti-slut-shaming or the anti-sex side, men are still evil and none of them are good enough for any woman, ever. Natalie believes they are nasty and all want to control her, Spencer believes that they are nothing but sexual beings that women need to manipulate with their own sexuality. Woah girls, I adore the "love thyself" message but I don't condone the "hate men" message, I don't think that's what being a strong, independent woman is about - these things actually give feminism a bad name.

I do think that the author was trying to pull these two types of feminism together - Ms strong and independent, and Ms pro-sexuality - to combine the two and show that in reality you need to find some kind of healthy medium. I think she's right about that. I also enjoyed this book immensely, I was hooked on the characters, the interesting ideas presented, the romance... but in the end, the message was just a little too sloppy for me. I *think* I know what Vivian wanted to say, but it was far from clear. For that reason, this book gets 3 stars from me.

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### **Nomes says**

Not That Kind of Girl is my third Siobhan Vivian book. I've read all her books in order: A Little Friendly Advice was cute but perhaps too lower YA for me (in themes, vibe). I really loved Same Difference ~ it has some aspects that make the book very much my thing ~ an artistic setting (summer art school) and an older YA crush (her college-aged assistant art teacher-y guy) and it's themes are strong but subtly explored.

However, I struggled with her third novel. Not in terms of reading it (read it in one sitting, I suspect it was Connor's appearances that kept me turning the pages) but I struggled with liking it much :/

Thematically, I just was not interested (sorry to be blunt). Normally, I can overlook a novels themes and enjoy the story regardless, but here the story was so shaped by the theme ~ there would be no story without it.

The real deal-breaker was: I did not like the protagonist, Natalie. I could have handled her if she had been softened around the edges, but I found it hard to sympathise. She was hard to bear, judgmental and not particularly fun (not a happy girl). I assumed there must have been some trauma making her so extremely intense. Nope, nothing. I cringed my way through watching the things she said and did to people...

Connor, however. SWOON. Siobhan Vivian has a talent for writing swoony guys and steamy scenes. I REALLY liked him but I cannot say I understand why he liked Natalie (she lacked any charm and was so stand-offish).

My three stars are for Connor <3

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### **Susan says**

Natalie's a humorless pill, the worst kind of feminist stereotype. She's a bad friend; she's also pushy, manipulative, and controlling. She sneaks away to make out with Connor, who actually is a nice guy, but she's ashamed of what she's doing and very judgmental of his motives.

Beyond the issue that Natalie is straight-up unpleasant and the book is from her POV, Vivian's message about girls and sexuality is about as clear as mud and as well rounded as a brick.

She skates around the idea that adolescent sexuality can be difficult and damaging for boys too. Natalie flings it in Connor's face that she knows when he lost his virginity and he admits later the circumstances were questionable (it was in eighth grade, there was drinking involved, and regrets, but no details). Natalie thinks of him disparagingly as promiscuous and again, says as much to him. Yet neither she nor Vivian seem to acknowledge that maybe he didn't want things to go the way they did, that maybe he felt pressure to be sexual before he was ready, that it's kind of messed up for her to be using him for sex and degrading him for it at the same time. Natalie worries incessantly about being "that kind of girl" but she doesn't even see that boys are also pressured, only in their case, if they don't score, they're scorned. Vivian hints at the edges of the issue, but this is a book for teens about sex. Subtlety is over-rated.

Secondly, "sexting" plays a prominent part in the plot. Vivian mentions at one point that the principal probably wants to keep the police from getting involved. Natalie and her friends do attend a private school, but this a felony we're talking about--one that police are taking pretty seriously. The picture of a naked 14 year old girl got passed around to the entire school, so that seems kind of hard to keep under wraps. Not only that, the principal suspends the girl for taking her clothes off, but does nothing else to any of the people who have actually committed felonies--the boy who took the picture and the kids passing it around. That's kind of a deal-breaker on both the responsible-adult-behavior and the believably-realistic front.

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### **Cory says**

Eh, not bad. Kind of heavy on the messages though. And the cover is misleading. This isn't really heavy on the romance. Thankfully, it focuses more on girl/girl friendships. The first 1/3rd was four-star material. In fact, it reminded me of *Saving Francesca*. The second half was two-star material. It was very *All-American Girl*.

I don't agree with a lot of the messages, and only two characters really stood out: Spencer and Natalie. The rest were two-dimensional. Autumn had potential, but the message behind her story really confused me. So you can't juggle your social life with your school work--ignoring the fact that school *is* for learning, not for sex.

This hit on quite a few problems, but it didn't deliver. There was too much demonization and not enough payback. I wanted Mike to suffer even more. And I wanted a deeper discussion of female sexuality. This is somewhere in between a Sarah Dessen book and a John Green book. Sarah Dessen has the better catalog, but *Looking for Alaska* blows her books out of the water. But *That Summer* would be a good follow up to *Not That Kind of Girl*.

This is great of example of why boys don't read more. I don't know why this would appeal to them. Either you're an asshole, like Mike, or you're the everyman, like Conner. Everything was so black and white. And we wonder why teenage boys don't read YA. It should be kind of obvious.

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### **Kristy says**

This was a little bit too black and white for me, too "this is good and this is bad". The lines were drawn. This is what a good girl is, this is what a bad girl is. This is how it's supposed to be.

Almost too much "Girl Power", feminism for me. It loses a few points for me because it doesn't seem all that realistic and the characters weren't all that likeable.

That being said, I have to give credit to an author who is not promoting teen sex. The bad girl is not the winner. The good girl might not have ended up being as perfect as she wanted herself to be, but that was what redeemed the book for me. The "Good Girl" actually messing up, making mistakes, doing things the "bad girl" would have done and realizing that just because she did something doesn't always make you "that kind of girl."

Acting like a slut doesn't make you a slut... although people's perception of you play a huge factor. Gossip is a killer, especially in high school.

If you're into girl power with a touch of romance, you'd probably like this one. If you want extremes on either side though- you're not going to get it. Feminists will think the main character is a sell out, romance seekers will think she's not nice enough to her guy.

3 stars from me.

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### **Chelsea ❤️Peril Please❤️ says**

***I had always known what kind of girl I was...until I didn't.***

So, the idea of writing this review makes me laugh. I think it's because I finished it almost a week ago or maybe because I'm not quite sure what to say-and not because I finished it Friday. There were so many things I disliked about this story....but a lot of things I liked, for whatever reason. It was well-written, witty (at times), and had a really cute male lead that made me smile quite a bit-he's gone hand in hand with the books I've been reading lately. But the female lead drug his character down. In fact, she brought a whole 4 story down to a 3. And, don't get me wrong, I actually liked her. Well...sometimes.

This, for me, was strictly a character driven book. Had the main character been more consistently likable, I bet I would have been just as happy with it as many of the other books I've read recently. But, sadly, she was too much of a consistent **bitch**, more than anything. Which makes me so sad because this book had a lot of great things going for it.

I'm going to make this quick, because I've had a lot of negative to write about in the last few weeks and I'm just not in the mood to write about it (okay, I'm ALWAYS in the mood to write about my thoughts but I'll shorten this to help you suffer less). So, yeah, I'm guna use my favorite bitch, Karen, to show my dislike for the main character's antics-I'll tell the story from her POV:

**She's too good for high school parties, naturally.**

**Anyone who dances scantily clad in the hallway at their high school is assumed a whore who will put out. (Who does dances in the hallway to promote things, anyway.....what is this, High School fucking musical???)**

**This guy who's a jock couldn't possibly be a good guy who just wants to be with her....he is just like his friends, presumably.**

**Her best friend was tormented freshman year, so now that she wants to start hanging out and going to parties with those people again, she's a naive fool who doesn't realize these people couldn't ever have**

**possibly matured....(Did I mention the main character is too good for these parties??)**

**Oh. Oh, yeah. The kicker. The one that probably annoyed me the most: She starts to fool around with the aforementioned jock and feels the need to hide that she's doing it...but wait, wait....when he does things to help her publicly?? It's so he can cash in on a booty call....I mean, duh. He couldn't possibly just be 'Not that kind of guy' (hehe wink wink nudge nudge) and someone who really really likes her....**

**(hey, I don't get it, but whatevs).**

Soooo, yeah. This book had it's issues. And no, I wouldn't rec this to my friends-It wasn't good enough. But there were a ton of moments I enjoyed and I obviously sped through it very quickly...so it kept my attention, for whatever reason (\*cough\* the boy (OH JUST LOOKED UP HIS NAME-it's Connor!) \*cough\*).

A story about a girl who thought she was right where she wanted to be in her life when everything started to crumble around her. Discovering what it means to not always be in control and learning to finally let herself live, a little-Even if it means disappointing some people in the process. I didn't like how she treated her best friend or the guy she was secretly falling for-it was wrong. But, in the end, I liked how it all panned out. I just wish I didn't have to go through half of the bullshit. Oh well.

*It didn't matter if I was the kind of girl who had sex, or the kind of girl who had her portrait on the wall in the library, or the kind of girl who got into the best college, or the kind of girl who didn't tell her parents everything, or the kind of girl who teachers loved.*

*I just needed to be okay with all the kinds of girl I was.*

For more of my reviews, please visit:

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### **Tatiana says**

Ok, after meditating on this story during my yoga class, I am going to knock off a star. The more I think about it, the more it seems to me the message this novel sends is rather wishy-washy.

I appreciate any YA book that explores the subject of female sexuality. And Not That Kind Of Girl conveys the sort-of-feminist message that if a girl has sex, she doesn't automatically become a slut, quite well. I just wish the author didn't choose to deliver this message by making the main female character such a high-strung, man-hating, borderline psycho feminazi who can only be humanized by having some schmexing. Surely, there was no need to feed into the stereotype that every staunch feminist just needs some banging to loosen up and stop being so stuck-up?

It is great that Siobhan Vivian portrays that having a boyfriend and being in a relationship doesn't make a strong woman any weaker, but it also, IMO, doesn't make a girl deficient if she chooses to focus on studies

and social activities and put aside dating for later, as the author seems to imply as well. I am afraid that while saying that having sex is OK, Vivian forgets to mention that NOT having sex is OK too.

Plus, I do truly have a problem with sex being used as something to divert one's mind from problems, and with someone you don't really know. That is exactly what Natalie does in this novel. Luckily, her partner is a nice guy, but still, that's not the approach to sex I care for.

The other complaint I have is that Natalie's character needed a little more development. Her ardent desire to be a "good girl" and her almost psychotically hostile behavior towards guys lead me to believe there was some major trauma in her past or at least a very strong parental influence. You don't really see even super-smart girls act like that for no good reason. Intelligence doesn't automatically come with a chastity belt. Girls try to be "good" so hard mostly to compensate for something else. I thought maybe Autumn's fish stick incident affected Natalie to such an extent, but apparently she had been like that long prior.

It would also be nice to know what exactly Connor finds so attractive about Natalie. I liked him a lot, but I could never understand his initial interest in her. Natalie sure didn't appear to be charming in any way.

And then there is Spencer who uses her sexuality as a weapon. Wouldn't it be interesting to know who and how taught this 14-year old to act this way?

I keep comparing Not That Kind Of Girl to E. Lockhart's Ruby Oliver books and it is clear that Lockhart is more subtle and plain better at writing on this subject, she is more embracing of multiple choices young women can make in regards to their sexuality. But still, Not That Kind Of Girl is not bad and is quite a page-turner after the trying first 100 pages or so. Too bad I can't quite agree with what this book teaches, but then again, is there a correct answer what is right and what is wrong in sex? I heard today on the radio about this married couple where wife is bi-sexual and is allowed to have a female lover on the side, while husband is obligated to be faithful to his wife (and is fine with this arrangement), so what do I know, right?

P.S. This cover doesn't do this book any favors.

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### **Heather says**

When I picked up Not that kind of Girl, I was expecting light and fluffy. After all, the cover boasts a young, pretty couple in the throes of what looks to be a sweet, affectionate kiss. Naturally, I assumed this book would contain a three star YA romance albeit with some added teenage emotional drama for added conflict. In other words, I was expecting a Dessen novel, but what I got was so much more. While I was anticipating a cutesy romance, I received a wonderful tale about what it means to be a teenage girl. A girl who thought she had it all figured out and is now discovering herself for the first time. Sounds cliché I know, but at 25, this book somehow managed to give me some food for thought.

Natalie is a senior in high school. She has spent her school years buried in books and community service in hopes that she can gain entrance into a top college. She has one friend to her name, Autumn, who was ostracized by the remaining student body freshman year after an unfortunate boyfriend fiasco. Most would find Natalie's world empty and boring. She never goes to parties, has never had a boyfriend or even a first kiss. Her experience has been limited, but that hardly prevents her from having a world view. You see, Natalie learned a great deal from Autumn's traumatic experience. Boys can't be trusted, and nothing good can be gained from attempting to earn their attention. Natalie has it all together, she's pretty, intelligent,

accomplished and assumingly intuitive. Never for a moment has Natalie considered the fact that she could be wrong, that being attracted to someone and wanting to be attractive to them in return is the natural order of things. Never has she considered that there could be such a thing as genuine jocksters. But this year, there's a new freshman girl in town, and she, along with the good looking senior jock, Conner, are about to open Natalie's eyes to a whole new realm of possibilities.

Not that kind of Girl taps into the very essence of a battle that all young girls face throughout their lives. There's a fine line between prudishness and whorishness. Women often walk a tightrope on their journey of self discovery. What's sexually empowering, when does it become slutty, when do we lose control? And how to we maintain that control while delving into our own sexuality? This was a brilliant story that fully encompassed the awkwardness, the impotence, and uncertainty that accompanies our teen years. I felt as though I had been thrown back into high school as the portrayal, verbage, etc. was spot on. I felt Natalie's joy, fear, pain and frustration and was glad to see her finally come to terms with a very valuable lesson. Siobhan Vivian has written a wonderful story that I would recommend to women of any age.

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### **Maddie says**

I really appreciated how complicated the representation of overt female sexuality was and the two different perspectives on that embodied in the characters of Spencer and Natalie. I wanted the pair to interact even more and have that be the focus of the novel. Instead, it descended into a typical good girl mets jock boy romance that's I've seen one hundred times and did nothing to transform Natalie's judgemental attitudes.

If you're looking for more feminist reads, I'd definitely recommend this one (particularly chapter 15. Just read that if you see it in a book store!) but I can't say it lived up to my expectations by the end.

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### **Arlene says**

I've had my eye on **Not that Kind of Girl** for a while and after seeing some favorable reviews by my trusted GR friends, I thought I'd give it try. Great choice! I definitely enjoyed it and breezed right through the book in a few short hours. It's fun, fast paced and filled with characters that I can relate to and care for quite easily. Lovely!

Natalie Sterling is someone I would have probably befriended while I was in high school. She's determined, studious, smart, a slight type-A control freak and a girl who just wants to do the right thing. Great MC for this book! There were times she jumped to conclusions and said cringe-worthy things to Connor, but you've got to love girl who wears her heart on her sleeve and learns from her mistakes after crashing and burning.

Connor was by far my favorite character in this book. He's kind and considerate and comes through for Natalie when she needs him most without expecting anything from her. He was pure awesomesauce and I found myself looking forward to his scenes. Squeee!

I felt compassion for Spencer and Autumn, and I feel that they did their best to be a good friend to Sterling. I couldn't stand Mike and I was disappointed to see he didn't pay for his cruel ways. I am glad though that Connor cut ties with him.

Overall, I enjoyed it much and if you're a fan of YA romance you can't go wrong with NtKoG. Siobhan Vivian did a great job of creating loveable, flawed characters that learn from their mistakes and entertain you with their antics. Great quick read that will leave you satisfied and ultimately happy.

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### **Jen says**

I've been dying to read "Not That Kind of Girl" for the longest freaking time. I have no idea why it took me so long to actually BUY the book. I am one of those people who actually likes covers with PDA. Not the whole bodice-ripper kind with the castles in the background and hiked up dresses, but the simple, straightforward message: YOUNG LURVE.

And that's precisely what I got with NTKoG. But not without a struggle.

Natalie's character is the girl I wish I could've been in high school. Determined, self-assured in my schoolwork, "eyes on the prize" kind of chick who is Ivy League-bound. Natalie and I are polar opposites. She tended to grind my gears at times, because she was a little too maternal and overbearing in her friendships. Her intentions were good, but ultimately, no one wants a friend who hovers like a mother hen. I did love that Natalie wasn't an unrealistic character. She internally acknowledged her jealousy over her best friend bonding with another girl from school and she knew she was being redonkulous with Connor. That's just her personality. She's self-aware! LOVE IT! I also enjoyed the interaction between Spencer and Natalie. Even though I didn't agree with everything (or much of ANYTHING) Spencer did, I did enjoy the fact that she called Natalie out on her neuroses, telling her to forget what everyone else thinks of her. Life-changing lessons, ahoy!

And can I also say that I don't think anything that Natalie did qualified her as a "slut?" AT ALL. I thought that was a bit ridiculous.

I seriously loved Connor. Love. Love. Love. I loved the way he talked to Natalie, the way he handled her craziness, even their fights. I only wish the book was longer so we could've gotten a better glimpse at Connor. The romance in this book was delightfully believable. I can picture someone like Natalie playing "who's got more power" games, even though she's head over heels in crush for the guy. We've all done it. GUILTY AS CHARGED. I may have to go back and re-read my favorite parts. Nom.

And finally...my FAVORITE part of NTKoG: CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT! \*round of applause & whistles from the audience\* THANK YOU, SIOBHAN. Not only do you have an awesome name that is fun to say, but you also know that your characters aren't perfect and you make them learn lessons. YES! I do love epiphanies that result in the bettering of my YA MCs.

Siobhan. Siobhan. Siobhan. Gosh, her name is fun. Now if you'll excuse me, I've got to go hunt down the other novels that Siobhan has written.

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### **Flannery says**

While I think a lot of this book was a pretty accurate portrayal of how awful high school can be for some people\*, I don't remember the head of student council actually doing *that* much work...though maybe they do in larger high schools. I definitely knew people like all the characters in the book, for better or worse, but Natalie drove.me.crazy. (cue the Britney Spears video) She was so patronizing to her classmates and to Autumn and I GET IT, she learns that by the end, but it doesn't change the fact that she was beyond annoying. Listen, if the quarterback of the football team, who is adorable, super nice, and charming is willing to *just* make out with you for weeks and weeks (honestly), you freaking own up to it. If anything, I thought he should be ashamed to be seen with her rather than the other way around. She has a huge stick up her wazoo. She's pretty much Tracy Flick from the movie *Election*. Totally driven yet totally clueless.

Yeah, so anyway, I liked the book...but it wasn't amazing. Connor was adorable, Spencer was ridiculous, and though she started to show signs of growing up near the end, I hope Natalie stops being such a condescending a\$\$hole.

\*I went to all-girls high school and, let me tell you, Fish Sticks is just the beginning of the stories I could tell...

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### **Janina says**

Well. I just flew through **Not That Kind of Girl** in a couple of hours this afternoon. If you are wondering, yes, I actually would have had other, more important things to do. Such as studying, for example. But after exhausting myself pointlessly on a 6x6 matrix for about an hour, I decided to throw in the towel and reward myself with some quality book time. Which is something the main character here, Natalie, probably would not approve of.

Natalie has big goals in life. She is more intelligent than most other people at her school and she knows it. She wants to be someone. So she works hard for it and won't let herself be distracted by anything. Especially not by boys. But with this ambition also comes a certain aloofness and a self-imposed isolation that may be viewed as pride and arrogance. Natalie most definitely is not as wise and knowing as she thinks she is, and she has to learn that in a sometimes painful way.

I can definitely see people thinking of her as an arrogant and annoying character, but I grew to like her. She is flawed, and she desperately needs to learn a lesson (or two), yet you can see that she is not being a snob on purpose. She wants to shelter the one person she truly cares for, her friend Autumn (even if she is carrying it to excess sometimes), and she wants to meet the expectations of those around her – and especially the expectations she has for herself.

I enjoyed seeing her grow throughout the novel, and see her realise that being with a guy you like does not imply that you are dependent on him. That is does not make you any less strong as a woman. That it does not necessarily mean he is only using you. And that sleeping with him does not automatically make you a slut.

I really liked to see the girls' totally different ways of dealing with their problems in this book. Natalie is the one to close up, push people away and snap at them. Autumn has retreated into the shadow of her friend. And Spencer just tries to hold her head high and live with it. Which sometimes works and other times doesn't. Yet all three of them grow and find their own way.

Connor is definitely a swoon-worthy crush, and I appreciated how Siobhan Vivian succeeded in portraying him a bit like the stereotype footballer on the outside, but as a totally different person on the inside as you get to know him better. I would have wished for the interactions between him and Natalie to have a bit more

depth, though.

So don't let yourself be fooled by the cover. Although this book clearly features the romance I expected it to, it is also a novel about friendship, about finding out who you want to be and about accepting that being any kind of girl can be totally fine – if it is what you want and what makes you happy.

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## **Ari says**

This book was as beautiful as the cover. I loved it!

### **The cover**

I've been waiting to read this book from the moment I first saw the cover. Look at it. Isn't it beautiful? Not only the girl and the boy (they are cute), but that precise moment.

In my opinion this is one of the best moments in life (not as great as for example, holding your baby in your arms for the first time, but anyways you get my point).

It's one of those moments that fill your heart with joy and anticipation and in every cell of your body you feel that you are alive.

Try to imagine that moment for a second... Try to go back in time before a first kiss (or imagine one), try to think about what would you feel in that moment.

It is the insecurity that makes it perfect.. there are so many options from there, so many possibilities for things to happen (or not to happen), and not knowing what's next makes you take the risk. It's that second when you hold your breath and your heart skips a beat, and you feel that you are in the best possible place on Earth.

### **The story**

I think that the cover fits the story perfectly.

First - because the book is full of moments when things are about to change completely. Every now and then the story unfolds up to one point when you hold your breath waiting for the characters to make a decision and wondering what the consequences of their act might be...

Second - because the story is also romantic, and Natalie and Connor seem to come back to the same moment when they are "a kiss away from each other", so close but in the same time so far away.

After reading the reviews on goodreads I thought that this book would be similar to The DUFF (not that this would've been a problem for me), but in fact I couldn't find many similarities between the 2 of them. Also this book was more about friendship and finding your way in life, than losing control (as I initially thought). Yes it got to that point near the ending, but the journey was the important part.

I found the characters to be nicely defined (most of them anyways). I liked Natalie and of course Connor, but also I liked Autumn and Spencer a lot. They all believed in friendship, and even if there were lots of problems throwing them apart from time to time, they knew how to come back, to say "I'm sorry", to be a great friend when someone needed them.

The love story between Natalie and Connor felt realistic too.

It was nice that the author took the time to introduce us to Natalie first and her friends, and only after that she let us know Connor. In this way we knew exactly what Natalie thought about love and boys and responsibilities, and control (of course) and I could understand her actions, her feelings, her fears.

### **Natalie**

She was one of those people that keeps for herself. She didn't have many friends, she didn't like to party (in fact she never even tried), she took school and other things way to serious and tried to be perfect.. but perfect for whom?

It was strange to see her totally in control one moment and totally losing it in the next one. I even had a tiny problem with this because I don't think that having a boyfriend should've affected her so badly (not that she would accept that Connor was her boyfriend, but he kind of was).

Trying to be in control she kept hiding her emotions and feelings, she kept seeing him at night, losing sleep, she kept thinking about him and their ~~relationship~~ affair and she only made it worse. It would have been better just to enjoy her romance for once and take the risk, but no, she wanted to have everything planned, and love wasn't on the list.

I think that *she has learned her lessons*:

- that there are also gray shades (not only black & white),
- that sleeping with someone doesn't make you a slut,
- that not having control doesn't make you weak,
- that being in love doesn't make you stupid,
- that having fun doesn't make you irresponsible ,
- that having a different opinion doesn't make you a bad friend,
- and so on...

(and I don't really know if the lesson "sticking your nose in other people's business can get you into big trouble" is something that she understood completely, but I think that she is now a little more familiar with it also)

### **Connor**

Even though we don't get to know him that well, I really liked him from the beginning.

I liked his confidence. You know why?

Because generally speaking, if you really think that you can do something you will always be able to achieve it not matter how hard it might seem to be; because it takes a lot of confidence to be the person you want to be and I appreciate those people who doesn't lose their way trying to be someone else.

We don't know much about what he wants in life, but we know that he wants Natalie (I meant it in a good, romantic way, but yes - also in a physical way - it comes in the same package with sleeping in someone's arms, kissing and touching all night), and even if she thought that *she* was always in control he got straight to her heart (and he knew that).

As a side note: You're never in control when you start to care about someone, but that doesn't mean that you have to feel bad about it... and after all, from time to time is good to lose it for a while and just enjoy your life without being scared.

Also I liked the way he tried to get closer to Natalie step by step, breaking her guard, trying to understand her, trying to help her, trying to be there for her. It was not an easy task because she was damn difficult, and

unpredictable (not in the best possible way), but he really tried and I give him credit for that.

(view spoiler)

### **Autumn**

I really got to care about her. She was the only one that had to suffer because of someone else's fault. If you think about it, she didn't do anything wrong, she fell in love and tried to take it easy. But that was just bruising someone else's ego and she got caught in the middle of a high-school drama without having a word in it. Also, being protected by her best friend was never a good choice, because she and Natalie didn't share the same dreams. They had different perspectives in life - Natalie wanted to be a good student, the president of the school council, Autumn wanted to have fun, she wanted people to forget about the incident and just let her be.

I couldn't blame her for wanting to keep her distance from Natalie when she realized that she wanted more from life and it wasn't that hard to do it on her own.

### **Spencer**

She is the opposite of Natalie in terms of actions, but they are so alike in so many other ways.

If you want to put these 3 friends together and compare them, Autumn would stay in the middle and Natalie and Spencer on the opposite sides.

Spencer was smart (even though she did quite some stupid mistakes) and she knew how to have fun all the time, and, of course, she also thought that she was always in control. She took another path (so different from Natalie's) but the result was the same: she had to learn her lesson in the hard way.

But she was a good friend, and I liked the fact that she tries to help Natalie when she could (if it wasn't against her own beliefs)

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SO, all in one, messing up with someone is never a good thing to do, because every single time someone gets hurt.. and it hurts even more when you are that one. I think that if people would just mind their own business this world would be a better place.

Also I think that we all need to love and be loved, but a little bit of pride won't hurt.

You need to know what's really important in life, what defines you, and you need to be yourself (because, you know, everyone else is taken).

It's hard sometime to be a teenager, but it is a beautiful time to remember :)

## **Jessica says**

TBR Reduction Challenge #9 (Nomes)

Hmm, what to say what to say...

My main problem with this? I wanted to strangle the protagonist. God, she was so annoying! I mean, I am a woman, I usually know what I want and I think I'm doing fairly well in achieving my goals and I certainly do have self-respect but this feminazi of a heroine really took matters too far for my taste. I just couldn't relate to her at all. I'm sorry, I don't mean to offend anybody but I honestly couldn't care less whether or not a woman gets elected president and if a woman decides to take nude pictures and have them published in Playboy I don't think that she needs a lecture about valuing herself. It's her decision and I certainly won't think any less of her because of it. This is the kind of feminist Natalie is, though. Therefore – sorry - but this wasn't for me.

Unfortunately there wasn't anything else to make up for the annoyance that was our main character and even though things got a little better towards the end I was already way past caring. This only gets two stars from me because of the last 15% or so.

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