



The Almost Truth

Eileen Cook

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Teen con artist Sadie might be over her head. To escape her backwards small town, delusional mom, jailbird dad, and the tiny trailer where she was raised, she also must leave Brendan. Sadie wants a better life, and she has been working steadily toward it, one con at a time, until her mother wipes out her savings.

Brendan helps devise the ultimate con. But the more lies Sadie spins, the more she starts falling for her own hoax, and perhaps for the wrong boy. Sadie wanted to change her life, but she wasn't prepared to have it flipped upside down by her own deception. With her future at stake and her heart on the line, she suddenly has more than just money to lose.

The Almost Truth Details

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Author : Eileen Cook

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From Reader Review The Almost Truth for online ebook

PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says

Complete and total spoiler rant.

Eileen Cook, why did you cheat me out of an emotional payoff?

WITH MALICE is one of my favorite novels and THE HANGING GIRL was another five star review for me. THE ALMOST TRUTH could have been a nail biting, edge of your seat thriller, but the ending that Sadie is Ava without showing the reunion with her parents is cruel to readers who live for this stuff.

The romances in the book were lukewarm at best. THE ALMOST TRUTH wasn't going to be higher than three stars unless the ending blew me away.

I still love you Eileen Cook.

Tiff at Mostly YA Lit says

The Almost Truth is one of those kind-of-perfectly-done books that only come up once in awhile. Sadie's story is so well-drawn, so perfectly paced, so twisty-turny...without being cheesy or cliché. This is how you do a YA contemporary novel.

I can't really explain why this worked so well for me. Maybe it was the fact that every time I thought I knew what was going to happen at the end, I turned a page and Eileen Cook showed me that she was one step ahead of me. Maybe it was the fact that I really didn't know which boy to root for at first, or that if there was a love triangle, I couldn't even call it that. Maybe it was how frustrated I got with Sadie's parents and how horrible I felt they were being to her, only to find out that I might have been wrong about the whole thing.

Read the rest of this review at [Mostly YA Lit](#)

Michael Burhans says

This is my third Eileen Cook book. As much as I enjoyed the first two (The Education of Hailey Kendrick and Getting Revenge on Lauren Wood) this is easily my favorite. This story twists and turns and you think you have it figured out, then you change your mind, then you change your mind again. A powerful and heart felt book that will make you question a lot of things that on the surface seem easy. I can't say much about it without giving away important things. Go read it.

Lynn says

Won my free copy in Goodreads First Reads. This review is my honest opinion unaffected by having won.

3.5 stars rounded up to 4. This book was an entertaining story. The main character Sadie grew up as one of the poorer people on an island populated by many who are very affluent. Her father is a con artist who spends more time in jail than in Sadie's life and her mom is someone who escapes the harsh world by inventing new versions of events and realities in her mind.

I really liked the character of Sadie. She does some petty cons and I was worried going in about being able to like her but this wasn't a problem at all. She recognized that what she does isn't right even though she justifies the things she does do. That is human nature and realistic, especially in light of her parents and her upbringing. We find out pretty quickly that she does have pretty firm limits as to how far she'll go and she does have her principles and ethical limits. That was nice to see and helped make the character likeable. Sadie's desire to leave her life for something better was easy to understand and relate to.

Her parents were very interesting. I felt like I got a pretty good feel for them and were crafted so that by the book's end I got them. Not all parents are what they should be or the people they should be as is the case here. (view spoiler)

I am not sure how I feel about Brendan. I liked him as Sadie's best friend and if things had remained there I think I wouldn't have some of the mixed feelings that I do. I just never got enough of a feel for him to understand him. I liked that he loved Sadie just as she is. I think it is believable that he doesn't want her to go off and leave him and the person she is behind. I don't understand his man whose ways to attract her. Is that supposed to be his immaturity before now? I also didn't feel like he had even close to the same ethical lines as Sadie. I got the feeling that he was actually just a younger version of Sadie's dad and that both bothered me and worried me. Brendan is someone that if I had seen growth away from that I could have gotten behind more. Instead I never felt like he had all that much more potential than her father except for the fact that I hope Sadie calls him on stuff. She does have the potential to push him a little more. It's just that I think with their backgrounds I worry about them as a couple with the little we got from the book.

The romance also wasn't my favorite part due to the fact that I didn't think we had enough time in the book to develop it properly. It had to rely on our knowledge of Brendan's feelings and their past friendship. This kept me from connecting to it properly. Honestly I would have preferred leaving out the whole Chase part of the book in favor of developing Brendan and Sadie as a potential couple and Brendan growing as a character. That is personal preference but it did knock a little off the rating for me.

Read this for the story of Sadie and not so much for the romance and character growth for others and you are more likely to be satisfied.

Diane Wilkes says

I read a lot of YA books, even though I am so far from Y I am practically O. However, I am I for Immature, so I rarely have problems enjoying this particular genre.

As I read others' reviews, though, I know I am officially O, because I find the narrator/protagonist Sadie incredibly sympathetic. She has excelled in school and works hard, despite being brought up by a mother who gives up on mothering and a con artist father who is in and out of jail. Her intelligence and industriousness are impressive.

She has gotten into Berkeley, and, in order to pay for her education, she does small cons (her father's

expertise comes in handy that way)...but never any cons that could harm individuals.

Berkeley's appeal isn't solely educational; she wants to leave her town and her trailer park existence far behind. This means leaving her best friend Brandon behind, too. Brandon seems to want to be more than just friends, and while she may want that, too, she is determined not to let anything get in the way of the new world order that will come with her Berkeley education.

And then...she discovers almost simultaneously that her bank balance is gone and a singularly lucrative con could change everything for the better.

What she discovers in the rest of the book is herself: who she really is and what she really wants and what is of real value. I am particularly impressed with the way Cook sets up the subtle differences between Chase, Sadie's potential new love and Brandon, her fellow con artist. When we discover Sadie's name, it is late in the book...and it feels like a shock, because the narrator seems nothing like a "Sadie."

This is another clever authorial move--and as I reflect back over the book, I never feel manipulated, despite the "Is she or isn't she" question. This is an incredibly well-crafted and engrossing book. Highly recommended.

Giselle says

Imagine leading a completely different life than the one others think you have. Sadie lives in a small town and wants nothing more than to leave and better her life. When her mother takes her entire life savings in one go, she realizes she needs to make money and fast. This leads her to con a family that she thinks could be her long lost family.

I liked the plot in this one..You don't get a teenager who cons people in YA books so it reminded me a bit of *White Collar*. She was particularly humourous which I enjoyed. Especially when she hung around her best friend. I also liked that the main focus was family and not so much romance. Sometimes characters get so wrapped up in their significant others' lives that they don't realize there's more than just that romantic relationship. I liked the mystery element to the plot and it kept me reading until the end. Eileen's writing is very simple and straight to the point, I rather enjoy her contemporary reads, but I also wanted a character that more depth and personality.

The Almost Truth is a rather enjoyable read that I recommend to contemporary fans and whomever likes a good mystery now and then.

Kelly Hager says

Sadie's a con artist. I know that makes her seem like a bad person, but she really isn't. She runs small cons, partly because that makes it less likely that she'll get caught but also because that means no one loses more than they can afford to. And it's for a good cause: getting her away from her hometown and into a good college.

And then her mom steals all her money, leaving Sadie completely broke and with just a few months to earn it

all back. She has a great idea for a big con, the biggest she's ever done...but it's complicated. Someone could get hurt (emotionally) and it could also affect this new guy, the one she's just met and is already starting to fall for.

You may remember that earlier this year I completely binged on Eileen Cook's novels and then had to wait what felt like forever to get a new one. This one was totally worth the wait! I was excited when I read the synopsis because it sounded like Heartbreakers, which I really liked (and yes, I know most people either didn't see it or hated it, but I don't care). And I am oddly fond of stories about con artists and heists and capers. I blame The Thomas Crown Affair and Ocean's 11.

I love Sadie. I know that a lot of what she does is pretty shady but she's not trying to finance a trip to Europe and for someone who basically steals for a living, she's very moral about it. There are definite lines that she won't cross. And I realize that it's me rationalizing what she does because I love her and I rationalize like crazy for people I love. Apparently even when they're fictional.

Anyway, I thought going in that I knew exactly how this story would go...and I was taken completely off guard.

Well, that's not entirely true. I knew that I would enjoy this story, and I did. I knew that it would be smart and fun and sweet and that I'd probably smile and sigh a little. And all those things happened. :) But plot-wise, I expected one thing and got something completely different. I am a pretty big fan of being unprepared when it comes to books.

What I am not a fan of is having to wait, and I have no idea when the next Eileen Cook novel is coming out. I hope it's not next December; I may die.

Highly recommended.

Rachel Piper says

3.5 stars. I enjoyed the writing style, but the ending felt rushed and I don't think the author did a great job balancing breezy teen romance with some of the darker elements that emerge later in the novel.

Becca says

Originally posted at OMFG!Books

Whenever I see something about cons or con artists, my mind immediately goes to the tv show LOST and Sawyer. LOST was one of the best television shows of all time and Sawyer was one of my favorite characters. I'm always intrigued by stories like these and I was interested to see how a book about a young con-artist and her life would go. Well, I thought it went great.

Sadie's life is anything but perfect. She grew up in a trailer on a resort island full of rich people. Her dad was

in prison more often than not. Sadie has had it hard but she has made the best of it. She dreams of getting out, of going to college. She was accepted at Berkley in California which she sees as a brand new start, a whole new life. She had saved up enough money by doing what she calls small-cons, cons that hurt virtually no one and that also have a low likelihood of her getting caught.

Sadie is left with nothing after her mother drains her bank account. She has no college money, no out. She needs to figure out a way to make a lot of money fast or she will lose her spot at Berkley. She has an idea for a con that could get her a lot of money quick and she enlists her best friend to help her but the only problem is the con could cause a lot of collateral damage. There are a lot of emotional ties to it for everyone involved and it has the potential to end badly.

I loved Sadie. She was burdened by circumstances. All she wanted was a way out, to be someone and make something of her life. She is a big dreamer. She doesn't want to be stuck and realize twenty years down the line that she hates who she is and where she is. While these cons that she does, even the little ones, can be dubbed bad or sketchy or wrong, she does it with a moral code. She has a reason, a drive, in her and she will do that and do her best not to hurt anyone in the process. I admired her through all of the book, during the con and all the other things she was going through because while she at times felt lost she still knew her end goal.

While there were many aspects of the book that you could see coming from a mile away I still enjoyed the ride. Some plot points were obvious but that didn't take the enjoyment away. There were also twists to those obvious points that I enjoyed. It was like the author said "I know you know how this is going to go but you don't really know *flirty wink*"

This book had everything I want in a YA contemporary novel: romance that wasn't the driving force of the plot, an interesting plot with well rounded characters and a wonderful ending with twists and turns along the way. You won't be disappointed if you pick this up.

Lix Hewett says

(This review is super long because it's going up sometime this week on my blog.

I was scrolling through my ebook library last night, and feeling a bit giddy looking at all the covers since I finally uploaded all my ebooks to Google Play Books, and my eyes fell upon *The Almost Truth*.

I basically inhaled it.

Like *Unraveling Isobel*, *The Almost Truth* is a mystery set on an island a ferry away from Seattle. It has a side of romance as well, though I admit I didn't care very much for it this time. The premise — and this may be spoilery as far as the third chapter, but I would have picked this up even quicker if I'd known what the big con in the — atrocious, absolutely awful, what the hell — summary for the book on GoodReads was, so I'm going to tell you.

Sadie lives in a trailer park with her washed-up mom and sometimes her dad, who is a con artist and spends more time in jail than out. She has dreams of going to college in Berkeley, and has been saving money via petty cons and part-time work at the main hotel on the island to put down a deposit and secure her place

there. That's her plan, and she's extremely excited about it until she opens a bank statement and finds out her mom's spent *all* of that money on... other stuff.

So desperate and confused (another relatability point here, Sadie feeling the bottom drop out of her stomach due to money issues), she takes the ferry to Seattle to perch herself on a coffeehouse and think for a few hours (also extremely relatable), and on the ferry, she finds a flyer offering a reward for information about a missing girl — the daughter of a rich couple who disappeared on Sadie's island and who's been missing for fifteen years, and who, in a Photoshop rendering of what she'd look like now, looks exactly like Sadie.

People know Sadie around the island and the hotel where the rich couple in question lost their daughter and are now holding a charity fundraiser, so she can't pose as her — but maybe she can find someone who'd like the missing girl to stay missing, and that's an angle she can certainly play to make back her college money.

It's just kind of weird how many things she keeps finding out she shares with that missing girl.

Guess where this is going! Guess! Predictability is my *jam*, y'all, and I love when writers make it so that by the middle of the book you may actually be okay with either outcome, which Eileen Cook manages very well here.

Mystery aside, I found the book, as usual, very entertaining and engaging, and much like *Unraveling Isobel*, I wish it hadn't cut off so soon. Eileen Cook has a habit of ending her books when all the really awesome stuff is about to happen, like the promise of it is enough to satisfy the readers, and — agh, I just want more.

My other issue with the book is the ridiculous amount of casual slutshaming, both internalized and outward-bound. It's really sad, and apparently a fixture in Eileen Cook's books, and I wish she had an editor who made her tone it down. It's really just not necessary.

But back to the good: the book begins with Sadie struggling with money at the supermarket checkout, which I found extremely relatable, and while some things bugged me about, e.g., the way Chase was handled (I've never been a fan of love interests who are very charming and then turn out to be assholes without much warning at all to make sure you're rooting for the *other* guy in the triangle), I was pleased with the messages here, especially the awareness of poverty and how easy it really is to make the right decisions and find yourself and travel and be educated and experienced if you can afford to randomly pop on a plane from the US to Venice and rent an apartment for a month. I mean, who can do that? I can barely rent a place in London, certainly can't afford to fly back home, within the EU, any time soon, and my stay is supposed to be permanent.

But Sadie knows that, and it pisses her off. It's good.

Sadie is also relatable for me in the way she wants to just pack up and leave and not have to deal with who she is and where she comes from. I've been there, which is why the fantasy of maybe having been someone else all along works wonders for me. My inner seventeen-year-old eats it up with a spoon, and there's little I enjoy more than indulging that little pretentious teenager I used to be.

Besides, sometimes you read things like Sadie being afraid she'll become one of those people who are always talking about the things they want to do and everyone around them tunes them out because they know she's never going to do any of them, and it's moments like that that make me think — fuck, I actually moved to London. I actually did this thing.

So yeah. It was a fun book. If you like simple teenage mysteries, *The Almost Truth* will be just your bag.

Djezelle says

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This sounds like such a great premise - it reminds me a little bit of a tv movie I saw a long time ago that I really liked, called Caroline?, starring Stephanie Zimbalist (of Remington Steele fame). It also reminds me of The Face on the Milk Carton, which I never actually read, but somehow I know the story? I also love cover

photos where the girl is crossing her fingers behind her back while kissing the guy. It seems like there have been a few lately, and it always portends drama and plot-a-liciousness!

❁ **Crystal** ❁ - says

[I'm more disappointed with this book than anything. It showed so much potential and though I was immersed from start to finish I felt the story wasn't complete. Sadie and her family have a great background. Her childhood pretty much sucked and she became a product of her environment. Though the story did show many similarities between a few movies and books the characters and storyline were unique enough to make it interesting. Such as her desire to flee the island and go to Berk

Leah says

OMG!! I was kind of in a reading slump for quite a few years then discovered my love for reading again, I recommend this book for people who are unsure of the genre they want to read this made me feel happy to be reading again its one of those books you are not able to put down when I started reading I understood better maybe a few chapters in that I knew what kind of book I love it kept me on the edge of my seat literally wondering what happens next. I loved the ending and the middle where there is a twist so I recommend you read this book if you are in between books or love a story that keeps you guessing and if you need to reclaim the love you have for reading this book reminded me why I love to read so thank you Eileen Cook I loved this book!
