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Kissing Kate

Margaret Manchak

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Myracle, Lauren. *Kissing Kate*. Dutton Children's Books, 2003. ISBN 0525469176. \$16.99. 198 pp.

Reviewer: Margaret Manchak

Reading Level: Young adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary realistic fiction;

Subject: Friendship--Juvenile fiction; Homosexuality--Juvenile fiction; Identity--Juvenile fiction;

Lissa has been best friends with Kate for years, but that all changes when they kiss each other. Kate starts ignoring Lissa and pretends nothing has happened. Lissa is confused and lonely, and additionally has no parental guidance (her parents died in a plane crash) to rely on. Lissa wishes she could go back in time and is left floundering, but she starts to make sense of her feelings through the help of some new friends in unexpected places, along with a book on lucid dreaming.

Lissa's voice is engaging and consistent, as are her relationships with minor but colorful characters throughout the book. The friendship between Lissa and Kate, however, is unpersuasive. Their dialogue seems unnatural, and their relationship as old friends feels stiff. Still, the book has a redeeming plot and a likeable protagonist. The moral implications of homosexuality are not explored in this book—it seems to be beside the author's point or agenda. It is merely the story of one girl's experience in dealing with it. This would be a good book for teens who might benefit from seeing different perspectives in a compassionate way.