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This Song Will Save Your Life

Lisi Hong

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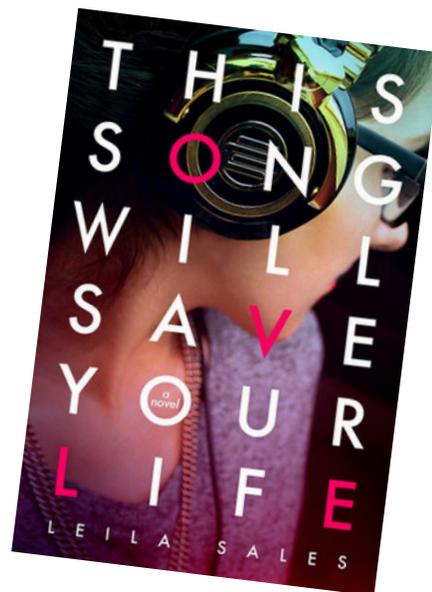
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Book Review

Title: This Song Will Save Your Life
Author: Leila Sales
Reviewer: Lisi Hong
Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux
Publication Year: 2013
ISBN: 9780374351380
Number of Pages: 288
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Excellent



Review

After an attempted suicide, 911 call, hospital stay, and 24-hour watch by her divorced parents, Elise was back to normal high school life, which means bullies everywhere and no friends to be found. Elise has never been “cool” or “popular,” so when she finds an underground club and people who instantly accept her, she falls in love with the people, the music, and the judgement-free environment. Most importantly, she falls in love with DJing. Once she leaves the club though, she is back to being uncool Elise. As her DJing prowess increases and an offer to DJ on Friday nights appears, Elise chooses to sacrifice her family relationships and school in order to do what she loves; however, this choice does not make her any happier than she was before she found the club. Only when she finds a way to combine her family and her secret DJ life is she truly happy. In the end, Elise opens her heart to her new friends and family and finally embraces who she is.

For some this book will save your life, and for others it will just fall short. Elise’s character is easy to love when you can relate to the things she’s been through. Sales portrays Elise as a real girl, struggling with real issues in a bit of an unreal high school environment. When you have lived through some of the same things as Elise (depression, anxiety, self-harm, or bullying), this book can change the way you look at yourself and your situation. But when you didn’t struggle with those things or you aren’t currently a teenage girl in high school, Elise comes off as bratty, snobbish, and arrogant. Even if you can’t relate to Elise, the other characters in the book have their own unique, relatable struggles and find their own solutions. This Song Will Save Your Life addresses real issues that can be hard to read about. However, Sales writes in a way where you understand the problems and finish reading the book with a desire to be more accepting of others and yourself.

*Contains moderate language and severe sexual content. Also deals with suicide and self harm.