



2017

First & Then

Katelyn Osborn

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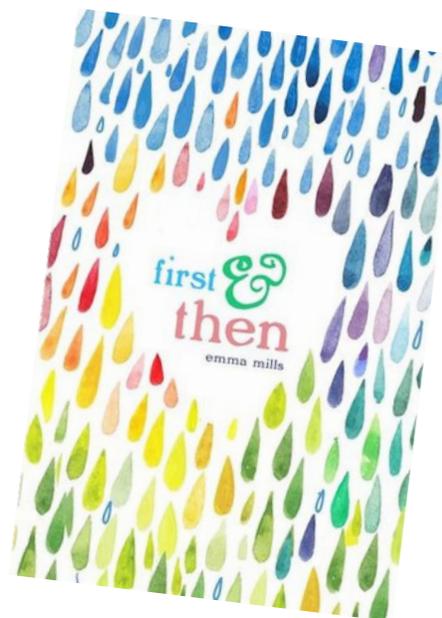
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Book Review

Title: First & Then
Author: Emma Mills
Reviewer: Katelyn Osborn
Publisher: Henry Holt
Publication Year: 2015
ISBN: 9781627792356
Number of Pages: 268
Interest Level: Young Adult
Rating: Outstanding



Review

Devon Tennyson's life was going pretty well, all things considered. She was ready to start her senior year, she had a college picked out, and she had a plan to get there. But when her cousin Foster moves in she instantly changes from an only child to the older sister of an awkward, geeky freshman boy who just can't leave her alone, whether it's at school or at home. When Foster's hidden kicking talent is discovered by Ezra (the school's surly, quiet star linebacker), Devon ends up getting to know both Foster and Ezra better and discovers that sometimes the black-and-white caricatures portrayed in the school paper aren't always true. And sometimes a nerdy little cousin can become an unexpected best friend.

First & Then is one of the most realistic portrayals of high school on the YA shelves. What many current YA authors fail to realize is that sometimes readers want to read about a protagonist that's just like them – not the overdone social outcast, not the stereotypical queen bee – just a regular student at a regular high school. Mills pulls this off extraordinarily well. Readers will immediately bond with Devon over her quick wit and snarky sense of humor, or maybe with Foster's sense of longing to belong. An affable cast of secondary characters round out the story wonderfully. Laugh-out-loud moments are plenty, but are balanced perfectly with moments of teenage angst, longing, and relatable difficulties.

*Contains severe language and very mild sexual content.