



2018

Literally

Meagan Andrus

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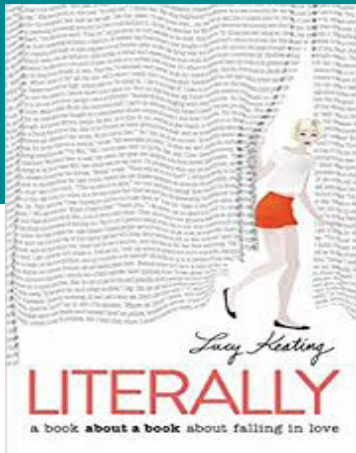
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Book Review

Literally



Author

Lucy Keating

Illustrator

Reviewer

Meagan Andrus

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

Pages

250

Year

2017

Publisher

Harper Teen

ISBN

9780062380043

Senior Annabelle Burns has a perfect life: a fun if slightly dysfunctional family, an annoying dog, straight As, and awesome best friends. But one day, seemingly out of the blue, her parents announce their separation and their impending move from Annabelle's childhood home, right as gorgeous new kid in school catches her eye. Will seems to be Annabelle's perfect complement, the guy of her dreams. However, soon after this Annabelle discovers that an author, Lucy Keating, is writing her as a character in her story. Annabelle doesn't have any control over what she does or who she ends up with—or so it seems. With conflicting feelings of wanting perfection and also maybe falling for her brother's best friend, Annabelle has to decide if she's going to take charge of her own life and be more than just a character in someone's book, or if she is fine with letting someone else make all her decisions for her.

The concept for the book is fascinating, and the resulting story is some interesting metafiction. While Keating had high aspirations with this book, many of the attempted concepts fell flat. The characters felt like stock characters, which they were supposed to, but they never really seemed to actually develop, which was supposed to be the crux of the novel. The plot got a little too confusing at times—why were these characters suddenly capable of leading their own lives after Keating stopped writing the story? Why do they have distinct memories from before the novel began? This book felt like a half-baked execution of a cool idea, and with some edits would make a fantastic book. Regardless, teen romance fans will appreciate the new perspective the story takes on love triangles and formulaic romance books.

*Contains mild language and mild sexual content.