Review

Lucy Beck-Moreau had a promising future as a concert pianist and was gaining fame in the musical world until she quit after her parents and grandfather lied to her about her grandmother’s death so Lucy would be more focused on her music. Now, she is in regular school and everyone instead expects her ten-year-old brother, Gus, to be the star of the family. When Gus gets a new teacher, he encourages her to go back to piano, not for her family but for herself and the music. Going back to music involves the possibility of a forbidden romance, distancing herself from her family, and losing her friends, but finding the music inside of her might be worth the risk.

*The Lucy Variations* captures a wide spectrum of emotion. Lucy’s emotions are varied and real, and so are the emotions of other characters, particularly Gus and how she still loves him even though he is jealous and angry. The family drama feels realistic and just as frustrating for the reader as it for Lucy. It explores a teenage girl’s attraction to a teacher and a married man in a mature way, showing that some relationships won’t and shouldn’t work out. Lucy learns through these that what she thought she wants is someone to support her passions and interests, but she has to do things because it’s what she wants to do and not because someone else approves of it. Because of this and other reasons, Lucy grows up a lot in the course of the story and has a great character arc. This book is perfect for those who are looking for something that’s a little different from a lot of contemporary books, focusing more on decisions of who you are rather than outside circumstances and relationships.