



Becoming Olivia

Roxanne Henke

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Roxanne Henke's first book in the Coming Home to Brewster series, *After Anne*, received great reviews and enthusiastic sales, appearing on the Crossings Book Club bestseller list. The second book in the series, *Finding Ruth*, was also a huge success, as more readers fell in love with small-town Brewster and its people. In this third novel, Roxanne returns to the life of Olivia "Libby" Marsden, the main character in *After Anne*. Libby has the perfect life...good kids, a wonderful husband, and a strong Christian faith. Why then is she increasingly depressed? Libby discovers that sometimes God works through the most unexpected circumstances to help us become who we're meant to be, as readers will discover in this touching novel.

Becoming Olivia Details

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Author : Roxanne Henke

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From Reader Review Becoming Olivia for online ebook

Ali Wang says

I just love how all five of the "Coming Home to Brewster" books are intertwined somewhat. This book in particular is very touching as it deals with clinical depression and how it can strike very accomplished people who you would never expect would get depressed. The great part is seeing how she overcame depression and especially how she leaned on God. I found it very real and true compared to life experiences, and did not gloss over the realities of depression.

Catharine says

I think I would categorize this as a Christian novel. It was clean, no bad language, and, though the subject was depression, it was overall, uplifting. I liked the book all right, but I don't have a lot of interest in the subject matter (another book club book). I guess it didn't make a really strong impression on me, because when I remembered that I hadn't put my review on Goodreads, I got on my computer to do it and had to pull up a synopsis of the novel to remind myself what it was about (and I only finished it 2 weeks ago).

Beth Peninger says

While Henke does tackle some complex life issues in her series, of which this title is book 3, her books still lack some depth and reality. I'm assuming this is to keep them clean and marketable in the Christian publishing world.

Olivia, i.e. Libby, is the focus of this book. However, like the other books in this series there is at least one other person's story that shares equal time with the "main" character. I'm still confused about this but I've given up trying to figure out why Henke did this. I wouldn't mind it so much if the title of the book reflected the shared stories of the others. Anywho...

Olivia has experienced quite a bit of loss in her lifetime and it seems to be catching up with her. She's started to experience "symptoms" and is on the hunt out find out the source of them. Olivia's daughter, Emily, is a junior in High School and experiencing that teenager boredom with living in a small town, striving to be well liked, and fitting in. Dr. Sullivan is battling his demons while trying to counsel others. Except it doesn't seem to be working out so well. I related best to Olivia. I went through a very similar season that she experiences in this book. Many of Henke's descriptions were spot on for my experience as well. What I did appreciate about Henke's story of Olivia is she didn't do the "christianese" thing and brush off depression as if it were just having a lack of faith or something.

These books are safe reads, kind of boring but safe nonetheless.

maylene says

Great book, there were a few mundane areas but overall great book. I read the first one and am eager to read the next.

Meredith says

This is the first book I have read by this author. I often shy away from Christian fiction because I find a lot of it unrealistic, simplistic or overly sugary. So this was a nice surprise. It's about a woman who has a husband and teenage daughter...and about her descent into depression. It's an accurate description of what it is like to be imprisoned by anxiety and depression, by the person experiencing it and by the people close to them.

This book is also about grief and the strange path it can take. Five years have past since her best friend died and the main character feels like she should be past the acute stages of grief. But the story shows how events in your life can spiral you back into the grieving process...and that grief is circular, not linear.

The writing is plain and the author switches between the characters' viewpoints. I gave it 4 stars because I liked the how the author combined the topics of Christian faith, lived, and depression/anxiety.

Libby says

Becoming Olivia hooked me right from the beginning but there was even more there than I even expected. In a note from the author she say , " I wrote this book to bring light to a dark subject. To bring understanding and offer hope." And that is what she has done- bring light to the dark subject of battling depression/anxiety especially as a follower of Jesus. The battle that Olivia faces is written so realistically and clearly that whether you share her battle or have a friend or family member walking the same road you will find encouragement and understanding. I only give 5 star ratings to life changing books and I feel this is certain worthy of it's 5 stars.

Kara S says

This taught me a lot about what people face in depression.

Carla Sokotuk says

Great read! Perfect if you're heading into the wonderful world of empty-nest syndrome and/or the staggering coming of age for us women.

Karla says

I just picked this book off the shelf at the library. And was surprised to see myself in it in many ways. I'm not quite to the point that she was at, but felt I was going in that direction and was glad I was guided to it to give me some help before I found myself there. Only gave it 3 stars because sometimes it just bugged me.

Nannette says

I had not read the previous book so this was a little hard to "get into" at first. Glad I stuck with it. Very realistic portrayal of the pain depression causes the one suffering with it as well as the family.

Lucy says

I really liked the first two books in this series, but absolutely loved this one. Her realistic and sensitive way of dealing with depression was amazing...a God thing. Reading some of the same words my counselor said to me in the past was thought provoking. Thank you, Roxanne Henke for sharing your God given talent. May He continue to bless you.

Larisha says

Few authors touch on the subject of depression and fewer yet portray it with the insight and compassion that Roxanne Henke delivers in this story.

Olivia Marsden has it all...on the surface. She has a perfect life, a perfect husband, a perfect family, everything is perfect. Except that she just can't quite snap out of this sadness she feels. She begins having panic attacks and ultimately ends up hospitalized while she tries to deal with her new "illness". She becomes such a real person that you feel her inner struggles with humiliation, negative self-talk, her despair. You find yourself amidst the group of Olivia's friends, some cheering her on, others minimalizing her situation.

Roxanne Henke tackles a typically taboo subject matter with tact, honesty, grace and humor. Her characters, as in the other Coming Home to Brewster books, quickly become family and you find yourself drawn into their lives as you would that of an old friend.

Her books never cease to amaze me and this was certainly no exception... as she showed the Hope in Depression and the characters steadfast holding onto the Hand of God and NO ONE has ever Failed; holding onto the hand of Jesus!!

Barbara says

Wonderful, inspiration story about the rough road Christians who suffer from depression travel on.

Julie Taylor says

This entire series is a must-read. It has everything you need, as a reader. It's been 4-5 years since I read this series, and it hasn't been topped, yet.

Lisa says

Coming Home to Brewsters series / book three
