



The Sun in Your Eyes

Deborah Shapiro

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A witty and winning new voice comes alive in this infectious road trip adventure with a rock-and-roll twist. Shapiro's debut blends the emotional nuance of Elena Ferrante with the potent nostalgia of *High Fidelity*, in a story of two women—one rich and alluring, the other just another planet in her dazzling orbit—and their fervid and troubled friendship.

From the distance of a few yards, there might be nothing distinctive about Lee Parrish, nothing you could put your finger on, and yet, if she were to walk into a room, you would notice her. And if you were with her, I'd always thought, you could walk into any room.

For quiet, cautious and restless college freshman Vivian Feld real life begins the day she moves in with the enigmatic Lee Parrish—daughter of died-too-young troubadour Jesse Parrish and model-turned-fashion designer Linda West—and her audiophile roommate Andy Elliott.

When a one-night stand fractures Lee and Andy's intimate rapport, Lee turns to Viv, inviting her into her glamorous fly-by-night world: an intoxicating mix of Hollywood directors, ambitious artists, and first-class everything. It is the beginning of a friendship that will inexorably shape both women as they embark on the rocky road to adulthood.

More than a decade later, Viv is married to Andy and hasn't heard from Lee in three years. Suddenly, Lee reappears, begging for a favor: she wants Viv to help her find the lost album Jesse was recording before his death. Holding on to a life-altering secret and ambivalent about her path, Viv allows herself to be pulled into Lee's world once again. But the chance to rekindle the magic and mystery of their youth might come with a painful lesson: While the sun dazzles us with its warmth and brilliance, it may also blind us from seeing what we really need.

What begins as a familiar story of two girls falling under each other's spell evolves into an evocative, and at times irrepressibly funny, study of female friendship in all its glorious intensity and heartbreaking complexity.

The Sun in Your Eyes Details

Date : Published June 28th 2016 by William Morrow (first published June 7th 2016)

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From Reader Review The Sun in Your Eyes for online ebook

Bridget says

I ended this book thinking about who I want to gift a copy of this to but how much I hate the social pressure of foisting a book on someone and demanding that they read it.

However this book was that good -- sharp and funny and smart and gut wrenching in its portrayal of this friendship that it might be worth forcing on a friend to find out if they saw the same moments as you.

Frog says

If you're into stilted dialogue, 5-word sentences and a grown adult woman still neurotically obsessed with the fact that her college roommate is cooler than her, this is the book for you.

Kristianna Mays says

I won this book as apart of the Goodreads Giveaway. I had a hard time connecting to anything in this book, and I did not quite care for the main characters. It is not often I put a book down and do not finish it, but this one was one I could not quite keep my interest on. Maybe one day I will try again.

Jackie says

Interesting and engaging, but point of view switches a bit disconcerting for this reader.

Shelly says

I received this book in a Goodreads giveaway from the publisher. The book was ok. It's largely about a friendship between Viv and Lee. The biggest section is from the point of view of Viv. At first I found her interesting and relatable, but after awhile I found her annoying and bitter.

Maybe I was supposed to because the next section was from Lee's point of view and Viv's annoying and bitter attitude toward the end of her section made Lee more sympathetic. Lee is an interesting character, but I usually don't really care that much about the characters like her in books that are breathtakingly beautiful, wild seeming child of celebrities (in this case) or regular wealthy people (in other books I've read). Lee's chunk of the book was smaller, but much more interesting and I kind of wish she had been the major voice of the book.

All in all it was fine. Nothing special, but not all books need to be. This books is for people who love easy books that don't require a lot of mental energy and isn't dark like much of literary fiction.

Cindy Roesel says

When I was younger, I was told by a wise woman, that men come and go throughout a woman's life, but I should hold on to my girlfriends. Your really good girlfriends will always be there for you through the good and bad times, divorces, sickness, no matter what, so protect your friendships with the women you cherish. I never fully understood what she meant until I got older. Now unfortunately, my best girl-friends are scattered all across the country. A phone call isn't the same as a hug or one-on-one chats over a glass of wine.

the SUN in YOUR EYES (WilliamMorrow) by Deborah Shapiro explores the friendship between Viv and Lee. It's a nice respite from a summer filled with "bad girl novels" like GIRLS ON FIRE and THE GIRLS. the SUN in YOUR EYES actually explores the dynamics of women's friendships starting in their 20's, then a decade later; it had me reflecting back on some of my own relationships. The novel starts like a familiar story about two girls, Viv, the quiet one falling under the spell of, Lee, the loud, rich outrageous one. But Shapiro doesn't take the easy way. She writes with depth and the characters are complex. The narrative is full of surprises and messy.

I usually have more to write about the novels I read, but I must admit this book took me deep inside myself. I found myself revisiting friendships I've had in the past, how they were positive and where they failed. I started looking at my part in those relationships and the ones I have now. Perhaps I'm getting sentimental. Life has been pretty extreme for everyone lately. Give someone you care about, an unexpected hug today! ...just an idea...

ANYWAY..... I enjoyed this novel. Deborah Shapiro is a highly talented writer. I suggest you read the SUN in YOUR EYES for yourself.

Jen says

I received this as an egalley from William Morrow through Edelweiss in return for an honest review.

I decided to stop reading this about 35% of the way through because at that point I was just no longer intrigued by it. While the characters can be interesting at times, and the writing is decent, I found the constant jumping between the past and the present to take away from the plot and overall made it feel as though nothing was actually happening. I felt no personal connection with any of the characters or with the distant plot and thus decided not to continue with it. I'm sure there are plenty of readers out there who would enjoy this type of story and can better connect to these sort of characters, but I am not one of the readers right now.

Anna Meaney says

"It makes me glad we're not here anymore, that we're not twenty-one or whatever. That it's a long time ago already. But I also can't understand where it all went."

I was drawn to this book after reading Deborah Shapiro's review of Marlina in the New York Times. The books are similar in many ways but ultimately do not do well from comparisons.

The novel takes place in 2010 and is about old college friends Lee and Viv. In the present day, Lee is searching for a lost tape of her late father singing. He was a relatively famous musician before his death, which was caused after a car accident, and it wasn't ruled out that it could have been a suicide. In the search for the tape, she enlists the help of Viv, her old time friend that she hasn't seen in many years. Viv is looking for a change in her life, and has just found out that she is pregnant. She is married to Andy, a third in their triangle that Lee used to have a thing with.

Interspersed in the quest for the lost tapes is accounts of Viv and Lee's friendship during college, as well as the dynamic with Andy while they all lived together.

In the end, it is revealed that Lee's mother, Linda, had been in the road while Jesse was driving, and was the cause of the car accident that killed him. Lee isn't sure she can ever forgive her mother, but finds the tapes a few years later, after Viv has given birth.

The comparisons to Marlena make sense. Both books are about an intense friendship between two women in formative years. Both have the more awkward of the two looking back on the friendship after the two have mostly parted ways. However, I have to consider *The Sun in Your Eyes* to be by far the less successful of the two.

First of all, the book really isn't about the friendship between Viv and Lee. Sure, it has some moments, but the book is really about finding the tapes. It could even be said it's about the relationship between Lee and the past. For a book that spells Lee out to the most enigmatic character, the book still gives a lot of insights into her psyche.

None of the characters are very interesting, nor do they really grow. In the middle of the book, Viv cheats on Andy with a former almost boyfriend. Her actions are never really explained and justification is not given. In the last few pages of the book, the reader flashes forward 2 years after Viv has already had the baby. The conflict is a non-starter and with a lot of the conflict in the book, it is just resolved in a way that doesn't make sense. For example, I was lead to believe that conflict in the book is between the past and the present, as Lee and Viv try to understand what happened between them as friends. This is not the conflict. The conflict is what happened in the relationship between Jesse and Linda, which doesn't make sense. I wasn't even aware that was the conflict until Viv had gone home and Lee was questioning her mother about the night her father died and that was the climax of the book.

The inclusion of Andy also muddled the waters in terms of having a clear narrative with Viv and Lee's friendship. The friendship between Viv and Lee didn't seem that intense in the flashbacks – it seemed like both of them had more interesting relationship with Andy than with each other.

Additionally, the flashbacks did not work at all. They seemly appeared at random, to explain how a new character was related to them, or explain the significance of a place. They would go on for pages and then go back to the present with no delineation, so it was hard to tell what was in the past and what was in the present and why the background knowledge was relevant. It made for a very choppy read.

Rachel says

BORING!

Esil says

This is the second book I have read recently about a complicated relationship between two women who first became friends in university. The first one was *She Poured Out Her Heart*, which I didn't love but which certainly engaged me on several levels. In contrast, I felt like I kept losing the thread of *The Sun in Your Eyes*. Lee is the daughter of a famous musician who died when she was 5 years old. Viv is her somewhat awe struck friend. There is also Andy, who started off as Lee's friend and ends up as Viv's husband. In their early 30s, Viv accompanies Lee on a road trip to find out more about Lee's father and how he died. The story is told from their alternating points of view, and moves back and forth in time. Their friendship has had highs and lows, and as the narrative unfolds it becomes less clear who has the upper hand in the relationship -- but what is clear is that this friendship is fraught and full of wounds and scars. The concept isn't bad and there are some scenes that are really well done, but to me the book didn't hold together particularly well. I didn't really like Lee or Viv nor did they feel like fully dimensional characters -- it was also hard to understand what had drawn them together in the first place. And it felt like two storylines awkwardly meshed together: the women's friendship and Lee's quest to understand her father. I do find it interesting that both books about female relationships seemed to be driven by a need to de-romanticize female friendship -- explore ways in which women are capable of hurting each other -- interesting but imperfectly executed. Thank you to the publisher and Edelweiss for an opportunity to read an advance copy.

BookBully says

2.5 stars for Shapiro's schizophrenic debut. Yes, this gal can write. And, yes, she knows the ends and outs of female friendship with its highs and lows. The periods of incredible closeness that often are tainted with jealousy and disappointment.

THE SUN IN YOUR EYES tells the story of Vivian and Lee who meet in college and quickly become besties. Vivian comes from a quiet upper middle class family and suffers from a tendency to overanalyze herself and how other people interact with her. (Too often this detracts from the story.) Lee is the daughter of an uber-famous rock star who was killed when she was very young.

The main part of the novel centers around a round trip that the adult duo take at Lee's insistence. Thirty years after her father's death, she's become obsessed with finding the lost album he was recording just before he died. Throughout this portion of the book, there are flashbacks to earlier events.

And here's where I wanted to scream - yet again - "where was the editor?!" I'm not afraid of toggling back and forth between decades but there needs to be a sense of purpose and rhythm. Plus the addition of Andy, who once worshipped Lee, seems tacked on.

Again, I want to emphasize that Shapiro knows her way around words and the nuances of friendship. "Though she kept things from Viv, she never felt she had to hide from her friend. To pretend she wasn't, on a good day, moody, and on a bad day, sometimes panicky. What Viv was able to do was take Lee out of herself." But passages like this are spoiled by a disjointed plot.

PinkAmy loves books, cats and naps says

Vivian and Lee met in college and probably never should have become or stayed friends. Lee is the daughter

of a rock legend who died tragically young and a glamorous clothing designer. The more stable Viv is starstruck by her friend, as a young woman and when they reconnect after several years apart. Lee asks Vivian to accompany her on a road trip to learn more about her father and perhaps locate some of his missing songs.

Of the two, Lee was the far more interesting and complex. Wounded, provocative, lacking boundaries, I always felt a sadness about her, perhaps an empty hole she was trying to fill to escape the void she felt about her father's death and her emotionally unavailable mother. Vivian, who narrated most of the book, was hard for me to embrace. She had lots of feelings about her relationships with her husband and Lee, but never voiced when she felt hurt or asked for clarification. Viv assumed the worst and held onto things. Both women had narcissistic features, Lee's were more pronounced and overt. Vivian's seemed more subtle and while she acknowledged at times wanting to hurt Lee with her words, I never got the idea Viv felt badly or wanted to do better for herself. For me, friends like Lee are easier to embrace, because what you see is pretty much what you get and I can adjust my expectations accordingly. Vivian, meanwhile, had an unspoken secondary friendship with Lee inside her head with assumptions and innuendos, and about which Lee knew nothing.

I liked that Deborah Shapiro included letters, articles and interviews from Lee's parents' past to help understand the phenomenon of her father and his death. I didn't enjoy switching points of view from Vivian's first person narration to Lee's third person. I also didn't like that the book had large sections without chapters, so finding opportunities to pause was sometimes difficult. The most interesting aspects of the story for me belonged to Lee and her journey, but much of THE SUN IN YOUR EYES was devoted to Vivian's internal dialogue with herself about Lee and others with more telling than showing.

I think many readers will see aspects of friendships they've had throughout the book. The dynamic between the two women reminds me of that in two much more enjoyable books BUFFLEHEAD SISTERS by Patricia DeLois and Kristin Hannah in FIREFLY LANE books.

I received a complimentary copy of THE SUN IN YOUR EYES in exchange for my honest review.

Melinda says

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A story examining the dynamics of friendship. I found myself taking inventory of my friendships to see if I am easily influenced, passive, questioning if power and/or control exists, luckily my relationships are well balance.

I found it interesting after a 'falling out' which led to a considerable amount of time apart, these two pick up the pieces, albeit with suspicion and questions not to mention guilt, as if a monumental interruption never occurred - betrayal isn't easy to digest. They do wrestle with their reconnection as the story unfolds. Lee clearly the leader, Viv the follower. The duo rekindles their fragile friendship for their own reasons - known and unknown.

I enjoyed the legendary Jesse Parrish and the rock references along with Lee's quest to learn more of her deceased father Jesse.

I do wish the plot focused less on Lee and Viv's past friendship and more on their interaction now. The alternating of 'then' and 'now' became distracting. Difficult to bond with protagonists, simply too much telling and not nearly enough showing.

Fans enjoying a well written exploration of friendship and relationships in general will want to make room on their TBR.

Leigh Kramer says

When I first heard about Deborah Shapiro's *The Sun In Your Eyes*, I was intrigued. It's rare to find novels where friendship takes the center stage.

The power dynamic between Viv and Lee is compelling. Who is using who? Are they more equal than either think? The time apart has given both a chance to reflect about their relationship. (We experience more of Viv's perspective in the first half and some of Lee's perspective in the second.) As we learn about how they first met and the circumstances that strengthened their bond, it becomes clear that for all their closeness, there are parts of each other they do not know or understand.

As I read, I wavered between thinking Lee manipulated everyone around her to whether they had a co-dependent relationship to how Viv benefitted from her relationship with Lee. There were no easy answers. Even when the characters made choices with which I vehemently disagreed.

At its heart, *The Sun In Your Eyes* is about the ups and downs of friendship and whether we can see another person clearly. I'm not entirely sure we as readers should judge the nature or health of Lee and Viv's friendship. We are changed by the people we befriend. At times, this blinds us to their faults- and we benefit when we are on the receiving end of this.

Shapiro's debut novel impressed me for the ways she welcomed us into Lee and Viv's world and showed us its nuances and heft. It is at once a gracious and incising portrayal. Neither character is demonized but nor are they idealized and idolized. In other words, they are you and me. While I don't have any friends like Lee and Viv, their portrayal gave me hope about the state of female friendship because no matter how they leave things, it shows why women need each other. And we do need each other.

The Sun In Your Eyes is a lovely and worthwhile addition to the friendship canon.

Full review here: <http://www.leighkramer.com/blog/2016/...>

Disclosure: I was provided a free copy of this book by TLC Book Tours. Opinion is my own.

Elyse Walters says

Vivian and Lee had not seen each other for three years....yet, it's not as though they just drifted apart since having been best friends during college. That 'falling out's name is Andy. Vivian is married to him. Lee had history with him.

A very interesting part of the story happens early on....worthy of discussion.

Lee contacts Vivian. After three years of no contact they meet at an old familiar coffee shop. Lee asks Vivian to take a road trip with her.

[Lee's reason for the road trip]>>> she wants to find an uncovered tape hoping to learn more about her father..."first hand", since all she really knows is what she has

learned from her mother, Linda. Lee was only 4 years old when her father,

Jesse Parrish, a rockstar died in a car accident. She'd like to know what he was thinking at the time he died,

and thinks the record he was working on might give her clues.

It was Vivian's response - rather what she was thinking that puzzled, intrigued, and peaked my interest.

"It did seem kid-detective, Lee lighting out on a well-worn trail that had never led anywhere, as far as I knew. But she was also the femme fatale--the one who shows up with a story full of holes and you, the cynic and the sap, still follow her. And old

friend whose powers of persuasion still held sway because those powers had once persuaded you of so, so much".

So, I thought of all the reasons I might say yes...take the trip...and reasons I wouldn't.

Most of this story is told through Vivian.

She says this about herself --- (then takes the road trip):

"My doubts were never much of a match for my tendency to say yes to her. If I thought that changed, my difficulty in meeting her gaze now proved otherwise".

WOW...I thought..."why the hell not?? You pansy!"

However...then I looked deeper...looked at a few of my past friendships. I asked myself

"do they still hold any - (dormant)- power over me? Might I have justified - in theory that I leave doors open to reconnect and forgiveness to simply fall back into old patterns?" Patterns that are not empowering?

The entire story has thought-provoking dialogue. Women's friendships almost have a life of their own. They are among the most important relationships in life.

They are at times easy...but often complex...as Deborah Shapiro so beautifully constructed. Besides the jealousies, and disloyalty ... their is intimacy, attachment, resilience, acceptance, and moments of laughter!

Thank You William Morrow, and Deborah Shapiro
