



Before I Let Go

Marieke Nijkamp

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Before I Let Go

Marieke Nijkamp

Before I Let Go Marieke Nijkamp

From the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *This Is Where It Ends* comes another unforgettable story of loss, hope, betrayal, and the quest for truth.

Best friends Corey and Kyra were inseparable in their snow-covered town of Lost Creek, Alaska. When Corey moves away, she makes Kyra promise to stay strong during the long, dark winter, and wait for her return.

Just days before Corey is to return home to visit, Kyra dies. Corey is devastated and confused. The entire Lost community speaks in hushed tones about the town's lost daughter, saying her death was meant to be. And they push Corey away like she's a stranger.

Corey knows something is wrong. With every hour, her suspicion grows. Lost is keeping secrets—chilling secrets. But piecing together the truth about what happened to her best friend may prove as difficult as lighting the sky in an Alaskan winter...

Before I Let Go Details

Date : Published January 2nd 2018 by Sourcebooks Fire

ISBN :

Author : Marieke Nijkamp

Format : Kindle Edition 372 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Mystery, Contemporary

 [Download Before I Let Go ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Before I Let Go ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Before I Let Go Marieke Nijkamp

From Reader Review Before I Let Go for online ebook

Sophie "Beware Of The Reader" says

An ARC has been offered by the publisher in exchange for an honest opinion

“Hers is a story that deserves to be told. Hers is a story that deserves to be heard. It’s the story of a girl who believed in heroes and wanted to be one herself. Who saw stories in the world around her, and who regaled an entire Alaskan town with them. And hers is a story of how they started to believe her.
“

4,5 “eerie” stars

This book will be hard to review without spoiling your fun so I’ll probably keep it short.

I’ve seen readers stopping their reads as they were lost about what kind of book this story was. When “it” happened I was puzzled and confused too. I wondered where the author was headed to with the choice she made for this book. **It took a turn I totally did not expect based on the blurb. Yet I still loved it. Maybe because this story can’t be put into a box?**

Marieke Nijkamp’s writing is excellent! The story is nerve racking with an oppressive mood. Everything happens in this very, very small town lost in Alaska with endless nights and snow everywhere. It is weighting on you. It has an oppressive and eerie feeling. Lost is a town that thrives on secrets.

The small clues left here and there built up the tension till the apex of the thriller. All along I was uneasy, shivering, shoulders tense and I could not put it down.

Back to the story now!

When Corey comes back home to Lost after she’s learned that her best friend Kyra has been found dead she soon realizes that Lost is not home anymore. So much has changed that it’s scary. Its inhabitants who could not stand Kyra seem to have claimed her. She is mourned fervently by everyone and that’s so not what Corey remembers!

Corey is grieving. She had a very tight friendship with Kyra. Kyra was “special” and I won’t say more about this as to not spoil the book. Let’s just say that the way Marieke Nijkamp described what Kyra went through was spot on. Take it from someone who also has this “kind of” special friends.

Corey is resenting the town so much! Where were they when Kyra suffered all these years? When they rejected her? Where were they when she needed love and acceptance the more? Kyra suffered so long from their rejection because in this little town anything different feels like a threat. **“Why is everyone so afraid of me?” “Because you’re unpredictable.” Like spring storms and inaccessible mines. “In Lost, unpredictability has never been good.”**

But Corey is also struggling with her guilt as she can’t avoid thinking that she left Kyra alone too. She has her death on her hands too.

In the span of six days Corey will try to understand what happened in the few months she left. What really

happened to Kyra and to the town?

She also realizes that even if she is born and grew up for more than sixteen years in Lost she is now an outsider.

Marieke Nijkamp did a stellar job at writing suspense. The oppressive atmosphere. The eyes always watching every move Corey did. The petals appearing in her room. The fever overcoming the town. The small signs Corey gathers to show her that Kyra's death may be not what it seems.

Know beforehand that things will be left unexplained even by the end of the book. Things beyond our logical grasp. If you can't stand a book leaving questions unanswered then don't read this. But if you love books and movies with a mysterious and scary feel, if you love spooky atmosphere then this could be your next fix.

It was my first Marieke Nijkamp and it won't be my last as she thinks and writes "out of the box".

Find me on:

Wordpress: Beware Of The Reader

Facebook: Beware Of The Reader

Facebook besties: Best Reading Blogs Ever

Instagram: @bewareofthereader

Twitter: @BewareOffReader

Maddie (Heart Full Of Books) says

This book will go down in my personal reading history as the first asexual protagonist I've read. Huzzah!

Liz Overberg says

To be blunt, this book just **isn't good**.

In order to build a growing sense of unease, a good storyteller will slowly build from "things seem pretty normal here" to "WTF is going on?!" Unfortunately, this story starts at the latter and stays there, effectively killing any tension.

The events are *incredibly* repetitive. I think the main character, Corey, has the same conversations with others and with herself about 76 times.

There is absolutely zero characterization of any characters other than the protagonist, Corey, and her friend Kyra. Kyra's parents may as well be the sheriff may as well be the post office clerk may as well be the other people in town. They are all exactly the same character with different names.

Forgiving the elements of the story that are meant to be mysterious and possibly magical, too many things don't add up. After Corey, a 17-year-old girl, moved away from her best friend, she never texted or called? Corey and Kyra's only option for communication was snail mail? In 2017? The author makes a lame attempt at using the poor cell phone reception excuse, but you would think Kyra could have talked on a landline. Or emailed? Skyped?

Finally, Corey is the worst. She is self-righteous and unsympathetic. I don't even care that she was right about the things that she was saying. She was angry and unlikable, and she didn't attempt to make sense of anything before she went around yelling at everyone that they were bad people. And you know what? They were bad people. Which was not really explained *at all*.

I feel like this was the type of really melodramatic, overly-long, not well written story that would get submitted in a freshman writing workshop. Steer clear.

Inge says

I'm... not sure how I feel about this book.

On the one hand, it has a very interesting premise. Sure, at its base, this storyline has been used a lot. But every author adds something different. In the case of *Before I Let Go*, I really enjoyed the Alaskan setting, as well as the eerie atmosphere it provided. There's also the matter of diverse representation: pansexual, asexual (though I felt like she was more aromantic?), gay, bipolar disorder. I did really love the mystery.

But a lot of the time, I had no idea what was going on, and that stayed with me for the rest of the book. I was hoping for more answers, but not much changes between Corey's arrival and her departure from Lost Creek. She gets called "outsider" a lot, gets treated like crap, the townspeople are very weird. It got very repetitive very fast. She discovers a few things about Kyra's time before her death, but overall, you know the whole story pretty early on, which was kind of disappointing. There were also scenes that were written more like screenplays, which was very odd.

I do have to compliment the writing as the book was very easy to read, but I can't say I enjoyed it much. It lacked development in terms of character and plot and missed a climax or just overall closure.

Thank you to NetGalley and the publisher for providing me with a copy

Esther says

Thanks to the author and Netgalley for providing me with a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

The best part of this book, for me, was the setting. I truly hope there are not many towns like Lost Creek around. The town and the people in it gave this book a pretty creepy vibe. I believe this is a likeable book for a lot of people, everyone can find something to bond with in this book and feel satisfactory at the end.

A longer review can be found at [Bite Into books](#)

I have to be honest here, I did not like *This Is Where It Ends* that much. I felt that Marieke Nijkamp did not give me enough answers at the end of the book, while the characters and relationships were the best part of the book. I was so happy to see I was chosen to review the book via Netgalley because I did not feel that Marieke Nijkamp is a bad author. I feel that she gave me a satisfactory feeling and the end of the book and was able to write another book with great characters and a lot of feelings and life lessons. So while I try not to compare books, I do have to tell you that I like *Before I Let Go* better than her first book!

Katie McNelly says

It will be very difficult to write a spoiler-free review of this book, but I will in due time. For now, suffice it to say that I liked this MUCH better than 'this is where it ends', though I can't say I cared that much more about the characters. It was a page turner and I polished it off in one sitting (about 4 hours). This YA is worth the read, and I have a feeling much younger readers (who get less wrapped up in a need for in-depth characterization) will really enjoy it.

I absolutely LOVED the experimental structure and the diverse cast of characters.

RIYL: We Were Liars, Dangerous Girls, All the Bright Places

Lara (Bookish_turtle) says

I nearly gave it three stars, because I liked bits and pieces of it, but overall I wasn't really enjoying myself and there weren't enough bits that I liked. This book was okay.

The premise sounded good, I was keen for a murder mystery, but it wasn't really a 'murder mystery' book if it makes sense. It was more of a suspense novel, but that didn't really happen until near the end. It also felt like they tried to throw in some magical realism and a bit of 'friendship contemporary' and I don't even know what this book was...

It just felt so all over the place. There were so many flashbacks, but they weren't in order? It would go from the present, to three years ago, to the present, to two months ago, to when they were little... I just didn't get why though?!

The characters were meh. I liked a few, but that was it.

The plot was confusing. I'm still not completely sure what was going on in that novel.

And the main character... I didn't HATE her, but I wasn't her biggest fan. (view spoiler)

The book was okay, but that was it.

Emma Giordano says

I'm not really sure how I feel about this book. On the one hand, I was really invested in it. On the other, it's not particularly the best story I've ever read. Nonetheless, it was interesting and I'm happy I read it.

CW: bipolar disorder, suicide, death, grief

Honestly, it's hard for me to identify what my likes and dislikes are for this story. I had a similar experience with Marieke Nijkamp's other novel, *This Is Where It Ends* where I didn't love it personally, but still enjoyed my time reading it. *Before I Let Go* is not a completely mediocre novel, but it's not overtly

impressive, but also not all that bad?

I did enjoy the writing style. I feel Nijkamp has a prose that is easy to fall into and engage with. Though her plotting may not be a favorite of mine, I enjoyed her ability to keep me interested in the story and effortlessly continue reading. The story is somewhat of a mystery, yet the resolutions are revealed extremely slowly to the point where the mystery lacked suspense. Though I enjoyed the story overall, I felt a little unsatisfied by the plot.

I feel one of my favorite parts was the setting. From a New Yorker's perspective, an extremely small town in Alaska is drastically different from my experience which is possibly what made it so intriguing. I'm typically not interested in small-town stories but the dynamic of this community is so **WEIRD** that I didn't have a my usual experience while reading. I don't even know how to describe this town. They are so creepy and almost cult-like to a point where it feels supernatural, even though it is a contemporary novel. Their perspective on Kyra and her death was almost "brainwashed-like" and totally inexplicable, which made it all the more intriguing for me. I thoroughly enjoyed trying to analyze the community's mindset while reading, attempting to understand where their thoughts are rooted and why despite that we don't get many concrete answers. In that respect, I found the setting very unique.

Regarding the characters, I didn't love Corey. She was fairly bland and lacked character development. Despite going through some immense realizations when visiting her hometown, I feel she did not change much and her reactions and perspective on the world were fairly stagnant. I did like Kyra though! It's strange to discuss her as she is not an active character as she's dead at the start of the story, but I felt she was well-fleshed out. Though I can't speak for the representation, I felt the author took great care in representing her bipolar disorder. Kyra remains an individual and unique person while dealing with her illness and I feel much information about the reality of this disorder is revealed through the text which I love to see in literature. Additionally, I LOVED how this book examines the trope/misconception that mental illness is something that is "magical" and that greater depth and power comes from the manifestation of said illnesses. This is something that is not typically addressed in fiction and I loved the way it was portrayed.

That said, I am a bit conflicted on how the LGBTQ+ representation is received by others of the community? I've seen this book labled as falling into the "bury your gays" trope as Kyra, a pansexual girl, is dead, yet the main character is also asexual and I frequently see this trope used to identify works that specifically kill off characters from the LGBTQIAP+ community when they are the singular character from that community and their death is used to forward the development of an allocishet character. I'm not attempting to speak for the rep but that's exactly why I wanted to include this conflict in my review because I'm unsure of how this particular plot would be viewed. Additionally, I felt there was not much development into the character's sexualities beyond finding the labels they identify with (which is definitely important to include!) and one having unreciprocated feelings for the other. I have yet to find ownvoices reviews, but I just felt there wasn't a lot that was expanded upon in the story.

In all, this story is weird and my feelings on it are weird. I don't feel I can properly vocalize what I did enjoy and unfortunately disliked about it, but with that being said, it was definitely a unique reading experience. I think if you are a lover of small-town stories, you might be interested in this one but I would keep your expectations a bit low in order to fully enjoy it.

I received a free copy of this book from Sourcebooks at Book Expo 2017. I had no obligation to review this book and all opinions are my own.

jv poore says

It sucks when bad things happen to good people. When blame can't be assigned, when that-which-is- terrible isn't exactly someone's fault, but maybe everyone could have done something a little differently to avert the tragedy...well, that's just real life.

Ms. Nijkamp displays life with a mental illness in a heart-felt, honest, hard-to-handle way that sticks with the reader long after the story has been told.

Reading.Between.Wines says

????? / 5

My reviews and (maybe) some other random thoughts can also be seen at

[https://readingbetweenwinesite.wordp...](https://readingbetweenwinesite.wordpress...)

First of all, I love the cover of this book. It is so beautiful and fitting. Sourcebooks Fire sent me Before I Let Go as a bonus book with As You Wish and I was very intrigued by the plot. Unfortunately, this book just wasn't as great as I was hoping it would be.

Before I Let Go felt to me to be about friendships, loss, and small town mentality. I like that it switched between past and present, and you learn the most about Kyra from the past chapters and the letters she writes to Corey. The different styles this book is written in was also a nice change. There are phone calls, notes/letters both sent and unsent, and parts that are written like a script.

However, I feel like we only scratch the surface of these characters, and I didn't feel like there was much depth to them. Corey felt like the only fully developed character to me which was kind of odd.

Also, this book was just *weird*. I was confused for almost the entire book, and I still don't feel like there was enough closure at the end. There were too many things infused into this book that didn't get explained which drove me a little crazy. Eyes watching her? Voices she hears? The salmonberry blossoms left everywhere (including on her at one point?!). None of it gets explained. Also, the weird chanting and actions by the townspeople and the semi-crazy ending seemed so off and unexplained. I felt like I was in an alternate universe and you wake up and don't remember what happened.

Before I Let Go was definitely a very fast read (it took me about a day total to read it), and I stayed up late(ish) to finish it because I just couldn't fathom how this book was going to end. There isn't really a mystery here that you can't figure out, but I literally had no idea what was going to happen to Corey when shit started getting crazy.

Final Thought: I still want to give This Is Where It Ends a try even though I didn't LOVE this one. I'm a little concerned that Marieke Nijkamp might just not be an author that I can connect to, but I still want to give it a shot. I don't want to say I would never recommend this because it wasn't that bad, and I was interested *confused* enough that I read all of it and didn't skim. If you're looking for a creepy/weird/fast read you might want to give this one a try and see what you think. I loved the underlying creepiness, there just wasn't enough that I loved for me to give this one more than a 3.

All the thanks to Sourcebooks Fire for sending me a free copy of this book to read and give an honest review for!

This title was published on 02 Jan 2018

Carrie says

When Corey moved away from her home town of snow covered Lost Creek, Alaska she promised her best friend, Kyra, that she would always stay in touch and always be there for her. As with most teens though Corey's new life and new friends she made after her move kept her busy so she wasn't the best with keeping in touch with Kyra. Corey did have plans for returning to Lost Creek very soon though and finally seeing Kyra again.

Unfortunately Corey receives a phone call that Kyra has passed away, she was found under the ice in the lake that should have been frozen solid this time of year. Some think that Kyra purposely went looking for a weak spot in the ice and a way to end her own life after battling mental illness for years. Corey knows she needs to return to Lost Creek and get some answers on just what happened to her best friend.

Before I Let Go by Marieke Nijkamp is a young adult mystery read. After finishing this book I'm beginning to think that perhaps Marieke Nijkamp is just not an author for me. Last year I read *This Is Where It Ends* and while the idea behind the story was one that I was really taken in with the execution of the book left a lot to be desired for me and unfortunately now I can say the same with *Before I Let Go*.

I think really my biggest issue with this book came with the character development which was pretty non-existent. Corey is really the only character that felt developed and I find myself hard pressed to say even that as all that is repeated is she and Kyra had been close so now instead of owning up to her own mistakes she is determined to find who is at fault for Kyra's death which should be touching and emotional but instead I just disliked Corey and found myself not caring if other's were at fault or not.

Now as far as the mystery is concerned in this one it is buried within the repetitive nature of Corey blaming the town and eventually does come to light. It's one that I might have been really taken with as there was a creepy and disturbing vibe but if I blinked while reading I would have missed it as that part of the story wasn't developed very well in my opinion. So as sad as I am to say this one just wasn't for me and as much as the ideas behind Ms. Nijkamp's stories appeal to me I think this may be my last attempt.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress...>

Cesar says

2 stars

With a setting in a small Alaskan town, you would expect **Before I Let Go** to have some atmosphere of a small-town mystery surrounded by snow and dreariness. But just like **Girl in Snow**, *Before I Let Go* doesn't have that appeal as well as having boring characters.

Before I Let Go is at best (in my opinion) a mediocre book. I know I might be sounding mean, but there was nothing appealing about the story or characters. It's bland and doesn't really offer much other than being another generic book about a small-town mystery. There is nothing wrong with that type of genre if it is done well. Before I Let Go was just plain boring and didn't have that vibe of an eerie mystery.

Before I Let Go is a small-town mystery book that takes place in a small town in Alaska called Lost Creek. Our main character, Corey, was set to return to Lost Creek to visit when she finds out her best friend, Kyra, has died. When Corey does get to Lost Creek, she discovers something is wrong with not only the town but the people themselves. They're keeping secrets about what really happened with Kyra and Corey wants to find answers.

Before I Let Go could've been a great book had it not been for its lackluster atmosphere and dead-ass boring lead character. Even if this is another small-town mystery book, they can still be a great read. There's no denying the ominous tone to these types of books where not everything is what it seems and that your closest neighbors and friends could be hiding something.

Before I Let Go had none of that. It did have secrets but they were not presented in a good way.

The Cons

(1). Lack of Atmosphere.

For many mystery books, there is this feeling you get knowing that a secret could very well rip apart a person or a community. It's even more creepy if it takes place in a small town where literally nowhere is safe.

By all means, Lost Creek should've been a perfect setting. It's not.

There was no atmosphere to be seen anywhere. This was the same issue I had with her previous novel, **This is Where it Ends** where I did like the idea but it didn't have that effect of a school shooting and the characters were boring as well. I figured that maybe Marieke did improve on that but it seems like it still stayed the same.

There was no suspense. There was no hook. There was no fear. There was nothing. It may have been a fast read, but by no means did that mean it was a good book.

The Alaskan setting did help somewhat, but only a little since I never got that Alaskan vibe. Plus I'm sure small towns like Lost Creek don't have police chiefs or something like that.

(2) Boring Character.

Corey is without a doubt a boring character. I don't hate her, but there isn't anything interesting about her to redeem her. She was so boring I forgot her name twice. That is not a good sign. To me, all she was was a friend who wanted to find out the secret of her friend's death. And that's fine and all, but she didn't have much of a personality.

She wasn't unique in any way and came off as generic. She could've been a great character had Marieke put in a personality other than being a mystery solver.

(3) Credibility.

There were a few instances where I had to suspend my disbelief with how the town reacted to Kyra's death and Corey's intrusion. It felt way too much like something from a cheesy movie (another issue I had with *This is Where it Ends*). There were even chapters where it was written in a script format that didn't add to the story. It was random. If Corey was interested in writing or playwriting, then it would make sense. But she wasn't and it was redundant.

(4) Boring Read.

Since there was no atmosphere, my experience with *Before I Let Go* was a boring one. The chapters were short so I was glad I didn't have to endure more than 8 pages of boring dialogue.

This isn't a major issue I had with the story, but I got to say it. In *This is Where it Ends*, the town is called Opportunity. The town in *Before I Let Go* is called Lost Creek, shortened to Lost. I can't with these names. ?

The Pros

Honestly, there weren't that many pros.

(1) Some good representation.

I did find Kyra's bipolar disorder to be a good rep. It didn't look like it was handled badly so I'll give Marieke props for that.

(2) Friendship.

The moments between Corey and Kyra was probably the highlight of the book. They really did care for each other and even with Corey not understanding Kyra's bipolar disorder, she was still there and didn't leave her.

Verdict

A boring read with a boring character. No eerie atmosphere, lackluster story. I worry that if Marieke doesn't improve her writing, I believe her future books will suffer the same just like *Before I Let Go* and *This is Where it Ends*.

There is a story in *Before I Let Go*, but it didn't live up to it and sadly disappointed me.

Thanks for reading my review!

-Cesar

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

The level of mediocrity here is just *astounding*. Given how ranty this review is, maybe I should one star this, but I honestly just don't have the fucking energy to hate this book. It's too mediocre to deserve hatred. *Before I Let Go* is a cliché story that tries to be something more but is not fooling me.

I'm going to full-out explain everything I disliked and liked about this book, but really, I should replace the whole review with "read Tess Sharpe's *Far From You*" written fifty-eight times down the page. That book is also focused on girl friendship with romantic vibes, but it's got far more developed characters to drive the story. Read *Far From You*!! Do it!!

? CAN YOU EVEN BE MORE CLICHE

Can I summarize this book for you? **It's a mashup of "dead best friend had secrets and may have been in love with live best friend, because bury your gays" and "girl moves to small town and discovers family secrets", except if you leeches every single good thing about both those plots out of the book.**

Before I Let Go was especially disappointing for me because of all the comparisons it begs to every other suspense book ever. I was really hoping this would differentiate itself with a new take on all those tropes. Uh. Nope, it's not an original take. **This is a mashup of a lot of way better books** and also predictable.

Here's the thing, though: any cliché suspense book can be saved. **How do you save a cliché suspense book?** There are two options: **characters or atmosphere**. Yeah, this book doesn't do either. Let's get into those two factors.

? WE NEED CHARACTER WORK, KIDDOS

We all know that **books in which the protagonist goes back to her small town are a bit of a cliché**. But I do tend to enjoy them. Why? Because at its core, **this trope is about the exploration of relationships and childhood. Yet this book doesn't explore a single fucking thing about our protagonist's childhood.** (Do you know why I just called her our protagonist? Because it has been less than twenty minutes since I finished this book and I just forget Corey's name.) Moving on. **For good character-driven suspense, we need to focus on all of the above: 1) the protagonist's character, 2) the former best friend's character, and 3) the complexities of their relationship.**

#1 - As I've already mentioned, **our protagonist is incredibly bland**. Informed traits do not make a character - what we need is an inner monologue. And unfortunately, Corey doesn't have any unique thoughts or reactions to the world. I feel as if she's a character I should adore, but most of her character is for the reader's emotional manipulation.

#2 - I do think the author put a vague amount of effort into developing Kyra, the dead best friend. Kyra's BPD is represented well, at least, and the narrative is clear on the fact that she is *more* than her BPD. But, uh... she's textually not much more than her BPD because she has basically no personality. I do think, to be positive, that it comes from a matter of **lacking effort on the part of the author rather than a genuine distaste for mentally ill people.**

#3 - Kyra and Corey's relationship just seems so... lacking in problems? Kyra gets rejected and is not that weird about it, they hardly fight, there's not much tension between them. There are one or two moments where past Kyra mentions feeling like no one, not even Corey, sees her as anything but her BPD. That was interesting idea I would've liked to explore. Yet their issues feel **oddly glossed over**, and more importantly, **we don't get much of a sense that they have issues** from Corey's narration. It feels like an informed character trait and loses all its interest within the narrative.

Basically, I just felt like every problem and character trait was informed rather than shown. And like, I *get* that it's young adult, but listen, young adult can and has do better. Moving on.

? WHAT IS A SUSPENSE? I DON'T KNOW HER

The book could've gotten away with its incredibly lacking characters if the plot weren't so fucking obvious.

But there's no twist. **I had the solution guessed from the blurb.** The townsfolk start saying "it was her natural end" on page 50 and they stay on that exact same phrase right to the end and it is so, so obvious where it's going.

There's not even a slow progression from normal atmosphere to creepy atmosphere, which could've replaced a slow-burn plot. And this is maybe what ruins the book the most.

I am firmly of the belief that a good atmosphere can save an otherwise mediocre book. Nijkamp tries to add atmosphere, at least. There are a ton of minor touches where Corey thinks she's being followed by ghosts that echo gothic horror and are, in hindsight, kind of cool. But some of these touches feel superficial because they don't add to the story, meaning they feel a bit like a transparent ploy to scare the audience.

The other issue is that **any atmosphere created is ruined by the thrown-in chapters written in script format. This somehow feels both gimmicky and lazy.** There were a few scenes written in script that honestly kind of felt like the author drafted a scene and couldn't be bothered to translate it into normal writing. But okay, let's say Nijkamp genuinely thought it would add to the book. Here's why it doesn't work: the epistolary chapters and the flashback chapters fit in fine, but **the play-script chapters completely throw you out of the story.** I literally thought Nijkamp was planning on some kind of reveal about these chapters being fake because of how misplaced they felt.

I did like the use of **snow-covered Alaska** as a method to create atmosphere - I happen to really like the cold-wintery aesthetic. Honestly, though, I've seen this done better. If you're looking for a book that uses Alaska to create a truly great atmosphere, look to *The Smell of Other People's Houses* instead.

? OH MY DEAR GOD, USE GOOGLE

On the topic of representation.

So this book is really diverse, first of all. It stars an ace lead, her dead best friend is pan and has bpd, there are two side characters who are mlm and people of color. And in my positives section I'm going to discuss the discussion around bpd and narrative depersonalization. But for now, let's talk about the ace lead. Though at one point Corey uses the word, the major plot point framed to *show* that Corey is ace seems to be Corey rejecting Kyra. Which is a major inaccuracy as to what asexuality actually is. The result is that **asexuality is equated to aromanticism by the narrative.** I expect Nijkamp was trying to make this book more palatable to readers who don't know what asexuality is, let alone aromanticism, but I am incredibly unhappy with this as a writing decision and to me, it undermines representation that would've otherwise been really revolutionary.

? SOME LONE POSITIVES?

So the main theme of this book is the trope of the magical mental illness - the idea that someone with mental illness is someone deeply other, the idea that mental illness will make your art greater or suffering will make you deeper. And this book, at its core, is about taking down that trope. That's a *really* compelling theme and I really appreciate it. [If you're looking for more with this, also with super-diverse leads, *Final Draft* by Riley Redgate is calling your name!!]

I will say that Nijkamp has a very **readable** writing style. I finished this in only two sittings and it wasn't a struggle to get through. And while a lot of the book felt to me like smoke-and-mirrors meant to make the readership think things were deeper than they are, I think this could be a good book to consume quickly. It's not going to be a DNF. However, I think plenty of readers will find it easy to see through this book. I'm

starting to doubt if I would like *This Is Where It Ends* if I read it today - Nijkamp is good at emotionally manipulative writing, but I don't think this book is trying to shoot for anything deeper that readers can *truly* connect to.

Find Me: [Blog](#) | [Goodreads](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Youtube](#)

K. says

Trigger warnings: mental health, death of a friend, fire, drowning, suicide.

I've been excited about this book for the better part of a year now. I mean...a YA thriller set in Alaska? Uh, YES. *grabby hands*

Unfortunately, what I got was...confusing, to be honest.

It cuts back and forth in time CONSTANTLY, both in the actual narrative but also in letters and notes and diary entries that were never sent. The story was...trying to be too many things? It was like it was trying to be a contemporary story about the friendship between two teenage girls, one of whom is bipolar. But it was also trying to be a thriller AND a magical realism book. And it ended up that it just didn't do justice to any of the three.

That said, I appreciated (for the most part) the diversity in the story. Corey identifies as asexual, though I'd argue that what she discusses in regards to her feelings is more on the aromantic spectrum. Kyra identifies as pansexual. Two teenage boys are in a relationship, and one of them is Indian. There's plenty of mental health representation, particularly Kyra's bipolar disorder. So that side of things was great.

But overall, I was left confused. And honestly? More than anything, this reminded me of an episode of *The X-Files*. You know, teenage girl in a bizarrely introverted small town starts displaying mysterious powers then dies, outsider comes to town and is greeted with suspicion and disdain, locals become increasingly antagonistic, etcetera.

Unfortunately, Mulder and Scully didn't show up to rescue the situation with alien theories and sass, so...while the Alaskan winter setting was great and the diversity was wonderful, this was ultimately a big ol' disappointment for me.

Dannii Elle says

I have no clue how I actually feel about this book... Actual rating 3.5/5 stars. I think...

Set in the isolated community of Lost Creek, Alaska, this is the story of once-best friends Corey and Kyra. Corey has returned to her former home only to find herself labelled an outsider. But struggling to fit in is the least of the troubles she faces here. In her absence Kyra, the best friend she left behind, slipped below the ice that enshrouds their small community and died a tragic death. Corey seems to be the only who who truly remembers the girl that was lost and is the only one willing to search for answers.

Part of my inability to navigate my feelings about this book is due to how mesmerising I found the quality of writing. I so badly wanted to award this the full 5 stars as I found beauty in every sentence and was

enchanted by the way Nijkamp structured and vividly created such an atmospheric and eerie setting.

However, regardless of my adoration for these aspects, I struggled to fully immerse myself in the story-line. Early on, I was fascinated by the mystery but when the intrigue kept adding and nothing seemed to be resolved I was left a little disappointed. Some semblance of an explanation was garnered about two-thirds of the way through but it felt like an unsatisfactory one, for me, and as so much of the book was still left I was awaiting a thrilling plot twist that never arrived.

Despite my misgivings in this area, I still found this a wonderfully diverse read that discoursed authentically and sensitivity on a variety of real-world topics. I am still so glad to have read this, even if only for the chance to experience such sublime writing, and have this author pegged as one who I will continue to explore.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. Thank you to the author, Marieke Nijkamp, and the publisher, Sourcebooks Fire, for this opportunity.
