



Forbidden

Tabitha Suzuma

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Perfect for readers who enjoyed *Flowers in the Attic*, this is a heartbreaking and shocking novel about siblings Lochan and Maya, their tumultuous home life, and the clandestine, and taboo, relationship they form to get through it.

Seventeen-year-old Lochan and sixteen-year-old Maya have always felt more like friends than siblings. Together they have stepped in for their alcoholic, wayward mother to take care of their three younger siblings. As de facto parents to the little ones, Lochan and Maya have had to grow up fast. And the stress of their lives—and the way they understand each other so completely—has also brought them closer than two siblings would ordinarily be. So close, in fact, that they have fallen in love. Their clandestine romance quickly blooms into deep, desperate love. They know their relationship is wrong and cannot possibly continue. And yet, they cannot stop what feels so incredibly right. As the novel careens toward an explosive and shocking finale, only one thing is certain: A love this devastating has no happy ending.

Forbidden Details

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Author : Tabitha Suzuma

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Download and Read Free Online Forbidden Tabitha Suzuma

From Reader Review Forbidden for online ebook

Debra says

"How can something so wrong feel so right?"

AMAZING.

HEARTBREAKING.

BEAUTIFUL.

POWERFUL.

AND SAD. SO, SO SAD...

Forbidden was not an easy story to read.

In fact, reading it was a real struggle at times.

It made my heart ache and my eyes hurt with unshed tears. Until the very end, when the tears eventually did flow freely.

But in the end, it was all worth it, because Forbidden was such a thoughtprovoking, powerful and emotional story and despite all the anguish and heartbreak in it, it's easily one of the best books I've ever read.



Forbidden is the story about a sixteen year old girl and a seventeen year old boy who both mean the world to each other. Their life isn't an easy one. With a father that has left them several years ago, a mother who drinks more than is good for her and who doesn't have a sense of responsibility for her children whatsoever and 3 younger siblings to take care of, they're going through a rough patch to say the least.

Bills need to be paid, dinner has to be made and the younger children need to be taken care of and all of these tasks fall upon the shoulders of the two older children of the household, Maya and Lochan. But amidst all of the chaos in their lives, there is one constant piece of comfort; the love Maya and Lochie have for each other and the strength that love brings them in order to move forward.

MAYA

"I might appear confident and chatty, but I spend most of my time laughing at jokes I don't find funny, saying things I don't really mean - because at the end of the day that's what we're all trying to do: fit in, one way or another, desperately trying to pretend we're all the same."

"Before there was anything, there was Lochan. When I look back at my life, all sixteen years and a half of it, Lochan was always there."

Maya has always had a special bond with Lochan. She considered him her best friend, and despite him being a year older, they've always been equals. She knows Lochan has trouble connecting to other people and she does whatever she can to make him smile and be happy, even if it's just for a minute. Slowly but surely, however, the feelings she has for him turn into so much more than just the love between siblings. And although she tries to hide it behind smiled and meaningless words, after a while it becomes harder and harder to hide her true feelings for him.

LOCHAN

"Only with Maya can I really be myself. We share the burden together and she is always on my side, by my side. I don't want to need her, to depend on her, but I do. I really do."

Lochan has a really hard time communicating with other people, especially people his own age. At school, he never answers questions in class, never participates in oral assignment, never talks to anyone. He's intelligent and handsome but he has no friends, let alone a girlfriend. The only people he has no trouble speaking to are his brothers and sisters. And the only person he can really be himself with is his slightly younger sister Maya. She's the only one who understands him and supports him no matter what.

Together, Maya and Lochan always pull each other through. They're not only brother and sister, but best friends as well. They're soulmates who can always count and rely on each other. But what happens when their love turns into something more than just the love for a family member? And how come, even though what feels so right and natural to them, is frowned upon by all the rest of society?

This story made me think about those "unconventional" types of relationships and realize that people should be able to decide for themselves who they want to be with. Especially in the case of Maya and Lochie, who love each other so unconditionally, so irrevocably, who are we, "the society" to judge them and decide they can't be together? I think it's wrong to condemn them for expressing their true feelings and that as long as they harm no one else, why shouldn't they be allowed to live their lives together, in peace...

"The human body needs a constant flow of nourishment, air and love to survive. Without Maya, I lose all three; apart we will slowly die."

"At what point do you give up - decide enough is enough? There is only one answer really. Never."

If you want to read a story that will amaze you, move you and stay with you for a very long time, then Forbidden is the perfect kind of read. Days after finishing it, I often still think about this unconventional love story that will make you want to root for the unfortunate ones. Lochie has to be one of the most tragic, loveable and unforgettable characters I've ever come across (view spoiler). All in all, it was an absolute **MUST READ** that will from now on forever reside on my absolute favorites - shelf.

"At the end of the day, it's all about how much you can bear, how much you can endure. Being together, we harm nobody; being apart, we extinguish ourselves. ?"

Angela says

Forbidden was a book I thought would be easily forgettable, and I have never been so wrong. Throw out your moral compass and pick up this book

When I read what this story was about I was weirded out beyond belief... Brother and Sister get it on... No thank you, but after reading the reviews I finally put on my big girl panties and bought it. This book is like the show Shameless but with incest... Yeah I know still sounds insane! The character of this book couldn't have been written better. Maya and Lochan are character I find myself even struggling to sum up in words. (I will say I did end up calling him Loki the whole time so sorry about that Tabitha.) They are strong, they are weak, they are irrational, stupid, genius, wild, and so much more.

I will warn you that this book did start off slow, took around 120 pages to start picking up. When it gets going though it doesn't stop. The last few chapters are the definition of a page turner. This had me laughing, praying, cheering, and then crying my eyes out. Never in my life did I think 1) I would read a book about incest or 2) that I would read a book about incest and end up in tears.

The ending of this book has me so shell shocked and I don't think that feeling is going to be something I'll be able to shake off anytime soon.

It is so rare to come across a book that make you feel so many emotion, makes you question your beliefs, and leaves you utterly breathless. This book is that book.

I will probably have to come back and add more this this review later, or go more into detail on my blog, but right now I'm still just so surprised by how truly moving this book was.

**read this review and more over on our blog:
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Reynje says

So, About Taboo Subjects in YA Literature

Or: Do Teenagers Really Use the Word “Ensnoced”?

Somewhere deep in the world of technical things I don't really understand, there is an algorithm that persisted in listing Forbidden in almost every shelf of personalised recommendations. Based on my previous reading and shelving habits, it insisted that I should read this book. But I dug my heels in: “*Stop trying to make Forbidden happen, Goodreads. It's Not. Going. To. Happen.*” (Because I have a pretty good idea of my own tastes, and sometimes I talk to inanimate objects like that). I guess I could have just clicked that helpful “Not Interested” button. But perversely, I wanted to see how long Goodreads would continue to push Forbidden on me as I carried on updating my shelves.

And the inevitable happened. I decided to read it. There was always the possibility my gut had misinformed me, right? It's happened before.

And thus, after much thought, I have Things To Say about this book. The Things are not going to be overly positive. Hence, if you loved this book – and I know and respect many who do (hi, friends!) – you may not wish to proceed with reading this review. I will make it clear upfront: I did not like this book. And while I apologise in advance to anyone who finds my comments in any way offensive, I do not make apologies for disliking it.

Part of my employment history directly relates to child protection. The sexual, physical and emotional abuse of children was on my radar on a daily basis. No doubt that colours my response to this book to some extent. I freely admit that this affected the way I approached it, read it and am able to process it. I spent a lot of time arguing with myself upon completion: was I simply having a knee-jerk reaction to the subject matter? Why was I responding this way to this particular issue? Was I a hypocrite because I had a different response to other books which contained, arguably, equally controversial subject matter?

My answer, which may not satisfy all, is that it's *not* the subject matter I object to. I am not unfamiliar with incest in works of fiction. Rather, I take issue with *the manner in which it was handled* in the case of Forbidden.

I would like to believe that this book is a stroke of literary genius in which the author masterfully makes use of unreliable, self-deceived narrators to thrust us into and examine their solipsistic minds, subverting the usual use of sympathetic and unsympathetic characters to powerful effect.

However, I suspect that this is not the case.

It's clear to me that Suzuma's heavily introspective, densely descriptive writing style will appeal to many. But personally, I found the prose distastefully soapy and melodramatic. The viewpoints of Lochan and Maya were strikingly similar and also ridden with language that felt awkward, so I was never fully convinced that this was a story narrated by teenagers. What little action takes place in the book is interspersed with long, ponderous interludes of the characters' angsting over their mutual attraction and subsequent horror as they consider the ramifications of it. This is a book largely dependent on the tension (especially sexual) between the characters in order to balance the long internal ruminations which were, even for me, tedious.

However, I was always conscious of Suzuma's presence behind the scenes, pulling the characters' strings. This is especially evident in some of the dialogue, where Lochan and Maya muse on the outside world's hypothetical response to their relationship, to the judgement they would be subjected to should they be found out. At this point, Lochan and Maya ceased to be characters and sounded more like mouthpieces, which bothered me immensely. I am capable of reaching my own opinions and making up my own mind. I do not appreciate being clunked over the head with poorly veiled commentary. I won't go so far as to say that I think there was a particular agenda being pushed - I don't know that, after all. But in these sections the dialogue felt out of place and laboured, in a bald-faced effort to make the reader question, and ultimately sympathise with their predicament.

Similarly, the characters' (Maya in particular) preoccupation with how their love transcends sibling bonds also felt like a manipulative reach for sympathy. I can't help but think this novel would have been all the more powerful had it not relied so heavily upon insistence that the characters don't perceive each other as "brother" and "sister", but rather as "soulmates". Instead of being brutally realistic, straight-talking and heartbreaking, this pushed things into the realms of PNR-style tropes and creepy wish fulfilment for me.

And on the topic of "creepy": Lochan. While I sympathised with his emotional and mental struggles, and I think his experience with anxiety was portrayed with a great deal of insight, I hated the manner in which his mental illness was used as a plot device. I hated the fact that he engaged in sexual activity with a girl who, sister or not, had just suffered a head injury. I hated this book's fixation on his sexual gratification. I have no strong comments on the explicitness of the intimate scenes, that's up to each reader's personal taste. However I objected to the romanticised tone - it's all exploding suns and ecstasy and oh-so-wonderful and it has me wondering what exactly the intention is? To make readers believe in their connection? To simply be honest? To shock?

And a plain fact of the matter is - even if these two were not related by blood - I still would not be shipping them, on the basis of Lochan's propensity for violence and jealousy alone. Again, I do not take issue with the portrayal of dysfunctional relationships in fiction, whatsoever. This is simply, sadly, reality for many. But I do feel that care needs to be taken with the subtext that is being communicated.

I thought the characterisation of the younger siblings was well done, and although Kit occasionally read a little older than his thirteen years, I did sympathise with him. Their interactions and responses to their home situation felt realistic to me, especially the way Willa and Tiffin's awareness of their neglect occasionally seeped through. This, in my opinion, was the most heartbreaking part of the book - the fact that while not fully understanding why, they were cognizant of their abandonment and the fact that their lives were different. While Lochan and Maya have, for all intents and purposes, taken on the parental roles, their inherent immaturity was highlighted by the way their need to get into each other's pants gradually took precedence over everything else. Which is realistic, of course, but felt at odds with the way I thought the story was trying to present them as an object of tragedy.

I have spoken in a previous review about my strong feelings on the commercialisation of grief, and how I deeply resent anything I perceive to be a grab for an emotional reaction. Which is why the ending and epilogue of *Forbidden* made me sick to my stomach. It felt gratuitous and tear-jerky in the most literal sense, a lunge for a strong reader response, the literary equivalent of going for the jugular. I strongly dislike seeing (view spoiler) used this way.

As mentioned earlier, I don't want my rating to be misinterpreted, or taken as a statement that I don't believe these kind of subjects have a place in literature, young adult or otherwise - because that is simply not the case. I just did not care for this approach - which I felt was exploitative, calculated and overwrought.

Obviously, many will disagree. Some will see this as the tragedy of neglect and abuse. Or a thought-provoking challenge to the parameters we put around "acceptable" love. Or a heartbreaking examination of

society failing its young people. Or just a love story. There are plenty of excellent reviews that discuss these interpretations.

But I'm afraid this book simply didn't prove groundbreaking or revelatory to me. What I wanted to be complex and respectful felt melodramatic and toxic, a serious subject sacrificed on the altar of "edginess".

°°°.°..°-°. _· ????? Ροζουλ? Εωσφ?ρος ·_·°-°.·° ·.°°° ★·.·^·.·★ ?????? ?????????
??????? Ταμετο?ρο Αμ says

?να βιβλ?ο που σου προκαλε? ποικ?λα και μπερδεμ?να συναισθ?ματα.Η συγκ?νηση, η κατ?πληξη, η οργ?, ο θυμ?, η θλ?ψη,η συμπ?νοια,ο θαυμασμ?,?ρχονται σε αντιδιαστολ? με την τρυφερ? αγαπη,την ανιδιοτ?λεια,την αξιοπρ?πεια,την αξιοθα?μαστη π?στη και αφοσ?ωση,την αυταπ?ρνηση, τη θυσ?α.....

"?σως να"μην μπορε?ς να κλε?σεις την καρδι? σου σε πρ?γματα που δεν θ?λεις αισθανθε?ς".

?σως ?σο κι αν προσπαθε?ς να αποφ?γεις την ολοκληρωτικ? καταστροφ?,τον αφανισμ?, το ?γκλημα που ερχεται καταπ?νω σου με καταστροφικ?ς συν?πειες, το λ?θος, το ΑΠΑΓΟΡΕΥΜΕΝΟ...αυτ? να σε κυριε?ει ψυχικ?-νοητικ?-σωματικ? και να σε καθοδηγε? θριαμβευτικ? και συγκλονιστικ? στον απ?λυτο χαμ?!

Θα το χαρακτ?ριζα ?να επικ?νδυνο λογοτεχνικ? ταξ?δι που σου ζητ? να αναθεωρ?σεις ?τι σκ?φτεσαι ως κοινωνικ? ταμπο?,ηθικ? καν?να ? ν?μιμο δικα?ωμα.

Και σ?γουρα δεν ε?ναι για ?λους...

Παρ?λα αυτ? αν το επιχειρ?σεις σε συγκλον?ζει πραγματικ?!!!

Καλ? αν?γνωση.

Πολλο?ς ασπασμο?ς.

Whitney Atkinson says

4.5 stars

I have NO idea who allowed this to get published in the YA genre. It's risky, disturbing, and altogether, a masterpiece. It's not inappropriate just to be obscene; there's a moral behind it. It's so hard to describe. Lochan and Maya are self-aware, trapped in this miserable lifestyle that is so impossible yet I found myself absurdly empathizing with them. A book that tugs on the heart strings, and definitely veered in a direction I wasn't expecting.

The reason I took off half a star is because this book was a bit "borderline" for me. Borderline too cheesy. Borderline too unrealistic. However, this was written so beautifully and and it is so different than anything I've ever read before, I have to give it credit.

(also i'm upset because I didn't cry reading this book and I was so expecting that I would. I guess I jinxed it.)

Marie Lu says

The second book this year to make me bawl my eyes out (the first was Code Name Verity, by Elizabeth Wein). I've never seen such a taboo topic like sibling incest handled in such a poignant and heartwrenching way. It's a testament to Ms. Suzuma's skill that I found myself desperately wishing for Maya and Lochan to be together. Simply amazing.

Ninoska Goris says

Español - English

Si obviamos el tema del incesto y de lo prohibido, esta hubiera sido una hermosa historia de amor.

Pero no lo es.

Es una historia devastadora cuando dos hermanos se enamoran perdidamente uno del otro.

Esta situación se dió simplemente por las complicaciones familiares en que viven. El padre abandonó a su familia. La madre no se ocupa de sus hijos por estar pretendiendo que no tiene responsabilidades y estar bebiendo todos los días.

Los hermanos mayores Lochan y Maya, de 18 y 16 años son los que se encargan de sus tres hermanos pequeños de 13, 8 y 5 años y de todas las labores de la casa.

Desde pequeños Lochan y Maya tienen una relación muy cercana y se tienen un amor incondicional, pero no es hasta que Maya sale con un compañero del colegio que se dan cuenta que aparte del amor de hermanos, también se quieren como algo mas, que no pueden vivir el uno sin el otro.

Pero todo se agrava con que en el país donde viven las relaciones de incesto, incluyendo las consensuadas, conllevan penas de cárcel. Y que además esto conllevaría a la disolución de la familia y que llevaran a sus hermanos a hogares de acogida.

Hasta el último momento estuve esperando a que la madre se arrepintiera y confesara que Lochan o Maya no eran hijos de ella, pero eso no forma parte de la historia.

Yo me imaginaba que tenía que terminar en tragedia, que no podía tener un final feliz, pero nunca me podría haber imaginado como quedó.

If we ignore the subject of incest and forbidden, this would have been a beautiful love story.

But is not.

It's a devastating story when two brothers fall madly in love with each other.

This situation was simply due to the family complications in which they live. The father abandoned his family. The mother does not take care of her children by pretending she has no responsibilities and drinking every day.

The older brothers Lochan and Maya, aged 18 and 16, are in charge of their three little brothers of 13, 8 and 5 years and all the housework.

Since little Lochan and Maya have a very close relationship and have an unconditional love, but it is not until Maya goes out with a schoolmate who realize that apart from the love of brothers, they also want as something else, that they can not live without each other.

But everything is aggravated by the fact that where they live incest relations, including consensual ones, carry to prison. And that in addition this would lead to the dissolution of the family and to take their brothers to foster homes.

Until the last moment I waited for the mother to repent and confess that Lochan or Maya were not her children, but that is not part of the story.

I imagined that it had to end in tragedy, that I could not have a happy ending, but I could never have imagined how it was.

Emily May says

After reading recent comments, I feel the need to stress an important point about this book: it is not about accepting incest. It's not a book like *Flowers in the Attic* or *How I Live Now* where incest is romanticised. It is a sad story about the danger of dysfunctional families and should never be regarded as another angsty tale of forbidden love, even though the title suggests otherwise.

So, first let me say that this was a very brave book to tackle such a controversial subject matter and the author must have some real bottle to take it on. I know quite a few people who would read the synopsis and put it straight back down, shaking their heads at the thought of another "Flowers In The Attic" scenario. But this book is far from that. "Flowers In The Attic" was about two teenagers who had grown up isolated from members of the opposite sex, all they had during puberty was each other and their sexual relationship was based on desires that are natural but they had been prevented from feeling them in a natural environment. But "Forbidden" tells the tale of two teenagers, Lochan (17 - later 18) and Maya (16), who both go to school with other people their own age, including plenty from the opposite sex but they have been forced to live quite unlike their other schoolmates when at home. Neglected at an early age by their mother after the sudden departure of their father, Lochan and Maya begin to play the roles of parents to their three younger siblings who they refer to as "the children". This ensues a relationship in which they support each other and share parenting roles like a couple would and not at all like a brother and sister. They are prompted to feel that they are related by some biological accident.

Characters:

Lochan is an excellently constructed character, when he is narrating the story you feel his pain every second of the way. You almost feel his nerves when he struggles to speak to people and, most of all, you really care about him. He's a troubled guy and that becomes apparent from the very first page when he is sat in class; he

has many sides, all of them passionate. And then there's Maya. Maybe it's the strength of Lochan's character that does it, but I just don't feel any real connection with Maya and I don't feel like the author did either. For a female author she writes her male characters far better than the females, a fact also true of her other books. Maya is bland and, instead of feeling her pain and pitying her like you do with Lochan, she seems whiny and irritating. Also, incredibly naive. Now, I know there are plenty of pretty girls who are virgins at 16 and much older; I also know that there are pretty girls that haven't been kissed at 16, but I don't know of any quite so innocent... I mean, she goes to high school for godsakes. Lochan's blushing at sexual hints is forgiven because of his character that has been built up around his timidity, but Maya is supposed to be outgoing and full of life to balance him out. But it's hard to believe she knew what a penis was before this with Lochan. Ok, so you get that Maya didn't do it for me. But Kit did, surprisingly. I was expecting a throwaway character in the form of a bratty teenager, and yes, we got the bratty teenage stuff but Kit was a lot more than that. I loved the other side to him, he wanted to rebel and he didn't like that his older brother got to boss him around but he also understood the importance of them staying together and he wanted to keep them away from the eyes of social services. I felt really sorry for him when he's chasing the police car near the end, even though it was partly his fault, but I did like what it signified about the relationship between him and Lochan. His other siblings were just tools to move the plot along, Tiffin is only memorable because of his unfortunate name. Willa, though seemingly a sweetheart, was only there to reinforce the idea that Maya and Lochan were like parental figures, not siblings.

Ending:

If my review was of the ending alone then the book would have got 5 stars without a doubt. It was shocking, beautiful and tragic. That one scene after Lochan has been arrested, stayed with me afterwards and I was crying for ages. I got to a couple of chapters before the end and I thought "well, yeah, it is a good book", but the ending propelled it into awesomeness. Even if the story had been poor, it would have been worth reading just to get to that ending. I loved the simplicity of the final chapter - it could have been dragged out but it wasn't and that made it all the more effective. The final scene is told so well, you can see it clearly in your mind, imagine exactly how it would have looked. I cannot fault the ending at all.

The Incest Issue:

I understand what this book was trying to achieve and the question it was putting to the reader about different types of love. I feel the need to compare it to "Lolita" by Nabokov and the way in which Humbert is almost forgiven his perversity at the end and the reader is with him, inside his pain and wishing that Lolita would be with him. Paedophilia is viewed as one of the most disgusting acts possible, and yet Nabokov manages to get the reader to forgive Humbert, feel sorry for him, almost excuse him. Suzuma with "Forbidden" wants you to question the taboo that is incest. She is not saying "incest is okay", that's not the point. Like the many 'coming out' novels, Suzuma wants you to recognise a different type of love from the norm. Assuming they didn't have children because of the genetic issue and both were consenting... why legally prevent two people from loving each other just because they came out of the same woman? Can you answer it? Without the bible and comments like "it's just wrong" - do you have an answer? I don't. I think it's weird and creepy and makes me feel slightly sick but I can't put my finger on why the law forbids it (note: this does not include having children, because there are obvious reasons why this would be wrong). That said, for me Tabitha Suzuma didn't quite manage it the way Nabokov did. But I must stress how much I enjoyed this novel and how much it really made me think.

Candace says

Wow! That was some deeply disturbing and super depressing stuff. I'm thinking this was somewhere

between a 3 1/2 and a 4 star read for me. This one will take some time to digest. In fact, as I write this review days later I'm still not sure exactly what to make of this story.

Lochan and Maya have been forced to grow up too quickly. As the oldest, these two siblings have had to take on the responsibility of raising their three younger siblings. Their drunken, deadbeat mother breezes in and out of their lives when she chooses, leaving all of the day to day responsibilities up to her two oldest children. As a result, Lochan and Maya have a relationship that more closely resembles that of a husband and wife than that of a brother and sister.

Since I knew where this story was heading from the start, I wasn't surprised at all when the siblings' relationship started to take on a more romantic feel. However, I was incredibly surprised when I found myself rooting for them as a couple. Going into this book, part of me had convinced myself that they were going to be step-siblings or half-siblings or some other relation that would somehow lessen the taboo nature of their relationship. That wasn't the case and I had to deal with some very uncomfortable feelings. It was so wrong, but they were just so damn right for each other at the same time.

Okay, I know what you're thinking. You'd be right too. Awkward, right? I'm going to get it out and just say what we're all thinking, "Ew!" I'm not going to try and deny that this was some seriously messed up stuff. Just the thought of incest makes me cringe. To say the least, this was a very uncomfortable read as a result.

Nonetheless, I found myself hoping that Lochan and Maya would somehow get a HEA. Even as I knew it was totally improbable, I wanted them to be happy. No teenagers ever deserved happiness more than these two. They bore the weight of the world on their shoulders. Right to the end, they sacrificed for their younger siblings.

Of course, this is not that kind of story. This is the type of story that you go into knowing that it will break your heart...and it does. I cried big, fate tears and probably went through half a box of Kleenex while reading this story.

Aptly titled, 'Forbidden' is taboo and controversial. While I won't try to justify incest, consensual or not, I will say that this story was a heartbreakingly beautiful love story. You will fall in love with each of the siblings, as you hate their worthless mother. You'll respect Lochan and Maya for their strength and dedication to their family. You will feel their love, anger, and desperation, even as you curse the injustice of it all. No way around it, you will FEEL while reading this story.

As much as anything else, this story made me feel conflicted. I usually don't waver much in my convictions. However, this book made me question my values and morals. I found myself pondering "what if" more than I was comfortable with. Days later, I have to say that this story still has me feeling unsettled.

Will it make you highly uncomfortable? Yes. Would I recommend it? Absolutely! In my opinion, the books that challenge the status quo and make me look at life through a different lens are the best kinds of books. Agree or disagree, but consider alternate viewpoints. Books like this aren't necessarily there to change what you believe, so much as they are there to make you examine why you believe what you do and consider other perspectives. Are there situations in which there should be exceptions to some steadfast rules of morality? This book will make you think about that type of thing.

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

This is a review I've put off writing for over 3 years now.

It's always hard finding the words for a book I loved so much. I feel like everything that can be said about this book already has been said, and far more eloquently. As verbose I can be sometimes, it's so difficult to find the words to write in favor of a book I truly love.

To put it simply, I will just reiterate what so many other reviewers have said before about it: **This book broke me, completely and utterly. In the very worst ways, in the very best ways.**

This book's subject is quite frankly, not to everyone's tastes. I think most readers will either be a) appalled or b) touched and moved by this book. The subject matter and how it is handled ensures that there is no grey line. You will either love it, or you will hate it. There's going to be very few opinions in-between. I think it is a completely divisive book.

If you start reading this book thinking it's going to try to convince you to fuck your brother/sister or that it's ok to screw around with them, you would be wrong. I don't think there is a message in this book as far as "it's ok to do X or Y given Z circumstance." I do not feel that the author is trying to impose some sort of morality or send a message of acceptance of incest. It is just a story, albeit an extremely well-written story. It is about two people who have come to rely on each other, having been forced to grow up ahead of their time, under circumstances beyond their control. It is a survivor's bond, of sorts. It is a relationship based on friendship, mutual experiences, trust, love...and a shared background of hardship. The two people just happened to be brothers and sisters.

I'm not going to take a side and say whether the relationship was correct, or morally repugnant, or abusive. What I can say is that this book **sold me on the idea of Lochan and Maya**, and how their relationship eventually wound up to what it was.

I think it's a lot harder for people to accept the idea of contemporary incest. The cases we've read about these days in the news like the parents abusing and impregnating their own kids, are pretty damned horrific, and I do not judge anyone at all for choosing to stay away from this book and its subject matter. It is an extremely hard issue to address, much less in this manner. I think society is more open...wrong word, not so much open, but more like **grudgingly accepting** of incest in the past because it was a part of history within ruling dynasties, and therefore viewed as inevitable or even acceptable within some settings and places. It's certainly out there a lot lately, with the rampant incest in House Lannister between Jamie and Cersei, with the "shipping" of Cesare and Lucretia in *The Borgias*. Hell, there are awkward fanfiction of *Supernatural's* Wincest all over the place. However, putting this subject in a contemporary setting, with realistic characters, is a totally different story.

Maybe it's easier for me to take the concept of incest lightly, having no siblings of the opposite sex, but I entered this book with an open mind and this book turned out to be such a reward. Lately, my reviews have been set out to prove a point, to prove the rating that I wound up giving the book is justified. I tend to use quotes when permitted, and I will highlight most of the relevant points to emphasize the facts as I make note of them. There will be none such here, because if I do it for this book, I will have to reread it, and that's not an experience I wish to repeat.

Did I say earlier that it broke me? Because it did. There are books I love that I can reread repeatedly, and this is not one of them. I'm not an emotional person; I was, but life tends to slowly erase most of our weakness, and the child who once cried in 5th grade during a class reading of *Where the Red Fern Grows* has grown up to be an adult who doesn't blink at seeing blood and guts onscreen and who laughs her way through the majority of tearjerkers films. Life has a tendency to desensitize the most delicate of personalities.

Which is why I was so utterly unprepared for the pure visceral reaction this book wrought upon me. Which is why after an all-night marathon session of reading, at 6 AM, I found myself **muffling my choking, heaving**

sobs into a pillow so that my sister wouldn't hear me from the next room to save myself from having to reply with "**I just read this book about a brother and sister who fell in love, and it was really sad.**" Talk about awkward. I've cried that hard about five times in my life, and if one of those times happens to be this book...judge me how you will.

You might end up loving this book as much as I do, you might end up absolutely revolted by it. However your opinion might fall in the end, **I think this book at least deserves to be read.**

Lyndsey says

So... *awkward pause*

How many of you little sisters out there have come to a point in your life when you look at your older brother and think "Yeah, I'd hit that," and not in the *punch-you-in-the-arm* kind of way?

Raise your hand. No one? Oh - you haven't?! Really? Are you sure?!

Well, maybe it's for the best that you've never thought about your sibling like that. And maybe you wouldn't be interested in this book. Or maybe you still would... Let's see, shall we?

Now, I'm going to be very blunt about the premise of this book. This book involves **incest**. It is a graphic depiction of a brother and sister who struggle with their personal lives as a result of Disappearing Parent Syndrome. They begin to fall for and explore each other, physically and emotionally.

There is actually a condition called "genetic sexual attraction" that can lead to relatives (most commonly, those who meet as adults) to be sexually attracted to each other and may possibly be a result of attraction to similar facial structure. You might know a famous almost-couple who *may or may not* have suffered from this condition...

And, of course, there are **the Royals** who would take a look at their first cousin and think "Man, I need to get me a piece of THAT."

Or rather... more accurately, "Cheerio! I say I shall fancy a bit of the rumpy pumpy with that lass."

Incest has a very long and sordid history. As long as there are relatives, there will be incest. Unless humans soon evolve into a Vulcan-like race that suppress their emotions and always base their decisions upon logic. Which sounds *most* illogical.

Who should read this:

Let's just say that "brotherly love" or "sisterly love" is not for everyone. In fact, it's not for *most* people. Firstly: The large majority of siblings just aren't interested in each other. Second: If everyone participated in it - the human race would quickly devolve and be lost into genetic disorder. That's just genetics.

Sorry, I just seriously can't stop with the Star Wars thing.

I suggest that only MATURE teens read this.

It would be completely accurate for me to say that I have NEVER read a book like this in my life. Forbidden is the very *definition* of sexual tension.

Let's face it. Teens have raging hormones. I know I did. I would have in NO way been able to handle this book as a young teen. I already wanted to do all kinds of naughty things without having an influence like this in my life, and I know that if I had read it before I had matured hormonally - I would have rushed out and tried to seduce the first "off limits" guy I could find. And I could have done a lot of damage to myself and other people. I was not emotionally mature enough to handle this book then and many young girls will be in the same situation that I was.

It is difficult to say for sure how or to whom this book should be marketed. This is a young **adult** book with ADULT content. I am in no way an advocate of censorship, but honestly some teens are just NOT ready for the material in this book. It's just my recommendation that this book not be taken lightly. This isn't the new generation's Princess Bride. This book deals with things that not every teen needs to or would want to read about. All I'm saying is please, please - use discretion. Teens need to decide whether they are really interested and prepared for this book; they may even need help making their decision.

Obviously, if a teen wants to read about certain issues, they will probably find a way. But I get the feeling that a lot of people wouldn't necessarily realize just how graphic this book turns out to be without researching beforehand.

Personally, I really enjoyed it and couldn't put this book down. But I am an adult. Not to mention an **only child**.

Sometimes discouraging teens from doing something can lead to more curiosity on their part. But you could always use reverse psychology. If a parent said something like, "Oh, all my friends are reading that in book club, Hun," what teen wouldn't immediately put that book back on the shelf without even opening it. Just sayin'.

If you have a sibling close to your own age and never want to think of them as anything other than a sibling, maybe you should avoid this book. I have zero brothers and sisters, so I can't speak to whether or not this could change the way someone sees their brother or sister.

What I got out of this book:

I liked the book and story, apart from almost all of the characters being absolute douches most of the time, particularly the mother. The pace was involving and addictive, but I'm still rather disturbed by the whole thing. Maybe that's the point?

Mostly, I'm left wondering what the message of this book is. That sex is bad and bad things happen because of it? Or that incest shouldn't be illegal?

I guess what I took from it was that perhaps if people weren't so intolerant and judgmental, others wouldn't be driven to self-destruction so easily. Judgement not only hurts those it is directed toward, it can also hurt those doing the directing. Intolerance is a slow-working parasite, draining the empathy and joy out it's host and replacing it with it's own fear and discontent.

Intolerance is just fear in disguise. And you know what that means. Fear leads to anger... Anger leads to hate... Hate leads to suffering.

I'm not a big fan of judgement. I was judged most of my adolescent life, so I'm going to skip over any morality issue. No one is taking advantage of anyone else in this book. There isn't forcefulness or blackmail. It is just an anomaly of love. Or an anomaly of lust.

Despite the blunt statement at the beginning of this review, honestly, I don't think this book is about *incest*. It's about making the best of a bad situation. It's about overcoming the struggles of abandonment and loneliness.

Sadly, it is all too common an occurrence. Disappearing fathers, mothers chasing their youth and social lives instead of their children, and the kids, left to pick up the pieces of their broken family.

On a lighter note: apparently, this book has already awakened non-existent latent desires in *me*, an adult in a committed relationship, because the other night I had a dream that I had a step-brother and that I was totally making out with him in public. Not quite as awkward as a biological brother, but still pretty damn awkward. Then, of course, there is the possibility that my latent desires had nothing to do with the step-brother and everything to do with being in *public*. Yeah, that sounds much better...let's go with that.

Christy says

My second time reading this one was no easier than the first, in fact... it may have been more difficult. I would like to say I would never read this again, its too hard, but I know I will. One of my favorite books ever, it's not an easy read, and it's not for everyone, but I still stand by this: The most beautiful book I have ever read. LOVE IT! Lochie and Maya are unforgettable characters. This is an incredible and unforgettable story.

My original review posted 12.5.12:

You can close your eyes to the things you do not want to see, but you cannot close your heart to the things you do not want to feel.

I am a **complete mess- a total wreck** after reading this book. I'm not sure if I've ever felt quite as devastated after any book I have ever read.

Two people in love- a love that nobody else could possibly understand.

This is a love story. Between Lochan and Maya. Two best friends, who happen to be brother and sister. "You're not just my brother, you're my best friend." Lochie and Maya are not typical teenagers. After being abandoned by their father, and having an absent mother, who spends way more time with her younger boyfriend than at home, Lochie and Maya bear the responsibility of running the household and caring for

their three younger siblings. They love each other and count on each other. They are not much like siblings, more like partners. In school, Lochie is a little socially awkward. But at home with Maya, he is able to be himself completely.

“No one’s ashamed of you Lochie. God, how could anyone be? We all know that without you this family would fall apart.”

Only with Maya can I really be myself. We share the burden together and she is always on my side, by my side. I don’t want to need her, to depend on her, but I do, I really do.

Lochie and Maya both started to develop romantic feelings for each other. Neither of them know what to do with these feelings, they try to fight them, but you can’t help how you feel.

“There are no laws, no boundaries, on feelings. We can love each other as much and as deeply as we want. No one, Maya, no one can ever take that away from us.”

“We haven’t done anything wrong! How can love like this be called terrible when we’re not hurting anyone?”

“How can something so wrong feel so right?”

I know there is a huge stigma about love between siblings, but I swear, while reading this book- you will be rooting for them and their relationship. I wanted nothing for than for Lochie and Maya to be able to be together, love each other and have a happy ending. They loved each other so much and they just wanted to be together.

“You’ve always been my best friend, my soul mate, and now I’ve fallen in love with you, too. Why is that such a crime? I want to be able to hold you and kiss you and- and do all the things people in love are allowed to do. I want to spend the rest of my life with you.”“We will. We’ll find a way, Maya, we have to.”

This book was beautifully written. The characters were wonderful. I loved Lochan and Maya so much. It is a book that will have you contemplating everything you’ve assumed is right or wrong. Why are people so judgmental? Who is to decide who can and can’t love each other and be together? Why is it anyone’s business? If their love is consensual and not hurting anyone, what is the problem? I don’t see one personally. I do understand family members should never be able to procreate for obvious reasons, but If they just want to be together whats so wrong with that???

“They’ll never stop us. Not as long as this is what we both want. But you’ve got to stop thinking it’s wrong, Lochie. That’s just what other people think; it’s their problem, their stupid rules, their prejudices.”

The end of this book seriously broke my heart. I can’t even think about it with out crying. Not only did I cry while reading, I cried after reading, I am still crying writing this. Such a tragic ending. I am hurting. I wanted so much more for them. (view spoiler) The writing was excellent, the story was one I will never forget. A ‘forbidden’ love story that **everyone** should read!!!

Read: 12-2012

Re-Read: 5-2013

Wendy Darling says

This is the story of a boy and a girl who fall in love. Lochan and Maya are best friends who have known each other their entire lives and have helped each other and fiercely loved one another through the many brutally painful experiences of growing up.

The thing is, they also happen to be brother and sister, and the unholy mess of the repercussions from their choices looms over this entire story.

No one who picks up a book like this can be unaware of the potential pitfalls. It's all too easy for an author to resort to the tasteless exploitation of sticky sentiment or breathy fumbblings that heighten the excitement of a taboo relationship. What you'll find instead with *Forbidden* is a book written with stunning insight and incredible compassion, and two characters who will absolutely break your heart.

There is very little dialogue in this novel, and the narrative alternates in chapters between Lochan and Maya's points of view. As such, the reader gets to know both of them very well and experiences in minute detail the complicated terror of their lives at home. The two of them essentially function as the parents of three younger siblings in their household, as they have no father and their alcoholic mother neglects them for weeks at a time. The relationship between 17-year-old Lochan and 16-year-old Maya, already close since they were children, changes subtly and realistically as they gradually become aware of each other as adults.

The clarity of vision and strength and selflessness of both these characters is unparalleled in any young adult book I've ever read, and the way the author draws the reader in with their relationship is astounding. The intimacy and companionship, the joy and maturity, and the self-doubt and heavy responsibilities of these two young people drawn together in a terrible situation is described with extraordinary empathy and understanding.

Without the cruelty and selfishness of similarly challenged characters in books like Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden* or the confused, casual amorality of Janet Inglis' characters in the novels *Darling* and its follow-up *Father of Lies*, *Forbidden* intelligently and passionately explores emotions that feel desperately genuine and impossibly tragic. As the book builds unbearably to its unforgettable and devastating conclusion, the things that Lochan and Maya will sacrifice for the ideals of love and responsibility are astounding.

This is perhaps not a perfect book, but it is one that may open up a tiny crack in your armor and flood you with unexpected feeling. Whatever your pre-conceived notions about the sensitive subject of this novel, I defy anyone with a heart to experience the vibrant, pulsing emotions in this story and remain unmoved. I wept like a child--I bet you will, too.

This review may also be found in The Midnight Garden.

Nomes says

I am out on my own little limb here in saying I did not care for this book *waves to all my goodreads buds who love it to the max*

It is not the subject matter that irked me but rather the heavy-handed and melodramatic way in which it was handled.

This book, IMO, is the equivalent to a daytime drama* ~ complete with sappy character names (Lochan, Maya, Kit, Tiffin and Willa are the children), over-wrought "true love" sentiments, parental issues of alcoholism, abandonment and abuse, and an oh-my-gosh extreme climax (designed either to make a statement or just for forbidden love shock angle?).

The love Lochan feels for Maya (his sister) is all-consuming. In his mind it is love, no doubt, but it is a dark, all-consuming force. He is possessive, jealous, brooding and manipulative as he clings (and wrestles) with his desire for his sister. His intense love for her, and the way in which he declares it, is reminiscent of the romance Edward and Bella share in TWILIGHT (in intensity/forbiddenness/ and i-would-rather-die-than-face-the-world-without-you sentiments). It's hard-core, and Suzuma goes all out with poetic prose and cheesy statements.

While Lochan's behaviour is certainly plausible (in a teen who's view of himself and the world is so polarised), I struggle with that version of "love" being shown as romantic ~ and being written in such a way to gain the sympathy of readers. It is rather creepy and obsessive (although softened somewhat by Lochan's own social phobias/mental health problems which make him a character some readers would long to care for).

The only characters I really cared for in this book were Lochan and Maya's siblings, who are neglected and abandoned and I genuinely ached for them (although their problems take a back seat behind the incest-love-drama)

I found the prose a little heavy to trudge through and the sex scenes a bit too explicit (okay, they were too tackily explicit) for my preference.

FORBIDDEN is like a Romeo & Juliet forbidden love story with a sensationalist incest twist and an ending designed to shock and enrage readers on behalf of the characters. I get why it has garnered so much curiosity and also why so many people are gasping and weeping at the end. It is gripping and shocking and makes for an unrelenting read. It's quite dark and I felt like a heavy weight was sitting on my chest as I was reading it.

Unfortunately, melodrama and all-consuming sweeping love acts/declarations in a "day-time drama setting" are just not really my thing.

Jude says

So Wrong It's Right...

Shit. This book was... Shit. I'm at a loss of words, so emotionally drained that I am actually cursing. And I never Curse. Period. So shit.

This book reminds me of Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher; not in the story, they are total and complete opposites, but the same feeling afterwards. A hollow in me, at the pit of my stomach, hands shaking and my heart nowhere in sight. It was an Amazing book. Not the kind of amazing where I'm jumping up and down begging you to read it, but the sort of amazing where you are just staring at an empty wall before you and the only word you can think of is... Shit. And then you exhale.

The relationship between Maya and Lochan is complicated from the beginning. In my words, here's how I

see it: There's a line between brothers and sisters. You can tell to each other your most intimate secrets, share a room, even sleep in the same bed for fear of nightmares; each other the half of a whole. But you never become more, because of that line. That label that says Brother/Sister. And that's okay.

But when Lochan and Maya are forced to watch over their siblings, pay the bills and take care of just about everything in the house since a very young age, that line, that label, becomes blurry; and it is not something that happens in a blink of an eye in the book, it's something that came from long before. So it was only a matter of time that this line dissipated and they fell in love with each other.

This may all sound so disgusting but I never felt repulsed during the book, and I think this is what made it Amazing. Tabitha Suzuma managed to make their love relationship seem so right and not once did I forget they were brother and sister. It wasn't like "OMG! I had totally forgotten they were siblings!" No, I was conscious always of what they were and it never felt wrong.

By the ending my heart was beating so hard I thought it would just burst out of my chest, and in the last page it just stopped. I can feel that hollow. My shaking hands. And the amazingness of it all.

Ask me if I recommend this book and I'll say yes. No doubt. No hesitation.

Forget it, this book wasn't amazing. this book was Epic. Life Changing in every sense of the word. No kidding. This book has many lessons, and the one that stood most with me is that I am no one to judge someone, or a situation or just about anything. I don't think my review does any justice to this book but. . . you should just read it.

Wow.

After the initial shock review:

I still feel the hollow, and it hurts to think of the book. Even though it hurts I can't stop thinking about it, I'm still in awe, but I can think more clearly now! And I totally forgot to mention some things: The writing is fantastic! I loved it. It made it so easy to flow through the book, practically poetic. Also, I was a bit thrown of at times when they used words like *Bloody Great!* Or *Hey Mate!* And *snogging*. The Author is from the UK so it's natural, it still got me into giggles when I read them....

And one last thing: I'm Emotional. I cry easily and get deply engaged with books. I saw reviews that described the ending as Amazing and Cool.... I was crying ^^ depends on how you are I guess, but the one thing most bloggers agree with: Read it. :)

More Reviews Over At In Between

Dd says

I hate this book!!

I hate,hate,hate it!!

I thought I was prepared.And I was,to deal with a story depicting a forbidden and taboo relationship.

But....

But I was not prepared for this!!

I was NOT prepared to encounter something so pure,so beautiful,so tormented....something so stunning!!

I was not prepared for him.

Lochan.

Hello Readers!!

I find myself utterly captivated by **terrible beauty** this book possesses.

I was disgusted.I was exploited.I wept.I screamed.

But I could not stop.

I became that proverbial moth who can't stop even though it knows it will burn.

And I did burn.

So tell me Readers,how do I explain Lochan to you??How do I explain something so exquisitely beautiful in a few mere words??How do I do it??

I can't.

"At what point does a fly give up trying to escape through a closed window - do its survival instincts keep it going until it is physically capable of no more,or does it eventually learn after one crash too many that there is no way out?At what point do you decide that enough is enough?"

Meet **Kit**--

A 13 year old being corroded away by pain,bitterness and hatred.He does everything to refute authority.Does everything to drive Lochan mad.

Meet **Tiffin**---

A beautiful,spirited young boy who has to beg for every scrap of attention from his mother.He knows that when Maya tells him that their Mom actually cares about them,she's lying.

Meet Willa--

"At the age of five she has already come to terms with one of the life's harshest lessons:that the world isn't fair..."

And now meet with Maya---

A 16 year old girl who has to play the role of a mother for those three younger siblings.Because their mother is too drunk and selfish to even care.And their father left them years ago.

The only reason she can cope with a cheerful visage....is Lochan.

"I can't bear to think I might have lost our closeness,our friendship,our trust.He was always so much more than just a brother.He is my soul mate,my fresh air,the reason I look forward to getting up every morning.I always knew I loved him more than anyone else in the world..."

Yes.She loves Lochan.The kind of love that has no boundaries.Which is endless.

"How can something so wrong feel so right?"

Readers,I will not try to justify their love.Because no matter however I present it, it will be a difficult concept to grasp.

"Let's face it,this is all pretty sick.Maybe the rest of the world's right.Maybe we're just a couple of fucked-up,emotionally disturbed teenagers...."

So no,I will not try to justify it.

"There are no laws,no boundaries on feelings.We can love each other as much and as deeply as we want.No one,Maya,no one can ever take that away from us."

And nothing prepared me for the ending....

"At what point do you give up - decide enough is enough?"

There is only one answer really.

NEVER."

~~~~~  
I guess that's all for now.'Cause no matter what I do,I will not be able to convey the beauty of this story to you.

**Goodbye Readers.**

**P.S-I LOVE this book!!**

---

**Arlene says**

**Rating Clarification 10 stars**

**Or rather... the highest rating I can ever imagine giving a book**

As an avid reader you come across dozens and dozens of books hoping the next one you pick up will either move you to uncontrollable tears, challenge your belief system, take you on an emotional rollercoaster, show you love, make you feel hate, sigh with happiness, leave you with a sense of longing, or simply just close the book when you're done and say to yourself "wow, that was absolute perfection." This book didn't just do one of those, it did ALL of the above and then some.

For those that know me, they can attest to the hard fact that I don't cry over books...ever. Well, I can no longer claim that fame. My eyes are still watery as I write this review. I am truly exhausted emotionally and psychologically after reading this book and all I can think of is torturing myself by starting at page one all over again and reading through this masterpiece from the beginning to end. Angst to the 10th degree... BY FAR!

I don't think I'll ever...EVER... forget this book or Lochan and Maya for that matter. The content shocked me but the writing and delivery left me in awe. I truly believe not just any author could have taken this taboo subject and delivered it with such flawless execution that you begin to root for the main characters as they make choices and feel emotions that are so NOT socially, or legally, acceptable.

**Forbidden** takes the reader into the lives of Lochan and Maya Whitely. They are two teenage brother and sister forced to care for a family of five when the father exits their life and the worst mother in the entire world abandons them. Together they raise Kit, Tiffin and Willa, and do their best to keep their family together despite ongoing challenges and struggles. Lochan and Maya cry together, comfort each other, and see one another's vulnerable side, but unfortunately, they also share a burden inexplicable to the outside world. Their burden is a love so strong that it crosses boundaries society deems unacceptable as it goes deeper than sibling affection.

I despised the loser mother of this book with such a passion, and that just propelled my level of compassion for Lochan and Maya. My heart broke for the smaller children as they learned too early that for some... life just isn't fair. For Lochan and Maya, I was in constant angst as the logical side of my brain wanted to counsel them and tell them, "no.no.no, guys you can't do that. it's not right." But at the same time, the emotional side of my brain was thinking, "oh thank gawd they have each other. what they are doing isn't wrong." Then I'd stand back and think WTF did I just say? My mental babble... or rather battle was constant and the conflict I felt was emotionally charged to a level I wasn't prepared for, especially the ending. But to be honest with myself, I wanted them to love each other the way that felt natural to them... so yes, at the end of the day... I rooted them on. There you have it. To anyone that feels this is disgusting, I challenge you to read this book because believe me, it's insane to feel or see yourself seamlessly accepting and rooting for two people as they

cross that forbidden boundary.

I don't know what else to say but that I don't regret reading this book one bit and I certainly don't feel guilty about my feelings for the main characters and their choices. I absolutely love and slightly curse this book for how and what it made me feel and I know for certainty that I'll read it over again... and again... and again.. I tend to be on the conservative side with the books I recommend to my fellow avid readers, and this one would be one that I'd probably not openly share and say, "you must read this book" but if you do, I'll be here when you're done and we can talk or cry together. :(

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## Aestas Book Blog says

\*SOB SOB SOB\*

*“How could something so wrong feel so right?”*

**This book reduced me to a inconsolable, uncontrollably sobbing, shaking, and wailing WRECK!! My heart is utterly SHATTERED !!!!! Why? Why?? WHY????**

I have no idea how to write anything that describes the depths to which my heart ACHES! Its like a physical pain. The ending of this book was “heart-shattering”. Pure, gut-wrenching, PAIN.

It takes the concept of a “forbidden love” to a whole new level. It does not have a HEA and the ending is guaranteed rip your heart to shreds.

The story is raw, emotional to an extreme, powerful, achingly painful, beautiful, and devastatingly tragic.

I was beyond apprehensive about this story because, yes, **this is a love story between a brother and sister** (\*cringe/gulp\*, right?). It is only for the most open minded and non-judgmental readers. But I absolutely PROMISE you, after reading their story, you will be wishing they could have a happy ending.

With a self-centered, uncaring, and alcoholic mother and a father who abandoned their family years ago, siblings Lochan (17) and Maya (16) have always felt more like friends than siblings – being the defacto parents to their 3 younger siblings – 13-year-old Kit who is unhappy, self-destructive, and rebelling against life, mischevious little brother Tiffin, and sweet adorable baby sister Willa who is too young to understand the desperation all around her. Lochan and Maya work themselves into the ground trying desperately to hold together the broken pieces of their family for fear that social services will separate them if they learn of the absentee parents. The stress of their lives brings them closer and closer together to the point where they fall in love. They know its not right, they know its impossible, but they cannot deny the feeling they have that are so strong and feel so right.

The romance is slow building and comes as almost (dare I say it) a very subtle, natural, beautiful and progression. Its about two people drawn together by their circumstances, who are as close as two people can be, who rely on each other, support each other, have been through hell together... The pain, lonliness, and desolation of their life pushes them together. Everything in their life is so overwhelming, but with each other they feel safe.

*“... how to get across to the outside world that Lochan and I are siblings only through biological mishap? That we were never brother and sister in the real sense, but always partners, having to being up a real family as we grew up ourselves? How to explain that Lochan has never felt like a brother but like something*

*far, far closer than that – a soul mate, a best friend, part of the very fiber of my being?”*

The book is told in alternating POVs between Lochan and Maya. Their thoughts and perspectives made me question everything I was naturally feeling and forced me to think with my heart instead of with how I was naturally inclined to automatically feel about a sibling romance. It filled me with so many conflicting emotions. My natural reaction was to cringe at the storyline and scream ‘NO!’, but when you read and understand the emotion behind it, you can’t help but want to root for them as a couple.

The writing style is absolutely stunning. It conveys the stifling desolation and desperation of their life so vividly, you can feel with all your heart. It clouds the book, clings to the story and by extension, you as the reader are utterly wrapped up in their world.

This is a story that is going to stay with me for a long time. It’ll make you question right and wrong and think twice about preconceived prejudices.

In so many ways, their relationship didn’t feel weird or wrong. All the relationship lines in this story were blurred anyways – friend and sibling, parents and child, authority figure and equal... When the situation isn’t a normal one, where are the lines drawn? As a reader, your natural, biological instincts are screaming at you to think of it as cringe-worthy, sick and both Lochan and Maya were realists about their feelings for each other. They knew how taboo it was and struggled long and hard with coming to terms with being able to accept the things they were feeling. Their torn anguish at dealing with what they were feeling but at the same time being true to themselves and not being able to deny the strength and reality of their feelings and passion for each other was heart-wrenching.

***“I scrape the fingernails of one hand against the wall, violent sobs running in shock waves through my body, tears soaking my sleeve. “Help,” I find myself gasping, “I don’t understand what’s wrong with me!”***

And like I said, they were realists about their situation. They knew they could never have kids and that wasn’t a problem – they just wanted to be together. And in another world, one where they were just Lochan and Maya and not also raising three younger siblings, they could very well have made it work. But the responsibilities of their family kept them from being able to put themselves first and ultimately was what led to the tragic ending.

With all your heart, you feel their desperation as they fight to hide something the whole world will judge them for.

***“But its the whole world,” he says in an anguished whisper. “How – how can we make it against the whole world?”***

There was just no way to doubt the heart-breaking depths of their love for each other.

*“I think I’m going to die from happiness. I think I’m going to die from pain... At the end of the day, it’s about how much can you bear, how much can you endure.”*

**Their desperation just seeps into your soul as they fight against the cruelty of fate and the odds of the world. \*sob\***

Lochan was such a gorgeous character, inside and out. To have been able to hold it together for so long and to make the ultimate sacrifice for the people he loved... I can’t even write about this without tears coming to my eyes.

Everywhere they turned, there was another closed door. The ending just ripped me to emotional shreds. I'll repeat, NOT a HEA. My heart won't heal. The ending was un-fixable, irreversible, and horribly tragic.

The tragic ending didn't come out of the blue. You could feel it building from the start. I even know about the twist at the start before I began the book and thought I was fully prepared mentally for it, but it didn't help one tiny bit and did nothing to shield my heart from the sheer, unbridled PAIN of the ending... around the 80% mark events started unfolding and my heart just sank. It felt like it stopped. I just read with my hand over my mouth, rocking back and forth going 'please no, please no, please please &\$\$%# no NO NO!!!' . It didn't help that I was prepared, even writing this now and thinking about it, I'm starting to cry again.

It brought to light a lot of questions. Why is our society/world so obsessed with who loves who?? I can understand certain misgivings from a biological perspective. Yes, siblings should never be allowed to have biological children. THAT is wrong, from a scientific standpoint, not a judgmental one. Its damaging to the gene pool. But if two people love each other and just want to be together... who are we to judge? So long as they are not having kids, why shouldn't they be allowed to have a relationship?

Their story shattered my heart. It was haunting, beautiful, agonizing and tragic. If you are ever feeling brave enough to try it out, I'd highly recommend it. But you have to be in the right mood.... \*sniff\* This isn't a story that I'll ever forget.

For more of my reviews, visit [Aestas Book Blog](#)

And come join the [Aestas Book Blog Facebook Page](#)

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## **Dinjolina says**

### **Before everything:**

This review is soon to be edited and posted on Rain Hart's & my book blog.

You can find our blog here. Be sure to subscribe and see all the fun we have in store for you!

### **Now, on to the review!**

If you are starting this book or are planing to, put this song on your player and have it as a theme song for the book. Believe me. It helps when you get to the crying part :)

Together

First of all I have to tell you that what I am going to write will not please a lot of people.

So don't agree with me.

Don't read.

Don't comment.

I don't care.

This book was so powerful I simply do not care if somebody thinks that what I feel is wrong.

Ironic, given that if something is or isn't wrong is a big part of the theme of this work.

The book made me feel alive.

Maybe somethings, like the charges against Lochi were puffed up out of proportion. Maybe, but I still do not care. Maybe the ending was harsh and unnecessary. I do not agree. And again, do not care.

The anticipation I felt for them was real. And I fretted. I even had a feeling of dread and moments of doubt.

But after all of it I just can't force myself to think their love was wrong.

If a lot of hands go up in the air in order to point out to me that this was incest...

Just stop!

We tell ourselves that we live in the age of acceptance of things and people that are different. We support gay people, give our blessings to new found churches, give the people the right to hurt themselves emotionally in any way they can, and a lot of time don't even care that they can hurt themselves physically.

Sure there is child molesting. And that is wrong and sick.

But here, in this beautiful heart stopping story, we have two young adults that even pressed by the weight of the world, knew, without a doubt, that they love each other.

I stopped to think if they could know love at 17 and 18...and I think they could. They were already forced to grow up. And there is the fact that true love can hit you when you are 18,27,30,55...70 even!

As Lochan says, it is not fair for so many men to go around and use who ever they like and not be sanctioned, but his love is labeled as deranged.

It's not. It just isn't. Not to me. Not when it comes to Lochan and Maya.

I didn't want to redeem this couple like some readers did. I didn't want somebody to make them believe that they were wrong and to separate them, make them have different lives.

I think that they were just an aberration. Hormonal aberration (and when I say hormonal I do not mean sex!), galactic misunderstanding, fate glitch...but they were for one another. They just were.

I really wished them well. They knew they could not have children. And they did not want them. They already raised all of their kids. They just wanted to have one another. To be able to do the things others had, and discarded as every day convenience. And my heart made painful little flips for every moment of their happiness.

I wish, oh how I wish they had more. And wish, and wish and wish that they were left to tend to the smaller children until one day they could have a world in which to hold hands, kiss, and love as with nobody condemning them for it.

I hated their mother. She was a horrible person. And her fanatic involvement in the end was so in her character! I know some people do not see her as the type to care. And she was not. She was the type to fuss. Like she fussed about her kids but done them no real good. Like all the things she did in order to lie to herself that she cared for them or did something for anybody except herself. She was just a (beautifully portrayed)selfish slut.

As much the description of their mother and fate is brilliant, how the author gave us the lovely formed thoughts of sister and brother is majestic! They sound like teenagers but their intellectual rants hold real everyday fears, problems and solution.

The mother and father along with a lot of other situations and people made this book really hard and painful. And this was all good,.. no! Superb writing that kept me on the edge. But God, there are so many moments in the book that I hold so dear now!

Maya getting the bracelet, their strong support for each others troubles, tears, even the fact that in one day Lochan had the best morning of his life-with the kids as happy as they were, with Maya in her bedroom- just to fall from euphoria in to the worst and last night of his life ...

And all this...all of it coming to that final chapter and Epilogue.

When I read the last chapter I was emotionally broken. But when I read Maya's struggle after that... She still had to be strong. She still had to try. To fight. I cried. I cried in big gut wrenching sobs that I could not stop. Poor Lochan. The poor lovable bright Lochan.

And sweet pretty Maya.

Innocent little Willa that won't really remember him.

And Kit. That had no idea what his silly petty fit will do. How it will destroy lives. Destroy love. Destroy all of them in a cruel joke of destiny.

Oh how happy they would have all been if they were born different. Born like Maya's and Lochan's kids.

And loved, loved loved.

I write this rew and still cry, silent beautiful tears that make me almost feel pure.

Why?

Because I remembered a thing from my past...

When I was 16teen a friend of mine killed himself.

And the pain was big.

How will I go on?

He was my firstdoor neighbor for so long, friend, companion, so many things.

Five years later I saw his girlfriend still putting flowers on his grave.

But how long will she remember?

How long will I?

When will his face become a blur?

Love that people felt for him subdued and burned out?

When?

This book gives us the answer at the end.

Yes I knew all the answers when I read the last few lines of this perfect book.

They told everybody that read them that you should never give up.

And remember forever.

But live on now.

Looking forward to the small things.

To pink panties and a smile of a little girl.

So...

Summer is here. And they will try. We can always just try.

If you read this book, and I hope that you will, you will love it. But you will also curse your self for wishing what could not be. Their love.

It was like watching Titanic as a kid over and over again.

The ending is always harsh.

And breathtaking.

But mostly sad.

*Love can touch us one time*

*And last for a lifetime*

*And never let go till we're gone*

*Love was when I loved you*

*One true time I hold to*

*In my life we'll always go on*

---

**xrysa says**

**This story is forbidden...Their love will have devastating consequences...**

*Lochan*

**“I mean, at the end of the day, what the hell does it matter who I end up with if it can't be you?”**

*Maya*

**“Out of the millions and millions of people that inhabit this planet, he is one of the tiny few I can never have.”**

I dont want to review this book! I just cant! I've only slept three hours today because I **HAD TO** finish it! I needed to know how it ends and when that moment arrived I cried my eyes out.

Lochie's and Maya's love is doomed from the beginning. They are siblings and it is against the law to have an affair. What they feel may be considered as twisted or even sick but in this case you cant even feel disgusted by the events. While she is looking back to her life all she can see is Lochan. Under other circumstances they would have never fell for each other. Their life has always been difficult and they never acted like children. Their drunk mum loaded them her responsibilities while she decided to relive her "teen" years and have fun with her boyfriend like she's in highschool. That leaves Lochan and Maya to take care of their youngest siblings. As you can see they act more like parents instead of siblings.

They have to take care of a self-destructive 13 year old boy, Kit who never experienced the true maternal love, Tiffin and Willa who will do anything to draw their mum's attention but like always she's too busy to occupy herself with her kids.

Their attempts to keep the family alive are futile but they manage to find a way and stop falling apart.

Lochan is probably the most broken person of the family. His ongoing battle with the world around him is wearing him off. He has fears, he feels lonely but he is not. At the end of the day Maya will always erase his pain because she is the only one who can understand him. Her compasion and the way she loves him make me feel grateful that they have each other.

However they cant be together. They have already broken too many rules.. The fear of their illegal actions coming to surface haunts them every day but they are in love, they dont hurt anyone, right? It's amazing how this story does not feel wrong at all. They try together to survive and face the ghastly face of life.

The story is heart wrenching. Every chapter left me with tears not only because their mum was a total idiot but also because their love was so heart warming. I was living it with them. I was feeling every emotion that Lochan and Maya felt\*praises the dual POV\*.

About the ending....

Read it and you'll see...

(view spoiler).

Last but no least the writing style is so captivating and everything is written so poetically that you will find yourself hung by the lines. Totally amazing!

**\*\*\*\*The story is not for everyone. It's when the YA genre collides with the utter MIND\*CK.\*\*\***

