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We Are Okay



Synopsis

From the award-winning author of *Hold Still* comes an achingly beautiful novel about grief and the enduring power of friendship. A TODAY Show Must-Read Book “Short, poetic and gorgeously written. . . . The world LaCour creates is fragile but profoundly humane.” •The New York Times Book Review “A beautiful, devastating piece of art. . . . An extraordinary work.” •Bookpage “So lonely and beautiful that I could hardly breathe. This is a perfect book.” •Stephanie Perkins, bestselling author of *Anna and the French Kiss* *National Bestseller *You go through life thinking there’s so much you need. . . . Until you leave with only your phone, your wallet, and a picture of your mother. Marin hasn’t spoken to anyone from her old life since the day she left everything behind. No one knows the truth about those final weeks. Not even her best friend Mabel. But even thousands of miles away from the California coast, at college in New York, Marin still feels the pull of the life and tragedy she’s tried to outrun. Now, months later, alone in an emptied dorm for winter break, Marin waits. Mabel is coming to visit and Marin will be forced to face everything that’s been left unsaid and finally confront the loneliness that has made a home in her heart. An intimate whisper that packs an indelible punch, *We Are Okay* is Nina LaCour at her finest. This gorgeously crafted and achingly honest portrayal of grief will leave you urgent to reach across any distance to reconnect with the people you love. Praise for *We Are Okay* “As beautiful as the best memories, as sad as the best songs, as hopeful as your best dreams.” •Siobhan Vivian, bestselling author of *The Last Boy and Girl in the World* “You can feel every peak and valley of Marin’s emotional journey on your skin, in your gut. Beautifully written, heartfelt, and deeply real.” •Adi Alsaid, author of *Never Always Sometimes* and *Let’s Get Lost* “A beautiful, devastating piece of art. . . . The title hints at a happy ending, but the journey toward it passes through some of the darkest corners of the heart. Be prepared to be gutted and grateful.” *We Are Okay* is an extraordinary work by an author who keeps redefining and elevating her genre.” •Bookpage “Nina LaCour treats her emotions so beautifully and with such empathy. Of course, we’d expect nothing less from the stunning LaCour.” •Bustle “Exquisite.” •Kirkus, starred review “LaCour paints a captivating depiction of loss, bewilderment, and emotional paralysis. . . . raw and beautiful.” •Booklist, starred review “Beautifully crafted. . . . A quietly moving, potent novel.” •School Library Journal, starred review “A moving portrait of a girl

struggling to rebound— after everything she’s known has been thrown into disarray. — Publishers Weekly, starred review “Bittersweet and hopeful. . . poetic and skillfully crafted.” — Shelf Awareness, starred review

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up — Her first semester of college behind her, Marin stays alone in the dorms over break, even with the threat of a snowstorm looming, rather than return to San Francisco, where bad memories lurk. Her best friend Mabel comes to stay with her, and over the next few days, Marin contemplates the events of last spring and summer and deals with her complicated relationship with Mabel. Slowly, readers learn more about Marin’s life: the surfer mother who drowned when Marin was young, the father she never knew, the loving grandfather who raised her but whose concealed secrets kept a wall between them, and the painful events that sent Marin fleeing San Francisco. LaCour’s use of settings is masterly: frigid and desolate upstate New York reflects Marin’s alienation, while vibrant San Francisco evokes moments of joy. Though there’s little action, with most of the writing devoted to Marin’s memories, thoughts, and musings, the author’s nuanced and sensitive depiction of the protagonist’s complex and turbulent inner life makes for a rich narrative. Marin is a beautifully crafted character, and her voice is spot-on, conveying isolation, grief, and, eventually, hope. With hauntingly spare prose, the emphasis on the past, and references to gothic tales such as *The Turning of the Screw* and *Jane Eyre*, this is realistic fiction edged with the melancholy tinge of a ghost story. VERDICT A quietly moving, potent novel that will appeal to teens,

especially fans of Laurie Halse Anderson and Sara Zarr. —•Mahnaz Dar, School Library Journal

From the award-winning author of *Hold Still* comes an achingly beautiful novel about grief and the enduring power of friendship. —“So lonely and beautiful that I could hardly breathe. This is a perfect book. —•Stephanie Perkins, bestselling author of *Anna and the French Kiss* —“As beautiful as the best memories, as sad as the best songs, as hopeful as your best dreams. —•Siobhan Vivian, bestselling author of *The Last Boy and Girl in the World* —“You can feel every peak and valley of Marin’s emotional journey on your skin, in your gut. — Beautifully written, heartfelt, and deeply real. —•Adi Alsaid, author of *Never Always*

Sometimes and *Let’s Get Lost* —“A meditation on surviving grief, *We Are Okay* is short, poetic and gorgeously written. —|. The power in this little book is in seeing Marin come out on the other side of loss, able to appreciate a beautiful yellow-glazed pottery bowl and other people’s kindnesses, and to understand that she might one day have a girlfriend and a future. The world LaCour creates is fragile but profoundly humane. —•The New York Times Book Review —“A beautiful, devastating piece of art. . . . The title hints at a happy ending, but the journey toward it passes through some of the darkest corners of the heart. — Be prepared to be gutted — and grateful. — *We Are Okay* is an extraordinary work by an author who keeps redefining and elevating her genre.” —•Bookpage —“Nina LaCour treats her emotions so beautifully and with such empathy. Of course, we’d expect nothing less from the stunning LaCour. —•Bustle —| —“Exquisite. —• — Kirkus, starred review —| —“LaCour paints a captivating depiction of loss, bewilderment, and emotional paralysis. . . . — raw and beautiful. —• — Booklist, starred review —| —“Beautifully crafted. . . . — A quietly moving, potent novel. —• — School Library Journal, starred review —| —“A moving portrait of a girl struggling to rebound after everything she’s known has been thrown into disarray. —• — Publishers Weekly, starred review —| “Bittersweet and hopeful. . . . poetic and skillfully crafted.” —• — Shelf Awareness, starred review

Praise for Nina LaCour’s *Everything Leads to You*: —| — “But underneath the privilege surges real pain, longing, and feeling in a way that makes it easy to imagine this novel as a film.” — Publishers Weekly, — starred review “This sensitive, multifaceted novel creates an authentic portrayal of the

ups and downs of life. . . . An absorbing Hollywood read." [Kirkus Reviews](#) "This is summer love for the ages." [Booklist Praise for](#) *The Disenchantments*: YALSA Best Books for Young Adults (2013); Kirkus Best Teen Book of 2012; A Publishers Weekly Best Summer Book ["This is about the inside and outside of characters, the past and future of their lives--and it is astonishing."](#) [Booklist](#), [starred review](#) "Quietly compelling . . . well rendered, bittersweet and hopeful." [Los Angeles Times](#) ["A rich tapestry that will make readers confident that they are in the hands of a master storyteller. . . . Hauntingly beautiful."](#) [Kirkus Reviews](#), [starred review](#) "Each roadtripper has his or her own artistic way of chronicling the individual journeys they are on together, and that introspection draws the reader into this intimate novel." [NPR.org](#) ["LaCour skillfully draws connections between art and life as she delves into the heart of her characters."](#) [Publishers Weekly](#), [starred review](#) ["Bittersweet and hopeful"](#) . . . poetic and skillfully crafted." [Shelf Awareness](#), [starred review](#) ["LaCour's writing style is laid-back, low key, and totally on point."](#) [VOYA](#), [starred review](#)

This wasn't that good. I went in fully expecting this book to be right up my alley. Blue is the Warmest Color made me cry for 3 days straight. I've lived in a dorm alone. I fully expected this to be a great after a string of mediocre books and just found nothing. There's nothing inherently wrong with the story except that it's painfully short and half baked. This couldn't be much more than 30,000 words which is less than half the size of an average novel. While the grief and loneliness is adequately developed, every single aspect of Marin's life is underdeveloped. I just couldn't find myself caring. The twists weren't that interesting, the revelation that she didn't need Mabel as a romantic partner was the only good thing about the narrative. I don't know if this was supposed to be young adult fiction, I didn't see it indicated anywhere on the book or page, just hundreds of glowing reviews for a very average book. I'm sure the countless rave reviews damaged my expectations for this book, but it was still short and boring. I also feel if this wasn't about a lesbian relationship it would have been unfinishable. The chapters and book are short making it easy to page through but I feel if this was a full length book I wouldn't have maintained interest until the end.

I read this book many weeks ago and I haven't stopped thinking about it since. It's beautiful. Haunting. Lonely. Hopeful. And true. It is palpable grief on the page. Grief that crawls into your chest cavity. It is about family and connection and how friends are family and love is love. It is truly one of my favorite books of all time. I loved every sentence.

I literally LOVE Nina LaCour's writing style! I am a twenty-something grad student and I like to read easier YA books on my down time. Sometimes YA books are so poorly written and with SUCH a childish voice, especially ones with queer characters. Nina LaCour is the opposite!!!! Her voice is so eloquent and ageless but also light enough for a nice relaxing read. You will not be disappointed by this author. I HIGHLY recommend this book and Everything Leads to You.

This book. This book is the best book that I have read in a long time. Beautifully written with such poetic melancholy. Can't stop thinking about it. And the core of the book is all about love. Nina LaCour is such a seamless writer. I read a lot of YA books and haven't come across one that is written this well. I'm going to read some of her other books now.

I don't often like YA books, but this one was different. It is so introspective and poetic. It brought me into Marin's world and mind, and I found myself always wanting to read more. Definitely recommend.

I needed more from this book. It left me hanging a bit in certain places. I think strong relationships are fantastic and real relationships are even better. This is a quick and powerful read. Touches on mental illness and same gender love.

Picked this book up because I liked the cover and ended up loving the quiet melodic story. Plus, happy to see LGBTQ storylines in YA.

I absolutely loved this book, it was sad, heartfelt, lovely, and much more all at the same time:)

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