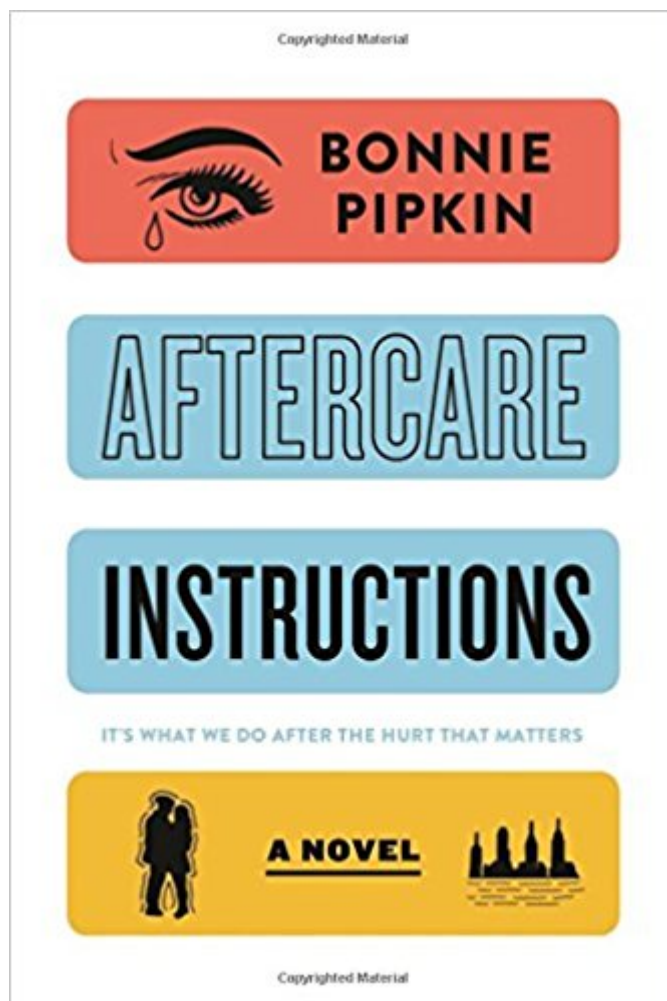


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Aftercare Instructions: A Novel



Synopsis

Everyone is talking about Aftercare Instructions, Bonnie Pipkin's electric debut novel: "Important, fierce. Pipkin stole my heart with this book." A.S. King, author of Still Life with Tornado "Mighty, innovative, and nearly impossible to put down." David Arnold, author of Kids of Appetite "Incredibly honest and empathetic." ALA Booklist "Big-hearted, sensitive, and engrossing." Publishers Weekly "Troubled. That's seventeen-year-old Genesis according to her small New Jersey town. She finds refuge and stability in her relationship with her boyfriend, Peter until he abandons her at a Planned Parenthood clinic during their appointment to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. The betrayal causes Gen to question everything. As Gen pushes herself forward to find her new identity without Peter, she must also confront her most painful memories. Through the lens of an ongoing four act play within the novel, the fantasy of their undying love unravels line by line, scene by scene. Digging deeper into her past while exploring the underground theater world of New York City, she rediscovers a long forgotten dream. But it's when Gen lets go of her history, the one she thinks she knows, that she's finally able to embrace the complicated, chaotic true story of her life, and take center stage. Aftercare Instructions, a debut full of heart and hope, follows Gen on a big-hearted journey from dorm rooms to diners to underground theaters and ultimately, right into readers' hearts.

Book Information

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Literature & Fiction > Literary #47 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family

Issues > Pregnancy #56 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Theater

Customer Reviews

cute cat. Aftercare Instructions is Bonnie's first novel.

This is a beautifully written novel. The narrative structure is both inventive and effective. I would recommend this novel to all teens. Gen's story lingers with me.

I liked the book, however, the ending left me quite unsatisfied with a what???? It seemed unfinished to me.

Excellent enlightening book. And I had a wonderful time discussing it with the author. The book is certainly a great read for young people.

Gen (short for Genesis) has 99 problems, but this book isn't one of them. This book is bold and risky. It's heart-breaking and life-affirming. It handles delicate subjects with extreme skill and care. I don't want to tell any more about this story than is already written in the synopsis, but definitely don't judge a book by it's story...unless you've read it. This seems like a really important book at a very important time.

This book was so incredibly compelling and so well written that I was forced to read it straight through. I literally couldn't put it down as I was mesmerized by the raw, emotional story and the characters who seemed so complex and real, they immediately captured my heart. It's a fast paced study on grief, family and love that tackles more than one sensitive subject with straightforward honesty and raw power. This is a book filled with energy thanks to the author's unique way of telling a story that will resonate with teen and adult readers. The book opens as we meet Genesis a young 17 year old girl who has been left at Planned Parenthood by her boyfriend and father of her aborted child. Forced to make her way back home on her own, she struggles to come to terms with Peter's betrayal, her decisions, and a family life that has been less than ideal since her father's death from a drug overdose. If that sounds like a lot, it certainly is, so it's no wonder that Genesis seems to be at the end of her rope. Her struggles to come to terms with her life, her love and her future are universal and any reader will find it easy to relate to her emotional responses, her resilience and courage. The author's decision to start with a traumatic event and then fill in the back story with excerpts formatted as a play give this story an propulsive energy that marks it as an excellent choice for reluctant readers. The mature subject matter marks it as best enjoyed by older teens and adults. A truly great read that I won't soon forget.

This review originally appeared on herestohappyendings.com. "The Thing I Wish I'd Known: -I love you doesn't come with any guarantees." Aftercare Instructions was one of those books that I went into expecting to like, but not love as much as I did. It was probably one of the best books that I've read in 2017, and maybe one of the most emotional novels that I've read to date. It's not the kind of book that had me crying the entire time that I read it, but it was one of those books that made me actually feel throughout every single chapter - from sadness to happiness to anger and back again, all while throwing in a bunch of other emotions, too. The main character of the story, Genesis, finds herself at a family planning clinic with her boyfriend, Peter, with the intention of terminating a pregnancy that neither of them wanted or were ready to face. Peter has always been wonderful and loving toward Genesis, and she felt that she needed him and would be with him always - that is, until he leaves her there while she is having the procedure, which causes her to need to find her own way home and to deal with the abortion by herself, as well as the after effects and emotions that she would be faced with. Not only does Genesis already have the reputation of being "troubled," she now has to face that reputation alone with only her best friend for guidance - and she finds herself having to deal with the breakup with her and Peter, even though she is in no way ready to move on. "There aren't any instructions anywhere on what to do when your dad dies like he did and then your boyfriend leaves you at Planned Parenthood while you're getting an abortion. Where are those instructions?" Perhaps one of the neatest things about this book is the fact that during all of this, there is also a four act play going on in between the chapters of the book (which are actually titled by "aftercare instructions" themselves). During the acts of the play, we get to revisit some of Genesis's most precious memories, which make up her entire relationship with Peter, from the first time they met onward. This part of the book is creative and full of vital information for the reader, as it allows you to really get inside Genesis's head and see what makes her character tick. I think this interesting part of the book was probably my absolute favorite aspect, as it's rare to see books written this way and it's a creative way to incorporate memories. Another thing I loved about this book was Genesis's character herself. She is full of emotions and she tries her hardest to be a good person, despite all of the stuff that she's been faced with over the years. I can't imagine having what happened to her happen to me, and I honestly thought she was a strong character. Genesis is someone to look up to, and I hope others who read her story can think of her that way, too. I didn't care too much for Peter's character, as it was obvious that he only thought of himself and what he wanted, but it's obvious why his character was written the way that he was, and I think the author did a splendid job tearing his and Genesis's relationship apart, and then allowing the reader see it

develop through the memories. It was a creative way to weave all of the parts of the story together."No one will hurt us. This is the most bullshit advice adults ever give. There's so much that will hurt us; it's how we take care of ourselves afterward that matters. The aftercare."I love that Aftercare Instructions doesn't focus on making things better magically or making it seem as though these things don't actually happen to real young adults (and older adults, too!) everywhere. Instead, it brings to light the things that really do happen, and that while it can feel quite emotional at times (or all the time, in the case of this book), things do happen, and they do need to be dealt with. Giving positive messages that essentially, everything negative does eventually pass, is a great way to help others through some messy situations that they may feel alone in. I can't praise this book enough. I know some people will dislike it and refuse to read it because it deals with abortion, but you have to realize that it deals with SO much more than that. Sure, the main character has an abortion in the beginning of the book, but that isn't the main focus here. The main focus is what happens afterward. After the procedure. After the character's relationship falls apart. After she is betrayed and has to learn to trust again. After she has to figure out who she is and what her place in the world will be. Aftercare Instructions is amazingly written, heartbreaking, beautiful, and one of the most gripping books that I've read this year. Note: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

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