



The Promise: A Tragic Accident, a Paralyzed Bride, and the Power of Love, Loyalty, and Friendship

Rachelle Friedman

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Just weeks before her wedding, four of Rachelle Friedman's friends threw her a bachelorette party. At the end of a perfect evening of dancing and celebration, they decided to take a moonlight swim. One of her friends playfully pushed her into the water . . . two feet too far from the deep end. That chilling moment changed their lives forever. Rachelle broke her neck and was paralyzed from the chest down. She would never walk again.

The Promise is a powerful memoir of resilience, love, and loyalty. On the night of the accident, the five girls made an unspoken agreement to never reveal the name of the friend who had pushed Rachelle into the pool--and their bond has remained unbroken. As Rachelle undergoes a physical battle for her life, her friend struggles emotionally to prevent one moment in time from defining her forever. It's the story of true integrity; it's also about finding the incredible strength inside each of us we never knew we had.

Also a love story, *The Promise* chronicles Rachelle and Chris's relationship, their struggle with her paralysis and rehab, the physical challenges of intimacy, and ultimately, their fairy-tale wedding.

The Promise: A Tragic Accident, a Paralyzed Bride, and the Power of Love, Loyalty, and Friendship Details

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Author : Rachelle Friedman

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M.M. Koenig says

I read this book in one sitting, which I'll admit isn't uncommon for me, but with this book - it was a MUST! I couldn't turn the pages fast enough to read about this amazing woman's story. Her strength and spirit is awe-inspiring. The love she has in her heart for her husband, family, and friends is absolutely incredible. I loved reading this story so much because it was SO powerful. She rose above what happened to her and changed countless people's lives with the message she spreads and shares by never giving up on the power of love in all types of relationships be it family, friends, or lovers. She is one of those people that changes the world simply by how she leads her life and carries herself. She had me feeling many emotions as I read her words - she made me teary eyed and she made me laugh hysterically. Her strength and courage and fierce belief in love is something we should all strive to have in our own lives. Her spirit is one of those rare ones that is truly a gift for human kind and we are all lucky to have people like her in this world. I look forward to anything else she writes because her words are truly touching and her positive outlook on life and how she educates those around her is truly amazing. This is a must read for everyone!

Brenda Roberson says

This is the story of a beautiful young woman who in an instant because of a freak accident became quadriplegic. The most important point in Rachelle's story is the positive attitude she held onto and shared with everyone. Her firm resolve to protect the one who was forced to carry the guilt of the accident speaks of many things: friendship, tenacity and the determination to look rationally at the situation. This story deals head on with the perils of being a quadriplegic and also embraces what it means to face those demons head on and go on with your life.

They were all horsing around and having fun. One innocent little push caused Rachelle to never be able to walk again. Where some may be bitter and full of hatred toward the person who caused it, Rachelle holds no one person responsible nor holds no ill feelings toward anyone. Her fiancé needs to be recognized for being strong and supporting her. While some guys would wimp out and call off the wedding, this young man told her he still wanted to marry her and he loved her then and now "no matter what". All of the friends stood strongly together and would never let anyone outside of their circle know who did the pushing!

This story truly portrays true friendship, personal strength and complete forgiveness in the face of the utmost tragedy. May we all be inspired by this truly remarkable young lady, her husband and unforgettable friends. The things she had to say about her "independence" also can be said for those of us who suffer from severe Rheumatoid Arthritis. We also have lost quite a bit and mourn the loss of so many things we used to do and take for granted. I wish I could give this story as many stars as I want to give it. That being said, I will gladly give it as many as I possibly can. 5+ stars

Lynne Torgersen says

I was familiar with the story having seen Rachelle on talk shows, but wanted to know more about her and the event that changed the course of her life. What an incredibly strong woman she is and I admire her courage and positive attitude which she had right from the beginning of her tragic accident. I can't even imagine how I'd react if I were in her shoes, perhaps over time I'd accept things and make the best of it. But to not breakdown or be thinking "why me" right from the get go, is remarkable. I wish her and her husband Chris many, many years of happiness.

Catherine says

Friedman suffers a heartbreak tragedy when her friend innocently pushes her into a pool on the night of her bachelorette party. Rachelle broke her neck and became paralyzed from the waist down. There were five friends with her that night. As the media began covering Friedman's accident, the girls formed a pact to protect the name of the girl who pushed Friedman that night by never revealing her name.

Friedman goes into specific details of her recovery process and how she's adapted to her disability without wallowing in pity but clearly states the facts of what she endures on a daily basis. She quoted a friend who said, "Life goes on and we make new memories every day, regardless of our situation or the hand we're dealt," and she follows it well.

I very much admired her commitment to letting go of blame and what-ifs. Her compassion toward her friend that pushed her and understanding the emotional damage that entailed was very wise for someone her age. A lesser person might have caved from the pressure of Oprah's producers and allowed the show to exploit Friedman and her friends. She refused to allow that. She was sympathetic to her friend's emotional pain and made protecting that friend her first priority. I thought that was commendable.

Her forthright political comments on the U.S. health care system in the Epilogue were well stated.

Kerry Kenney says

This book is far outside what I normally read. I confess I was attracted by the cover art and found that the story inside was even better. Rachelle Friedman is a voice you want in your life. I love her integrity, her approach to her life and cannot say enough good things about this book. It is a remarkable lesson in resilience. I learned so many things and she changed me for the better for having read her story. I wish her the best and wish that she is blessed with medical advances that help her recover from her accident.

Billy says

Quite a heartwarming story! Life changing events really make one think of what's important, and how you'd deal with the same problem.

Tonya says

Quick read! Great message about never taking anything for granted in life, and how important our personal relationships are, but also learning to let go of things we cannot change. I enjoyed it!

Sara says

Wow, was this ever engrossing! I'd read about the author a few years ago, when the news covered the story of how she broke her neck in an accident at her bachelorette party and was left a quadriplegic. Her name was mentioned on the news again recently, talking about her new memoir, and I was very excited to read her take on the accident, her friendships, her marriage, and day-to-day life in general.

While the writing in here may not have been the most "polished" it was obviously very heartfelt. I was drawn in almost immediately; the author was such a positive person (although she didn't gloss over the hardships) and she was very easy to relate to, making her seem almost like a friend. I loved the descriptions of her relationship with her now-husband and how their relationship changed significantly after her accident, although not necessarily for the worse. This reads, in parts, very much like a love story because of how devoted they are to one another.

Her friendships with the four girls around her at her bachelorette party was also nicely described. It was very obvious why they all got along so well and how close they became. She shared some funny times they had together, both before and after the accident, as well as some really sweet moments, and it was easy to understand why they're so protective of each other. I can't imagine the guilt her friends felt, despite the broken neck being a complete accident, and I can completely understand how all of them felt worse when reading rude comments made by strangers on the internet. It was really amazing to read about how they all sort of comforted each other while trying to get into the swing of what regular life turned into.

This entire book was remarkable. I was amazed by everything Rachelle had to go through after the accident and inspired by how her little victories suddenly seem big. Her message of making the most of each day because you don't know what the next can bring was perfect. I loved her positive tone because, regardless of how difficult things were, she realized that the situation couldn't be helped but the outcome could.

So many great observations about life in here and about people, both good and bad. This book was so powerful and such a wonderful tale of the power of (like the subtitle says) love, loyalty, and friendship to help one get through hard times. What an inspiring and touching tale.

Madison Calhoun says

I won this book from a giveaway on GoodReads (thank you!) and was really excited when it arrived. I'm still not quite sure what made me enter the giveaway in the first place, but I'm so glad that I did. I tend to read a lot of fiction, and while I don't make a point to avoid nonfiction, it's just not something that I pick up very often. When I came across this book, I was intrigued by what happened to Rachelle and I wanted to learn more. The Promise is a great book. It's a story of tragedy, healing, friendship, and love-- plus so much more.

There were parts where I teared up and other parts where I laughed out loud. There were even some philosophical chapters that made me stop and think for a while. Overall, this book is so much more than I expected. It's not just a story of a girl that was in an accident, but about how she triumphed over it and dealt with the consequences as positively as she could.

This type of story is very hard to critique. But I still don't slap a five star rating on just any book, even if it's a sad read. *The Promise* was very powerful and inspirational to me. After reading it, I feel more educated and grateful for what I have in life. I heard John Green say once, about another nonfiction novel, "You feel like a better person just for reading it." That's how I felt after finishing *The Promise*. It's not a book begging for sympathy from the reader. Yes, it did make me feel bad for Rachelle. I would have loved to have been able to do something to help her. But that wasn't the focus of the book. Instead, it makes you want to go out and make a change in the world. Or maybe even just do something more in your personal life-- it could be something as simple going for walks more and appreciating the things around you. Most books don't make me feel like this. If something tries too hard to inspire me or to outright make me a better person, it usually just annoys me because it doesn't feel genuine. Everything in this novel is heartfelt and you can tell that the author is being completely honest.

The book still isn't perfect. The writing was good, but not great. The only real issue I had with it was that there was a lot of repetition from time to time. But I try to be a little less critical with memoirs, because the authors aren't usually professional writers. They write because they have an interesting story to tell, not because it's their job to craft and sell books for a living. Also, the repetition wasn't enough to really bother me. I got past it quickly. There were so many other elements to the story that held my attention to the point that I didn't need to focus too much on the technical side of it. There were also some other times when the writing was really good. Some of the things that Rachelle said hit home to me. I've never dealt with a spinal injury or paralysis, but I still could relate to some of the things that she wrote about. I loved her viewpoints on the world and I enjoyed reading what she had to say on certain topics.

Overall, this is just a really good book. I would definitely recommend it. Nonfiction isn't usually my genre of choice, but this book didn't even read like a memoir. It felt more like I was having a conversation with Rachelle and that was great. The author is such a strong woman. I can't imagine going through what she did and still being so positive. It was cool reading about her family and friends, too. In that situation, it's easy for people to run away when someone is hurt. Instead, Rachelle's relationships grew stronger and a lot of her friends bonded even more in order to help her. I thought that was awesome. If you're bored or looking for something new to read, you should definitely give this book a try. It was so much more than I expected, and I thought it was fantastic.

Kristen says

Great story. Most of the time I felt like Rachelle was just telling her story, not as a book but in person.

Michelle Allen says

What an inspiration!

Kay Gillis says

I didn't want to put this book down. A true story that touched me. At times I cried, at times I laughed but most of all I was amazed at Rachelle's strength, her determination, her loyalty and her understanding of the meaning of friendship and love. She tells her story in her own words in her own way, so don't expect anything except a truthful telling of her experiences.

Jaynez says

Better than I thought it'd be. I thought it might be paralyzed 'bride' girly girl inspiration porn. But the author delves a bit deeper at times. She had an excellent paragraph on how (I suppose) well meaning people think that if you work hard enough, think positively enough you can walk again and how that ain't necessarily how things work. Also I liked her newbie revelation about asshole disability parking scofflaws and calling a guy to the curb or, at least, attempting to but he truly was an asshole. And I think I may have met him the other day, myself. There were a bit too many stories of her spending time with her "girls". I can appreciate the sentiment though and I think it is actually pretty noble of all the women who were there, when Rachelle's accident occurred, to keep the promise of not revealing the identity of the one who pushed her in the pool. Totally stand-up group, so to speak. The epilogue, which may have been tagged on after the book was written, seemed like kind of a fishing expedition for a surrogate to carry a baby for Rachelle & her husband. Apparently it worked too, so more power to them, I guess.

Gina M. Peper says

Great read!! Very inspirational!!

Great read!! Very inspirational!!

highly recommend!! I couldn't put it down! I would definitely recommend to anybody that enjoys non fiction and likes inspirational stories!

Bri says

I opened this book and did not stop reading until the very last page, its rare a book captures me so intensely. A true story of love, friendship and strength.
