



## When He Fell

*Kate Hewitt*

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**The powerfully gripping new book from USA Today bestselling author Kate Hewitt.**

Josh and Ben are nine years old and best friends, until a single, careless act in the school playground destroys the lives of both families – and wrenches their small Manhattan school apart.

As both mothers Maddie and Joanna try to find out what really happened between the boys, they discover the truth is far more complicated and painful than either of them could have ever realised... with lasting repercussions for both families.

And when tragedy strikes again in the most unexpected of ways, the lives of these two women will be changed once more, and this time forever.

***When He Fell explores the issues of parental responsibility and guilt, and whether there are some acts that human nature just cannot forgive...***

## When He Fell Details

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Author : Kate Hewitt

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## From Reader Review When He Fell for online ebook

### Tanya Brough says

Boys will be boys, I guess. Energetic, naughty and adventurous. Ben and Josh are both 9 years old and as close as brothers.

Then one accident on the playground of their school in Manhattan shatters their lives, their friendship and the lives of their families.

Their mothers, Maddie and Joanna, unravel the whole nasty business. What happened that day? Why did it happen?

As they soon find out, you can never know anybody as well as you might think you know them.

I found When He Fell most chilling as I have a kid myself, not much older than Josh and Ben.

The power of When He Fell lies in the unexpected twists and turns that Kate Hewitt so masterfully weaves into the story. The narrative is clever, well paced and well structured. When He Fell almost reads like a newspaper story as the book is that believable and gripping.

Brilliant.

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### The Book Review Café says

Before we begin my review I had one tiny gripe About When He Fell, I felt the book description was far too detailed, so I was already prepared for a second tragedy right from the start, which was a shame. When He Fell is a novel that packs an emotional punch, it's both a poignant and emotive read that left me emotionally drained. This novel explores the unthinkable for any parent, a careless act in the playground destroys the lives of two families, which in turn will change the lives of two young boys and their parents forever.

I was unable to take to the main characters of When He Fell, which usually means I struggle to then read the book, but fortunately although the characters aren't particularly likeable this just added to my curiosity regarding this novel. I found Joanne really irritated me rather than deal with problems head on, she was more likely to bury her head in the sand, and avoided confrontation at every opportunity, she also appeared self absorbed at times putting her career before her family. I did have great empathy for Maddie, as what she goes through with her son Ben is every parents worse nightmare, but I did dislike the needy side of Maddie, and how she was so desperate to be part of a loving family, she didn't even consider the fallout of her actions. In the characters defence as the plot progresses we do learn more about their pasts, and how this shaped them into the people they had become, and the complexity of their characters actually added to my enjoyment of this novel.

Whilst reading When He Fell I experienced so many different thoughts and feelings throughout, dislike, anger, compassion and irritation and heartbreak, to name but a few and in my opinion this is down to the authors extraordinary ability to give the reader a set of characters who are not always endearing or even very likeable, and you see them for what they really are, which is not very pretty picture at times. When He Fell delves into so many issues loss, abandonment, guilt, the need to feel loved, and most importantly the choices we make as parents, and the ramifications for our children when we make bad decisions. Kate Hewitt has produced an emotionally powerful read, with a well constructed plot, if you are looking for a book to pull on your heartstrings then this might just been the book for you, it certainly left me feeling emotionally drained.

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### **Lisa Hall says**

This was a good storyline with some really unpleasant characters - Maddie, the mother of the boy who fell, was not the kind of person that I could warm to at all, and I found some of her behaviour very uncomfortable. This is no bad thing however, I liked the fact she made me feel a little bit "ewww" at times, and she did evoke some very uncomfortable feelings in me, mainly the fact that I found it hard to find any sympathy for her, purely because she wasn't a very nice person.

The book is quite an emotional read, and although I found it hard to feel sympathy for Maddie, it doesn't make the events any less shocking, or emotional to read about. I found the relationship between Jo and Lewis far more intriguing, and it was actually Jo that I felt the most sympathy for, as she seems to bear the brunt of all it, almost as though she is being punished for not being there enough for her son in the first place.

I would definitely recommend *When He Fell* to those who enjoy being taken out of their comfort zone slightly when reading - It definitely makes me think "what if?" and that had me turning the pages til the very end.

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### **Kim says**

When a little boy has an accident whilst playing at a private school, a huge turmoil is released. Ben is in a coma and Josh, the little boy he was playing with admits to his mum that he didn't push him accidentally.

The two families are left to try and find out what happened without the support of the school or their friends. What family secrets are about to be revealed and why is Josh such a troubled little boy? You can just feel the anguish of both mothers- it would be hard to be in either of their situations.

There are unexpected turns throughout where little pieces of the story come to light and different encounters with the school make you wonder what exactly happened on that day and why no one is telling the truth.

None of the characters are particularly likeable and have had troubled backgrounds- but you can understand why they are all behaving the way they do. It is intriguing and brings up many subjects to think about including selective mutism, which is a matter close to us.

With many thanks to NetGalley and Carina Uk for the chance to read this one in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Thebooktrail says**

A story which starts in a school in Manhattan but where the repercussions spread out into the larger community and causes ripples of grief and guilt within two families.

One boy ends up with brain damage and the other one won't speak about what happened. There are questions over who is exactly to blame as there would be if such an accident happened in any school and it's the

emotional fallout from this, for any parent which is very hard to read at times. That's before the two families and their backgrounds come to light!

I admit I found this a hard book to read - the subject matter and the themes involved and not the writing! I will go and buy another one of Kate's books but this one wasn't to my taste. Having said that it will put the fear into any parent and you'll never forget it!

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### **Lindsay says**

Originally posted at: <https://bookboodle.wordpress.com/2016...>

3.5\*

I jumped at the chance to read When He Fell as part of the blog tour as it came across as one of those books that poses moral dilemmas to its reader which I rather like.

Simply told yet captivating from early on, I liked this book for its authenticity; one of the parents has proper financial issues which she's stressing about which make it more realistic rather than just having the cash to throw at the problem.

I liked Josh and Ben's characters; I think they're portrayed really well with their everyday struggles and difficulties and the frustrations that it causes their parents feels very real.

In all honesty I didn't really love either of the main women characters; I found Maddie to be a bit of a lush, obsessed with finding a man, although I did find myself feeling sympathetic towards her for the situation and the hardship she faced and Joanna well..excessively needy springs to mind, however this was one of those rare occasions where my disconnection with the main characters didn't hinder the experience for me as the book has such an interesting theme.

My one criticism would be that the blurb gives away too much information...I would have much rathered it didn't contain anything about the second tragedy; although I didn't guess what it was I was waiting for it. I would have preferred to be totally in the dark.

Overall, a good and interesting read and one you may need to have tissues handy at the end!

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### **Aoife says**

3.25

I received a free digital copy from the author/publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest feedback.

Ben and Josh are nine years old and best of friends before an accident during recess ends up with one boy in hospital in an induced coma and the other refusing to speak about what had really happened. Ben's mother Maddie and Josh's parents Lewis and Johanna are left to try and sort out the pieces which may reveal some secrets better left hidden.

Overall this was an interesting and heartfelt read. But when the characters getting hurt are children, you

really feel like more should be done to find out the facts. I felt quite frustrated reading it, particularly in Johanna's chapters as I felt like she and Lewis should have been doing so much more to get Josh to talk. Two months later and he still hasn't admitted what happens. How is that okay when a young child is sitting in hospital with brain damage? I also couldn't believe how lax Maddie was at times with finding out the whole story as well. She definitely lacked some kind of drive and I did feel like most of the adult characters were just a bit weak and pathetic. I do think the end of the story, heartbreaking as it was, brought light to a situation that is becoming more widespread in current society and that, if anything, is important.

While this book is short at only 200 pages or so, it felt much longer. But if you're looking for a read to pull at the heartstrings, it's probably one for you

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### **Sarah says**

Awfully hard to read, I identified with Maddie, who recognises her history of poor decision making. The results of some of her instantaneous decisions are horrendous, causing so much heartbreak for herself and those around her. Yet it's not her fault that the effects are so bad. I thought the school was awful, happily taking money and walking away from their responsibilities when times got tough. But as someone familiar with the education system (in Australia, but still...), I also understood how they had to protect themselves.

My biggest issue in this story was about the rocks. If they were so dangerous, why would they be accessible by students? Why wouldn't they somehow be blocked off? A verbal warning, no matter how regular, isn't going to stop a determined child from climbing them. So throughout all of the blaming, I see this as being at the forefront of the reason behind the tragedy that began the book. However, given the way the boys dealt with what they'd seen and assumed, the same outcome may have happened, differently, elsewhere.

I felt as though a lot of emotional blame was laid on Lewis, when he was truly trying to be a good guy and just got caught momentarily in a bad idea. He corrected himself, and was careful to make it clear that nothing further would happen. I think that Jo carefully tried to manage her marriage the way she thought best, not realising her own distance was causing some of her problems. I hate to feel as though Maddie brought much of the drama upon herself, especially since I recognise that for the rest of her life she's going to have moments of pure guilt over everything that happened, knowing she was in some way responsible. I don't like feeling that way, but I do. It would be an unbearable way to live, realising that her actions caused so much pain.

Really good book, but brings up a lot of difficult concepts and I hope never to find myself in a similar situation.

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### **Jenny in Neverland says**

I very rarely read and review the books I've been asked to organise book tours for – only if they sound exceptionally good. The blurb for 'When He Fell' stood out instantly to me so I knew that this was going to be one of those exceptions. Two children, two families, two very different childhoods. Ben and Josh are both nine and are best friends but their lives are worlds apart. Hyperactive Ben's mum Maddie is single whereas

shy, quiet Josh lives with his parents Lewis and Joanna who look like the perfect couple but who's relationship survives on silence. When a terrible but suspicious accident at school occurs, it puts strain on both mothers to find out exactly what happened to their sons but they soon realise that this "accident" may go back a lot further than that day on the playground.

I simply do not know where to start. I've been finding it very difficult to read over the past few months, with things getting in the way of me being able to just sit back and enjoy my favourite ever pastime. But as soon as I started reading *When He Fell*, I knew I was onto something gold. The opening begins straight in the action: You're only in a couple of pages before the first 'thing' happens so there's no messing about with any build-up, which I love. The information you need to build the big picture within this book is drip-fed to you, very gently and very gradually – particularly in the first half – adding and adding to the suspense and the tension.

The thing that stood out massively for me in this book was how dramatically my opinions of the characters changed over time. Being written in a very clean two person narrative: Maddie and Joanna, you get a full view of each of them, their lives and their boys. You get absorbed into each of their worlds completely so build up a very elaborate picture of each. But somehow, Kate manages to make sure you see each of these pictures through misty glasses because as the book went on, the characters I felt for, I no longer did and the characters I thought were innocent no longer were and so on. It was a huge characteristic of the book that I'm not even sure was intentional – but it worked!

No particular character stood out to me: Maddie and Joanna definitely both had their flaws, although very different from each others but I loved the initial contrast between the two but also the sneaky little things that make you realise that maybe, these two women aren't that different after all. I was deeply intrigued by Ben and Josh however and the genuine contrast between these two best friends. A friendship that really, shouldn't have happened, with one being loud, boisterous and hyperactive and the other being quiet, shy and with a history of not talking to anyone for long periods of time. There was a good number and mix of characters – not too few but not too many that you get confused with who is who.

'When He Fell' was, quite simply, amazing. Kate Hewitt has a compelling and effortless writing style and approach to storytelling and I'll definitely be keeping her on my radar. 'When He Fell' teaches you that imagination can be a dangerous thing – if you let it. It is a book first and foremost, about consequences. About a chain reaction that you could never fathom and whether you can genuinely place blame. It will make you question karma – does it exist or are some things just freak accidents? And how the phrase, 'be careful what you wish for' can have more of a significance than you ever thought possible

Full post on: [www.jennyinneverland.com](http://www.jennyinneverland.com)

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### **Sue says**

*When He Fell* by Kate Hewitt packed a real emotional punch. Its a novel about two 9 year old boys - who were friends at school. Ben had always been kind of hyperactive and Josh had been extremely shy and neither had many friends until they became friends with each other. After a fight on the playground, one of them ends up in the hospital with brain damage and the other one always been won't talk about it at all. Both families are caught up in the ensuing turmoil surrounding fallout of the boys disagreement. As they struggle to find out what really happened, with little help from the school administration, secrets are revealed in each family.

The characters are very real and full of good and bad traits - at times during the book, I disliked all of the adult characters - especially the two mothers - but then found out later that they had reasons for the way they acted and then my opinion of them changed. There were times that the book was very difficult to read. Any time a child is injured to this extent, its very painful to read because its so emotional to any parent.

Overall, I highly recommend this book -- its a fantastic book to read and hard to put down once you start it. This is the first book that I've read by Kate Hewitt but I plan to read more of her books.  
(Thanks to the author for a copy of this book for a fair and honest review)

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### **Tracy Shephard says**

When a child has an accident, you do not have to be a parent to feel concern. Kate Hewitt's novel by far the best at ensuring the readers emotion her top priority.

From the first page I felt for Maddie. Her son Ben has had a fall and is now critical in an induced coma.

Juliet is Maddies friend. She witnessed the accident but seems reluctant to give Maddie any details or even give any comfort.

When it comes to light that Josh, Ben's friend may be the one who pushed Ben the guilt of the child and parents involved make this tale one of the most emotive I have ever read. There are a lot of secrets and the question to be asked is 'Why'?

I loved this book, Kate's writing about blame, guilt, neglect, hopes and wishes is brilliant. My imagination went into overdrive.

The relationship between Joanna, Lewis and Maddie makes the reader ponder.

it is not a light-hearted read. There is tragedy on all sides.

A truly shattering, moving tale.

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### **Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says**

One of my more memorable reads of 2015 and an easy five star read for me. I really loved this book. It's fascinating.

I've grown to love a good moral dilemma in a novel, one that challenges the characters as well as the reader, this one had me thinking of two perspectives as I read wondering where I stood.

*Josh and Ben are nine years old and best friends, until a single, careless act in the school playground destroys the lives of both families – and wrenches their small Manhattan school apart.*

*As both mothers Maddie and Joanna try to find out what really happened between the boys, they discover the truth is far more complicated and painful than either of them could have ever realised... with lasting*

*repercussions for both families.*

*And when tragedy strikes again in the most unexpected of ways, the lives of these two women will be changed once more, and this time forever.*

*When He Fell explores the issues of parental responsibility and guilt, and whether there are some acts that human nature just cannot forgive...*

Tragedy strikes early in this novel. A mothers worst nightmare (one of many), and not easy events to read. The drama that unfolds is complex with no true clarity at first. It's very powerful reading.

I won't tell or reveal the core plot but it divides friendship, marriage, community and even the inner belief systems of central characters. Not to mention you - the reader. What will your viewpoint be? Who is to blame if anyone?

The characters are really well done, even the children. I was able to relate, plug in and feel the story along with all of them. No perfect characters here, plenty of flaws which I adore.

**There are a few moments when you think truth is all revealed but nothing quite prepared me for the BIG reveal. Sheesh! I was speechless as my brain tried to absorb. From there the book just got better and better.**

A stunning and emotionally powerful novel that packs a punch. An easy 5 paw prints from Booklover Catlady for this one from award winning USA Author Kate Hewitt.

**Put this one in your to-read list for sure!**

For more of my reviews see me at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BookloverCat...>

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*I received a copy of this book with thanks from the publisher and NetGalley.*

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**Lee says**

Another very suspenseful and emotive book. A terrible accident occurs that will forever change the lives of two young boys and their parents. This is a moral dilemma and it was interesting to see how the author addressed this issue, I believe she did a very good job. The characters are laid bare in this story and you see people for who they really are, this is not always endearing especially from the parents. I was totally taken aback by the end, a truly tragic story for all involved. A great read.

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**Jay says**

*This copy kindly provided by NetGalley on behalf of the publisher.*

If this was real, it would be a heartbreak story. Unfortunately, the emotional connection just wasn't there for me.

The synopsis was a little misleading... At the second tragedy, rather than further tearing these families apart, I thought it brought them all together to finally acknowledge what happened and the roles they all played in it, enabling them all to move forward on their own paths.

To be honest, I saw the second tragedy coming a mile off. As soon as dad introduced a new hobby I knew what was going to happen, and that was further cemented when mum told us of a specific moment something had been made (trying to put down my thoughts without spoilers is hard lol). Anyone with a good active brain will know this moment as soon as they read it & know what's going to unfold, just as I did.

A good read that would have been fantastic if only I got the emotional connection with it.

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### **Lynn says**

Two boys have an altercation on a play ground and life is never the same for them or their families. The book was very suspenseful with many emotional twists and turns. Not a happy book but an a good read.

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