



Sparrow

Sarah Moon

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Sparrow has always had a difficult time making friends. She would always rather have stayed home on the weekends with her mother, an affluent IT Executive at a Brooklyn bank, reading, or watching the birds, than playing with other kids. And that's made school a lonely experience for her. It's made LIFE a lonely experience.

But when the one teacher who really understood her -- Mrs. Wexler, the school librarian, a woman who let her eat her lunch in the library office rather than hide in a bathroom stall, a woman who shared her passion for novels and knew just the ones she'd love -- is killed in a freak car accident, Sparrow's world unravels and she's found on the roof of her school in an apparent suicide attempt.

With the help of an insightful therapist, Sparrow finally reveals the truth of her inner life. And it's here that she discovers an outlet in Rock & Roll music...

Sparrow Details

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Author : Sarah Moon

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From Reader Review Sparrow for online ebook

Lydia says

It me.

Ok, not totally, but every time Sparrow explains why she can't talk, or tell her mom or therapist something, it resonated with me. What a great book. What a brave book.

Samantha Lizzio says

This book is a beautiful debut. I felt Sparrows pain throughout the pages and I could definitely tell the author cares so much for her main character and may have had similar experiences as Sparrow. I enjoyed reading through Sparrow's therapy sessions; I felt Sarah captured what it's like to begin going to weekly talk therapy sessions especially when you've just started to feel like your mind needs a little help.

As someone with a mental illness, I am pleased more authors are having the courage to write about anxiety, depression, mania and more. It's a nice token of warm comfort to read about a character that is far from perfect and feels the same insecurities you have felt.

I had the pleasure of meeting Sarah Moon at a YA event and I'm excited to read her future work.

Ashley Fitzpatrick says

A delightful YA novel with an interesting... well I can't call it a twist... But an interesting spin. It's an incredibly thoughtful look at mental health among young people, especially young black teenagers who do not often find themselves at the centre of these stories.

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

I might actually put this on hold soon because I am so not in the mood for dark contemporary, but if you're in the mood for dark contemporary that's vaguely middle grade / YA, **please pick this up**. I'm 60 pages in and it's quite well-done.

Kathy Mathey says

This is an important book ~ introspective, courageous, and timely.

Amber says

Thanks to the #kidlitexchange network for the free review copy of his book – all opinions are my own.

I have a soft spot for Sparrow. My heart broke for her while reading this book. I think it's going to resonate with a lot of readers. She finds herself stuck in a space where she doesn't feel that she's understood, so she shuts down. Her actions are repeatedly confused as meaning something other than what she intends, and she seems to be caught in a cycle. She can't seem to express her feelings in a way that's acceptable to those around her.

While that part is heartbreakingly sad, it's also inspiring. With the help of her slightly untraditional therapist, Sparrow is able to find an outlet through music. Slowly she begins to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I think this book will resonate with many readers. Someone who's looking for a good strong emotional and heartfelt middle grade/teen book will enjoy this one, as will those readers who feel like Sparrow – lost, unnoticed, buried under grief.

Side note: Moon created a Spotify soundtrack for this book, and you can find the link to it in her Instagram profile. Personally I love this type of added bonus and the extra effort author's put into this kind of thing.

Highly recommend.

Michelle says

Amazing. Gorgeous. Painful. Wonderful debut. Only reason it wasn't 5 stars was because the music camp was a little *deus ex machina* for me- a little too convenient. But otherwise absolutely stellar. The narration and the characters were incredibly good. Including one of the best fictional therapists ever. I fell in love with Sparrow immediately and felt a strong connection to her 15 year old angst. Hope Moon writes more-I'll be first in line. Turns out she's the author Amy Bloom's daughter. Thanks to the ALA annual YALSA list for this rec.

Danielle says

"That's when I saw them, a handful of kids scattered around the library on rugs, lying in pairs or off in a corner by themselves on a mat, piles of books beside them. It was the first time I ever wanted to join anything."

"I keep waiting to feel ready to get up, and then it hits me—I'm not going to be ready. I'm going to have to do this without being ready."

Jamie says

Beautiful cover for a beautiful story.

Warning - it starts out slow and you're not sure you're going to get out of Sparrow's funk. But ultimately, this is a beautiful story of a young girl's navigation from fear and walling up to life.

Read InAGarden says

Sparrow is the quiet, shy kid we all know. Instead of being present for the cutting remarks of classmates, she imagines that she flies away with birds. After being labeled as a suicide risk, Sparrow must learn how to navigate her social anxiety without escaping reality. An introspective and well written book.

Alexandra says

Read in an afternoon and I absolutely loved it. Sparrow deals with tough topics regarding mental health, but it is perfectly balanced with the main character's wit and candor. A must-have for upper middle school and high school book shelves.

Sally says

A great story that I could relate to more than I thought! A young girl who has always hid within herself, never making friends. A great story for anyone, but especially a shy person who is trying to find their place in this mess of a world.

Eva says

This was really well done. Hit hard on some hard hitting issues and really struck home in a lot of places. Very realistic recovery and I loved loved loved Sparrow's descriptions of people, especially Doctor Katz.

jv poore says

I never imagined that anyone could capture, then convey the desperate isolation of an outsider-always-looking-in. Ms. Moon makes it so real that one evening while reading, my eyes were all leaky and my nose wouldn't stop sniffling. My husband asked if it was the pollen or a really sad book. It was not the pollen.

Which is not to say that Sparrow is dreary or depressing. We just meet Sparrow at a tough time.

Accepting that she will never fit in with other students, staying under the radar of teachers and staff; Sparrow

has developed her very own coping mechanism. It is a soul-soothing, secret escape. Private, because there's no way anyone would ever understand. Or even believe.

So, when Sparrow was discovered on the roof of the school and all assumptions were grossly inaccurate, the wrong question being asked, it was no surprise. But it didn't matter, she couldn't answer anyway.

Sparrow's mom is fiercely strong, capable and confident. And surprisingly willing to set aside her initial reservations about therapy. Even after meeting the not-as-pictured Dr. Katz and her interesting attire. In spite of the funky shoes, Sparrow could be cold and aloof towards Dr. Katz. It was much harder pretending to ignore the music that punctured the silence. Songs articulated her thoughts. Rough voices relayed her pain.

Sparrow felt her problems were solved, finding and embracing artists that understood. But listening to music was just the tip of the iceberg. With the enthusiastic support of her therapist, the determined, albeit a bit dubious, backing of her mother; Sparrow sets off for the Gertrude Nix Rock Camp for Girls.

Tackling a topic so commonly experienced, yet rarely addressed; Ms. Moon elicits empathy in an eloquent, engaging way.

This review was written for Buried Under Books by jv poore.

Suzi Evelyn says

MY Summary of the book:

SPARROW was found on the ledge of the roof of her school. She says she wasn't going to kill herself, but then what was she going to do? She won't say. After being released from the hospital and as she is forced to go to school again, she tries to repeat what she tried to do on the roof; she's been doing it for years. But it isn't suicide. No, it's a way to escape middle school and the terribleness that comes with being excruciatingly shy and a total bookworm.

Sparrow is such a wonderful book. Every page screams of Sparrow's loneliness and anxiety in a way that is intimate and real. It later shifts into a tale of heartwarming transformation and growth. Many different friendships and themes about friendships take place. Music is also a significant presence. Sparrow's mom and her therapist are very big characters in the book. As I mentioned, Sparrow is a bookworm. So, there were many places where she'd drop the title of a book I'd read and I'd freak out. Some of these books were Out of My Mind, The Book Thief, and The Fault in Our Stars, a.k.a. three books that I'm in love with. She also mentioned some on my TBR that have become gone higher on the list of priorities, like The Perks of Being a Wallflower and An Abundance of Katherines. The main character, Sparrow, is hilarious at times, and some things in this book will speak to everyone.

Sparrow on cafeterias: *Tables filling up with girls who are chatting, smiling, finding a place because they know where to go. It's like everyone got a map, but me.*

Sparrow on singing together: *I'm singing along. I'm singing at the top of my lungs. So is everyone else. I'm just one more happy, shouting voice, we're like waves in the ocean, one on top of another, impossible, to tell apart.*

And this part gives me pure happiness:

Ty comes up to me.

"You know I don't dance," I say.

"Mmmhmm," taking my hand and turning me under his arm. "Oh, look. . .that's called dancing!"

There were also some things I didn't like, though. This was advertised to me as a YA book, but it felt entirely like Middle Grade. That isn't really a problem; this book being Middle Grade didn't take away my enjoyment of it. I just kind of feel like I was lied to. Also, minor spoiler, there's this part where Sparrow has to help with a school talent show, and the entire process takes up a total of about 4 pages. I feel like the author could've put so much more detail into that. I love backstage. I think if she'd included more about Sparrow's experience, I would've liked this book that much more. However, I'm aware that maybe the talent show wasn't much of a significant part in the book to the author, so she didn't elaborate on it.

Overall, I highly enjoyed this book and will be recommending it to many people the minute I click Save.
