



Becoming: Sex, Second Chances, and Figuring Out Who the Hell I am

Laura Jane Williams

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After being dumped by the man she thought she was going to marry, Laura, hurt and bewildered, turned to excess in an effort to heal; misplacing her anger for one man with all men and using sex as a weapon. After one final lewd encounter Laura declared a vow of celibacy and moved to an Italian convent. Set in Paris, Rome, Detroit and Derby this is the story of her life before and her life after, the beginning and the end. *Eat, Pray, Love* meets *Wild*, BECOMING is a memoir that shows how one year can change everything, even when it seems like you'd never know yourself again.

Becoming: Sex, Second Chances, and Figuring Out Who the Hell I am Details

Date : Published June 2nd 2016 by Hodder & Stoughton

ISBN :

Author : Laura Jane Williams

Format : Hardcover 310 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Feminism



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From Reader Review Becoming: Sex, Second Chances, and Figuring Out Who the Hell I am for online ebook

Nicola says

I've been an avid reader of Laura Jane William's blog 'Superlatively Rude' for around four years now, and it's one of the few that I still check up on regularly. When I heard that she'd signed a book deal I hit the 'pre-order' button as soon as I could and waited patiently for the release date to arrive.

After being dumped by her childhood sweetheart, who then goes on to marry her best friend, Laura stumbles through the next few years in a haze of sadness, booze and men, before embarking on a year of celibacy and living in an Italian monastery where she slowly starts to piece herself back together.

Becoming had me laughing, crying and aggressively nodding my head while saying "yup, I've felt that exact way so many times". There's nothing picture perfect about Laura's story, it's messy, honest, raw, and real. But that's what has made her such a wonderful writer, and why she has such a loyal following.

Rosie Ellen says

Devoured this. A little too much gratuitous graphic sex in the beginning to set the scene, but the rest of it I loved - a fair bit of repetition from her blog (which I also love) but I really enjoyed filling in the gaps between stories I knew and the, aha, so that was him moment I had. An interesting and empowering journey through heartbreak.

Lauren Kaye says

Funny whilst heartbreaking all in one.

This is a perfect read for the modern woman trying to find herself.

From one night stands to travelling around Europe and seedy heartbreaking moments. This is written with the intent that we have all felt some of the emotions expressed in this book.

Will definitely recommend to friends.

Katey Lovell says

This memoir is a frank and honest account of the author's relationships during a tumultuous time. Exploring sex, celibacy and confidence, this is a read which will likely appeal to feminists, millennials and the younger end of Gen X. Funny and poignant, crushing and at times crude, I couldn't help but feel for Laura as she considered who she was and what she wanted from all aspects of her life.

A well-written look at the sex life of one single woman in modern society.

Amy says

More of a 2.5

Let me just say that I adore Laura and her blog. I find her extremely witty and funny on Twitter.

I listened to the audiobook, narrated by her but, something just didn't click for me. It is a tale of heartbreak, loss and finding yourself but for me, I felt for a memoir, much of it was heavily embellished.

It's a real shame, I wanted to love this but I just couldn't gel with it - despite myself having overcome heartbreak after a long term relationship. There are other reviews with the same thoughts that reflect how I feel too but sadly, this one just wasn't for me.

Seymour Glass says

I feel like this is the book a lot of young women have been waiting for - overcoming heartbreak and loss of identity by adventuring your way into a new existence? Yes please! I've lent my copy to several friends already, all of whom said they had various moments of self-identification while reading. It's hard not to when a lot of this book concerns being made to feel ashamed of who you are - your sexuality, your thirst for knowledge and success and experience, and your unassailable femaleness in a world that punishes such things in myriad little ways. From terrible sex with terrible men to passionate soul-bonding with dreamy virgins, Laura Jane has run the gamut of 20-something female romantic experiences and she writes it all so wittily and vulnerably that you feel much less alone for having gone through it yourself.

A well-travelled explorer, Laura Jane also takes us on a journey round the world, Derby to Detroit plus Italy, New York and Bali. Think 'Eat Pray Love' for broke millenials who have to fund their travels by working at summer camps for kids. The descriptions of her days as a tutor-trainer on the Italian Riviera are particularly evocative for their sense of summer-time freedom and the endless possibility of being young, daring and hungry for experience.

Allie says

A beautiful book about vulnerability, heartbreak, strength and gumption.

I'm a big fan of Laura's online presence and red magazine articles and this book made me fall more in love with her tellings of her faults, and wisdom.

There were so many sections I highlighted and will revisit because honestly, we as humans never recover from heartbreak of past loves. The baggage always follows us in to healthy relationships and plays tricks but Laura guided a light to becoming our own champion and doing the work to loving ourselves will help us swim through the waves when they hit unexpectedly.

Frankie says

At times I loved this book and others found it tricky. Without even an ounce of confidence that Laura Jane Williams possess at times I found it a little to self indulgent. But I think that speaks more from my own insecurities. I wonder if I found myself in a similarly self aware situation if I would have related more. The bravery to lay your life bare, including all the hardness is something few people do.

Cat Perrins says

'I'm proud of who I am but I'm well aware that Gwen is more palatable – she's smoother round the edges. Less opinionated...By comparison I'm a blonde, loud, hurricane of a mess, constantly asking why and demanding who and talktalktalking. I take up so much more space.'

Everybody LOVED this book and honestly, I don't know what I'm missing, but I couldn't even finish it. To me there is such a difference between introspection and self-obsession, and this book absolutely crosses that line. So not only is it completely self-absorbed, the author also constantly mentions how hard she is on herself and how she doesn't love herself and on and on and on. Often in comparison to others, like the comment above. And yet NONE of it rings true to me. Somebody who really doesn't think they're unusually interesting probably wouldn't write an entire book about themselves and their sex life, for a start, and certainly not one full of all this faux-humility.

There's endless stuff that other people supposedly said about her:

'I've literally never known anyone give themselves as a hard a time as you do.'

Firstly, who even says that to another person? And secondly, I just don't believe that anyone could meet Williams - a blogger who literally writes about her sex life for a living - and think 'wow, you're insecure.'

None of the 'insults' Williams throws at herself are even really insults per se, just hidden compliments:

'I so long to be the girl who understands who and what she is, what she stands for, is reliable and constant. But that is absolutely not me...I'm forever unfinished business. Isn't that exhausting?'

Is it? Or are you actually self-congratulating yourself on how complex you are, how different? She sounds like one of those girls who goes on about how she never eats salads but always eats burgers, or only wears natural make up. It's just not real humility, it's not a real concern. I don't buy it.

Some of the stories here are genuinely funny but it's all so wrapped up in this weird pretense that it becomes incredibly difficult to read. You should sympathise with Williams - her boyfriend dumped her and married her best mate, and that's awful - but as the book goes on, you do find yourself thinking 'oh, come on, love, worse things happen at sea, you know.' It doesn't go anywhere, the revelations Williams has are obvious and don't seem to develop as the book goes on, and in the end I just thought I didn't want to read any more of her pretending all the good things about herself were bad things in an effort to get others to say 'Oh, no, I actually PREFER girls like you, you're so much more INTERESTING!'

It's a shame because I like the author's blog, but this was absolutely not for me.

Rosie says

I hate myself for such a low review as I adore Laura's blog and Instagram, I recommend it to others all the time. However I couldn't get on bored with *Becoming*. It felt so over emphasised and fake? Some of the conversations - nobody talks like that nobody I know anyone. Nobody actually calls there best friend baby girl or sugar tits, do they?

Alice Caryer says

I really wanted to like this book because Laura is a lot like me. However, I don't particularly like myself and I am at times extremely irritating, as is Laura. This book was me at my most self absorbed and repetitive. There are quite a few reviews on here that say it all really; the book comes across as quite fake, and while I don't really think it's my place to say someone's memoir is fake, I can't help but feel it. I honestly don't really think Laura had got anywhere close to being comfortable single and in herself by the end, which is a bit depressing, but I can empathise wholeheartedly.

PS: I think my friends would actually kill me if I was still crying about an ex four years on.

Jennifer Richards says

I could identify with so many things that happened in this book! The heartbreak, the casual sex, the realisations etc. The book gets much better as it goes on. I have to say that at the beginning some of the dialogue between the characters came over a bit "cheesy", and this is very petty but I noticed a few typos which makes the book seem amateur when it really isn't. Overall though a very enjoyable read, I was rooting for Laura throughout and I'm going to follow her blog now too.

Amy Elizabeth says

If you hang around on the Internet, you've probably come across Laura Jane Williams and her brilliant blog at one time or another (and if you haven't, where have you been?). There was a lot of praise for her first book when it came out last year but it's only just fallen into my hands. With a subtitle of 'Sex, Second Chances, and Figuring Out Who the Hell I am', you can guess at the subject matter, and I think a lot of people will have similar stories to tell from their own lives - but isn't that the point? After being dumped by the man she thought she was going to marry, Laura turned to booze and sex to try and heal her heart. But, after finding that it just isn't working for her, she embarks on a journey of self-discovery from Derby to Detroit, and finally to an... Italian convent?

The comparisons with *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed or *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert are inevitable, but I think they are justified; not only does this book feature solo female travel, designed to repair and restore the traveller's heart and soul, but Laura manages to combine that wonderful mixture of honesty and sincerity

with humour and self-deprecation, which makes this kind of memoir work for me. It would be so easy to go too far down the navel-gazing route, or to make the story more light-hearted in an effort to shun emotional intimacy with the reader, but Laura is unfailingly honest, even when it doesn't picture her in the best light, whilst remaining warm and self-aware enough to have you rooting for her the whole way. We might not have all gone on such a journey, but anyone who has ever experienced heartbreak (and haven't we all?) will find something special in this book.

Paula Dennan says

After being dumped by her childhood sweetheart, the man she thought she was going to marry, Laura Jane Williams turns to excess in order to deal with heartache. Drink? Check. One night stands? Check. Having a good time is nothing to be ashamed of. But what happens when you are no longer having a good time? What happens when you realise that you haven't really dealt with the fact your ex-boyfriend is marrying your friend? What happens when you realise that you don't really like who you've become?

These questions are at the heart of *Becoming: Sex, Second Chances and Figuring Out Who The Hell I Am*. Laura decides to take a vow of celibacy, one year without sex or dating. A year where she can focus on processing the emotions she'd previously been fighting against, however messy those emotions may become.

Laura's writing is raw, honest and often times heartbreak. Her ebook *The Book of Brave* had a profound effect on me, so I was looking forward to reading *Becoming*. I wasn't disappointed. *Becoming* is poignant, thought-provoking, funny, heartbreak and above all an exploration of the work that's sometimes involved in truly liking yourself.

Hayley says

I read this shortly after reading Dolly Alderton's "Everything I know about love" and found it a great segue. Williams is frank and brutally honest about her experiences, and I found I related to a lot of her thoughts and some of the inner turmoil she went through. A funny, open and entertaining read.
