



Punch Like a Girl

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It's not the girl in the fight; it's the fight in the girl.

Nobody understands why Tori has suddenly become so moody and violent. When she attacks a stranger in a store, she ends up doing community service at a shelter for victims of domestic violence. She bonds with a little girl named Casey, but when Casey is abducted while in Tori's care, Tori is racked with guilt, certain that she should have been able to prevent the abduction. During the search for Casey, Tori comes face to face with an ex-boyfriend who sexually assaulted her at a party. Only when she speaks out about the assault is she able to begin to heal.

Punch Like a Girl Details

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Author : Karen Krossing

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From Reader Review Punch Like a Girl for online ebook

Raynee says

This was a really nice story about a girl going through a tough experience. You really sympathize with Tori as she struggles to get over her issues. Also, this book was the perfect length; it wasn't long, and it didn't need to be.

Moira says

I'm considering writing a review for this one, so more thoughts to come.

Amber Loyacano says

This is a great book for late middle school to high school aged students. The story covers hard topics like rape, abuse, kidnapping, vulnerability, and bullying without being overly graphic or over the top. The main character is likable and easy to relate to even if the reader has never experienced such hardships.

I really enjoyed how each chapter began with a vocabulary word with accompanying definition that connected to the plot. I thought it added a really interesting perspective on the action in the story without overpowering the story.

The writing wasn't stellar and there were many plot points that were obvious, but I do not think that is always a bad thing for a YA novel. Sometimes quick, gripping reads are important to get students into reading. This is a great gateway book for other more complicated reads. It would be good for fans of *Speak* or *Breathing Underwater*.

Yolanda Duke says

The best book to read about how to overcome problems

K.A. Wiggins says

I almost put this book down in the first quarter or so, because it starts out with a teenage girl getting violent as a way to cope with a traumatic experience that she's had (that isn't explained until the end of the book), and while I could understand and empathize with her feelings, it seemed like it was glorifying violence from a sort of feminist equality position.

I'm glad I kept reading, though, because the author did an excellent job of telling the story through the perspective of the teenage MC, and having her naturally progress to a different perspective by wrestling

through potential approaches.

There's surprising dimension to this story, given that it's a pretty quick read. The MC's relationships with her friends, teammates, sibling and parents, and ex-boyfriend are all explored and developed. She volunteers (as community service) at a women's shelter with the children, and a situation there helps her grow and deepen her understanding of how to seek justice. Mildly spoilery, but the resolution manages to bring balance to her perspective, allowing that different approaches are necessary in different situations, and doubling down on the redemptive nature of meaningful relationships.

Possible trigger warnings on sexual assault, physical and emotional abuse of women and children. Some violence and language; I'd rate this as PG for preteens and kids (but well worth a read if your kid is ready or if you want to co-read and talk through the ideas) and totally ok for teens 14+. This would be a great book for classrooms to teach through as well. Extremely well done (as many of the Orca Books titles).

Ailis McCleary says

Honestly, I signed this book out because of the cover. I know you're not supposed to do that, but it was irresistible!! (and the actual story sounded nice too.) So I read it. And I loved it! This book really was powerful.

Chalice says

Great book about dealing with life's struggles as a teenager. Kept my attention. Gave me conversation topic to talk to my teens and their friends. I recommend it.

Dulcie Self says

Her courage rises

I chose a five star rating because I think this book speaks strongly about the courageous journey a teen goes through when faced with a difficult life event. The story is well told and makes me want to share with my middle school students. Reading a story like this could help encourage others to share their stories or seek help. A teachable tool.

Ariana Magee says

Although Punch Like A Girl by Karen Krossing is a fictional novel, the realistic characters make everything seem true. Tori Wyatt is a 17 year old high schooler who enjoys soccer, spending time with her friends, and apparently getting into fights. Her two best friends, Alena and Jamarlo, cannot figure why Tori is acting strange and punching strangers. Tori thinks no one could understand what happened in her past relationship with her ex boyfriend Matt. Even though Tori says everything is ok her parents think it's best for her to take part in some community service, so she decides to volunteer at a domestic violence women's shelter. Over

time Tori tries to mend her friends back together and find her voice when encountering her ex. I personally loved reading this because every chapter had a crazy event with important topics. The author of the book made sure that all the pages were interesting without making it messy and disorganized. Although there were close details about all of the characters I never got confused on what I was reading. Even though reading is not my favorite, the author definitely found a way to make me not wanting to put the book down. An import positive detail about the novel is that it includes topics about abuse, relationships, friends, and family. These are things everyone should be aware of, even if they might not ever experience all of them. There was not really anything negative to say about the novel except I personally think it would be more interesting if the author included some more details about the people Tori punched. If you are a reader that likes novels about friendships and drama, Punch Like A Girl will be a great book for you. The author wrote an intriguing plot that will keep you excited during each chapter. The book absolutely met my expectations while I read it over the summer, and that is a lot coming from a person who is not to fond of reading. There were a few times when I became anxious when reading this, because there is a big heart beating event when Tori is doing her volunteer work and something scary occurs. When reading this novel it opened up my eyes on important messages every girl needs to know. There are some topics including harassment and abuse that some people are afraid of talking about, but in this novel the author makes sure to spread an important message in a creative way.

Maryam Asif says

This book was simply amazing. I loved everything about this book, from plot, characters, and themes.

Tori is a fierce character who suffered something traumatic that pushes her to be ‘tougher’ and she believes she will achieve this by first looking like it. So she shaved her head. Honestly, this was a pretty powerful statement and I think the way she treats it is spectacular because it shows she doesn’t give a shit anymore about things that are now superficial. Honestly, her anger was so raw that I literally felt it myself while reading it. I loved how she was loyal and caring towards everyone important in her life.

I loved the addition of having her volunteer at a shelter. I think it really developed Tori’s character and added so much to the plot.

This was a tremendous read, highly recommended.

Bonnie says

I'm a high school librarian in New Jersey. I have a student who who is a reluctant reader and was unhappy that she had to pick a book for her sustained silent reading. I recommended Punch Like a Girl, which she renewed twice before starting. A few weeks later her teacher returned it and told me that the student loved the book so much she asked for more by the same author. This is a huge victory, and I look forward to populating our reluctant reader collection with more of Ms. Krossing's books; she deserves the credit for getting a reluctant reader to love a book!

Sarah Woodall says

Amazing character development wrapped in an awesome story. Some basic plot holes remain, but overall a really good book.

Emily says

I liked Tori. She was a genuine character

Lesley says

I find my voice.

"He tried to rape me." The words flutter free. "Again."

Why did I think that speaking out would hurt me?

Punch Like a Girl is not about attempted date rape; it is a story about the power of finally speaking out. After Tori is sexually assaulted by her controlling ex-boyfriend, she lashes out at others and herself, physically and emotionally. But through standing up for others, she learns to stand up for herself, not by punching and pushing away, but by letting others in and sharing her story, thereby healing herself. This novel is a good quick read for teens—without any graphic description or profanity. One strength is that it doesn't bash all males; there are some wonderfully drawn male teen characters—Jamarlo, Daniel, Sal, and finally, even Joel. The story also shows the complexity of adolescent female relationships.

Emily says

maybe 1.5/5? 2/5?

TW: sexual assault, trauma

For a book that touches on such an important topic, I'm really disappointed that I didn't like it. I read this for a YA lit class in uni, and I had never heard of it before, which makes me even more disappointed in it. If you don't know, this novel follows Tori the day after she is sexually assaulted by her ex-boyfriend. To cope with the trauma, Tori vows to become more tough, more hard, so that no one can walk over her or try to take advantage of her again. She soon discovers, however, that this isn't the way to cope, and a little girl at a women and children's shelter helps Tori to learn just that.

To be blunt, I have several issues with this novel. First off, the writing is too simple, too utilitarian. It's clunky - to use the phrase of my roommate - and it makes this tiny, 200 page book feel as though it's dragging along as it points to things to tell you about. Especially the very beginning and end. "I did this because of this. And also this. Then I did this."

I also was disappointed in Tori. Not because she was trying to cope with trauma, but because she's so mean towards the other girls in the novel. She sort of grows out of this, but it's never pointed out just how hard she is on the girls around her. She resorts to calling a rival soccer team the "Blue Bitches," she calls out girls (in her narration) on what they wear and how they look. I know all teens are judgemental and self-centred, but Tori never really learns exactly how harmful and constructed thinking these things are.

So yeah, I wouldn't recommend this, but I also wouldn't totally stop you from reading it.
