



Reclaiming the Sand

A. Meredith Walters

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Bully and victim.

Tormenter and tormented.

Villain and hero.

Ellie McCallum was a bully. No connection to anyone or anything. A sad and lonely existence for a young woman who had come to expect nothing more for herself. Her only happiness coming from making others miserable.

Particularly Freaky Flynn.

Flynn Hendrick lived a life completely disconnected even as he struggled to become something more than that boy with Asperger's. He was taunted and teased, bearing the brunt of systematic and calculated cruelty, ultimately culminating in a catastrophic turn of events that brought Ellie and Flynn's worlds crashing down.

But then Flynn and Ellie grew up.

And moved on.

Until years later when their paths unexpectedly cross again and the bully and the freak are face to face once more.

When labels come to define you, finding yourself feels impossible. Particularly for two people disconnected from the world who inexplicably find a connection in each other.

And out of the wreckage of their tragic beginnings, an unlikely love story unfolds.

But a painful past doesn't always want to let go. And old wounds are never truly healed...and sometimes the further you try to run from yourself the closer you come to who you really are.

Reclaiming the Sand Details

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From Reader Review Reclaiming the Sand for online ebook

Patrycja says

[Yes (hide spoiler)]

Lady Vigilante (Feifei) says

5 'IT'S GOING TO HURT LIKE A MOTHERF**KER' STARS

No doubt or second guessing about it, Reclaiming the Sand just earned a “best book of 2014” nomination from me. Three words come to mind when I was asked to describe the story: get-your-tissues-ready, OMG-the-writing-is-phenomenal, and Flynn-will-steal-your-heart. Technically three words right?

Normally this is where I launch into a brief description of the book and what I thought was great and yada yada, but this review is going to be a little different. I don't want to give **ANYTHING** away so what you read from the blurb is all you're getting from me. The reason I say this is because the entire story is based on the friendship/lover dynamic between Flynn and Ellie and the *plot* is a secondary factor in the book so there's not much I can say about it. Instead, I'm going to focus on just the emotional aspect that may come up when you read...

Ellie is a bitch and mega twat. There's just really no other way to say it. She's ruthlessly mean to Flynn, who is the sweetest and kindest man and though he suffers from Asperger's, he repeatedly forgives and reaches out to Ellie. How can anyone *not* fall for this man? I was tearing up at 7% and just didn't stop crying until the end of the book, and even after that I sat for a good half hour and bawled my eyes out. In the middle of all that, I also might've deliriously messaged the author multiple times and got on her nerves. Anyways, my point is that you will CRY. You will FEEL. You will HATE. And then you will LOVE.

Even with me finishing the book, I can never fully understand why Ellie would direct so much poison and hate towards Flynn but I never condemned her. I mean, what she did is so unforgivable in many ways, and while I cried for Flynn and all the abuse he suffered, I also cried for Ellie. She was the victim of the inadequacies of the foster care system, repeatedly taking the heat for things she never should've experienced or gotten blamed for, and receiving this kind of treatment at such a young age without an outlet is traumatizing, at least in my eyes. I, for one, sympathized for her and could forgive her because she did redeem herself in the second portion of the book.

And Flynn...this man with two hearts of gold just stole my heart. There are a couple of chapters completely in his POV and let me just tell you, grab some kind of stress/anxiety reliever because those chapters have the most heartbreaking scenes I have ever read. I think the author did a fine job of writing in his perspective considering his Asperger's, which in turn, made it that much harder to read because I got to hear his thoughts and experience his emotions when he was taunted and tortured. Just...GRAB SOMETHING to get you through it.

As for the romance aspect, I loved that the author slowly, expertly got to the point where both characters were comfortable to move forward with their relationship. With their destructive past, I expected a LOT of development and growth to happen before any kind of romance came in and the author delivered that flawlessly. Still, reminders of their past and old scars served as constant memories and I could really tell both Ellie and Flynn were making efforts to mend the cracks in their relationship.

Although the ending was a bit rushed given the drawn out nature of the rest of the book, it still delivered the emotional impact that was warranted and so I was pleased with the way the story concluded.

This is where my review sort of turns into a forum, and I say that because this book was thoroughly discussed in my Goodreads thread and I want to share that with you. Normally I don't include these kind of things, but this book is SO unique, thoughtful, and bold I want you to get an idea of how my reading timeline worked and what others thought and said at the time.

7% mark:

Me: Holy cow this book is awesome!! I've been told that Ellie is a mega twat so I'm prepared!! xx

Jenny: OMG! We've just finalised our review for this one. Ellie....I can't even...twat is the right word but wait until you meet her friend!! Flynn on the other hand stole my heart. Can't wait to hear your thoughts. The writing was wonderful. xx(

Me: Oh YAY!!! I'm equally excited to read y'all's review! It's like eating a box of Godiva chocolates hehe

I got a glimpse of Dania and UGH! Über super mega x infinity twat lol! Oh and the writing is beautiful, totally loving it so far <3 <--- by the way, Dania is Ellie's best friend and just watch out for

Jenny: OMG! I miss Godiva chocolates lol

Oh geez, you ain't seen nothing yet! I wanted to bitch slap Dania soooo badly! Enjoy! :)

19% mark:

Me: OMG :(

Katy: Oh I have this one, enjoy Feifei :)))

Me: Thanks Katy! Ohhhh this book is making me cry non stop!! :(

Katy: Oh hell, but that's why I love Meredith's books!! Loved her find you in the dark series... I'll be watching out for your updates :)))))

Me: Loved that series too! This is really good but it's so heartbreaking >_<

Katy: Ohhhh :(((good luck x

Mysza: That good, huh?

Me: It's so good!!! A heartbreaking story but it's amazing! <3

Mysza: Well then, just one-clicked this one. Thanks for updates, they really encouraged me:)

Me: You're welcome! I just finished it and wow...get the tissues ready! I can't breathe through my nose since its all stuffed lol :) <--- this is me responding after I finished since I ignored Goodreads after this 19% mark

100%mark

Me: I actually finished this 30 mins ago but just sat here crying and crying. My heart hurts. My face hurts from all the crying. And I have to breathe through my mouth because my nose is clogged up.

Claire: I will save this one for at home then.....Nothing worse than crying like a nutter when you are on public transport!!

Me: Definitely save it for home!!!! I should've thought of that before since I now have to go to work looking like Rudolph the Reindeer :(

Bibliophilia: My kinda book then ;)

Me: Haha ;)

Sim: I was going to start while eating breakfast and waiting for the office computer to fire up. I guess I'd better not - thanks for the heads-up!

Me: LOL! A tearjerker is putting it lightly :/

Claire: Lol, I'm going to start it when I get home this evening :)

Gena: ahh!! so excited for this!!! did you love it Feifei?

Brandi: Lots of crying...I will have to stock up on alcohol and tissues. :)

*Jessica: *hugs**

Denisse: oh honey.... I want to read this and cry too. love this author. reading this with my girl Patty later on this week. Sending you big hugs...

*Sammy: *hugs**

Jennifer: I'm sorry I didn't give you a heads up about the tears that come with this story :(I didn't know if you were a crier like me when it comes to books!!!!

*Baba: *hands tissues* :)*

J.B.: This sounds quite interesting. I think I'm not ready for such an intense crying book at the moment. :) Glad you seemed to enjoy it.

Me to Claire: ENJOY!! :D

Me to Gena: I LOVED IT Gena!!! It was really emotional for me but I pulled through! I think you'd like it ;)

Me to Brandi: LOL yes that'd definitely help! I only had my sleeve... ;)

Me to Jessica: ((hugs)) ♥

Me to Denisse: Ooooh y'all are in for a treat! :D ((hugs)) <3

Me to Sammy: ((uber squishy hugs)) :D

Me to Jennifer: Haha no problem!! I'm actually glad you didn't so I could experience it full-force! If you had told me I'd probably sucked up my tears ;) Oh and you're totally right!! This book is awesome! <3

Me to Baba: Thank you Baba!! ♥ ♥

Me to J.B.: Thank you J.B.! I didn't expect it to be so intense and tear-inducing but wouldn't have it any other way! Hope you like it if you read it :D

Mysza: O.M.G. Feifei, I'm at 16% and it sounds so promising, so far it's a great reading!

Me: Yay!!! Hope it continues to be that way! Hugs and kisses ahead of time! ;) ♥

J: Okay I have to ask....(view spoiler) You know me....too many feels aren't good for me. LMAO!

Me: LOL I get you. I can't handle all the feels either and this one took the cake. (view spoiler) Ugh. I still can't breathe through my nose haha ;)

Mysza: Thank God, woof... (thanks for asking J, it's been eating me). <--- you'll get the woof reference when you read it ;)

Me: Haha! Enjoy :D

Assenette: Ok, I was going to read during my breaks & lunch time, but I see I need to wait until I get home. I'm already feeling nervous and I'm just one chapter in.

:)

Me: Oh definitely a good call! That prologue was something! Enjoy! :D

J: Phew...okay, I can read it then! I think! Thanks friend! :)

Nikki: Snot inducing torture?? Sounds freaking fantastic! Just added it! :)

Me: LMAO!! Haven't heard of that one, brilliant! It is fantastic but puts your emotions through the wringer :/

E: That awesome? Got to get me one of these soonish then :)

Chelsea: Wow fei that good? Can't wait... I wonder if i'm gonna cry coz I haven't cried over a book yet, just slightly teary- eyed but that's it =)

Me: GET IT!!!!!! :D

I didn't think I was going to such a baby but the waterworks started at 7% lol :(

Lisa: Enjjjjjooooooooooy !!!!! You love to torture yourself don't you ? LOL

Me: Thanks dear and LOL!! Had no idea it was a tearjerker haha! A bumpy read but worth it :D

*E: Started! Page 7 now. *clutches a box of tissue**

Me: Ahahaha!! Enjoy ;)

So you can see, this book wasn't just me reading it by myself or only *my* take from it; I got to fully experience everything this book had to offer with all the above chats and then some...if you're looking for a highly emotional, life-changing, soul-etching read, I would recommend this one, and while you're at it, grab some friends and tissues and HAPPY READING!

Vrsha (PeekAtMyBookReview) says

Rating : 5 ‘ ...yes they were made for each other’ Stars

My Views : I think for me what made this book special was how the two protagonists who belong to **two completely different worlds were brought together to create their own personal world**. These two have different backgrounds, pasts, attitudes and behaviors yet they belong to each other.

This is a book where **you will want to cry, laugh, smile, beat the shit out of Ellie for her treatment towards Flynn** and sometimes you'll want to kidnap Flynn and take him somewhere where no one can hurt him and eventually when the book will end **you'll want to pause and ponder about what happened or have that Dreamy smile after you finish each book...** But for me NO! I nearly tear down the library's bookshelf to find the second book...

Style of writing : Now there were times when I enjoyed the style of writing of the author especially when we were getting Flynn's pov. I absolutely loved getting into his mind and know how he processes his thoughts which made me as a reader connect with him more. However, I felt like we were having repetitions in the thoughts of Ellie. (Her constant complains of how Flynn is better and how she's not good, that bit was dragged...)

Characters : Ellie has had a bad childhood, met some wrong people and got a bad life. She bullied Flynn when they were teenagers but at the same time she was finding a kind of peace/solace in their secret friendship. Due to the hard circumstances of life Ellie became string on the outside but Flynn brought out the

best in her, **At times I wanted to slap her or pull her hair out** because she was really bad to Flynn but somehow I do understand why she was behaving this way.

Now Flynn, as said in the beginning of the book, he's someone that you'll fall in love with. What I loved was getting into his thoughts; A. Meredith Walters did a wonderful job with the pov of Flynn. He was so pure, innocent that each time Ellie hurt him; **you'll want to wear your Big Mama Bear Panties and tear Ellie into pieces.**

Favorite Part : There are so many part that are my favorite and all of them are connected to Flynn. But what I love most is how Flynn is forgiving. He has such a kind heart...

What did not work? I know that Ellie had a bad past and all that but sometimes she would repel Flynn just because she think that Flynn is too good for her but simultaneously what she doesn't seem to realize is that she's hurting him. And Anything That Is Responsible For Hurting Flynn Is On My 'To Kill' List.

Similar books? Another book where the hero who suffer from Asperger's - 'Puddle Jumping' (Novella). There are certain similarities but we do not have a bully heroine.

Recommended : Yes, this is one of the best read that I've had this year. And one friendly advice; do not read this in the bus especially Flynn's pov. Each time I was **crying so hard** in the bus that people were looking at me funny.

Jasmine says

5 GIMME MORE TISSUES STARS! ★★★★★

"I hated the joy his pain gave me. But it was a power I couldn't have anywhere else."

Having read Lead Me Not by this same author previously and was left feeling underwhelmed, I certainly had my reservations starting her other books. But all hope is not lost when Feifei told me to give this author another shot by rec'ing this one to me and let's face it: **Usually when a book sits on Fei's top reads of the year, this book must be doing something helluva right.**

And by the definition of helluva right, I certainly did not anticipate how much **this book had the power to wreck and hurt me like a badass mothafarker.**

Firstly I'd like to emphasize that this is a **character-driven story**, so plot is rather secondary in this one. And I'm a total sucker for these reads because when it's really done right, it will evoke the most powerful feelings and stripped you raw of all emotions. **So believe me when I tell you that before going into this read, you will need:**

1. Tissues
2. Punching bag/pillows/buddy support (*I had Sandy & Fei, thankiu ladies! ♥*)
3. Comfort food/Xanax
4. Tissues. *Seriously.*

Reclaiming the Sand is the story of **Ellie McCallum and Flynn Hendrick**, two individuals who seemed to be at polar opposites. **One is a bully, the other is the victim.** Something happened in the past that set these two apart but to have them reunited again in the present. **And this is their story.**

"Our roles in each other's lives had been to every extreme. Bully and victim. Friend. Champion. Lover."

Ellie. She's definitely not your typical heroine; she was a bully, she'd done mean and vicious things to Flynn, she was the girl that ruled and roamed the hallway of your school and strike terror with the kids. **She is the kind of heroine you'd want to hate and wished you never had the chance to cross paths with.**

But here's the thing, **I never hated Ellie from the get-go.** I'm probably in the absolute minority for saying this, but there was *never* a moment that I had channel any kind of hatred towards her. If it's anyone I hated in this book, it would be her low-life friends, especially Dania that had me wanting to rip her hair out and throttle her. **I'm not saying that I condone Ellie's actions at all** because in all honesty, there should be no excuse for such behaviour and the things she did to Flynn were downright awful, so much so that it made me cry for him.

But as much as I cried for Flynn, I cried so much more for Ellie. Flynn having Asperger's would have made him a more prominent victim, but in so many ways, **Ellie herself was a larger victim of a cruel upbringing.** Growing up in the foster system and being shunned and deprived of love, she never had the sense of belonging and having to live a life where you believe that no one in the world cared for you, *THAT* for me was **profoundly heartbreaking.**

"And I never said anything to anyone about the way they treated me. I kept it buried deep inside me. I never cried. I never screamed. I never spoke."

Being able to watch Ellie turn her life around in the present, taking that first step towards redemption, it completely made my heart swelled with pure joy and love. In a moment where the author described what she felt when she got her first A on her college paper and the absolute faith that the professor had in her, *I completely broke down and cry.* **Even the tiniest and probably uneventful scenes had me all teary and left me in an absolute blubbing mess.** That is exactly how beautifully brilliant the writing was ♥♥

Flynn. Oh my poor baby Flynn. The author gifted us with his POV every now and then and my God...there were times that it was just too painful to read on. The author did a flawless job in delivering Flynn's POV which **exuded pure innocence in his thoughts that just melts your heart.** But being the first-hand witness of him being bullied and tormented, I can't even begin to explain how *difficult* it was to stomach reading them. It was like someone stabbing a knife into my gut and twisting it and I can't do anything to stop the torture.

"I hate being alone. I want people to talk to me. I want them to like me. It makes me angry when I try to say something and people ignore me. Or worse they laugh. They call me names. Lots of names. Mean names."

And put these two together, you will get one of **THE MOST powerful, beautiful, absolutely heart-wrenching, unconventional love story of the year.** I wish I could say I'm exaggerating this but their love story is so remarkable and is a true testament of how love transcends all odds that I'm sitting here teary-eyed even while writing this *sniffs*.

"I loved him. He had given me a life I never dreamed I could have. He had given me connection and belonging and acceptance. He had become my world."

Without a doubt, Reclaiming the Sand will go down as one of my **TOP READS FOR 2014.** There are books that had me do the ugly cry, but I never had the pleasure of reading one that absolutely leaves me teary and weepy almost the entire way. **Don't be mistaken that all were sad anguish tears, but a good portion were happy joyful tears.**

The writing is phenomenal, the characters were beautifully flawed and their love story will leave you absolutely breathless. There cannot be enough words to justify how remarkable this read was but you simply just have to read it to experience it. **Acceptance, forgiveness and love; A. Meredith Walters delivered a truly exceptional and unforgettable read.**

Trust me, if you give Ellie and Flynn a chance, I dare you to not fall in love with their love story ♥♥

Reclaiming the Sand is the first part of a series and can be read as a standalone. The sequel, Chasing the Tide will be out on 16 December 2014 as a continuation of Ellie & Flynn's story.

Amy Queau says

I want to start out by saying that when I write 5 star reviews, I do it so that the author can read my words and feel good about impacting another reader. I usually choose my words carefully and try to focus on everything that moved, touched, or impressed me.

Well, I can say that I'm writing this one for me. Sorry A. Meredith Walters, but I'm going to be a little selfish with this one.

Almost four years ago, I had my first child. A beautiful, chubby, blue-eyed joy that I couldn't wait to teach. I was a new mother; overwhelmed, overjoyed with the new adventure of raising a child and showing him how to be a man. But by the time he hit 18 months, it was obvious he wasn't like other kids. He couldn't stack blocks, he wasn't speaking, and he couldn't find the motor skills to hold a fork. Two months later, the school district slapped an autism diagnosis on him, and I froze.

I don't think it's easy for any mother to send their child off to school that first day, all alone on a big bus, with strangers all around them. But I can't even express to you how terrifying it was for me to do this, even before he hit 24 months; handing him over to smiling strangers reassuring me he was in good hands. He was still my beautiful baby boy, and I didn't care that he was 'different.' But it wasn't about me, it was about my son.

Junior will be 4 in June, and just now is he starting to pair two words together. When I read the first Flynn chapters, I almost vomited for how much I cried. This author gave my son a voice; one I've never heard, one I might never hear. And I can't tell you how monumentally grateful I am for that. And even though the book opened my eyes to the fact that people are going to hate my son, call him a 'freak,' or bully him to the point of physical harm (because people can suck), it was still a harsh reality that I hadn't considered, but should've.

This book spoke directly to me.

So while I could sit here and tell you that the writing was flawless, the flow natural, the story supreme, and even the secondary characters were written in such detail that they popped out from the pages, I'm not going to deny the fact that those weren't the things that stood out for me. A. Meredith Walters is a New York Times bestseller for a reason - she doesn't fuck around. She's not the kind of author that slaps a diagnosis on her characters without putting the research and dedication behind it. You do the math - the book is superb. No. For me, Reclaiming the Sand has blown a hole through my chest and grabbed hold of my beating heart and will stay there forever. Flynn and Ellie won my heart, but better yet, I'm walking away with a better grip on my reality and a stronger mother for my boy.

It has also given me hope.

Thank you for writing this book.

Sandy ?Coffee Addict Books? says

"5 Second chance stars"

You will hate me.

You will love him.

I love him.

He has changed my world.

This quote got me so intrigued I had to dive in to know more about this bully and her victim. Yes! I hated Ellie for better part of this book for tormenting Flynn when they were in high school but when I got the insight of real Ellie, I sympathized for her.

Ellie had a rough life growing up, she was abandoned by her mother at the young age of six since then she was under foster care, despite taken by different foster homes she never felt loved or wanted. She grew up being strong, violent, temperamental and emotionally deranged. With the company of her shallow irresponsible friends she became an anti-social person seeking drugs, alcohol and meaningless sex to cover her remorse.

But there was one person who saw Ellie for what she was and not for what she became. And that's Flynn Hendrick. Flynn recently moved to Wellston and enrolled in same school as Ellie and her friends. Flynn suffers from Asperger's, which made him a potent target for bullying. But somehow Ellie couldn't resist the kindness in him, there's a budding friendship between the two. Ellie finds herself in situation where she can't express her true feeling about Flynn at the same time she didn't want her friends to know this side of her.

I hated everything what Ellie and her asshole friends did to Flynn, not once not twice but every fucking time they had to pick on him, call him names, make fun of him. I swear to god I so wanted to punch Stu, Dania, Shane and Ellie, especially Ellie for making his life miserable. Even then Flynn ALWAYS forgave her! Why?! because that's how kind hearted he is, There is no shades of gray in his life it's just black and white.

“He sees the beauty where others don't. He hears love when others only hear pain. He gives me the strength to become the person I've been terrified to be.”

Besides Ellie was the only friend he had, every time she bullied him he was confused and angry but later she would apologize and spend time with him and that's enough to make him like her again. She never felt any kind of emotions for anyone, she spent most of her life shutting everyone. This growing bond between them terrifies her, she doesn't know how to deal with a new found emotion and soon she does something regretful that changes the course of their life and she ends up in juvie for very long time.

“My desperate need to feel wanted had twisted into something horrific. And I had ended up hurting the one person I had wanted in my life.”

Seven years after that incident she still blames him for the way her life was changed she becomes bitterer and stops caring all together but when their paths cross again she didn't want that embedded feeling to rise which always did when Flynn's around. How long will she go without confronting her true feeling? Will she embrace this second chance life threw at her?

I can't tell you how much **I LOVE THIS STORY**. It stirred all sort of emotions in me. It made me sad, weepy, angry and mostly had me falling in love with both the MC's. Ellie has one hell of redeeming quality, even though life ill treated her and made her ruthless, she also set her life at right direction, evolved as a better person with growing passion and emotion. What can I say about ♥Flynn♥- an epitome of love, kindness and forgiveness, most sweetest and honest person I had a pleasure of meeting. Even after suffering so much of abuse and not having anyone to rely on, he emerges as strongest person. I love him for never losing hope, for his patience, his strength and for loving unconditionally.

I know you're sorry Ellie. You weren't very nice to me. You made me feel angry and sad and I cried a lot because of you. But now you make me smile. You laugh and I laugh and we have fun together. You want to be with me and I want to be with you. We belong together

Thank you A. Meredith Walters for writing this beautiful heart wrenching story of two socially awkward people coming together to find normalcy in their difference. Writing was explicit, it's not easy to develop a bittersweet character like Ellie. She made me to both hate/love Ellie and to deliver emotions of that supremacy is praise worthy.

Rating clarification: I didn't give it '5 stars' initially because I thought the epilogue was too short and I'd expected an epic ending, I wanted more of Ellie and Flynn's new beginning but now since I know there's going to be a continuation of their story in Chasing the Tide I'm the happiest person in the world so this story gets a deserving 5 stars for making me an emotional wreck!!

Smitten's Book Blog says

Heart-breaking, excruciating, inspiring, beautiful and unforgettable!

5 STARS FOR ELLIE & FLYNN!

Oh goodness, this book was tough. Like, **really tough**. I really, really struggled to read some of the scenes and I know some of you are going to totally balk at this. There are some real extreme bullying scenes in this book and to be honest, sometimes I just wanted to shut my Kindle off and walk away. I just couldn't deal with it.

I hate being alone. I want people to talk to me. I want them to like me. It makes me angry when I try to say something and people ignore me. Or worse they laugh. They call me names. Lots of names. Mean names.

But although this book totally broke my heart, **it was worth every bit of pain!** I absolutely loved it.

Freaky Flynn Hendrick has **Asperger's**. I'll explain a little more about that in a second. He is noticeably different to all of the other kids at school.

Ellie McCallum has had it tough. She's grown up in foster care, been abused, abandoned and locked up and she's hardened, cold and cruel. Nobody messes with Ellie and her friends. And if they do, they can expect a face full of fist.

Flynn is an easy target. Ellie and her friends make his life a living hell. They tease him, they push him around, they call him names and they bully him in every way imaginable. And then Ellie finds herself falling into a very unlikely friendship with the local oddball and a battle with her conscience and her long-standing hardass ways begins.

Flynn is one of the most vulnerable, loveable, heart-melting book characters I have *ever* read. I just wanted

to scoop him up and protect him from everything life might ever throw at him. He suffers with Asperger syndrome.

Asperger's, is an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) that is characterized by significant difficulties in social interaction and nonverbal communication, alongside restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests.

Flynn is socially awkward, he has absolutely no filter between his brain and his mouth. If Flynn thinks someone, he'll let you know. Now, I know this can make him seem totally rude at times, but I found this totally endearing and very comical at times! I just adored Flynn. There aren't enough words to explain how much he warmed my heart.

And then there is **Ellie**. Ellie's character is a tricky one. I absolutely *hated* some of the things she not only stood by and watched her friends do to Flynn, but even actually joined in with. That is what I found so hard to read and I know that some of you just won't be able to tolerate the level of bullying in this book. It hurt. Like, physically hurt my chest, to read some of it.

You will hate me.

You will detest the choices that I have made.

You won't understand me at all.

However, there were times when I really liked Ellie, and really felt for her, too. Ellie has had a terrible upbringing. She's had no real guidance, no role model, nobody teaching her right from wrong, and she's developed a defensive, aggressive persona to survive. She's not just in with the wrong crowd, Ellie McCallum *is* the wrong crowd. But after a stint in juvie, and as she begins to recognise what's really important in life, she makes an effort to change her ways and her future. I enjoyed watching this change in her. And I loved how she felt for Flynn.

I loved him. I did.

I had never loved anyone before but now I loved with my whole being.

It split me open.

My guts spilled out on the floor at Flynn's feet.

He owned me. Completely.

There was no coming back from this.

Flynn had reclaimed me.

The reason I think Ellie is tolerable, despite her actions, is because she is so *real*. Y'know, she is a total bitch, but A. Meredith Walters explains her character so well that you kind of can't help but feel a bit sorry for her. I mean, there is *no* excuse for bullying, but she's got this real 'attack to defend' mentality, this in-built survival instinct that she has developed over so many years of hardship. And underneath it all is a good person. And the truth is that there are so many young people out there like that. People that just don't know how to deal with real life and the tragedy that is their existence, so they lash out and they create this hateful, hard, ruthless persona to hide their sadness and their short-comings. That's how I felt Ellie was. She couldn't really deal with life, so instead she made other people feel small to fit in with the only friends she has and to make herself feel bigger. She uses drugs and alcohol to numb her mind from her pathetic, repetitive existence. And she rebels against any kind of authority or rule implementation. But she knows no different. And once she starts to mature and realises that she *does* have other options, she begins to change.

Had I mentioned I wasn't a people person with some major anger issues?

And also, I think part of what makes this book so emotional is that no, you can't really forgive Ellie for everything she did. But life moves on, people change and, though we can't change the things we've done in the past, all we can do is try and change the direction of our future and try to make good choices from here on in. And another thing I took from this book was that it takes a certain strength and pure, unbridled goodness in a person to be able to forgive and love, regardless.

"I'm upset, Ellie! Because you won't talk to me! Because you always hurt me" You make it so hard to love you!"

A. Meredith Walters has had first hand experience, working with troubled teens with mental health problems and troubled lives, so you can rest assured that you will always get an accurate account of the obstacles and issues that these young people face, with her books. Her books are raw and emotive. They pull you in and consume you. They always draw out such intense emotions from me and I feel like I could very possibly be reading a story based on somebodies real life experiences.

The book flips between Ellie and Flynn's POVs. Flynn tells us the story of the past, from his perspective, when they were teenagers in high school. And Ellie narrates the here and now. I *loved* the chapters from Flynn's POV. His narrative is so simplistic, so black and white. He thinks in basic, obvious sentences. There is no mind games or beating around the bush, with Flynn. He doesn't know how to lie and he totally doesn't get sarcasm or figures of speech. He takes everything literally and at face value, and it's utterly adorable.

He didn't hold the door open, instead letting it fly back and knock me in the face.

"Thanks," I muttered, rubbing my nose.

"You're welcome," he said, my sarcasm lost on him as always.

The romance between Ellie and Flynn will melt you from the inside out. It's slow building and so pure. As we know, Flynn says how he feels, so we always know exactly what he is thinking. And this includes his thoughts on Ellie's appearance, on what makes him happy, what makes him mad, on kissing, on touching Ellie's boobs! It really made me giggle and just added to Flynn's appeal. Honestly ladies, forget being dominated by all of our sexy, controlling Alphas; you will *all* just want to spend the rest of your lives loving Flynn Hendrick, protecting him and teaching him the ways of the world.

"I want you to only do this with me. Okay?"

"You don't want me with anyone else?"

"No! People that love each other don't do that with anyone else."

This book breaks all of the romance novel stereotypes. It throws the rule book away and writes one all of it's own. We have a defenceless, victimised hero and a cruel, bad-ass, hardened heroine. And at no point do their roles reverse. Flynn's disability means that he is and always will be the vulnerable one, the one that needs help, that has trouble with every day life and Ellie will always be the decision maker, the protector and the stronger, more capable partner.

We've already witnessed A. Meredith Walter's talent for engaging a reader with her seamless writing, with the very popular *Find You in the Dark* series. And she absolutely achieves the same effect with *Reclaiming the Sand*. I love the way she writes, the way she brings the characters to life and the way you can visualise every location and every scene. Again, I'd have loved to see more of this in terms of how this would affect them as a couple, moving forward with their life.

There were never two people more ill suited for a relationship than us. We were all wrong.

We didn't stand a chance.

And that made me want to fight for it even harder.

This book has a beautiful happy ending. I was a bit nervous, as I neared the end of the book, that we weren't going to get there. But we did, and it was just gorgeous. If there's anything I'd have changed, it would have been to have a little more insight into the hurdles Flynn and Ellie would face as a couple when building their future. But that really is my only complaint. Everything else was flawless.

If you are prepared to wade through the darkness and the pain, I highly recommend this book. You will be rewarded with a story that makes you feel from the very depths of your heart and characters that will climb

right into your soul!

Have you read it? Tell us what you thought?

'Reclaiming the Sand' Statistics

- **Steam Rating (out of 5):** ♥♥
- **Ending:** Happy ending
- **POV:** Alternates between Ellie & Flynn.
- **Narrative:** First person. Past tense.
- **Series:** ✕
- **Can this be read as a standalone?** Yes
- **Themes:**
Asperger's
Bullying
- **Writing:** Fantastic

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Sophie says

Review after re-read

This is the story of Ellie and Flynn. Bully and victim. Ellie had been tormenting Flynn, when they were at high school, along with her group of friends getting pleasure from making his life miserable. Flynn has Asperger's and he couldn't understand why people were treating him that way.

***There was no coming back from loving
Flynn Hendrick.
Ever.***

Flynn has found his way deep into my heart and I'm not letting him get out of there. Seriously, thank you for

this amazing book! Thank you for this lovely character! I cannot thank you enough for this. It touched me deep and I fell in love with Freaky Flynn. Of course I didn't like the bullying scenes , but sadly nowadays it's expected with the high rates of bullying at schools and not only. This is a sad fact, but it is however a fact. (view spoiler)

***“I remember everything about you.
Even the stuff I wish I could forget”***

Six years pass and Ellie with Flynn meet again. Many things have changed during those years. But some things had remained the same.

Was it possible for two people who had hurt each other so badly be happy together?

All you have to do is read this wonderful book and find out. Enjoy the ride through the journey between present & past, around Ellie's & Flynn's lives. **I highly recommend this book**, I'm sure that everyone will fall in love with this guy.

Brandi says

4.5 Stars

This was such a tough read, but it was worth it. *Reclaiming the Sand* is an emotional story, it's unique and beautifully written. Told from both Ellie (present) and Flynn's (past) POV.

Ellie McCallum is a bully. She is a product of the foster care system. Angry and disconnected, she doesn't care about anyone. At 15 she meets Flynn and her life is changed. Now at 22, Flynn enters her life again.

I had cared about Flynn. So much. It had scared me. I was terrified to feel anything for anyone. I had spent most of my life shutting everyone out. I hadn't a defense against a quite boy who was just as lost as I was. I had opened up. I had let him in. And then I had pushed him away in the only way I could. By destroying him.

Flynn Hendrick has Asperger's syndrome. During high school he was the victim of Ellie and her friends constant teasing. But he was drawn to Ellie and they end up developing a 'secret' friendship outside of school. Flynn's flashback POV's, gutted me, I was in tears a few times. He struggles to understand why Ellie is his friend sometimes, and then mean to him. But he always forgives her.

I hate being alone. I want people to talk to me. I want them to like me. It makes me angry when I try to say something and people ignore me. Or worse they laugh. They call me names. Lots of names. Mean

names.

With Flynn back in town and Ellie trying to make some positive changes in her life, will these two find their way back to each other?

I loved experiencing the developing relationship between these two. It was beautiful and healing. And while Ellie was difficult to like at times, I found myself invested in her, as well as Flynn. This was truly a remarkable story.

Flynn Hendrick has taught me how to feel. He had taught me how to live. He had taught me how to love.

Amy (Foxy) says

Whoa, this book made me uncomfortable reading it. A couple of reasons why:

- (1) As a mom, you want your child to fit in and belong. And watching **Flynn** not fit in was painful. The constant bullying by a group of kids hurt my heart.
- (2) As a former teen and now having 3 of my own, I know how hard it is to stand up against the crowd and stop others from tearing down someone who is different from the 'norm.' Sometimes it's just easier to go with the crowd, even if it's NOT the right decision.

Reclaiming the Sand is about **Ellie** and **Flynn** and learning to be okay with who you are.

Ellie has been released from jail for a past transgression and now is trying to figure out where she fits in. Having grown up **unwanted** and **unloved** she has been diagnosed with **Reactive Attachment Disorder**. Her label does nothing to make her any more lovable or easier to deal with. She's a hot headed, selfish person who has an inability to empathize with others. I was not a fan of hers but as the story neared the end I softened to her, *just a little bit*.

Flynn is different from his peers. Because of his awkwardness he's considered a weirdo and a freak. The thing that sets him apart from others is his **Aspergers** (a form of autism). Social cues are not something he understands and he doesn't know how to be anything but honest.

The constant humiliation that Ellie and her band of misfit "friends" bestows on Flynn, both as a teenager and as an adult, was realistic feeling and made me cringe to see such calculated cruelty. I wanted **John Quinones** from "What Would You Do?" to appear and question the people who stood by and let this abuse take place. Make them examine themselves on why we as a society turn a blind eye to this sort of "teasing." As a mother of teens, I hope my teens are not the ones joining in on this type of **mob mentality**. Okay, sorry, I got sidetracked.

Ellie grows from being a bully to a friend for Flynn. She becomes his champion and he hers and eventually they become lovers. I'm not going to lie and say it was easy to read about their situation because it wasn't. This is a story about forgiveness, redemption and finding love in the most unlikely of places. The hurt is very real and painful to read but also a very powerful and beautiful story. One that we can all relate to; either as

the bully, victim or the bystander.

While I mentioned this book made me uncomfortable to read, **I still would recommend it to everyone.** We need to be pushed outside of our comfort zone. Next time we see a “Flynn” or “Ellie” we should step in and be the difference we want to see with our world.

“Reclaiming the Sand” is my first A. Meredith Walters book but it won’t be my last. I loved the writing and the way the words pulled you into the story. I will be reading the continuation of Ellie & Flynn's story in the new book coming out 12/16/2014.

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SERIES:

Continuing story.

****Complimentary copy in exchange for an honest review.****

Mysza says

This is a story about a girl named Ellie and about a boy named Flynn. Ellie is broken, Ellie is damaged, she is a „product” of foster care system, she is mean, vicious, cruel and violent. She is bully. Flynn has Asperger’s syndrome, Flynn has problem with communicating, he is shy, he is quiet, he is reserved. He is Freaky Flynn (and OMG my heart was breaking everytime I read that insult in the book). Somehow, by chance, Ellie gets to know him and their acquaintance grows into friendship, but the friendship she tries to hide. You would think she stops bullying him after that, well you would think wrong. She is weak and pathetic, she not only lets her so called friends humiliate and hurt him, but she joins in. She is his enemy at school, calling him names, laughing at him, and she is his friend afterwards, spending time at his house. Flynn doesn't understand what she's doing to him, he is incapable of reading people's hidden motives or deceitfulness, he takes world as it is, he trusts her. She keeps hurting him, he keeps believing in her. Ellie has never been loved and she has never loved anyone. She hates the world and herself so much that she destroys the only true relationship she has ever had, too scarred to finally care about someone. Her actions lead to horrible accident after which they go their separate ways.

But seven years pass and their paths cross once again. Flynn is back and Ellie finally awakes from numbness in her life. Slowly they build their relationship all over again. And this time it's not only friendship, it's love. And it's beautiful. Seeing Flynn struggling with everyday life really breaks your heart but it also makes you happy that in spite of his limitations he is pure, he is good, he is worthy of love. And as much as I hated Ellie

in the beginning, my feelings changed in the second part of the book. I think she really redeemed herself by being patient, attentive and understanding, but most of all by loving him unconditionally. She simply grew up.

And the intimacy? Their first kiss? Their first touching? Their first love making? Let's just say I had goosebumps while reading those scenes.

I simply adored this book. It has remarkable writing style. I was a little worried in the beginning how the author will deal with Flynn's POV, not necessarily, as it turned out. She did a great job capturing Flynn's behaviour, which must have been hard considering his Asperger's syndrome. I didn't feel like reading a book, I felt like listening to him, like being inside his head. But what I loved the most were the peaceful and tranquil feelings while reading it, I savored this book. The story wasn't that important to me, it was the way it was delivered that really touched me. Amazing, beautiful, heartbreaking, but full of hope and finally happiness, great job Mrs. Walters.

I must agree on one thing with my friends though. The ending was rushed, and since there is information in the blurb that this a standalone I feel like I'll be missing the end of the story. (view spoiler)

Jennifer Kyle says

4.5 Reclaiming Stars

Please note this story has some truly heartbreaking scenes

I had no doubts that A. Meredith Walters could deliver an Asperger lead male and an Reactive Attachment Disorder heroine. This story was indeed well done! I think readers will feel Flynn's pain -- but I think more light should have been given to Ellie's disorder. I am noticing that some friends are struggling to empathize with her. Ellie's disorder is real, and unlike Flynn who had a caring mother no one ever helped Ellie with her issues.

This story is told mostly in Ellie's pov with a few chapters in Flynn pov. The story takes place in the present but we are given insight to Flynn and Ellie's high school past. (I found Ellie's pursuit of a relationship in the present truly ballsy. I feel the majority of people would have steered clear of him after what she put him through out of shame. I'm guessing her disorder played a part in this.)

Ellie is on the cusp of either staying the partying route to nowhere or trying her hand at a college future when this story begins. Flynn walks back into town and the story gets exciting. Ellie's feelings for Flynn resurface as do the regret for her actions that landed her a two year stay in a juvenile detention center.

"My desperate need to feel wanted had twisted into something horrific. And I had ended up hurting the one person I had wanted in my life."

This is the story of a girl who finds a connection with a 'freak' that her so called friends brutally bully. Ellie doesn't stand up for Flynn and sends him so many mixed signals. She not only laughs at the bullying but also is the instigator many times.

"And I feel sad when Ellie is mean to me. When she is with her friends she is just as mean as they are."

Flynn was beautiful inside and out. He was forgiving, he was kind, he was talented and he truly was everything Ellie needed in a friend and partner.

Flynn and Ellie's path cross in town and at the community college. They start their friendship up once again. I enjoyed Flynn and Ellie's renewed relationship and swooned over their baby stepping to so much more.

The ending was abrupt for me and I'm wondering if there will be novella in the future. I for one would like to know more about Ellie and Flynn. I would LOVE for Ellie to have a scene with Kevin, Flynn's therapist.

Glass says

After finishing *Lead Me Not* (you can read my review [here](#)), I couldn't resist and not pick up one more novel by A. Meredith Walters. I am happy that I did, because what I read was equally good as her latest novel and completely different when it comes to the story.

I did not expect that. One of the biggest cliches of new adult genre is alpha male/bad boy who falls in love with the good girl. A lot of drama and angst. *Reclaiming the Sand* is a novel that might not appeal to the fans of genre. Why? For starters, forget about bad boys and melodramatic make out sessions. There is nothing easy here and you could find yourself in situation where you wouldn't know if you hate main character or you forgive her. Ellie is usually that girl we find somewhere on sidelines in new adult books - unlikeable character who at some point choose to do a good thing and in the end we start to believe that there might still be hope for her redemption. It was hard to "accept" her and even harder to empathize with her because a lot of things that she had done were cruel and mean. Ellie is a bully. Nothing cannot undo her past, but I kind of understood some of her actions and in the end I didn't resent her that much.

Flynn. One thing I can promise you is that you have never met main male character like this in any new adult novel you have read so far. Flynn is complete opposite to Kellan Kyle and Travis Maddox type of boys. Struggling his whole life with Asperger's, Flynn had a hard time growing up, adjusting to change and interacting with other people. Ellie didn't make things any easier for him. My heart broke every time when he would smile and say that she is his friend now because she smiles at him and talks with him. Or when he would let her hold his hand. And I was so proud when he stood up for himself. I melted when he told her this:

"I'm upset, Ellie! Because you won't talk to me! Because you always hurt me! You make it so hard to love you!"

Please, read this! *Reclaiming the Sand* is a book worth reading, especially for all of you who have doubts about genre or no love for alpha males.

Song that fits the book --- Dustin Tebbutt "The Breach"

Review posted at Ja ?itam, a ti?

Pavlina Read more sleep less blog♥♥ says

+5 Beautiful,Emotional stars

**"We were a perfect,messed up pair,
Flynn and I."**

Such a beautiful story! I wish I could give it more than 5 stars!! This book was perfection!
It was so intense, emotional, heartbreaking, captivating, sweet, beautiful, romantic, unique and realistic!
There are so many words to describe how much I loved it!!! This book did something to my heart...really I
couldn't stop crying! I decided that I like this author a lot! And after reading another book of hers I can say
that she prefers to use anti heroe in her books and this is what makes them so realistic!
This story is about Flynn and Ellie...

**"Bully and victim.
Friend.
Companion.
Champion.
Lover."**

Flynn has Aspergers and people at school treat him bad because of this. Especially Ellie and her friends. But
Ellie when she was alone she spent time with Flynn. Flynn thought Ellie was his friend...So you can
understand how it was when you see someone you supposed to be your friend treat you bad...

After years they meet again...But now Ellie starts to see things different..and she wants to give more in her
friendship with Flynn...

First of all I would like to say that at the beginning I hate Ellie's friends so much, they were so mean and
bad..And sometimes I feel the same for Ellie. But the author managed to make me also feel sorry for
her..And after some facts and after trying to know her more I can say that I forgave her in the end.. Omg my
heart is bleeding for Flynn...poor Flynn..This moment I write my review I also cry...because I can't stop
thinking how people treat him...

Sometimes I wonder...Are there really so mean people??And why twould they do this?

Their moments together were so cute and sweet and so innocent at the beginning.

**"You want to be
with me and I want to be with you.
We belong together."**

I'm not sure if my heart will recover soon...I finished yesterday and still thinking about this story....
Please give it a try...it's so powerful, beautiful and unique!
And it could better to read this book when you are in a good place...because it will break your hearts...
You will need Kleenex!!!

Aestas Book Blog says

*** FULL REVIEW NOW POSTED *** **4.5 stars**

Woah. This was one tough read but it was absolutely beautiful. The emotions that A. Meredith Walters' evokes through her writing make you truly feel as though you are living the story alongside her characters and she writes with such vivid imagery that her words just come to life right before your eyes.

This was the kind of book I wanted to read as slowly as possibly just to enjoy the actual writing itself. However, despite the beautiful writing, this book was not always easy to read. From the moment I read the blurb, I knew this was going to be a heart breaking story but I fully trusted this author to do the story justice. She really earned my trust and respect with her phenomenal *Find You In The Dark* series where the hero of her story had a mental illness. That story really stayed with me and even now when I think back on it, my heart squeezes. But even more importantly, the way she tackled the difficult subject matter was so respectful that I knew that if there was any author who could tell this story, it was her. Let me explain a little about the story in *Reclaiming The Sand* here to give you a bit of a background...

Ellie was a girl who'd grown up passed from foster home to foster home, and by high school had ended up in juvie. Now, living in a small, rundown, dead end town with a rap sheet, bad friends, and a quick temper, her prospects in life were bleak at best. She'd learned the hard way to put herself first and had built up a reputation as a hot head and a girl no one should mess with.

"My life had beaten all of the good out of me until there was nothing left but the shell of a person I was now."

And then one day, a guy walked back into her town. Freaky Flynn Hendrick. The guy she hadn't seen in six years. The guy she blamed for ruining her life.

But Flynn was a little different than everyone. He had Asperger's -- a form of Autism -- and had many characteristics that made him stand out in society. With no filter between his brain and mouth, an extreme aversion to being touched, and difficulty reading people's emotions, he was easily a target for bullying. Unfortunately though, in the past that bully had most often been Ellie.

She and her friends tormented him endlessly throughout high school -- calling him names, physically hurting him, emotionally crushing him, mocking him, ganging up on him, publicly humiliating him... they heartlessly bullied him day in and day out. But he and Ellie did eventually built a friendship of sorts -- in secret. Until one day, one bad choice brought everything crashing down. That was six years ago.

"I had been weak and pathetic and unwilling to stand up to the people who tormented him, no matter how much I wanted to.

And I had joined in. I had bruised and hurt him. Wounding him with maliciousness that he had never deserved.

I had cared about Flynn. So much....

I had let him in.

And then I had pushed him away in the only way I could.

By destroying him.

And in doing so I had destroyed a part of myself that had only started to flourish in the warmth of his affection.

And these feelings hardened and solidified, freezing my heart and numbed me to everything. Then I had only survived. Only existed.

Until he had reappeared in my life."

In the present day, Flynn kept showing up. Here, there, everywhere. She was drawn to him -- unable to stay away from the boy she blamed for so much and who also filled her with such guilt.

"He reminded me of the girl I had been. One that wasn't angry. That wasn't bitter.

He made me remember a lonely girl who had been drawn to a sad boy and had found comfort in him."

And somehow, despite their past, a beautiful and unlikely love story unfolded...

With chapters flipping back and forth between Ellie and Flynn's POVs, we really got a very complete picture of the situation. I was surprised to find that I actually didn't *hate* Ellie as much as I thought I would. I mean, there was no doubt that her actions were horrible, selfish, and downright cruel at times, but I think that getting her perspective allowed me to see how much she hated herself too which made me almost pity her more than anything. I won't deny that there were many times when I hated her actions though -- especially during the times when she was aware of how wrong her actions were but didn't stop. I was angry at the way she allowed herself to be pushed around by her friends and peer pressured over and over again. But I was proud when she finally tried to pull herself out of her spiral and make a better life for herself.

"I had focused on the wrong things. The wrong people. And I had paid the price for it.

Maybe this time could be different.

Maybe this time I could be different."

In the alternate POV, the author did a phenomenal job especially of showing us the world through Flynn's eyes. It was impossible not to love him. His blunt honesty, his direct outlook on life, both his strengths and his vulnerabilities, his shy smile, and everything about him just tugged at my heart strings. And with way his chapters were written very much reflected his direct thoughts and feelings allowing us to really connect with the way he saw the world.

"I hate being alone. I want people to talk to me. I want them to like me. It makes me angry when I try to say something and people ignore me. Or worse they laugh.

They call me names. Lots of names. Mean names."

This wasn't a book where there was some sort of magic cure and all the problems just miraculously disappear at the end. Flynn's syndrome was not something that would ever go away -- it was a part of who he was. Between him and Ellie, he would always be more vulnerable, and she would always be strong in many ways. But as we were shown in the book, there were many strengths he had that put him far above everyone else.

"There were never two people more ill suited for a relationship than us. We were all wrong. We didn't stand a chance.

And that made me want to fight for it even harder."

My heart broke for him over and over again. I loved him for who he was. Just as he was. To everyone else, he was different, abnormal, a freak. But to him... his reality was the only one he'd known. To him, he was normal.

"What's wrong with you?" she asks me and my stomach twists up. Everyone always asks me that. I don't understand why they ask me that."

Gosh, he was just such a beautiful soul. So pure. So full of *good*. His shy smile, his huge heart, his trust (if sometimes heartbreakingly misplaced), his endless forgiveness, and his love healed a girl who'd become so embittered by life, who'd given into her anger, who'd hurt him, used him, and tormented him, all out of a desperate need to be loved herself.

Their multi layered history made for a very rich, complex dynamic between them. Even before I knew the details of their past, even before it turned romantic, I could feel some sort of close connection between them.

"Both of us were so isolated.

But then we had somehow found each other.

And here we were again. We were still those same disconnected people that we had been years ago, only now a little older and a little more damaged."

I found it interesting to note as an observation that when Flynn had a meltdown or an outburst, it was considered "freaky" to everyone around him because of his "condition" but when one of Ellie's "normal" friends (who honestly just seemed psychotic to me) had an outburst, people just accepted it as "her" and shrugged it off. It was an interesting reflection of the prejudice and double standards rampant in our world.

Falling in line with the nature of the story, the romance between Ellie and Flynn was slow building and very gently paced. But the beautiful writing built the story up in such a way that by the time things began to move beyond just friendship between them, my heart was just fluttering all over the place. It was all portrayed in a very non-explicit fashion, focusing more on the emotional connection shared than on vivid physical descriptions.

"What we shared was so much more than sex. It was an intimacy that came from baring your heart to someone who you knew would take care of it."

My one and only complaint in the whole book was that I felt that the ending was rushed. I already was on edge because of a certain choice Ellie had made towards the end and my poor, bruised heart could really have used a more detailed resolution to help it heal. But please don't get me wrong -- there is a happy ending, but I just would have wanted a little bit *more*.

Regardless, A. Meredith Walters has shown us once again that she has an extraordinary ability to take difficult topics and present them in a candid, yet deeply respectful manner. Her stories feel real. Believable. I love her writing style, I love the uniqueness of her stories, and I love the effortless grace with which she projects her characters' emotions right onto you. I love that she shows how romance book heroes don't have

to be soldiers and fighters, bad boys and millionaires. She shows us with Flynn that a romantic hero can be anyone; that their heart is all that counts.

*"He owned me. Completely.
There was no coming back from this.
Flynn had reclaimed me."*

Rating: 4.5 stars

This is a standalone novel.

For more of my reviews, book news and updates:

- ◆ **Main blog: Aestas Book Blog**
- ◆ **Facebook Blog Page**
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Katy Loves Romance ♥? says

Update~Spotlight on February 4th 2015:

CHARACTER AND AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT: Flynn Hendrick from Reclaiming the sand by .Meredith Walters:Q&A ****GIVEAWAY****

<http://www.slutsistas.blogspot.co.uk/...>

Enter the Giveaway here~ <http://on.fb.me/1zIt7uV>

WOW 5***** STARS

What a profoundly AMAZING read, there is so many great Reviews already for this one I'm going to just write some of my thoughts. This is the kind of book that starts off cold but warms your heart the more you read and get into. It is gripping touching and if there was **EVER** a hero in a book Flynn sure is one.

This is about a girl who is in a group of friends that bully a boy named Flynn who has Asperger's syndrome who ends up falling for a boy with such disability and to me this is a story about how maybe in society is deemed as not right?? mmm maybe more that in school its deemed as odd and therefore Ellie turns into

Flynn's Bully just like the others.

Ellie has been brought up in the foster care system she knows only how to survive in that she drinks, she has a temper and she works in a shop its a daily routine she knows inside and out but that's her life, but then there's Flynn the boy that makes her heart do somersaults and he makes her nervous and he also makes her **FEEL** which is so not like her she doesn't feel she just does so she becomes just like the gang she has been part of for such a long time. **A BULLY.**

Ahhh our Boy Flynn I have so much to say about him, firstly he has Asperger's I know I know I've already said that but let me say this ~ Meredith Walters has done her research concerning the subject matter, Flynn is the kind of hero you do nothing but fall for. Flynn has routines he doesn't understand mannerisms, reactions (although is trying in current times to work them out concerning Ellie) he may not understand why people are laughing, are they being funny or are they being cruel? In society people don't understand the Autism spectrum I'd say he's just mis-understood, in school he's an easy target and that is what he becomes with Ellie's friends. He becomes the guy to take the pain away from then someone to blame the issues on and the one people just want to ignore cause they don't understand how to react to him. He's the target for ALL in many ways so get your tissues ready cause this sure will make you cry.

Flynn is the kind of person that touches you right in the middle of your heart, he's so very refreshing he is very pure innocent and just so beautiful the kind of soul you just don't want to taint the kind of person that you just don't want to see any harm come to, he sees the good in everyone and is easy to forgive I just can't explain him enough he's the hero that you want to hug knowing that he doesn't want that hug. **A gentle spirit.**

But he doesn't know how to explain himself to show emotion and when he is needed he just can't give, saying that he shows himself in other ways little gestures little parts of him that others don't ~ see Ellie does.

Ellie in time starts to see life differently and wants to better herself there is lots of obstacles in their way, but Flynn sees what's in Ellie that others don't. I LOVED reading the PRESENT but I hurt in the PAST. This story takes you back in time to when Flynn was bullied as a teenager to Present where he gains strength and begins to see the differences in things and makes an effort to do what he is not so comfortable with mmm maybe fight even for his voice to be heard yet he still has Asperger's so he still has misunderstandings but he

does start to gain control in his choices.

And Flynn see's the good in Ellie where as others don't. Two different people, two different personalities, two separate goals except LOVE IS LOVE and the HEART knows what the HEART WANTS~ this statement is sooo true and I fell for this story 100%.

So was it easy to read? NO it hurt but it made me happy and smile and at times laugh too so yes enjoyable.

Would I recommend this story? Yes yes I just love Meredith's writing her descriptive words, emotions and subject matters that are REAL and NORMAL and HEARTWARMING.

READ IT~THAT IS ALL!!!

♥Sharon♥ says

5 Beautiful Stars!

Sometimes love is painful. Sometimes love is beautiful.

I'm not sure how to start this review other than to say that it was BEAUTIFUL and PAINFUL in equal measures. The beauty in the book came from Flynn Hendrick and the pain came from Ellie Mccallum. This book will bring about emotions that will have your heart hurting in ways it may have never hurt before BUT for me it also had my heart experiencing a pure sense of love that made it worth each and every tear that fell. And your tears will fall. I hope my words don't deter you from reading Flynn and Ellie's story. I am so happy to have met these two. Their story has affected me in a way I won't soon forget.

I will say what made a HUGE difference for me was not going into this book blind. I needed to know a little bit about it. I skimmed a friend's review, asked a question or two then found myself one-clicking and had the book on my Kindle. That was back in March. Then I waited for that moment when my finger unconsciously clicked it open.

Here are my thoughts about Flynn, Ellie and their friendship, their pain and their love.

Flynn~

Simply put he was beautiful. He is my superstar. He is also different than most. Flynn has Asperger's Syndrome. For me it is his condition that made him so beautiful. He felt things differently, he loved differently. Flynn didn't always understand "why" things were the way they were or "why" people treated him the way they did. He just wanted to be liked and to belong.

"Flynn was pure. He was untainted. He was good. And this man trusted me". ~Ellie

Ellie ~

There is so much to dislike about Ellie. She was mean. She was hurtful. She was a coward. But there were likeable parts of Ellie that she had locked away deep within herself. Even though she was flawed she had love to give. It was just something that wasn't easy for Ellie to do. Ellie was diagnosed with Reactive Attachment Disorder. Her illness is a result of her difficult life within foster care and having no family. She needed desperately for someone to want her in their life. Someone to need her in their life.

"You should do what makes you happy. You are smart. You are beautiful. You can do anything". ~Flynn

Their Friendship, their pain & their love ~

Flynn and Ellie's story was one that I won't soon forget. Not only because of the sadness and the pain that came from it but because of the friendship and love that Flynn unknowingly nourished between them.

Flynn and Ellie meet at school and share one class together. Ellie is visually different and Flynn is drawn to her. Flynn's directness with his words and actions startle Ellie a bit but it is also what pulls her towards him. Flynn is flawed just like Ellie, albeit differently. Flynn's illness makes it difficult for him to fit in, for him to be like most in social situations. As he begins to interact with Ellie, in his eyes a friendship starts.

Ellie doesn't understand (for lack of a better word) what starts to happen between her and Flynn. She should right? Friendship is something she should know about. But the relationships that Ellie has always been part of have offered her nothing but pain. The people that she currently calls her "friends" are just like her. Hate flows through their veins. But Ellie becomes a friend to Flynn. On her own terms, terms that Flynn would never be able to understand.

The little things that Ellie would say or do when they were together made Flynn happy. He just wanted to be liked, for people to talk with him, to have a friend. Ellie's friendship gave him that but it also brought him sadness and pain. Ellie's friends would bully and torment Flynn. The things that they did to him were despicable and horrid. What is worse though is that Ellie stood by and allowed it and sometimes joined in. Flynn may not have had the ability to understand but he felt the pain. And the hurt that Ellie caused was the worst. He hated her friends Dania, Stu and Shane but his feelings for Ellie were different, different until that final day.

Ellie and her friends make one final hateful choice that brings upon a punishment that Ellie deserves and this removes her from Flynn's life. It's been two years since she has seen Flynn, two years where her mind and heart has hardened where Flynn is concerned, two years where she told herself she would never see him again. Yet fate has other plans for these two. Flynn walks back into her life.

Ellie is not prepared to see Flynn again and what happens between them is something, once again, she

doesn't understand. But this time something is different with Ellie. Ellie's life is no longer consumed with hatred. There are other things that begin to fill her life and allow her to see things a little differently. She has a job, she is doing community service at a pet shelter and she takes a big step to improve her future by attending college.

As Flynn continues to pop into Ellie's life he offers her something simple, friendship.....love. It wasn't easy for these two to move beyond the past that they shared but they had to. Flynn cares for Ellie and wants her in his life. Ellie wants this too but knows she doesn't deserve him. Not after all the pain she has caused him but she isn't willing to give him up. She is only willing to fight harder to keep him in her life.

♥ *I know you're sorry Ellie. You weren't very nice to me. You made me feel angry and sad and I cried a lot because of you. But now you make me smile. You laugh and I laugh and we have fun together. You want to be with me and I want to be with you. We belong together. ~ Flynn*

You think we belong together? ~ Ellie

You make me feel good, Ellie. I make you laugh. We're happy together. That's all that matters. ~ Flynn♥

Will how Flynn feels be enough for both of them?

Please pick up this book and read what happens with Flynn and Ellie. Experience their journey. Find out if these two souls can be mended or if the pain from their past is too much to overcome. Can they have a relationship filled with touches, kisses and intimacy?

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Reclaiming the Sand is a story that has found a special place in my heart. Flynn was precious. Ellie was someone difficult to come to love and accept. But I did I come to accept her and forgive her but I won't forget what she did. I never came to accept or forgive her friends. Hatred is all I feel for them.

I want more though. I hope we get more of Flynn and Ellie's story and see what fate still has in store for them.♥

Rag says

5++ 'Messed Up' Stars

Reclaiming in the Sand is one fucked up story.

Ellie is a bully, full of hatred, and an unhappy person.

"I am an ugly person.

I do ugly things.

I think ugly thoughts.

You will hate me.

You will detest the choices that I have made.”

“If it’s true that eyes are the windows to your soul, I knew that mine held no possibility for goodness.”

Flynn is the freak, the awkward kid, and the kid with Aspergers.

I hate being alone. I want people to talk to me. I want them to like me. It makes me angry when I try to say something and people ignore me. Or worse they laugh. They call me names. Lots of names. Mean names.

“But you will love him.

It’s hard not to.

He is everything that I’m not.

He is good. He is kind. He cares for others deeply and absolutely”

We go back and forth between Ellie's pov (present) and Flynn's pov (past). We see the major changes in Ellie. She was a raging-straight-out-bitch. She hated herself and others. She was Flynn's friend in secret but treated him like shit in front of her druggie friends.

Fate brought these two back together.

Is it easy to forgive?

Can they start over and forget the past?

Can we have a second chance, not with others but also with ourselves?

“ Flynn had forgiven me, even when I couldn’t apologize. He always did. I wasn’t sure who was the bigger idiot. Flynn for accepting an apology I could never verbalize or me for not being brave enough to say”

This book was beyond *beautiful*. I really can't explain how this book effected me in so many ways. It made me look at the world in different colors. It was truly amazing. Sure I didn't like Ellie at the beginning but she wormed up on me. She's really terrific in her own way. Sure she made some mistakes in the past but didn't we all? We all deserve a second chance.

“Our roles in each other’s lives had been to every extreme.

Bully and victim.

Friend.

Champion.

Lover.”

“They say misery loves company. And we were the best company each other had.

Christy says

5+ emotionally spent stars!

I was so nervous to read this book. I had heard so much about it. Some loved it, some couldn't finish it. All I knew is it was written by the author of one of my favorite books and it sounded like an emotional read so I picked it up. I'm so happy I did. It was not an easy read, there were parts that were hard for me to stomach, it was worth it. This story was original, heart wrenching, beautiful and simply remarkable.

If you don't know much about Asperger's Syndrome or Reactive Attachment Disorder, before you read *Reclaiming the Sand* I would highly recommend you doing a little reading. If you don't understand the two main characters, you may not 'get' their story. I'm not condoning some of Ellie's actions, but if you know ahead of time what is she has been diagnosed with, you may understand her a little better, and like me, love her by the end.

Asperger's Syndrome
Reactive Attachment Disorder

Ellie.

Ellie is not your typical heroine. She has been through a lot in her life. Growing up in the foster system hasn't been easy. She has no family, no real friends. The one person she had, that was a real friend and truly there for her she pushed away and treated beyond terribly. She had cared about Flynn, more than she wanted to and she didn't know how to handle it. She didn't want to be the way she was.

I had cared about Flynn. So much. It had scared me. I was terrified to feel anything for anyone. I had spent most of my life shutting everyone out. I hadn't a defense against a quite boy who was just as lost as I was. I had opened up. I had let him in. And then I had pushed him away in the only way I could. By destroying him.

Ellie made some big mistakes, and we get many flashbacks of those in the story, but now she has her life somewhat together. Or she's trying to. She's working full time and attempting to go to college. It's just one class, but it's something. Ellie hasn't seen or heard from Flynn in years, he moved away when they were in high school after one big event. But now he's back in town.

Flynn.

Flynn's story will break you. It will tear your heart to shreds. I cried so many tears for this boy. He wasn't normal, but he was perfect. Getting into the past, the flashbacks from his point of view gutted me.

'I hate being alone. I want people to talk to me. I want them to like me. It makes me angry when I try to say something and people ignore me. Or worse they laugh. They call me names. Lots of names. Mean names.'

Flynn doesn't know why his new friend Ellie is mean to him. She comes to his house after school, she hangs out with him, they like each other and get along. But when she's with her other friends, she stands by and watches them mistreat him. Sometimes she joins in. He just doesn't understand. His syndrome makes it hard for him to get it. But he always forgives her. Every time. Now, after years of being apart, seeing her again is odd for him. He doesn't know how to act. He still cares for Ellie. Ellie cares for him. She knows she doesn't deserve Flynn, even as a friend. Not after all she's done. Yet he's forgiven her.

Flynn had forgiven me, even when I couldn't apologize. He always did. I wasn't sure who was the bigger idiot. Flynn for accepting an apology I could never verbalize or me for not being brave enough to say it.

Moving forward from the past isn't easy for these two, but it's necessary. They need each other. Need to be in each other's lives.

What starts as a renewing of an old friendship slowly turns into a relationship. Is it possible for these two to have a healthy relationship? Two people with such a past, so much baggage. They have everything working against them. They're aren't two people who appear more wrong for each other, yet somehow it seems so right.

There were never two people more ill suited for a relationship than us. We were all wrong. We didn't stand a chance. And that made me want to fight for it even harder.

I loved the dual pov in this story. Getting into both Flynn and Ellie's head made you see the entire picture. There is no one like Flynn Hendrick. No one. He is a hero unlike any other. He's awkward, sweet, kind and lovable. He has no filter, says exactly what he thinks and I love that about him. The hardest part of reading this book was having to witness the heartbreaking moments in his life. I couldn't stand it. There were a few times I had to take a break and a couple deep breaths. Then there is Ellie. I may be in the minority here, but I grew to love Ellie. She is hard to love. She can be cruel and mean. I hated some of her actions, but she had moments. Moments when she showed the person he really was. Life dealt her a crappy hand, and the disorder she has on top of that makes it hard for her to act a certain way. I forgave Ellie for her wrongs. Her friends on the other hand, I couldn't handle them. Despite the things Ellie's done, she's trying to be better. She's remorseful. And she loves Flynn.

I had been slowly dying for all these years and he brought me back to life. He taught me that being Ellie McCallum was okay. Because she was flawed and troubled. But she was also smart and capable and worthy of love.

People aren't perfect. Life is messy. Love is beautiful.

I wish I could find the words to explain how much this story touched me. But I can't. Some of the characters were far from perfect, but their story was moving. Their story was memorable. The writing was phenomenal. Even though the ending felt a little hurried, I still loved the way it ended. This book and Flynn Hendricks will stay in my heart for a long while.

Flynn Hendrick has taught me how to feel. He had taught me how to live. He had taught me how to love.

A. Walters says

I never know if I should rate my own books...because how ego-centric is that? But yeah, well I'm rating it anyway because Flynn and Ellie are very special to me and I hope they'll be special to you too! :-)
