



Words in Deep Blue

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This is a love story.

It's the story of Howling Books, where readers write letters to strangers, to lovers, to poets.

It's the story of Henry Jones and Rachel Sweetie. They were best friends once, before Rachel moved to the sea.

Now, she's back, working at the bookstore, grieving for her brother Cal and looking for the future in the books people love, and the words they leave behind.

Words in Deep Blue Details

Date : Published June 6th 2017 by Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers (first published August 30th 2016)

ISBN : 9781101937648

Author : Cath Crowley , ??? ??????

Format : Hardcover 273 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Romance, Fiction

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From Reader Review Words in Deep Blue for online ebook

emma says

HOW DID THIS BOOK ESCAPE MY NOTICE.

Seriously. Look at it. This book, with this cover, with this plotline, in this genre? It's fantastic. It's incredible. It's a massive injustice that it took me this long to find it.

This is exactly what I needed. Mainly because it's a contemporary, and I am so incapable of reading anything that isn't a contemporary when it's summertime that it's not even funny. But also because it's a fun romance with b*tchy girls (big love), and markets itself kind of as Sad And Profound but has a happy ending, so you can feel all deep even as your heart isn't smashed to bits, but most of all because THE MAIN SETTING IS A BOOKSTORE. AH! THE CHARACTERS WORK IN A BOOKSTORE, YOU GUYS. THE MAIN-BOY-CHARACTER LOVES TO READ.

It had flaws (the guy is kind of unbelievably stupid; traces of girl hate; couldn't really remember all the characters' names; this really confusing thing where the dialogue n e v e r follows the rule where a new quotation from a new person gets a separate paragraph from the dialogue from the last person; there were a few times when the book was clearly operating under the unbelievably false assumption that John Green is a good writer, rather than MY LEAST FAVORITE ONE).

But it was still pretty goddamn good.

Bottom line: I love contemporaries!!!! Look at this cover!!!! Bookstores!!!!

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

I'm so damn mad! This sounded like a book I would love. Most of my friends love it! So what happened to me???????? All it did was mostly get on my nerves even though I loved the majority of the people in the book and it was sad and there were books.

I'm at a loss people!

Maram says

Dear gorgeous cover and an interesting premise,
Be good to me, *please*.

Sincerely,
Desperate reader in a slump-*ish*

Carol (Bookaria) says

This is the story of Rachel and Henry. They have been best friends for years and at the end of their senior year of high school they have a plan to travel the world together. All is very exciting until someone enters the picture, *cough* evil vixen *cough* and their plans crumble. At the same time, Rachel is secretly in love with Henry and leaves him a letter expressing her love before she moves away. **What happens then? you have to read the book to find out.**

The story is told from the alternating points of view of Rachel and Henry. They both **love reading** and **books are discussed throughout the novel**. Some of the titles mentioned are Cloud Atlas, Fahrenheit 451, The Metamorphosis, The Fault in our Stars, and Waiting for Alaska, among others. Henry's parents own an used-books bookstore called **Howling Books** and in this place there is the **Letter Library** where people leave letters and secrets and it's just wonderful.

Rachel's brother, Cal, has recently passed away so the novel is also an exploration of grief, family relationships, and friendship. I was not 100% convinced by the ending so that was the only issue I had with the book.

Overall **I liked the book** and recommend it to all who love novels that take place around books, bookstores and book lovers.

Review posted on **blog**

FINAL NOTE: Check out the entire book cover below, it's beautiful

Aj the Ravenous Reader says

“If they were just words then people wouldn’t fall in love because of them...”

A beautifully written YA contemporary story about grief and love, death and life and most of all, about the magical power of words to people. Every element fits the overall theme and I love that most of the story is set at a local secondhand bookstore somewhere in Australia. I could practically imagine myself inside *Howling Books* enjoying every section of the store especially the *Letter Library* area where people are allowed to write on the books they love or insert anonymous letters to anonymous people and just let the power of words affect people in the best ways possible.

The characters are so easy to relate with and I truly enjoyed the alternating POVs between Rachel and Henry. I also love all the other characters who have become a sort of a family because of the bookstore. I appreciate how the romance is interspersed in the plot and I like that even though this is basically a romance novel, it doesn't overwhelm the entire plot. It's a truly heartwarming, adorable read that showcases the ability of the author to write one novel with layers upon layers of stories, themes and ideas. I'm definitely reading other books written by the author.

Dana Ilie says

Words In Deep Blue is a book you read on a beach. The letter library is such a wonderful idea I hope it exists somewhere so I can go to visit it, and the relationship between Rachel and Henry is beautiful, realistic and fun. Crowley manages an intimacy through her words, through the relationship between Rachel and Henry. These young characters are wise, they're well read, and they have a zest for life that makes it possible for them to surmount the loss and limitations that once held them back. I couldn't put Words in Deep Blue down, partly because of the literary references (who doesn't love bookshop as backdrop?), partly because of the truthful grappling with loss, but mostly because the relationship between Rachel and Henry is one that I rooted for. Cath Crowley is a master at writing well-developed, likeable characters that have you hoping that everything will turn out all right for them and this is yet another perfect example of her brilliance as a writer.

Kristin (KC) - Traveling Sister says

4 Stars!

Who: Young adults navigating through this thing called life...

What: Love and loss. Then some more love and loss. And books!

Where: A cozy, family-owned secondhand bookshop that I *desperately* wanted to visit...

What more could I possibly ask for?

Great writing? Yes, of course—it has that, too!

WORDS IN DEEP BLUE has it all, and is the perfect antidote for readers craving an uplifting story about **Love, Life, Loss, and Literature**—but one that also packs a punch.

This author isn't afraid to showcase the power of all those “L’s” through the ups and downs of life-like characters, nor does she shy away from using humor in her delivery. Dry humor, that is, because is there anything better?

This plot isn't filled with angst nor is it prolonged with grief, but is satisfyingly plausible and perfectly paced. It's deep in a way that isn't dramatic—a gentle sort of depth—with messages that whisper profoundness, rather than being launched at your face.

The “romance” is light but the “love” is pronounced, and the story's focus lies heavily on much more.

Henry and **Rachel** were best friends all their lives, but Rachel has always felt something *more* for Henry. Henry, however, is in love with Amy, and Amy is a heartless B*TCH. (In a nutshell.)

This plot pulls Henry and Rachel back together, working side by side in the bookshop, sharing letters with each other between the pages of their most beloved books, all while warming the hearts of its readers.

Life will be compared to books, and books will be compared to life, and you just may love every second of

it. I know I did. Although not heavy in suspense, I found myself flipping quickly through these pages, wanting to know where the plot was heading, and truly just enjoying the touching journey along the way.

This lovely story showed up at the perfect time, and for that I'm a happy reader. Hope you'll enjoy as much as I, and more!

"I don't think you can date a letter like this. A love letter, by definition, should be timeless or what's the point?"

Bianca says

Occasionally, one stumbles upon a book that just moves you in unexpected ways. *Words in Deep Blue* is one of those books. So what if it's labelled "young adult". If it's good, it's good.

Our protagonists are Rachel Sweetie and Henry Jones, both eighteen. They've been best friends for many years, with a three-year gap, when Rachel moved away to another town and stopped all contact with Henry.

When Rachel moves back to town, she finds things are not the same, as Henry is dumbfounded that Rachel hadn't missed him. Or had she?

Rachel starts working in Henry's parents' second-hand shop, cataloguing their books. Howling Books is a very special place, where many beautiful memories have been made. Where books are special. People leave messages and underline special passages in books. All those special books are held in the *Letter Library*; those books are not for sale. Of course, books are the centre of this novel. As a book lover, I am somewhat an easy prey when it comes to books about books, although, I've read plenty of novels about books that didn't quite do it for me. This one had references from contemporary and more classic novels and poetry and a few other genres. I never got the feeling that Crowley was just name dropping for the sake of ... whatever.

Of course, this novel is about more than just books. It's also about loss, grief, and love. It's also about finding your crowd, who accept you for who you are, even if you are a "freak". The books are the conduit when it comes to confessing love, learning about love, and moving on with life despite grieving the loss of a loved one and the loss of places and objects.

Crowley is a terrific writer, who managed to engage and transport me from the very first page. Honestly, I loved everything about this novel. The writing is superb, all the characters, including the secondary ones, are well developed and real. Despite having shed some tears (shhh, don't tell anyone), this was uplifting, calming, and optimistic.

Ah, another thing I should mention, this novel has a great filmic (is that a word?) quality about it. I could easily see the scenes as I was reading. I hope somebody grabs the rights for its adaptation and makes it into a movie. Who doesn't love coming-of-age movies?

Of course, now I'm keen to read more of Cath Crowley's novels. Because this was just **special!**

I've received this novel via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review. Many thanks to the publishers, Macmillan Australia, for the opportunity to read and review this novel.

Larry H says

Seriously. This book had me sobbing like I haven't since *All the Bright Places* or maybe even *Me Before You*, although there's not quite the same level of tragedy. But as I was crying so hard I wet my t-shirt (don't judge), at the same time I was thinking that I may very well become obsessed with Cath Crowley's writing after this one.

Henry and Rachel were best friends. They were utterly inseparable, and the truth is, Rachel was in love with Henry. She knew that Henry was fascinated by Amy, the pretty new girl in school, but she figured she needed to tell him how she felt before she moved away. So she wrote him a letter and tucked it inside his favorite book at his family's bookshop, and she waited for him to come to her.

He never showed up, and he texted her to say he overslept the morning she was leaving. She realized that it was time to put Henry and their relationship behind her. So she left town, and didn't respond to his letters or any of his attempts at contact. She built a new life for herself, one without Henry.

Three years later, Rachel returns to her hometown. So much has changed, most notably, her brother drowned, making it impossible to be near the water, which was her most favorite place to be. She is unable to feel, unable to derive any joy out of her life, so her mother sends her to live with her aunt. And although the one thing Rachel wants to do is avoid seeing Henry altogether, it's completely unavoidable, since they'll be working together in the bookshop.

Henry, meanwhile, doesn't understand how his best friend could have forgotten him. He doesn't understand why she's so angry, so closed off, so unwilling to laugh with him or tell him anything. But Henry has his own crises to contend with—Amy has broken up with him (again), and started dating the handsome jerk from high school, and his divorcing parents are fighting over whether to sell the bookshop. He doesn't know a life that doesn't include the shop—his family lives above it, after all—but at the same time he wonders if selling might make the most sense, since he would finally have the money to treat Amy the way she wants to be treated, when she realizes it's Henry she loves.

The bookshop is known throughout Australia for its Letter Library, a collection of books in which people have left letters (or written things) for others throughout the years. Flipping the pages of any of these books provides a glimpse into the beauty and imperfections of love, infatuation, grief, anger, and joy. As Rachel works to catalog the markings inside these books, she realizes that perhaps she needs to open herself up to life a little bit again, and discovers some of her fears about her brother's short life, fears that have paralyzed her, aren't true.

As Henry and Rachel try to rebuild their friendship, they must contend with the secret she's been hiding about her brother, as well as the three-year-old elephant in the room. But Henry still can't figure out what he wants from life—romantically or from the bookshop. Both of them must take a leap when the very thought of stepping outside their comfort zone is more than they can handle.

"What's the point in living on past the moment when those we have loved have left us? And how can we ever

forgive ourselves for letting them go?"

Words in Deep Blue is emotional, angsty, moving, and occasionally frustrating, but it is just so good. (I haven't even touched on the parallel storyline featuring Henry's younger sister.) Yes, I wanted to beat the crap out of Henry for most of the book, but he's a pretty authentic teenage guy, who wants what he wants regardless of how others feel. And while I get irritated when characters could move forward if only they would say what needs to be said but they don't, this, too, is more like life than fiction.

Not everyone out there is into YA, but this is a pretty terrific YA book. I love that the characters aren't refugees from a John Hughes film or a John Green book—while perhaps they're a bit more erudite than typical recent high school graduates, they're not coming up with bon mots you want to write down and try out on your friends either. (Or is that just me.) This is a book that made me feel, yes, all the feels.

Cath Crowley, can't wait for your next book. But perhaps a warning I'll need Visine next time?

See all of my reviews at <http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blo...>

Hailey (HaileyinBookland) says

Saying I have mixed feelings on this seems like an understatement. I loved the concept, this truly is a bibliophile's paradise with all the references to other well known books and the second hand bookstore setting. It brilliant conveys the emotions of the characters however I found the characters themselves to be rather uninspired. I definitely have mixed emotions regarding the writing style. It was good in some ways but for the most part I found it scattered and confusing to follow. I feel like the author was trying to accomplish a lot in a short amount of time which lead to that lack of clarity. That being said, I did enjoy it enough to give it a 3 stars. Side note: this cover is so aesthetically pleasing.

Elyse Walters says

There is so much to love about this book....

The writing is alive with authenticity, and angst. The intimacy of communication shows how extraordinary an ordinary life is.

Beautiful...and soooo very moving!!!!

C.G. Drews says

This is one of the most beautiful books I've had the pleasure of devouring at dawn. Actually I devoured it at midday but pfft, please let's not get caught up on the details. **THE FACT IS: THIS IS AN AMAZINGLY GLORIOUS BOOK AND I LOVE IT.** But then can Cath Crowley do no wrong?!? I adore her books *A Little Wanting Song* and *Graffiti Moon* and I'm sooooo glad this new book exists. **IT'S BEAUTIFUL.** (What do you mean I said that already??? Dude, I'm saying it a million times. Buckle up for

the ride.)

The best thing about this book is: IT'S ABOUT BOOKS. I think books about books are (A) the best kind of bookish inception, and (B) doomed to capture the reader's heart because we relate! It's partially set in a bookstore that's failing and about to be sold. And it's absolutely STUFFED with references, discussions, and mentions of other books. **Plus do you know how aesthetically pleasing an old second-hand bookstore story is!???** I just wanted to fold myself into this book and live here forever.

Although, the bookishness did pose *one* annoyance. Um, yeah. Hear me out. See the thing about books about books is....usually they're about *classic* books. Don't get me wrong. I have no problem with classic books. And **these characters WERE NOT SNOBS** about classics, which was great. The book even mentions *The Fault in Our Stars*! And I recognised a reference to *Summer Skin* (which I won and should read yeah???) But about 89% of the important books in here were classics. And it did kind of end up as a pretentious little tango there.

(Not enough for me to stop loving the book though, clearly.)

(And, I mean, I *love* the idea of abusing books and writing notes in them and letters and underlining and highlighting...but I COULDN'T DO IT. NO. I COULDN'T.)

(And also having a library where people write letters and put them in books for other people to find is THE best idea in the world. Please someone make this happen. #AestheticallyPleasing)

Also the characters and the dialogue was definitely BEYOND AMAZING. It's dual narrated by **Henry and Rachel** who are ex-best friends and kind of are slowly becoming friends again. Henry is also hugely involved in this girl who goes out with him and dumps him again and again etc etc. **But despite being an absolute LIMP CUSTARD NOODLE about this girl...Henry is still adorable.** Boys with good senses of humour who like to read are just adorable. The end. **And Rachel's brother just died so she's severely depressed and often rude.** But she's recovering from the worst kind of heartbreak and she is learning to live again (no "romance cures all" messages btw; huzzah). **And their banter is EVERYTHING.**

"What?" she asks.

"Your head," I tell her, "is a very pleasing shape."

"Likewise," she says, and smiles.

And that's not even to mention all the **amazing secondary characters.** I just...I can't even summarise how much I looooved the secondary characters. THERE ARE NO PAPER PLATES HERE. Everyone is so dimensional that I literally will climb onto a very *very* tall chair and yell for a spin-off story for George (Henry's little sister). Everyone was complex and interesting and HEARTBREAKING.

Although, I mean, mini-warning: it kinda contains a love triangle. Obviously it is a PERFECT love-triangle because here I am, still enjoying it. It's also 1 boy = 2 girls, which is unusual? And I honestly knew how it'd end up, and it was a case of characters being BLIND. But there you go. Fair warning. It *could* be a bit irritating because it was obviously Henry needed to get smacked upside the face with a large bookshelf. But ya know...these things happen.

I also maybe nearly cried. But I didn't because #Vulcan. But there was something like A TEAR tickling the

back of my eyeballs.

Also the books is actually very comfortable and calming. This feels weird to say??? BUT HEAR ME OUT. It was a cosy bookshop and lots of food and gentle banter and teenagers with excellent vocabularies and love of dusty old books. And that was just SO COMFORTABLE TO READ ABOUT. It was sad. It was beautiful. It was never never never dull. And yet it was what I'd call a "quiet book". And I'm just enormously thankful for it.

I READ AN EBOOK BUT I WANT TO BUY THE PHYSICAL NOW BECAUSE I HAVE A NEED.

Basically I love this book an exuberant amount. Obviously. Take a peek at my 5star shouting. The beautiful words, the book-appreciation, the amount of dumplings, the complex characters, the heartbreaking letter-writing, ALL. THE. BOOKS = completely won my little bookworm soul.

Bye. I have to go HUG MY BOOKSHELF NOW.

*** QUOTES ***

Note: quotes taken from an eARC from Netgalley. Be aware that they may not be final.

Second-hand books are full of mysteries, which is why I like them.

The Letter Library is a section of books that aren't for sale. Customers can read the books, but they can't take them home. The idea is that they can circle loved words or sentences on the pages. they can write notes in the margins. They can leave letters for people who've read and been there before them.

Last night I collected all the books I thought I'd need before I took to the couch, so they're all piled up around me -- there's some Patrick Ness, an Ernest Cline, some Neil Gaiman, Flannery O'Conner, John Green, Nick Hornby, some Kelly Link, and if all else fails, Douglas Adams.

Lola says

The letters left in books as a way of communication were absolutely wonderful. The inclusion of book culture itself caught my interest very fast. Books about books rarely disappoint me.

But the romance did. Rachel loves Henry, her best friend, but Henry loves Amy. Rachel leaves. Three years later, after her brother's death, she comes back and is forced to face Henry again. What if she falls for him once more? Meanwhile, Amy breaks up with Henry, but Henry wants her back desperately.

Henry is very, very desperate. If Amy had been a charming girl who wanted the best for him, I would have said, "yeah, okay, give it a shot, try to get her back since you love her so much." But the author does not

present her in a loveable way. She's banal, until she's annoying, until she's despicable.

I wouldn't say that there's a love-triangle, because Amy said early in the story that she doesn't love Henry, despite the fact that the latter is crazy about her. Still, there is a case of unrequited love, no secret there, and even of love-hate relationship. I loved the interactions between George and Martin, but Henry and Rachel left me mainly unmoved.

Rachel keeps Cal's death secret for the most part of the book. I understand that she doesn't want to bring up the subject, or even get into it, but it wasn't right for her to lie either. Secrets never stay secret for long. It's annoying for the reader, because he can clearly predict what will happen when the truth is discovered.

Howling Books is such an original setting. It's a bookshop! I had no trouble imagining it in my head. The garden. The monthly book club. The letter corner. I wish such a place existed near my house. It's a beautiful shop that brings people together and spreads the love of books.

I expected to like this more. It was fine... Three stars isn't the worst case scenario, but it means the book is not worthy of a reread.

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Stacee says

I fell in love with Cath's words with Graffiti Moon and I knew I wanted to read this before I knew what it was about.

I loved Rachel and Henry. They're both going through so much and while they rate differently on the spectrum of bad, to each of them, it's catastrophic. I loved their dynamic, their banter, their desperation to help the other when they weren't doing well themselves. And of course there are a small cast of characters who are all excellent and add a layer and texture to the story.

The plot is engaging, but it's the prose that did it for me. The topic of books and words and the passion the characters feel for them, it was electric. I was absolutely captivated and as always, I want to roll around in Cath's words.

Overall, this felt like a love letter. It was hopeful and heartbreaking and at times the grief was palpable. I was shaking my fist to the sky in one page and hugging my arc in the other.

I will forever read this book.

****Huge thanks to Knopf and NetGalley for providing the arc free of charge****

Berit??? says

This book was just simply beautiful.....

On the surface this book was about Rachel and Henry and their second chance at love, but truly it was so much more than that.... it was a book about love and life, death and grief, and the power of words... I found both Rachel and Henry extremely likable and relatable; i'd love to go to Australia and visit this book shop, especially the letter library.... if you love books and Love ♥? this book is definitely for you! So grateful I found this little gem...

narration: Hamlish R. Johnson and Chelsea Burland both did an amazing job, I am a huge fan when there are multiple narrators voicing the multiple points of view and bonus they have Australian accents!?
