



Pretty Girl-13

Liz Coley

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Pretty Girl-13 is a disturbing and powerful psychological thriller about a girl who must piece together the story of her kidnapping and captivity and then piece together her own identity.

When thirteen-year-old Angela Gracie Chapman looks in the mirror, someone else looks back--a thin, pale stranger, a sixteen-year-old with haunted eyes. Angie has no memory of the past three years, years in which she was lost to the authorities, lost to her family and friends, lost even to herself. Where has she been, who has been living her life, and what is hiding behind the terrible blankness? There are secrets you can't even tell yourself.

With a tremendous amount of courage and support from unexpected friends, Angie embarks on a journey into the darkest corners of her mind. As she unearths more and more about her past, she discovers a terrifying secret and must decide: when you remember things you wish you could forget, do you destroy the people responsible, or is there another way to feel whole again?

Liz Coley's alarming and fascinating psychological mystery is a disturbing—and ultimately empowering—page turner about accepting our whole selves, and the healing power of courage, hope, and love.

Pretty Girl-13 Details

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Author : Liz Coley

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From Reader Review *Pretty Girl-13* for online ebook

Giselle (Book Nerd Canada) says

Liz did her research and did it well. Especially during chapter 2 where she's being examined. Her writing is very easy, very fluid and you feel like you've been transported in Angie's world, forgetting about your reality. You're literally dropped into the mystery surrounding Angie and at first you're just as disoriented as her. There are different clues as to the horrors that could come to be.

Now I don't know about you, but when there's a problem to solve, my mind will fast forward with a million different scenarios, starting small then enlarging into one big mountain of a mole hill. It just so happened that one of my most extreme predictions turned out to be the biggest twist in the book. There was emphasis being portrayed and when that happens you know something is up. I'm still a little shocked about it. I know this happens to people all over the world, but to almost become a shadow in Angie's life was terribly traumatic. Kate is one of those wonderful best friends with a good head on her shoulders and that's exactly what Angie needs.

The prologue in the beginning is frightening, terrifying and something most girls should never ever experience. Being told in second point of view is unique and I felt the hairs on my body rise when reading it.

I'm thoroughly fascinated with alters. Having it displayed in a book like this makes it even better. Multiple personalities all living in one body, I just can't understand or fathom how crowded it would be to live that. I found it fascinating having her mind still be 13 years old, while her physical body is 16.

Psychology plays a big part in *Pretty Girl-13*. Liz describes it in such a simple and easy way that you have no trouble understanding it at all. If anyone noticed the title also states PG-13, because the issues in this book is very adult and psychologically damaging. I can't stop thinking about this book either, it gave me major book hangover.

Ashley says

BookNook — Young Adult book reviews

Pretty Girl-13 completely took me by surprise! This book is really heavy. It's dark, gritty, and deals with some seriously intense issues. I adored this book, but not in the usual girly, giddy, fan-girl-scream way. **I adored *Pretty Girl-13* in the sense that it really shook me to my core and left me speechless.** It's an extremely sad and emotionally draining book, but it will leave you with dark and heavy thoughts that are sure to change you.

My biggest fear going into *Pretty Girl-13* was that the "alters" would be confusing. These "alters" are Angie's other personalities. She developed them as a way to cope with extreme physical and emotional abuse. But I was afraid that these multiple personalities would make the book extremely confusing, especially if we were hopping from one personality's point of view to another. **But don't worry—none of those fears became a reality; Liz Coley does a wonderful job crafting this book with zero confusion.** It's definitely intriguing and a bit freaky to think about, but it's not confusing. For the most part, we don't actually see from the other personalities' points of view (there are a few minor exceptions). Usually when we

hear from them it's in the form of a physical letter or recording from one personality to Angie. This more 'physical' way of hearing from the other personalities made it really easy to relate to and almost just view them as separate people.

On a similar note: don't be freaked out by the second person point of view in the prologue. I have to be honest, it scared the shit out of me. Second person isn't something you come across often and I was confused, scared, and worried. It kind of put me off on a bad foot with *Pretty Girl-13*. But the rest of the book (or at least 99% of it) is formatted in a more traditional third person point of view. Now and then we do get the second person narrative, and that's when we're reading from an alter, who's sort of talking to Angie as "You". (I'm afraid I'm making this sound confusing, but I promise—it's not.)

Liz Coley did a fabulous job of slowly revealing the information about Angie's capture. We only learn bits and pieces at a time, but each new piece of information is a twist in the story. It's bomb drop after bomb drop, and things just get scarier, creepier, and more traumatic. But Angie was a fabulously strong main character and I was amazed at how well she took everything. She was a real trooper, and I loved that about her! **I also loved the integration of therapy.** I'm usually one of the people that's a little bit skeptical of therapy, but this book did a great job to demonstrate how therapy can really help a person overcome traumatic experiences, and it was brilliant!

***Pretty Girl-13* is certainly a dark book and you can't go into it light-hearted, but I highly recommend it if you're looking for an intriguing, fascinating, and devastating read all in one.** This book is just as hopeful as it is traumatic, and I love how Angie and Liz are able to point out the light amidst a sea of darkness.

Leslie says

I really enjoyed reading a book about someone with Dissociative Identity Disorder!
I have to admit though I hated her dad and Greg and Yuncle! And the last three chapters.. WOW.
It was a definitely an interesting read! Very different.

Giselle says

This is the perfect example of a book you should go into completely blind. I did not read the synopsis beforehand (I think I may have months ago but I couldn't recall anything), nor did I even know the genre. I went in with zero expectation, and came out of it baffled by how it blew me out of the water!

Since I think everyone should do like me and go in without a clue, I will not ruin the moment for you either. But I can safely tell you the very basics without changing your reading experience: Angie went missing, then she comes back suddenly, and with absolutely zero memory of the past three years of her life. Three years that, to her, has never passed. Thus she finds herself still in her 13 year old mind, but with a 16 year old body. This, to me, was unbelievable. Leaving me turning the pages frantically to try and get a grip of what exactly has happened to her, WAS happening to her. There are events at the beginning that leave your mind stunned; fascinated, mostly. But soon enough you begin to understand what she's going through, and it opens up a whole new world of intrigue and wonder.

The story is raw and gritty, it left me both horrified and in a puddle of my own emotions. Upon turning the last page, all I wanted to do was burst into tears. As the story progresses, we learn exactly what happened to Angie, slowly, piece by shocking piece, until everything fits together at the end. This wonderful, strong, and brave soul really grabbed at my heart. I loved the protagonist and I adored her friends. I do have one qualm with the latter, though: When her friends see her--their missing and presumed dead friend--for the first time after three years, I was not convinced by their reaction. It was underwhelming. I'm also not sure about how the media could have been kept away for so long, or how easy it was for her to re-emerge herself into society without any chinks, not to mention her recovery's progression. These are all easily forgivable in hindsight, though, being a YA novel. Yes the story could afford to be tighter and stronger, had it been more thoroughly dissected, in psychological terms especially--it would have also needed to be longer to achieve this--but the book progresses rather quickly and into a direction that essentially makes these qualms inconsequential to get to the heart of what this story wants to be.

For a review on this novel, my plan is to keep it short and to the point and I think that's been achieved. We get into very hard topics, told in an amazingly effective way; intense, piercing, and all-consuming. Now, look away. Look. Away! And just read it!

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An advance copy was provided by the publisher for review.

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Elena says

At times, this book was uncomfortable to read. Rather than being an exciting thriller about a girl's kidnapping and escape, it's about Angie's slow journey back from a three-year captivity--not a physical journey, but a mental one.

In the aftermath of her captivity and escape, Angie remembers absolutely nothing about the time that passed between waking up at Girl Scout Camp one morning and finding herself standing on her street three years later with a bag full of clothes that definitely aren't hers. Her parents, the police, and the doctors all say she went through a horrible ordeal, but Angie doesn't remember any of it. She doesn't even feel like she belongs in her own body anymore--it has grown up without her. Angie is diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder and through therapy she slowly gets to know her "alters," each of whom holds a different piece of the puzzle of Angie's past. The alters came into being to protect her, but now that Angie is safe, she becomes frustrated by her lost time--by the alter who stays up all night leaving Angie bleary-eyed the next day, by the one who "sluts up" her outfits without Angie even realizing it, by her total inability to recall *anything* about the three missing years of her life. And in the midst of everything she is also dealing with reintegrating into family and school life after everyone had given her up for dead, and with the mentality of a thirteen-year-old but the body of a sixteen-year-old.

I had a few minor concerns about sexism and some one-dimensional characters, but overall this book is difficult but compelling, heartbreaking, and definitely worthwhile.

April (Aprilius Maximus) says

Everyone needs to go and read this book right now. One of the most thought provoking, unputdownable books I have ever read. I'm sure this book will stay with me for years to come.

Katherine says

Longer review to come soon after finals crush my soul on Tuesday, but in short...

What a thrilling ride and an amazing look inside Multiple personality Disorder, something to rarely discussed in the mental health world (or YA books, for that matter). I thought the author handled it very tastefully and obviously did her research. While I did think some of the main characters "other" personalities were a little far-fetched and not fully developed, overall this was a compelling read. Highly recommended!

Kelly says

[I figured out that Angie had Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) from the writing alone. It wasn't that hard to piece together. The multiple voices inside, the way she referred to herself as "we," and the way the voices said they would protect her (hide spoiler)]

Kassidy says

This is such a thought-provoking read! I can't stop thinking about it, I felt so emotionally captivated by Angie's story . I love the all the psychology stuff and the mystery. I love how raw and real it is! I do have to warn that it is disturbing and mature at times. This is just one of those books that will stick with me. The mystery plot line is slightly predictable, but still a crazy and intense journey!

Emily May says

2.5

Just to issue a quick warning: I'm not sure what is to be considered a spoiler for this book as everything seemed glaringly obvious to me but please don't read this if you'd like to be completely unaware of anything to do with Angie's condition (even though it is made known relatively early).

This book started very well but became more ridiculous with every chapter that I read. A number of subplots were introduced that did nothing but further complicate the story whilst actually being an attempt to fatten it up as the main focus point was not enough to fill out a complete novel. These bits of plot-padding felt like last minute add-ons and were not blended into the rest of the story as naturally as they should have been. Amongst other things, I am talking about the mother's pregnancy - what did this really contribute to the

exploration of Angie's (protagonist) disorder? Besides, of course, allowing room for her to whine about how easily forgotten she had been. Once again, I feel like the idea of this story was far better than the reality and it failed to live up to its potential. I also think your enjoyment of this book will depend on how many psychological mysteries you have read and can use as a comparison; I doubt that I would feel so negatively about this if I had not already read books like *Living Dead Girl* that explore the mind of abuse victims in a much more effective way.

But there was one thing this book reminded me about that I did like: sometimes reality is weirder than fantasy and sometimes the human brain can be scarier than any vampire or demon.

The story here is about a thirteen-year-old girl called Angie who goes on a girl scout camping trip in the woods. She wakes early one morning and goes into the woods to pee, one moment she is crouching there amid the pine trees and the next she finds herself on her own street, walking in the direction of her house. She stumbles home in confusion to find that she has been gone for three years, that she is now sixteen and the evidence the doctors take from her body suggests she has been violently and sexually abused. She remembers none of this. Why? Because she has developed Disassociative Identity Disorder (or Multiple Personality Disorder) and therefore her brain has created multiple identities that she switches between in order to cope with traumatic situations.

I found this idea truly fascinating, but I fear that may be more to do with the fact that it's the first of its kind that I've read and I've always wanted to learn a bit more about DID. Don't you find the idea of multiple personalities simultaneously interesting and very scary? Imagine sharing your body with several different personalities - *completely different personalities* - each of them have their own thoughts and motivations and interests. They are essentially different people inside one body. But... isn't personality a creation born from memories and experiences built up through the years to make you YOU? So, if your mind has created them all, how can you be sure there's a "real" one? Or which that is? Doesn't the existence of this condition open up the possibility that we are all several different personalities inside one body but the dominant one is in control? Until, sometimes, it isn't anymore? It's like *What's Left of Me* but a million times more interesting. Give me a good book on this subject any day, too bad this wasn't the book I've been looking for.

One main problem with *Pretty Girl-13* is that there are no twists or surprises, no shocking moments, no revelations that make you glad you spent time waiting for the book to drop something amazing in your lap. And maybe that wouldn't be so bad if there weren't so many things I thought COULD HAVE made a great twist if it had been written into the story better. I am going to assume that certain things were not actually meant to be twists - though I'm not 100% sure if they were or not - because I am not a difficult reader to fool or surprise and I saw everything coming. (view spoiler) Plus, anything that might be considered a twist was actually just a ploy to send the reader spiralling off in a new direction, instead of adding something exciting to the main storyline.

Whilst not the primary subject of my dislike, I also didn't appreciate Angie calling one of her alternate personalities THE SLUT just because she was the one who satisfied her captor's sexual appetite. I wouldn't like it whatever the reason, but I felt it was even worse because she was doing it to prevent Angie from having to go through the sexual abuse and was, in fact, a victim of rape. In what fucked up worldview does being raped make you a slut?

Not everything is bad, though. I liked the idea of all these different personalities being an important part of Angie, that they were all the different strengths she had within her, ready to come out when she needed to be stronger or more resourceful than she usually is. I guess it really does show the ultimate power of mind over matter in the most testing situations and I had to write my whole review before I finally decided on a rating. I

like this idea, I just really wished I liked the book a lot more.

Kat Heckenbach says

I'm really not sure how to start this review. And forgive me, but there are going to have to SPOILERS here. I'll try to keep them to a minimum though.

I really wanted to like this book. The cover is so cool, the concept so intriguing. The structure had potential for real brilliance, too--the way Angela's other personalities tell their part of the story in second person and through notes they leave for Angela. But the potential wasn't met, and I found the story less and less believable as I read.

First of all, this book is about a hugely traumatic experience. Angela is abducted, and physically and sexually abused to the point where she splits into multiple personalities and the Angela part of her doesn't remember anything. But she is so flippant about the whole thing. At one point, as she's getting ready to have a full medical exam only hours after returning home--poked and prodded to determine if she's been raped--she discovers horrible scars on her ankles from where she'd been shackled. What does she think to herself? That she is "never, ever going to wear sandals again."

This lack of real emotion and realistic reaction occurs through the entire book. There were SO many variables thrown in--what happened to her during her missing years, the amnesia, the split personalities, changes in her parents lives while she was gone, her friends lives changing, things emerging from her past...and Angela takes it all in stride, joking about things, never crying. Even with the other personalities there to "protect" her, she'd be completely overwhelmed, but she goes right back to school, goes to dances and on dates, and even babysits for the neighbor.

That right there had me, as a parent, completely freaked out. I'm sorry--Angela's parents know she has other personalities inside her, personalities that take over her and make her black out for hours, and they let her babysit someone else's infant???? Seriously?

And other characters were unbelievable as well. Most were pretty flat, to be honest.

Just last week I read another YA novel that dealt with mental illness, and I've read several YA novels that deal with topics like suicide and abuse. Incredible, insightful, deep, emotional, and rich stories. Everything this book was not, I'm sorry to say. The fact is, if you're going to pick a dark topic to write a story around--and sexual abuse, especially to the extent present in this story--a light tone and simplistic voice just does not work. It felt completely unbalanced and awkward.

I gave the book two stars instead of one because I actually finished it--although I skimmed the last third of the book just to see if my guesses about certain things were true (they were)--and I could see *potential* in the author's writing.

Melanie says

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Pretty Girl-13 is one heck of a ride. Psychological thrillers aren't really my thing. I've always thought of them as well...weird and just creepy. However, this book was surprisingly good. While it had flaws, Pretty Girl-13 is a refreshing and unique read!

Thirteen year old Angie goes on a Girl Scout camping trip in the woods. One minute she's walking in the woods, next minute she's walking up the road to her house. Three years later. Angie, lost in confusion finds the fact that she is actually now 16 hard to believe as she felt as if just yesterday, she was packing her bag to Girl Scout camp. It turns out she has Multiple Personality Disorder. As Angie uncovers the shocking facts towards her abrupt disappearance, she endeavours through, meeting her 'alts' different personalities that helped her through her lost 3 years.

We dive into the story quickly, I really appreciate that as synopsis already gave us a run down on what happened. Angie is a really different girl to what I normally come by. Even though she had other personalities that were welded by her 'alters' Angie was quite average..but different at the same time. (...) okay this ain't working. Let me paint you guys a picture (not literally. That would be nasty) *A girl goes to high school, does the same things from everyone else, but has something special about her, nothing too outstanding but she is empathetic, impulsive and likeable.* Now, imagine this girl as our pretty girl-13, Angie the protagonist.

From what I have written down in my notes when reading this book, I have detected something I wrote down 4 times unintentionally. 'Lacks depth, couldn't feel any strong attachments to the characters' I really hate it when books lack depth. This one was a minor one, when the story began, everything moved too quickly, I couldn't quite keep up or have some 'text-self' relation.

The story line of Pretty Girl-13 is beyond what I expected. It was rather hard to grasp at first, but as the story progressed, I liked it more and more!

Pretty Girl-13 is a cannot be missed psychological mystery that keeps you on the edge of the seat the entire time. It could have been dusted up with the depth, but other than that, I really enjoyed this! Totally recommend to seekers of something new!

This copy was given for review purposes. No bribes were given to alter the review in anyway. Thank you for letting me have the chance to read such a lovely book Harperteen!

Wendy Darling says

Fascinating subject, and a hard one to tackle for YA in particular. I've mixed feelings about some of the things it missed, so I think it falls somewhere in the middle of books that involve kidnapping.

Possible review to come.

Leigh says

Wow! This was a rollercoaster ride! I cannot say that "I can't put it down" because I started reading late yesterday and I was so creeped out that I'm sure to get nightmares when I sleep, so I had to stop. But when I woke up, a bright sunny day, I dived back in and then I didn't put it down. It's been a long time since I read a book this fast, less than 24hours, because I've been a slow reader recently. I didn't expect anything from this book, so the creepiness came as a surprise. I got a bad case of goosebumps! It's the first time in a long time I felt this way, that I had to move around and jump up and down just to get the goosies off! And mind you, there's nothing paranormal in this! I don't want to go into details but just that, again, it creeped the hell out of me! It's not my first time to encounter this issue in a novel, but still! Liz Coley wrote this simply and it's perfect! No dull moment in this book!

Reynje says

[YOLO. (hide spoiler)]

Ma?a says

Pre?ítala som stovky young adult kníh. Ani jediná nebola ako táto. Napriek žánru je toto jedna z najviac psycho kníh, ?o som ?ítala. Porucha rozštiepených osobností je fascinujúca a toto bolo spracované ve?mi dobre. Bol to príbeh, ktorý ma naozaj zasiahol a ur?ite na? budem ešte ve?mi dlho spomína?.

Wow.

Odporú?am.

madametschenny says

Meine Rezi gibt es hier: <http://dasblondinchen.blogspot.de/201...>

Victoria says

This book is so many things that there are an endless amount of ways to fully describe it! It is heart-wrenching, absorbing, shocking, enthralling, unique, etc.! I just absolutely loved it! Thank you to my friend Johanna for telling me about it, because I began it this morning and have already finished it. This is a memorable book that I think is so worth every second of the time spent reading it.

Victor Almeida says

Uma abordagem muito boa sobre o Transtorno Dissociativo de Identidade (TDI). Já é um assunto que eu AMO ler e estudar sobre. Sou viciado em ficar buscando documentários, histórias e relatos. E esse foi o primeiro livro que eu li retratando o problema de forma mais direta e explícita. Apesar de ser uma leitura que me entreteve muito por causa do assunto, tiveram alguns defeitos que me incomodaram consideravelmente. Mas falo deles daqui a pouco.

Primeiro o que eu gostei: o mistério. O livro me deixou curioso e vívido até a última página. Não queria parar de ler. Ele flui muito bem, e a forma como é contada não foi nada difícil de acompanhar. Amei as razões por trás da existência de cada alter da Angie, e todo o elemento "fantasioso" criado pela mente dele.

O problema mora em algumas coisinhas. O livro subestima o leitor em vários momentos. Muitas das coisas foram meio óbvias pela forma como a autora entregou as pistas, e em determinados momentos as coisas eram reveladas como um grande choque, mas você meio que já sabia. Alguns diálogos também eram teatrais demais: "oh minha querida!!", "onde está aquela blusa de marca X que tanto amo??", e outras coisas que te deixam... QUEM FALA ASSIM? Também achei que houve um pouquinho de drama desnecessário por parte da protagonista em coisas que nem eram um auê tão grande assim.

A última coisa que me desagradou foi o ROMANCE. Sim! Um romance durante um livro em que a garota está tentando lidar com uma mente toda DESGRAMADA. Afinal, é claro que entre tentar resolver seus problemas psicológicos, e descobrir se o cara que era seu namorado antes do seu desaparecimento ainda está afim de você, a prioridade é sempre o macho. ARGH! O livro perdeu um bom tempo nisso, e me irritou.

No mais, foi uma leitura boa. Recomendo muito pra quem tem interesse no assunto. Só peço que tomem cuidado, pois ele apresenta cenas um pouco fortes de abuso, e talvez isso sirva de gatilho pra algumas pessoas. Eu mesmo fiquei um pouco chocado em algumas delas. É isso!

Deanna says

I highly recommend this book. I was so engrossed in the book that I had no idea of the time. I finally realized I should probably get to sleep as it was 3am and I hadn't stopped.

A tough and emotional read due to the themes it entailed but I was extremely impressed by the writing and delivery.

I have always been very interested in the subject matter (I'm not going to say much more as I really don't want to give anything away). I will say it impressed me how much the author must have researched her subjects.

Again I will say I highly recommend this book. I am still emotional after finishing it a few days ago. Well done Liz Coley!!!!
