



# Remind Me How This Ends

*Gabrielle Tozer*

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## **Remind Me How This Ends** Gabrielle Tozer

It's the summer after high school ends and everyone is moving on. Winning scholarships. Heading to uni. Travelling the world. Everyone except Milo Dark. Milo feels his life is stuck on pause. His girlfriend is 200km away, his mates have bailed for bigger things and he is convinced he's missed the memo reminding him to plan the rest of his life. Then Layla Montgomery barrels back into his world after five years without so much as a text message.

As kids, Milo and Layla were family friends who shared everything - hiding out in her tree house, secrets made at midnight, and sunny afternoons at the river. But they haven't spoken since her mum's funeral. Layla's fallen apart since that day. She pushed away her dad, dropped out of school and recently followed her on-again-off-again boyfriend back to town because she has nowhere else to go. Not that she's letting on how tough things have been.

What begins as innocent banter between Milo and Layla soon draws them into a tangled mess with a guarantee that someone will get hurt. While it's a summer they'll never forget, is it one they want to remember?

A boy-meets-girl-again story from the award-winning author of *The Intern* and *Faking It*.

## **Remind Me How This Ends Details**

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# From Reader Review Remind Me How This Ends for online ebook

## Krystal says

Man this was just such an adorable piece of fluff! It also got a surprisingly enormous amount of bonus points for being set in Australia because it was just so damn *relatable* without overdoing it on the Aussie stereotypes.

I loved how honest it was, and how it made a point of everything being pretty bland, with just the two lights of Milo and Layla in all the murkiness. How many 18-year-olds have been in Milo's position? That feeling of pressure to make something of yourself but not even knowing what you want or who you're supposed to be? That resonated with me so much, because I was exactly the same. It took an interstate move for me to finally start finding out who I was, and even then it's still a work in progress. I love that this novel explores that without drilling it home, and I love that the relationship between Milo and Layla really draws you in so you stop thinking about all those outside issues for a bit. It was very real to me, but it also created this fantastic, *fun* relationship that was just enjoyable to experience. Layla was so kooky and unique and I really liked that they seemed like opposites that fit together perfectly, with their own similarities providing the glue. The side characters of Sal and Kurt were easily forfeited for the (re-?)blossoming friendship between our two protagonists.

(view spoiler)

Really enjoyed how uncomplicated this one was, and just the simplicity of a friendship in a tiny Australian town. I loved the effortless Aussie slang, and how at times I could forget the setting as I got swept away by the story, which is a real highlight for me when I read Aussie fiction because it's so rare.

Highly recommend this one for lovers of fluff and easy YA reads, *especially* if you are Australian, or grew up in Australia. I wonder how this'll fly with a non-Aussie audience, though?

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## Kelly (Diva Booknerd) says

Ambivalent eighteen year old Milo Dark is adrift after choosing to remain in the small country town of Durnan. His girlfriend flourishing at university in Canberra while Milo endures the intermediate. Isolated, dubious and detached. Milo Dark is a wonderful young man who is tormented by adulthood. His peers have abandoned the small country town of Durnan for university while Milo remains working in the Dark family bookstore and navigating a long distance relationship. Most adolescents spend thirteen years within the educational system only to apply for university dependent on tertiary requirements, compromising and negotiating. Milo's narrative echoes those overwhelming sentiments and parental expectations. As his long distance relationship begins to dissolve, childhood friend Layla arrives in Durnan after a five year absence.

It's been five years since Layla Montgomery and her father disappeared, the emotional trauma of losing his wife unbearable as is the prospect of raising his daughter alone. Layla has now returned to Durnan and resides in share accommodation with her narcotic dealer partner, desperate to recapture her life once more. Layla's partner is manipulative and emotionally abusive, exploiting her insecurities and displacement while dealing narcotics despite Layla's plea.

An unconventional romance, two young adults seeking solace in one another while their lives transition into adulthood, a reconnection as friends exploring a physical relationship. It was a comfortable, consensual relationship in which Milo and Layla found strength. It was wonderfully refreshing considering often young adult novels only explore all encompassing or toxic relationships between characters. Often friendships and physical relationships can be comforting, offering stability and release, adding a further level of maturity throughout the storyline.

Layla shares an estranged relationship with her father. Having lost her mother at an incredibly tender age, her father immersed within his own grief was unable to offer Layla stability. Her father now has a wonderful long term partner who's supportive and nurturing and it was a moment of rejoice as Layla escaped her manipulative relationship. Milo's parents attempt to offer support which involves disappointment, misleading suggestions and ultimatums. They refuse to allow Milo to dwell within Durnan but in their attempt at motivation, it further highlights why adolescents need encouragement, not ultimatums.

Both Milo and Layla felt emotionally fragile to varying degrees and reminiscent of my own further education, I experienced similar feelings of resentment and depressive moods. Education is important but as Milo's narration demonstrates, it's important to forge your own pathways, experience life and to find who you are and your place within our ever changing world.

It was phenomenal.

Gabrielle Tozer is an exceptional author who creates vivid narratives and characters that are relatable and remarkable. Remind Me How This Ends is emotional, impactful and absolutely superb.

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### **Grace says**

I'm conflicted.

This is a good book but also a very heart-breaking one.

I.

Can't.

Function.

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### **Felicity Gimson says**

What a beautiful story of old childhood friends meeting again a few yrs down the track. I didn't want their story to end just yet....

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### **Jeann (Happy Indulgence) says**

This review appears on Happy Indulgence. Check it out for more reviews!

### **Rating: 4.5 stars**

Finishing high school is an emotional time, particularly when you're parting with people you've been seeing

everyday for most of your life. For the first time, you have a choice of what you want to do in life, where you want to study, if you choose to study, work, travel or do nothing at all.

This is a confusing time for many, and often the expectation of going to uni or further study is placed upon us by our parents and by society. *Remind Me How This Ends* explores the process of figuring out what you want to do after high school, for two teenagers in the small Aussie town of Durdam. One of them is dealing with grief, the other one who is soul searching. When they reconnect, sparks fly, memories resurface and their life changes.

Featuring one of my favourite romantic tropes of all time, *Remind Me How This Ends* has a beautiful best friends to lovers romance. As friends who used to spend every minute with each other, Layla and Milo have an easy friendship built upon memories, banter and routines. While we weren't there at the start of their friendship, we witness them reconnecting with one another and it's a journey filled with emotion. The chemistry between Layla and Milo was so strong, shown through their text messages and the way they teased each other. I loved their flirty banter and the way they challenged and supported each other.

Both of these characters just felt incredibly vibrant like they could be real people. Layla is dealing with grief from losing her mother, and dating her boyfriend who deals pot. She doesn't really have anyone else to rely on, as someone who has constantly moved from town to town and someone who's lost contact with her father. Layla hasn't properly worked through her emotions and every step forward she takes is a big deal. That includes reconnecting with Milo, who helps her through her emotional journey.

Milo on the other hand, is dealing with the confusing emotions of finishing high school, and not knowing what he wants to do. As teenagers, your choices are always forced upon you – you need to study, you need to clean your room, and you need to go to university. It was refreshing to have someone who so clearly needed the time to work out what he wanted to do, and to take the time to do this with his family, despite his parent's pressuring him. Sometimes, we don't have all the answers from the start and all it takes is a little inspiration.

I loved the presence of Milo's family in his life, which was a stark contrast from Layla not having anyone. The brotherly relationship he shares with Trent felt so realistic, often antagonistic, competitive but also dependent. Everything about the novel was developed extremely well, rounding out the characters, their circumstances and their thoughts and actions.

*Remind Me How This Ends* also approaches relationships in a meaningful way, particularly where you get together during high school, and are expected to be the 'golden couple' who ends up together. This very rarely happens, and Milo shows his disconnect with his girlfriend Sal, even before she moves away for college. It is also shown with Kurt and Layla, as someone who has relied on her boyfriend for emotional support, even though it's clear he cares more about partying and having a good time. It often takes us a while before we realise, the people we are with aren't the right ones for us, and I loved how the book explored this.

Featuring a best friends to lovers romance, a small town setting, coping with grief and just figuring out what you want in life, *Remind Me How This Ends* gave me so many feels. It dealt with so many multiple emotions in such a realistic way and I really felt like the stories of Layla and Milo are reflected in real life stories. For a relatable Aussie YA read about finding your own way, pick this one up! It's not often I rave about contemporaries, and this was one I loved wholeheartedly.

*I received a review copy from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.*

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## Trisha says

Gosh. Haven't read any of this author's earlier work. Is it like this? Cutting through crap and telling it like it is? Bittersweet romance that feels real? Deeply damaged families floundering for meaning?

Another one I need to ponder about while I search for the right words.

(Stayed up long after midnight to finish it).

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## rachel says

This is one of those awkward situations where I am struggling to understand the hype. Tozer is a much beloved Aussie author. I've been meaning to read *The Intern* for seemingly ever but well, I am a tad disappointed (to put it mildly). *Remind Me How This Ends*'s main problem was that it was boring as unbuttered toast. The characters lacked personality. The plot was stale. The writing was... just odd. It just missed so many marks and I'm crushed.

The premise of this story was really what drew me in initially, on top of all the recs from the OzYA community. There are so many books out there following characters who have their shit together and their life plan all sorted. I was keen for a different story, something more relatable that explored that awful 'what do I do with my life now that high school is over and I realise I have no real skills or ambitions' phase. Instead? We followed two characters who had absolutely no personality. I understand that a big part of their character arcs was the fact that they lacked ambition and were uncertain about most things in their lives but... it also made them vague and uncertain as characters. They had no real passions or interests, whatsoever. They were defined by their aimlessness and even that lacked the nuance it needed to be such a central part of the story. Milo and Layla's dullness left me feeling distanced from the story. I was not invested. I didn't even feel like I knew the characters well enough to care.

The secondary characters were a mixed bag. Milo's father was an actual douchebag and his brother was not much better. I could not stand either of them or the way they treated Milo. I did think that Layla's boyfriend was well-written, however. He was not someone who I could personally relate with - or even feel empathetic at his life choices - but he was such a believable, realistic voice in a sea of blandness that he stood out. I also would have liked to see a lot more of Layla and her family, to help flesh out her characterisation.

Their romance also did nothing for me. I always struggle with love triangles and cheating. While that was note *quite* the case here, it was enough to dampen my spirits. It didn't help that I struggle with them both as individuals and could not see them together. The fact that the plot revolved so much around the romantic shenanigans and, strangely, gelato did not help. It was dull. I was bored. I needed more, particularly from the ending. I was so disappointed that (view spoiler).

Tozer's writing style was also *very* Aussie... to the point that it did not feel realistic. Slang was used constantly in an over-the-top manner, and it made me feel a bit uncomfortable (even as an Aussie myself). It did not feel natural or organic, at all.

**Overall?** I cannot say I am happy my first Tozer story was such a flop. I wanted more nuanced characters and discussions about the stress of that terrifying post-high school phase of aimlessness. I needed less drama

in the romance and more... spunk, I guess. Just more. I think I will try out *The Intern* still but I will keep my expectations slightly lowered.

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### **Rebecca says**

- #loveozya (aussie af)
  - dual pov
  - bittersweet
  - realistic soul searching
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### **Diem says**

'Remind Me How This Ends' is the first 2017 #LoveOzYA book I've read this year and has raised my expectations for the other Aussie YA titles to be released.

I loved this. Immensely.

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Listen to a Bookish Friends review of 'Remind Me How This Ends' on Omny, iTunes or on the blog.

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### **Nadia King says**

Remind Me How This Ends is the classic girl-next-door story, except it's not. It's real-life YA fiction with wonderfully flawed characters who'll win your heart fast.

Cue a rural Australian town and Milo Dark, a guy whose girlfriend left him to go to uni in Canberra. Milo's left behind to work in his parent's bookshop without a clue about what to do now that high school's over. Being left behind is a strong theme throughout the book.

Layla Montgomery (the girl next door) has been untethered for the last five years since her mum's sudden death and her Dad dragged them both out of town to escape their memories.

Layla and Milo share the POV and narrative as the story unfolds and the pair navigate this transitory and ultimately awkward phase of their lives. When Layla arrives back in town there are a ton of awkward moments and plenty of humour.

The brilliant dialogue throughout this bittersweet tale was what truly won me over.

"It's been a while since I've seen someone's face beam like that when they see me.

'Hey, yourself,' I get out. 'Weird, huh? This bumping into each other.'

'It is Durnan. There's like three of us in town, remember?'

'I'll pay that.' I hold up my cone stuffed with melting gelato. 'Turns out this stuff is good. Who knew?'

'Me. Tried the boysenberry.'

'Salted caramel here.' I pause, already out of words, realising too late I should've never approached her. Damn my self-fulfilling prophecy. 'So, ah, guess, I'll leave you to it...just saw you there and thought I'd say a quick hi.'

She smiles again. 'Well, a quick hi back atcha, MD. See ya.'

I say goodbye and walk off, wondering what the statistical probability is that we run into each other again."

This is a sweet read with an honest story. Teens travelling grief will relate to Layla and her journey.

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### **Paula Weston says**

I really enjoyed this book. It took me by surprise a little, just how quickly these characters got under my skin.

Layla and Milo were both beautiful messes, and Layla's journey through her latent grief for her mum was painful and believable. As was Milo's indecisiveness about his future.

Remind Me How This Ends is at times heart-breaking, but it's also warm, funny and full of textured characters - not to mention awesome dialogue.

And I loved that it ended in a way that was full of hope, and was true to where both Milo and Layla needed to be.

This is another great read from Gabrielle Tozer - my favourite yet.

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### **Sprinkled Pages says**

for my thoughts, read my full no spoiler book review here: <https://sprinkledpages.blogspot.com.a...>

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### **ALPHAreader says**

IT'S FREAKIN' AMAZING! Not that I'd expect any less from a past winner of the prestigious Gold Inky Award, but Tozer has outdone herself with this contemporary YA boy-meets-girl-(again!) story.

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## Rachael says

What a gorgeous book. One of the best shared POV novels I have read in ages, where the characters voices are completely distinct and authentic. This took me right back to my senior year of high school and the chest tight panic when I realized almost everybody knew what they were going to do the next year except me! O\_O That omg, what am I doing with my life? How does everybody else know? Why don't I know?! Sheesh! So, I really appreciated this exploration of transition, the uncertainty, the fear of getting it wrong, of being left behind. Threaded through this coming of age narrative is a tender exploration of grief. Gabrielle Tozer handles painful subject matter my favourite way, mixing humor with sadness so that you can't help but smile at the bittersweet as you cry. And yes, I cried. It was lovely. The writing is snappy, Tozer at her best. I was totally absorbed, had to top up the hot water in my bath several times tonight as I finished the final quarter, so thanks for the prune skin Gabby! I won't give anything away but I loved the ending! All the stars.

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## Eugenia (Genie In A Book) says

**\*This review also appears on my blog *Genie In A Book*\***

4.5 stars

*Thank you to HarperCollins Australia for sending me a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review*

So you've finished high school...what next? In this heartfelt and adorable read, Gabrielle Tozer explores the time 'in between' the teen years and reaching adulthood. What I've come to love about this author's work from *The Intern* and *Faking It* is the humour and awkward-but-hilarious moments which we can all probably relate to on some level. Aside from the lighthearted banter between the characters, there is enough depth to what they are experiencing which really makes you think.

When we first meet Milo Dark, his life is almost on pause. Working in 'The Little Bookshop' in the small town of Durnan and his girlfriend Sal who seems to be having an amazing time at university hundreds of kilometres away, he's not really sure where to go from here. The pressure from his parents to go out there and 'make something' of his life like so many of his peers seem to have done is something which transcends fiction, and his journey which follows in the novel continues to reflect the challenges teens face today. From coming to the realisation that the excitement of a first love may not be forever, to slowly forging your own way in the world, Milo's character development seemed authentic.

When Layla, Milo's best friend from childhood enters back into the picture after five years, it's certain that both of their lives are about to change. It was interesting to see how they both had been in relationships that were fundamentally flawed, stuck in a rut where their partners didn't truly appreciate or understand them as people. The friendship and flirty banter which soon develops between the pair and their text messages was a sweet touch, though I like how Tozer didn't shy away from addressing Layla's grief over her mother's death and how this had an enduring impact on her own sense of self. The alternating POV's between Milo and Layla worked well here, as we had the opportunity to see them reach their own conclusions about not only

where the relationship was heading, but what their lives could be like outside Durnan and all the possibilities that lay beyond.

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Yes, this is a 'boy meets girl (again)' story, yet also so much more. Where Gabrielle Tozer truly shines is in her ability to portray characters who are equally endearing and realistic. She has captured the uncertainty and the thrill of growing up; both the pain and the joy of leaving your old self behind to begin a new adventure.

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