



Small Eternities

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Four months ago, Alaric and Naia, two teenagers who'd never met, discovered they were living almost identical lives at alternate versions of Withern Rise, their family's riverside home. One day, they accidentally stranded themselves in the wrong realities. It's summer now, and heavy rains have caused the river to overflow. Withern Rise's grounds are under water. When Alaric and Naia find their separate ways into an earlier reality, they meet a boy called Aldous Underwood. Who is he? Could he be the old vagrant Naia has met in the present day? Or is he destined to die tragically young? And will their meeting change Underwood history?

Small Eternities Details

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Jen says

Nothing is making any sense, despite this being the second book and being almost done with it. I'm starting to get upset that I paid for the trilogy when I may not even finish the second book. *spoiler* I am disturbed over how one of the main characters dies, basically due to another main character, who is completely unsympathetic, being in the wrong place at the wrong time. End spoiler. I don't understand how Alaric can be so mentally and emotionally different from Naia, even though they are parallel universe twins. Alaric is such a jerk. Maybe teen boys really are that sullen and immature and teen girls the same age really are that level headed, but it is a stretch for me. I'm going to try a few more pages, but that may be it for me. We'll see. *SPOILER* Ok, I didn't like the kid, but now he's dead?!? What the eff is the author doing? Done. Grudgingly reading the last one. I hope it ties everything together.

Erika says

[The second installment of the Aldous Lexicon was mostly about time travels. Time travels to the other reality.

Yes, you heard that right.

Not just the parallel universe, but Naia and Alaric gets to go back in time!

The name sake of the series (a.k.a. Aldous) appears in this one as well. Ah, wee Aldous. How cute.

Oh. And the cover design of the book made a total sense at the end.

Wh

Kim says

This one was interesting but wasn't as interesting as the first in the series. There's still too very little revealed even at the end. I'm gonna wait a while until I read the next one. 'cause I need to read something more gripping at the moment.

Adam Smith says

Four months after the destruction of the Follies, Alaric and Naia are struggling to cope in the resulting realities. Isolated and unable to tell anyone what happened, the pair resign themselves to never seeing each other again and moving on with their new lives, but the Follies were only the start of it. The barrier between realities is wearing thin. When the pair touch the family tree they are taken not to the other's reality, but somewhere else entirely. Somewhen else.

This book is beautiful. It's packed with hard hits that have stayed with me since I first read it. At first glance it's a nice simple story about parallel realities and bubbles of time, but it gets dark quickly. I love the first

book for its simplicity, but I love this one for the emotional punch the ending packs. Seeing it coming did lessen it slightly, but still right in the feels.

An excellent and emotional book. The very concepts of small eternities has a romantic elegance to them that I would have liked to see more of. There is a reason why this book is one of my favourites.

Meagan says

The second book in the Withern Rise Trilogy was just like the first, only with more surprising information.

This book takes off about a year after the last one ended. Naia living in the adjusted reality of Alaric and Alaric living in Naia's. Wonky dimension switches still happen, and we get into time travel. We also learn more about the old guy who claims to be Aldous Underwood.

I can't say I'm a fan of the Aldous character, though it is an interesting concept that is presented. Though his life is explained in the end, the wonkiness of it never quite is. I guess that's why there is a third book.

So I'm going to read it, both because I bought it and I'm curious where they can go now...

I have to say though that this laid back attitude to a topic so confusing is a little surprising (though that is part of what makes the topic accessible) It seems like they could have done more. But maybe that will all be explained in the third book.

Particle_Person says

This book is just as good as "A Crack In the Line" and mostly finishes that story. A few loose ends are left unresolved, but in my opinion the author could and should have stopped here. There is less humor and snappy dialog in this sequel, but the tension is much higher and you feel for the characters. The ending was quite satisfactory for me, even if it is not the ONLY ending, given we're talking alt universes. And AUs, oh yes, definitely AUs. (You'll get that joke if you read the books.)

Sarah says

I gave this book 4 stars not so much because I liked it (although I did enjoy it) but because of how much this book stuck in my head. I read it previously, soon after it was published I think? And even as many of the plot details escaped me the concepts of small eternities and inescapable fates comes back to me sometimes. This series has a light and magical quality to it with the house and garden and shifting realities, but also a dark feeling with the themes of loss it contains.

Nadine says

Although I was confused at times, this book has kept me very interested in the events around Withern Rise. It is a book that keeps you recalling earlier events in the story and even back to events that happened in the first book. You realize when you get into it that you will find yourself noting to remember little happenings because they will mean something later on. My interest was peaked after reading the first book "A Crack in the Line" so I bought the series. I hope the last book "Underwood See" answers the questions that you are left wondering about in Small Eternities. I am enjoying this series but you will need some patience to keep reading as unexpected events cause a bit of confusion at times. If you keep reading things will get clearer.

Ruth says

I feel like I've heard people say that the second installment in a trilogy is often the best. And it makes sense, b/c you already know and like the characters and that leaves lots of room for interesting complications to be introduced but they don't have to be totally resolved b/c the third volume is coming up behind to take care of them. That's the way I felt about this one, the second book in the YA Withern Rise Trilogy (the first was A Crack in the Line). It was, like the first one, very simple yet full of all these cool metaphysical ideas about other spatial and temporal worlds, nearly identical and simultaneously unravelling (or repeating themselves?) but it was better since it was way more exciting and shocking. It's blowing my mind!

Rain Kump says

Pretty good for a random \$.75 book from the thrift store.

Edit: Make sure you read the first book in this series before tackling this one. I did not and I was very confused for more than half the book. Otherwise a solid read.

Anne Hamilton says

This is one of the most memorable books I have ever read. Bar none. And I'm not going to say why beyond the fact that there is one immensely powerful scene in it that stayed in the forefront of my mind for days and now, years later, still hits me with a tearing emotional impact.

I read *Small Eternities* first by accident but I don't think it really spoiled my appetite for the first book in the series. I'm not sure that either book is as original and innovative as the blurb on the back cover would have me believe. That doesn't make them less memorable, though.

Alaric Underwood and Naia Underwood live in the same house in parallel universes - they are in fact, counterparts of each other, the same person, despite the fact one is male and the other female.

Alaric has lost his mother in a train smash, Naia hasn't. There are small differences between their dimensions but that is the major one.

All is well and separate, until one day Alaric experiences a deep and desperate yearning for his deceased mother while looking at an exquisite carving she had made of their home, *Withern Rise*. Suddenly and inexplicably he finds himself subject to intense physical pain and is confronted by an affronted Naia who thinks he's trespassing but doesn't understand why he'd be wearing slippers on such a snowy day. Unwittingly Alaric has found a way to pass between the universes.

Inevitably the pair change places - but in such a way that the different universes themselves seem to compensate for their intrusions. In Naia's univers, Mrs Underwood doesn't ever remember that her only child was a daughter, she instead remembers Alaric having always been there.

Alaric is ecstatic: he's got back the mother he believed lost forever.

Naia, however, is far from happy and progressively - and unfairly - begins to blame Alaric for engineering the exchange. In his universe, her dad seems set to remarry. She takes to consoling herself by sitting in a large oak called *The Family Tree* and there she meets Alaric again. They are both surprised.

There they also met a young boy named Aldous. Who might have died in 1947. Or might not have. And if he didn't, he might just be the strange elderly man wandering around the village and leaving cryptic warning notes in the Messag Hole of *The Family Tree*. Or he might be under the gravestone in the nearby cemetery.

Alaric, becoming increasingly sure that an action of his own is responsible for Aldous's death a half-century in the past, makes up his mind to rectify things. He determines he is going to save Aldous.

But that turns out to be a lot less easy than he thinks.

These books have a great deal of potential to be terribly confusing. By the end, I wasn't too sure how many Alarics or Naias there were wandering around. However there is only one Aldous - as Aldous himself makes clear by constantly reiterating that he is 'the one and only', a statement that takes on more and more significance as the series progresses.

There appear to be four universes in play, but there could well be substantially more, as there is at least one universe briefly visited by Alaric in which neither he nor Naia appear to exist.

Nonetheless the writing has a deft and sure touch about it that make me sure the mysterious comings and goings of Aldous and the multiple Alarics will all be explained in the final volume.

Jacqueline says

This follow up to *A Crack in the Line* is similarly a rather disjointed play with time sort of story. It is interesting and thought provoking, but it doesn't seem to be going anywhere. There is one more book in this series (that I know of), and I will be picking it up simply because I am curious to see if there is more.

Joell says

Considering this is the second book of the series and I havent even read the first book, i thought this book was very confusing. From the parts that I did understand were very depressing. Things sttarred to get complicated when it was faced with reality. It was hard to keep up with all the characters when they all had the same name. I dont see how Arliac and Naia were so confused when they were parallel universe twins.

In this book it shows how teen boys and teen girls act in any time and in any universe. It shows that teen boys are stupid and immature. In the book they dont make the best life choices and they dont help others. The book shows that teen girls are level headed i guess you woudl say becauase they only cared about themselves. They tried to help others but you know how us girls are. I wouldnt give this book a high rating because it really confused me because it was the second book of the trilogy series and i didnt read the first book. So im guessing that one is on me !

Jen says

I only have the second book in this trilogy, haven't read the first, but it seems that even if it isn't stand alone, it explains enough of a summary of what happened in the first book that I shouldn't get confused. We'll see. It seems to be very imaginative and well written thus far. If I get confused, I think it's good enough that I will take myself to the local B&N and see if I can't find the first and third books of the story. :)

I need the first book to fully appreciate this one. It will be on hold until I get the first book.

Ellie Scott says

A captivating sequel to A Crack in the Line, but with an additional reality to keep tabs on I have to admit the plot felt a little muddled at times. Loved seeing the changes in Alaric and Naia as they got to grips with their new lives after the cliffhanger of book one. A dramatic twist at the end took me off guard and left me reeling.
