



Brother/Sister

Sean Olin

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Will and Asheley have a troubled past. Their father left them when they were little, and their mother has just been carted off to an alcohol treatment center. Now, they have the house to themselves, and an endless California summer stretching out before them. Through alternating perspectives, they tell the story of how and why their lives spun violently out of control - right up to the impossibly shocking conclusion you'll have to read for yourself to believe.

Brother/Sister Details

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From Reader Review Brother/Sister for online ebook

Carly says

Okay - you have GOT to read this book. If you only take one recommendation from me this month then make it Brother Sister. This book will blow you away. Wow. I'm still in shock.

Will and Asheley (the only thing that I have to criticise is the spelling of Asheley - ugh) are brother and sister who have a close relationship. Maybe a little too close. Maybe not. Things do verge on creepy now and then but in such a brilliantly subtle way. They've had a troubled life and only have each other to rely on. Will is an oddball who doesn't do well in social situations and Asheley is desperate to fit in and have the summer of her life. Well, things don't quite go to plan when a house party ends in disaster - to put it mildly.

The writing in Brother Sister is fantastic. The voices of Asheley and Will are so well developed and I didn't confuse them for a second. It's brilliant to hear the brother and sister alternately narrate the events in the novel - especially towards the end of the story when the pace gets a bit INSANE, in the best way possible. I was literally out of breath when I finished Brother Sister and proceeded to shout about it to everybody within hearing distance for a long, long time.

The ending... Wow. Okay, obviously I'm not going to reveal a single thing but it is my FAVOURITE ending of any book I've read so far this year. It's just incredible. I had absolutely no idea how the story could end but it was perfect. Sean Olin, I salute you. You are a genius. Even if you don't think Brother Sister is your sort of thing you must read it, if only for the ending. Awesome.

I don't make a habit of criticising anybody's reviews (in fact, it's not something I EVER do) but there is a review out there that slates Brother Sister and has a bit of a rant about writers who 'send their novels off to print without finishing the story'. No, no, no. If I sound patronising then I'm sorry but this reviewer obviously missed the point of the ending - it is subtle but I think it's quite clear what the ending is and Olin certainly didn't send his book off to print without finishing the story. It just frustrated me as I saw a lot of comments on it from readers who had decided not to read the book based on her review - a massive shame as they're missing out on an absolute gem.

I have read a few reviews where people compared Brother Sister to Forbidden by Tabitha Suzuma. NO. Brother Sister is NOTHING LIKE Forbidden and I have absolutely no idea how people can compare them. Okay there is a slightly creepy relationship hinted at between the two lead characters but it's not at all the same as Forbidden in any way. So please, please don't let the ridiculous cries of 'INCEST IS BAD' put you off Brother Sister - if you enjoyed How I Live Now without freaking out about Daisy and Edmund then you're good to go.

Yes, Brother Sister will shock you but it will grip you from page one and will stay with you long after you've read the staggering final passage. Top notch stuff.

Kelley York says

What a twisted, gorgeous, beautifully written book. Told from alternating 1st-person POVs of Will and Asheley, we see things from both their eyes and the conflicting stories as they relay information to the

police.

The ending is abrupt and, at first, I paused and had to re-read and figure out why it was ending where it did. But then you notice something small, something very definite and purposeful in the last thing Asheley says, and suddenly the entire book takes on a whole new meaning and you're left reeling, wondering what really happened.

Definitely my fave read of the year. Flawless.

Alexa says

My review can also be found on my blog [Collections](#).

Before I started the book, I read reviews that said that the ending was shocking and surprising. Now that I've finally read it, I have to say that I agree. I was not expecting it to end that way at all. It made me question everything else in the book. And now I'm wishing the entire book got a reaction out of me like the ending did because maybe I would have liked it more.

Will and Asheley are siblings. Their father left them when they were really young, and their mother is a complete drunk. For their entire lives, Will and Asheley have never felt normal. Because of the way they grew up, they have social problems and aren't very trusting of others. But things seem to be finally improving for them. Asheley is starting to socialize with the girls on her softball team, and Will is doing great in golf and he's getting noticed by girls. Their mother has even been sober for a couple of months. That feeling of normalcy doesn't last though, and Will and Asheley's lives begin to spiral out of control.

Will was weird and creepy, and I just did not like him. He had anger and jealousy issues. Asheley was... Well, after that ending, I'm really confused about her and her relationship with her brother. I don't know what to think about either of them. Both were very paranoid people. I know I don't feel sorry for them, no matter how bad their home-life was. Honestly, they deserve what's coming to them.

All in all, I thought this was an okay read. I was never really hooked until the very last page, and I wish I had felt something for the characters. It was a strange and kind of disturbing book, so if you're curious, check it out.

Asghar Abbas says

Harrowing
haunting
beautiful
what an ending.

Read.
Read it.

Read it again.

Because

by the time you have reached the end, and read that ending, you may want to go back and read the whole book all over again. The ending will make you question everything.

Listen, it will-

Booklover6 says

Spoilers alert!

Two days. That's how long it took me to read this book. Two days!

It was fantastic. A very clever psychological YA novel, written from the point of view of Ashley and Will (the brother and sister). I liked how sometimes what Will said was happening wasn't the way it actually happened as we found out when it was Ashley's turn to tell the story. Like in the motel room in Mexico? That was really sick! Totally disgusting, though Will for some reason decided to leave that part out when he was telling the story. You could see it coming though right? I mean there were lots of clues, like how he wanted to touch her all the time, and loved her smell. Yuk!

And that ending! OMG! I read it first and thought, huh? That doesn't make any sense. But when I read it the second time I was really shocked. Ashley really slipped up there! I wonder if her and Will made a pact that they were going to lie a little so Ashley would be safe? Did you notice how insistent Will was throughout the whole book that Ashley was completely innocent? I thought at first he just wanted her to be safe, but now I wonder if it was actually a ploy the whole time! Also, did Ashley just tell Will to kill Craig (or helped Will kill him) or was it also the case for their other two victims as well? Hmm...

A great book, one I will definitely be reading again!

Madison Calhoun says

Brother/Sister is a really bizarre book and is pretty dark for the Young Adult genre. I feel like I went on a roller coaster between liking and not liking it. I can say one thing, though. The ending completely rocked my world and because of it, I would definitely read the book again- which isn't something I say very often. The novel is a great example of what I feel like English teachers have emphasized all of my life- first person point of view is not always accurate. Throughout the story, you have no clue who is right- Will or Ashley. They contradict each other a lot. Personally, I think that both of their views held some truth and some lies. But, it certainly made for an interesting read.

The story itself has a pretty good plot line. At the beginning, I wasn't very happy with the writing style or the fact that Will admitted to murder so early. But, as it went on, the novel held some surprises for me and I ended up liking Olin's writing more and more. I'm not saying it's worse or better than some other styles that are out there, but it's refreshingly unique, which I respect him for. The story was fast paced and like I said

before, fairly dark. I liked that aspect of it- Olin did a great job at getting into the mind of a killer. As other reviewers mentioned, it also wavers on the disturbing side. There aren't very many graphic depictions of murder. The darkness really stems from Will's past AND the affection he holds for his sister. Not very many young adult novels address brother/sister relationships, which was another aspect that made this book interesting. It's a little on the mature side (because of the sexual tension between the two), but nothing that I don't think teens 14 and up could handle.

Of course, I did find some issues with this book, too. But, none of them were terrible. I think they were more so out of Olin's writing style than anything else. For example, there's hardly any description. I didn't mind this too much, except for the fact that he doesn't even tell you about the appearances of any characters. Also, the book abruptly ends. The last sentence is absolutely shocking, but then... there's nothing else. You don't really find out the fate of the main characters, which I thought was slightly irking. Then again, it really leaves a lot open for the reader's own interpretation, which is nice. All in all, this book is just extremely different- in a good way. It's a very fast read and has a good story to it. I would recommend Brother/Sister to anyone that's interested. It's definitely worth your time. If it seems a little slow at the beginning, just stick with it. I promise, it will get better as it goes along. I think I'll read it again soon, just to see if I notice anything new after reading the end.

Glass says

I want this book.... I've heard some pretty wicked things about it!:)

P.S. So, I've read it and as you can see, I liked it. A lot. It's a wierd story, very well written with ending that'll leave you with your mouth hangging open.

Just read it. And one more thing - this is not *Tabitha Suzuma* kind of a story if that's what makes you all hot and interested.

Isa Lavinia says

1.5 stars

Will and Asheley (really didn't care about the spelling of her name) live with their alcoholic mother. Their dad left when Will was 6 and Asheley was 3, and while Asheley idolizes their absent dad, Will remembers what a horribly abusive person he was.

These two kids were so messed up, but... I don't know, it's weird, I didn't find the characters realistic. I'm telling you from experience, if you grow up with an alcoholic you don't celebrate their departure with drinks. And that's what these two did. After growing up watching their mum go into drunken rages, after their mother attacks them and leaves them broken on the floor crying, clutching each other - every night it's, "hey, have a margarita", "let's celebrate with some wine" etc. Just... no.

Then, when their mother is taken away by some creepy religious cult for "rehab" (what...), Will snaps and thinks he must protect his sister from everything, so she won't feel the pain he had to feel. And he also takes a weird turn into a somewhat incestuous attitude towards her. But more importantly, he snaps and starts killing a bunch of people he sees as a threat to her.

There's this big reveal at the end of the book about how Asheley was manipulating her brother, I don't see how that's surprising? I mean, it wasn't to me, it was pretty obvious all along that she was manipulative, Will did every thing she ever asked, even dressed the way she wanted. And the answers she gave were all too, "aww chucks, I love Will and I want to protect him, and I feel so guilty, but he's totally a violent murderer and I didn't have any control over the situation". It's like... wow, what suspiciously specific denials, Asheley.

Anyway, this whole story is told in alternating POVs, Will and Asheley's, while they're at a police station in Mexico. And to be perfectly honest, I started feeling sorry for the cops who had to listen to all the 6572406756 mundane, irrelevant teen drama details surrounding all the murders.

Maxine Livingstone says

This review contains spoilers:

This book was just WOW. As the title suggest this book is about two siblings Will and Asheley. Growing up they always had to rely on each other for everything. When Will was 6 years old his parents got a divorce. At the time his mother sat him down and told him that he was the man of the house. At the age of 6 that is a lot of pressure; especially since his mother told him that if anything went wrong it was essentially his fault. His mother after the divorce became an alcoholic, leaving the raising of his younger sister Asheley to him.

Of course nothing good can come out of this, and it doesn't. At the ages of 16 or 18 Will takes his responsibility of protecting his little sister to the extreme. He denies it but as time goes on readers can see that Will affection for his little sister is more than it should be. His love transforms into a way a man loves a woman. If you have ever read Forbidden or Flaw dealing with the same guideline as this story then you basically knows how it is.

However, the main twist is that Will in his obsession for Asheley killed her boyfriend one night when he was trying to rape Asheley. Will convinces his sister to help cover up the crime by putting the boyfriend in a wet suit and making it look like he drowned in the ocean while surfing in the middle of the night. Will hides the boyfriend's bike in his garage so it wouldn't be found. This of course was an accident. As the story progresses from there Will's aggression level sky rockets to the extreme and the only one who can talk him down is of course Asheley. The dynamics of these two are volatile. There are no words to describe. Asheley of course does not hold the same "love" that Will holds for her.

In fact throughout the story she tries to set Will on a date with a friend of hers from the baseball (softball) team. Of course this does not work out. Naomi (the friend) who happens to have a crush on Will soon realizes what Will actually really feels about his sister. Eventually Naomi comes across the boyfriend's bike and she too is soon killed by Will.

During his downward spiral of obsession and sanity in which he thinks every man wants to have sex with his sister he ends up killing his mother's boyfriend. The things that Will does in the thinking that he was protecting his sister is amazing. Not in the sense that what he is doing is right. But it gives a reader a glimpse of what obsession insanity (a word I made up) looks like and to what extent a brother is willing to do to keep his sister for himself.

The only thing I didn't like was how it ended. It ends in a huge cliff hanger. I wonder if this is the author's

way in allowing the reader to make up his/her version of what the ending should be. At any rate this book does leave a reader with the unresolve outcome of the fate of the two siblings. This book is truly dark and once you (the reader) finish this book then I implore you to find another book to read that is funny, contemporary, or light. I must warn you that this book is very dark and can somewhat leave a person shaking after. After I had finished reading this book all I could think about was reading a book that was not as heavy as this. I needed to read something that was cutesy and light.

Heather says

Brother Sister is a deeply disturbing, dark story about a brother and sister who raised themselves while their mother was in and out of rehab for alcohol addiction. Dad left when Will, the brother, was six and mom put the terrible burden of being "the man of the house" on his shoulders and told him "if anything happened" it would be his fault. An awful lot for a six year old to bear on top of being deserted by his father, though there are hints that his leaving may not be a bad thing.

Will was picked on, teased, bullied, humiliated- I've run out of words to describe the horrors he survived growing up, yet inside, he told himself it didn't matter as long as Asheley, his sister was protected. Asheley, for her part, remembered her dad as a good man, she was three when he left. She is a tad more social than her brother, she even has a boyfriend. She plays a team sport and after a spectacular game, finally feels like she's part of the group. But her boyfriend ruins it. Going home she finds her mother, after four months of sobriety being carted off to rehab again.

Will is inside the house having suffered the worst bullying of all-his mother beating him with the trophy he just won for being the best golfer in the county. She hit him so hard the golfer fell off the top of his trophy. Asheley comforts him as always, holding him from behind rocking him back and forth. And the two realize, the summer is spread out before them with no parents. But what starts out as a fun summer of playing grown up, turns into a twisted nightmare.

The bullying Will suffered throughout his life has warped his mind until his only thought is to protect Asheley. He sees threats everywhere-even when there are none. He devolves into a manic mess that even Asheley is afraid of, playing along only because she's afraid for her life.

The novel is told in alternating points of view- one chapter Will, the next chapter Asheley. The story is being told it seems like at a police station. Will's deteriorating frame of mind is like watching a train wreck, you can't look away. As his mind sees threats everywhere you can't help but wonder even after reading the story, was it the bullying, the burden of being the man of the house, the desertion of his father, the behavior of his father, his mother's alcoholism or maybe a mental illness that caused Will's behavior. And why did Asheley go along with it? Or was she a part of it? The last line of the book was chilling and left me to look at the novel through a different set of eyes. Had it not been three am., I would have read it again.

This book is chilling, haunting, heart breaking, achingly sad, manipulative and horrifying. It will make you think and rethink and re-examine everything you read. It will make you want to hug the little boy that was Will who stopped being a child at six and became a man. He took the bullying and internalized it. It will show you how bullying can make a person shut off their feelings. I think that's what made Will who he was. He never had a chance - his dad, his mom, kids at school, others- they all bullied him. If he became mentally ill from that, its not surprising.

This isn't a happy book, but it is well worth reading. It's well written. The characters are well written and their motivations are understood. The story is unbelievable as it spirals out of control. And the way the author wrote it, telling it from the two characters points of view in hindsight, but in great detail, was perfect. Asheley never claimed involvement, Will took all the blame. But you do have to wonder if she could have stopped what was happening. This is a truly compelling story, never slowing down even for a second. This is a must read-I don't know for who-bullies maybe-people that want to see the end result of bullying-perhaps. But I know it was a bullying story. That part was so underplayed. Yet it affected him so much. I do know, I'll never forget it-especially the last line. And I'll be reading it again!

Nic says

Brother/Sister is an intense read. I am still trying to take it all in and I am kind of lost for words at how I am going to explain this book.

Sean Olin writing is sharp, powerful and extremely gripping. The first chapter just grabbed me and sucked in. Even when I wanted to stop reading because some scenes were too painful and pushed me out of my reading comfort zone, I couldn't. I needed to know what happened.

I don't want to give much away about the plot. Let just say that at the beginning you know something horrible has happened but you really have no idea actually how bad it is. Brother/Sister with definitely surprise you with it's dark and shocking twists.

Will and Asheley, the main characters, are definitely two souls you feel sorry for. No parents that really care about them. As I was reading all I could think was how none of this terrible stuff would have occurred if Will and Ashley actually had positive parents in their lives. It just shows you how important a parent's role is. However, as much my heart went out to Will and Asheley, I felt the plot was stronger than the actually characters. I never really connected with them or understood their actions.

Overall, if you like your realistic fiction edgy, gritty and gut-wrenching this might be the perfect read for you.

Sue Morris says

SPOILER ALERT! SPOILER ALERT!

Asheley and Will live with an alcoholic mother who has been dragged off to rehab for a couple of months and her friend, a daddy wanna-be who tries to keep an eye on them by popping in every now and then. The two teens essentially have no adult supervision for the summer. Will is socially inept for reasons unclear. He is dependent on Asheley for everything, but believes he is her guardian and savior. His lust for his sister is palpable from the beginning but only acted on near the "end." Asheley is a typical teenager in high school. She has friends and a boyfriend and enjoys hanging out with them. She understands Will and tries to help him socially. Will is only concerned with pleasing Asheley.

While out hitting golf balls over a cliff, to avoid the party he and Asheley are throwing in the house, Will hears his sister's cries and goes to her rescue. Asheley's boyfriend Craig is raping her. Will bashes Craig over the head with his golf club, saving Asheley but killing Craig. At Will's direction, Asheley helps throw

Craig off the cliff and into the bay. This one incident unleashes an evil part of Will that also becomes increasingly paranoid and delusional. In all he kills three people and then runs off to Mexico with Asheley uncomfortably and forcibly taken along. Will tells her their father called and wants to see them. Asheley is thrilled and believes her father will be able to help them get out of the messes Will has made. Instead, things go from bad to worse. Will inappropriately touches and kisses his sister. She runs away determined to walk to her father's home. When she realizes dad never called, never asked to see them and wishes they would just leave, Asheley decides the police are a better option than Will. In the middle of a statement to the Mexican police the story simply stops. No ending, just empty white paper.

No Ending, thus the two stars. This story does not have an ending. It does not satisfy or even attempt to make closure. There is a beginning that raises interest and a middle story that keeps the reader guessing, but no ending. I really wish authors would finish their story before sending it to print. If they do not know the ending then wait until you figure it out instead of foisting it on unsuspecting readers, causing frustration. This is a waste of time to read, unless you like stories that just stop, worse, in midsentence. At least movies with no real ending attach "The End" so we know it is over. If this is a ploy for a sequel, it is a terrible injustice to the reader. Author's need to understand that readers spend a good chunk of time reading their books and when there is no ending, and worse, when the book just stops, the reader becomes frustrated. We have just wasted time on you and you did not deliver. Writing 101: beginning, middle, and end. Know your craft. Do not disappoint your readers else, you may not have any for the next book.

Without an ending, with stopping in mid-sentence, I cannot recommend this book to anyone. Without an ending, it is a waste of time to read. Frustration is what you can expect to feel when the words simply stop.

Note: book received from publisher

Midu Hadi says

The book features characters who are all kinds of crazy! As soon as the brother committed the first murder, I wanted to hide the book and never read it again! But it wasn't because it was bad, it was because I was too scared to read ahead and who doesn't like books that scare the heck outta us, right? Another thing I liked was that the issue of incest was dealt with very tastefully. There were no overt scenes about it but the author rather hinted at what was going on. Asheley's reactions would have felt unreal, if she didn't have the history that she did. The siblings were the most broken kids you'd ever see. I also liked how the author kept us guessing which of the siblings was right about their dad's personality and his reasons for leaving. And the ending was perfect. Loved what Asheley said at the end of the book too!

Aly (Fantasy4eva) says

So after reading some reviews and the synopsis I was in. I'm so glad I went with my gut and went for this book because it's pretty freaking awesome if you ask me.

Asheley and Will have always had each other to lean on. With no father and an out - of - control alcoholic mother it's Will in particular who has tried to protect Asheley. Whilst Will is constantly anxious, anti social and tends to have these aggressive outbursts, Asheley is the one with the boyfriend and is now slowly

starting to make friends.

But things are soon to become far from simple.

Let me make it clear and say this book is not about incest. It's about how a brother and sister cope with the circumstances they are in. But I can't say they have a normal relationship. There's definitely something unsettling about it, more so when it comes to Will, but that's something that creeps up with time and becomes apparent later on in the novel.

Will is a little crazy. There's no denying it. He doesn't just get mad, he goes out of control. Vicious almost. It's scary and it soon becomes clear that Asheley is scared out of her mind. And although he loves his sister as she does him, he tends to go too far when it comes to being overprotective, not only that, but he becomes obsessed with how others are around her. And as the reader you can't help but notice that despite knowing all this, Asheley kind of sits back and just lets it all happen until things go so out of control that it's a little too late.

As the book progresses things go more and more downhill. Will seems to lose all sense of reality and does not seem to care for anything apart from his sister. I didn't like either of them. I felt for Will, I really did, but although I know he has some serious issues I can't sit here and say that it excuses what he did. He does some terrible things and there's no forgiving that, and I can't say that his sister is all that innocent either. She was there after all, and god knows just how much a part of it all she really was.

That last line blows you away. It's a clever way to end things but the way it fucks with your mind is beyond crazy. I've sat here replaying everything in my mind and contemplating what I missed, any clues that I failed to see. I might just re-read the book all over again.

The pace is super fast. Every time I had something to do I couldn't will myself to pry away from the book. It seemed to end within a blink, leaving you with countless emotions, mainly confusion and frustration.

I want there to be a sequel so bad but I think the author has played it well. Leaving it with the ending he has will mess with our minds until we just accept, that really, who know? Who knows what really happened and perhaps that's where the beauty of this twisted story really lies.

Talk about epic.

Lora says

Is it just me, or does this sound a lot like Forbidden?
