



What Remains Unsaid

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In a placid California suburb, a mother ends up at the wrong end of her son's Colt .45.

Sean Masterson takes Ginny hostage in her own kitchen. "I don't want to hurt you," he says. "I want you to listen for once." With the tuna salad spoiling on the counter, he tells her things about his life she never knew. And, finally, coaxed by fear and desperation, Ginny reveals the secret at the center of their family.

Can Sean's reckless act bring mother and son together after thirty years of missed connections?

What Remains Unsaid is about the stories we could never imagine behind the faces we think we know—and how sometimes even the promise of forgiveness may come too late to save the ones we love.

What Remains Unsaid Details

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From Reader Review What Remains Unsaid for online ebook

Elise Miller says

Audrey Kalman's What Remains Unsaid is a book that will recur in my thoughts from time to time, whenever an incident of mental illness enters my life or the news - all too often, these days. Never mind that this dark and dramatic novel contains the most authentic scene I've ever encountered describing mental illness from inside the character's mind. I keep thinking about the choices of all the other characters. They were just ordinary small-town America teenagers from a range of families in the late 60s and early 70s, but their journeys span their lifetimes along with my own. Kalman is a writer's writer, with beautiful turns of phrase and enlightening descriptions set among all the personal twists. Expect to turn pages quickly!

James Hanna says

A son, with a festering sense of grievance, holds his mother at gunpoint. Thus begins What Remains Unsaid, a spiraling descent into darkness. The book employs multiple points of view, including a Faulknerian stream of conscience, to depict the epic failings of a mother, father, and son, all of whom seem genetically programmed to destroy one another. The writing is powerful and grabs the reader like an undertow. Five Stars.

Teresa Kander says

This is one of the best character-driven stories I've read this year. We get inside the minds of several of the main characters and see some of the same events from differing perspectives. The ending is one part predictable, and one part surprise. I could hardly stand to put it down once I started reading!

None of the characters are particularly likable, but the more you learn about their lives, the more you understand why they have become these people.

This is a book which will draw you in, hold you in the story, and then release you with a LOT to think about for days to come.

Fiona Baldwin says

I received this book for free from Voracious Readers Only for an honest review.

This is not the usual genre that I would choose to read but after reading the reviews I thought that I would give it a go. It never had me wondering what would happen next but as I was reading I could sympathise with the characters. I didn't like the way it skipped to different characters point of views until the end where it all came together. I'm glad I read What Remains Unsaid.

Jeannine Wickliffe says

This is a very thought provoking book about relationships and mental illness. Relationships between women and men and mothers and sons. It covers the lives of a mother who makes some chooses that are questionable and how they effect the life of her son. He suffers from mental illness and how it effects his life and his relationships. This book pulls not punches and does not put blame on anyone. It just gives these peoples lives to you, the good, the bad, the ugly, and the results

Linda Donohue says

I needed to think about this book for a day after I finished reading it. It had been awhile since I have read a character-driven book. The story is quite interesting from each person's point of view. This story reconfirms that we make decisions at the moment which we think are the right one for us and not many years later we are paying a price we did not expect to pay. Kalman did a good job bringing that forward and hopefully for a happy ending. Definitely worth the read. I received this book as a Goodreads Giveaway and I thank the author for the opportunity to read and review her book.

TRACY-ANNE PADDOCK says

I received a free copy of this book through voracious readers in exchange for an honest review. I can't even tell you what I just read! It started out quite gripping with a woman being held at gunpoint in her kitchen but went, for me, fastly downhill from there. It had no chapter numbers just like heading names - yesterday whilst reading it as I was desperate to finish it and move on three days ago, I actually nudged myself awake four times. I figured out toward the end that it was about a mental health sufferer but the bit between the first few pages and the last few pages it just, what I like to call grasshoppered about, basically it jumped all over the place so I actually got confused as to where the hell I was, at one point I actually backtracked a few pages to find out if I'd missed something as I said aloud 'what the hell?!" And when I realised I'd actually read the last page when I was expecting it to finish the story, it just ended! I honestly wouldn't recommend this book although the review I've read on amazon those reader enjoyed it but if me and them had such a huge differing of opinion I'm starting to wonder if we read the same book lol. Sorry Audrey.

Clare says

Firstly, thank you to Voracious Readers Only for this book. Definitely not my easiest review to write because I wanted to root for or hate at least one of the characters, and I didn't. The actual writing was really good however I couldn't get wrapped up in the story. Over all, for me, it was lacking emotion and therefore the plot was weakened.

Carrie says

What Remains Unsaid is an engrossing character-driven novel that explores one of the most complex human

experiences: our relationships with other people. It opens with an adult son holding his mother at gunpoint. As the story unfolds, we learn what led to that moment, meeting key characters in both the mother's and son's lives. Everyone is flawed; everyone is struggling. That's what makes them relatable. We may even glimpse parts of ourselves in their interactions and thoughts.

In addition to characterization, Kalman's strength is her prose and her gift of description, with phrases like: "the neuralgia of love" and "But life is surprising, how it persists with the fury of a cancer cell or the urgency of a plant heaving through asphalt." The writing is also very emotive, taking the reader on an emotional roller coaster ride right along with the characters, one that will leave the reader thinking long after they've finished the book. If you enjoy introspective reads that will make you evaluate your own life circumstances, this book is for you. A wonderful sophomore novel.

M. Verant says

I very much enjoyed this book. The narrative is complex, moving between many people and periods of their lives, but they combine together beautifully in the last chapters. I admit it took me a few chapters to wrap my head around the structure, then I was hooked. The characters are very compelling and real. Through the last third, it became increasingly intense, less due to plot (although stuff happens!) but because I could feel the many narrative threads of characters' lives beginning to merge.

Deanna Walker says

It was okay read this book...I felt bad for Sean that he's going through of his pains and he desperately needs his mother so bad but, she tried to be the best. Other as she can do for her son Sean.

I definitely will read next book soon.

Laurel Anne Hill says

"What Remains Unsaid" is one of the most amazing character-driven novels I've ever read. And I've read plenty. The book has the forward momentum of a genre thriller and the inner perspective of a literary classic. "What Remains Unsaid" delves into the minds of several characters to piece together their stories of love, disappointment and despair. Part of the ending I expected. Part, I didn't. I recommend this book for a wide variety of readers.

Yet why, you may ask, didn't I give "What Remains Unsaid" five stars? That is my fault, not the author's. As I age I have more trouble keeping track of point-of-view switches, especially within the same scene. All you older readers, just keep reading if you get confused in a couple of places. "What Remains Unsaid" is worth the extra little bit of work. Well done, Audrey Kalman!

Julie Failla Earhart says

After reading the first chapter of this novel, I sure pretty sure I wasn't going to finish it. Thank heavens for my 50-page rule.

In that first chapter, Kalman does what every writer is told to do: drop the reader into the middle of the action. Usually that works, but not in this instance. Sean has bound his mother to a kitchen chair and is holding her at gunpoint. He acts and sounds suicidal. Since there isn't enough information in the section for me to feel empathy with either character, I was put off by the melodrama.

Then the point of view switches to Ma, or Ginny as the reader comes to know her. This is an amazing piece of writing. Merely looking at the words on the page, the reader would think that the story is told, not shown. But somehow, Ginny's voice comes through. I felt as if I was reading dialogue, with vividly painted pictures. Readers basically learn her life story, especially of her relationships with her best friend, Nora, and Sean's father, Keith.

Every so often, the scene reverts to the present and the kitchen turmoil that is unfolding. That jolted me out of the story, and seemed irrelevant to the story.

Nora and Keith each have their own sections with their stories to tell. Again, the reader enjoys amazing writing similar to Ginny's. Also, again, every so often, the scene shifts to Sean and Ginny in the kitchen.

After I finished the book, I still wasn't sure why Sean's escapade had to be in the book at all. I couldn't find a reason for his actions, unless it was to justify the ending. The back-cover copy wasn't any help in understanding. I originally decided to review this book based, once again for me, by the cover and the title.

After finishing the novel, I headed to Amazon to learn what others thought, not that I really cared, I was merely curious. It was there that I learned Sean's age...shockingly...and a more truthful synopsis of the plot.

What Remains Unsaid, with the exceptions of Sean's scenes, is a powerful tale of tragedy, missed connections and hope. I want to give it 6 stars, but the flaws (although the great writing overrules most of them) mentioned earlier are why it only gets 5 out of 5 stars in Julie's world.

Eve says

What Remains Unsaid - a powerful title that fits the novel perfectly. It's all about what's boiling underneath the surface of somewhat seemingly normal lives. Emotional, philosophical, cerebral, all at the same time, plot and character development woven together seamlessly. Beautifully written, expertly crafted. Bravo.

Kourtney says

This is a work of literary fiction that is steeped in darkness as it explores the lines between a parent and a child and all the tangents that connect them and lead to missed connections between them. There is a lot of stream of consciousness in the writing, but it works for this kind of story. The story is told in multiple point of view and opens with a mother and son in her kitchen with him holding her hostage at gunpoint and

demanding she listen to him. The story flashes back to the past showing the reader how much of what happens in the present is rooted in the past. We learn who the mother was as a girl and a young woman. We learn why the boy is so angry and unstable. The characters are very gray and incredibly unlikeable at times, but deep down you can't help hoping that something will change for them. The writing is solid and definitely takes you on a journey into the minds and hearts of people who can't seem to help destroying themselves. Well done, Ms. Kalman.
