



Gravity Journal

Gail Sidonie Sobat

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Life is very grave for Anise. Hospitalized for anorexia, she wonders about the point of it all. Her frigid mother and ineffectual father seem oblivious to her struggle. Her beloved brother is too busy screwing up his own life to take note of hers. Living on the loony ward seems not to be making any difference at all, and Anise feels like a prisoner. Her only free choice is to turn to her journal--the place where she can make scathing observations about her family, other people, the world; the place where she can dream, and where she can decide whether to live or die.

Gravity Journal Details

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From Reader Review Gravity Journal for online ebook

Rachel McKitterick says

1.5 stars.

This is pretty basic as far as Eating Disorder stories go. For someone who is just at the beginning of having been diagnosed, yeah ok this might be alright to read as a starter glimpse into the world of anorexia/eds. But as somebody who has been in this for the past 18 years, it actually had me groaning out loud by half way through.

Plus the whole scene where the parents dropped the girl off in hospital with the nurses and doctors actually made me laugh out loud at how stupidly it was written. Parents dropped girl off to hospital. Parents look at the doctor and ask "Do you think this time she can be cured, Doctor?". I just couldn't help it. I HAD to laugh. (Note: it wasn't written in point form as I wrote it but it wasn't far off)

I will add, the reason I gave this an extra half star (I just couldn't give it a whole one based on this) is because the ending with the brother. I won't give it away but it definitely improved the overall story.

Gracie says

I thought this book was brutal. It was poorly written, depressing and overall boring. It's about a sixteen year old who is anorexic, bulimic and slits her wrists. Do I even need to explain why I don't like it? When I finally finished, I thought to myself, "Why would anyone write this?". Her brother is a drug addict, who knew about his sister's problems, but didn't try and stop her. Her mother doesn't even know she hasn't had her period in over a year because she doesn't have enough body fat. Her father is just a push over who doesn't even know anything. The last thing her mom says to her when she is dropped off at the facility to help her with her problems is; "Get better, but don't come home fat." Brutal, brutal, brutal.

Marsha says

Sobat has created a tight and simple masterpiece. It is obvious that she has done her research about eating disorders yet she doesn't preach or pander. She lets the story unfold to its own simple conclusion in a surprisingly satisfying way. The story itself provides the reader with tools to deal with their own problems. Additionally, there are resources listed in the back. This isn't a self-help book; it's a damned good novel. But it will not harm a person with anorexic tendencies. It may well help them.

Mazohyst says

I thought it was cool that the author lived just two hours away from me... And that's where the coolness ends. I was constantly frustrated by this book. Although I'm the same age as the female heroine, I couldn't relate to her at all. Of course, we girls sometimes feel pressure to be skinny and all but this girl's weight goal is around 80 lbs. It frustrates me to know that there are girls who think that this is a healthy weight to be. Ugh, I

just wanted to throw the book across the room. The majority people who take of girls with disorders are seriously insensitive. Why work in such a place when you don't care to help people? Ugh, ugh, ugh. Society is a bitch for practically brainwashing girls like this. Curves are sexy, not sticks. Shit. I have never ranted this much about a book before. At least the author is great at stirring up emotions, even if they aren't the emotions she probably wanted.

PS. The diary entries were brutal. I pretty much skipped those over. Plus, the poetry was just ugh worthy.

Isabel says

This book was wonderful.

I really enjoyed the story. Very realistic to me. On the other hand, some of the scenes were just too intense for me (I had to stop reading to take it all in before I could continue).

Either way, I loved it so much!

~

Monisha says

Honestly, the book reads like an outline more than a finished story and... it's just really immature. Some of the scenes, the heroine even though she's trying to act she's better than other people her age and insinuating some blame on her parents for her illness but not wanting to take any responsibly for her brother's overdose/issues (typical, wanting to blame other people for what you're going through and not wanting to acknowledge how your actions also hurt other people), just everything. A lot of the characters are more caricatures. They don't feel real. I'm not down for using romantic relationships as the primary means to get over an illness, because even after being told it wasn't good for her, Gail still made the initial catalyst for the heroine's recovery her boytoy. That's not realistic. And the heroine is some great artist and writer and oh, she's so talented and perfect and she does no wrong? Fuck that.

The whole thing is just kind of ridiculous. I'm a little upset I had to buy the physical book.

Canadian Children's Book Centre says

On the eve of yet another hospitalization for anorexia, Anise wonders if there is a point to her life. Lacking support from a cold and distant mother and a hapless father (referred to as Loathed and Witless) she looks to her brother for support, but his addiction to crystal meth has him too badly screwed up to be of use. To find relief she cuts herself, and writes in her journal, recording her feelings and observations about her family and those around her, and most importantly, where she decides whether to choose life or death. Whether given to a teen with an eating disorder, or read for personal interest, this highly compelling novel will grab the attention of readers from the first page. Anise is intelligent, but conflicted. She loathes the idea of being hospitalized again, but is at the same time grateful for the escape that it offers her from her family. The story alternates between the narrative and Anise's journal, and it is the journal that is most powerful. Written in a variety of forms ranging from poetry to lists, the entries are heartbreaking, brutally honest, and a glimpse

into this character's soul. Behind those words is a girl who desperately wants love and support, but doesn't get it from the sources she most needs it from. Where she does ultimately find that support, and the complexity of that relationship, adds another dimension to this already powerful story. In what could have been another depressing teen issue book, *Gravity Journal* ends on a positive note. Neither promising, nor providing a tidy happy ending, the final pages leave the reader feeling that there is a possibility that everything could be alright, and that there is hope for the future.

Reviewed by Rachel Steen in *Canadian Children's Book News*
Winter 2009 VOL.32 NO.1

Aren says

Gravity Journal is a heartbreakingly honest look at a girl's struggle with anorexia and self-injury. Anise is hospitalized when her eating disorder becomes too much to deal with, and her unsupportive family leaves her there to "get better, but not come back fat". The author has experience working with young girls afflicted by eating disorders, and the experience shows in the writing of the book. Every journal entry is believable, and Anise is a sympathetic character.

Michelle. D. says

This book was so amazing! It was so lyrical, so mesmerizing, just so refreshing. For me, that is. The book progressed amazingly. The characters were original and down to Earth and I just loved them because they flowed together so well.

Everything was just so satisfying to read and very, VERY entertaining. The beginning was enticing, the middle was too and the end was great. Though, I wish it was a little more mind-blowing. You know? More, "OMG!" It was sweet though. And for once, I didn't want to see the book end badly (like, for example, the main characters dies).

I just loved this book and it was really inspiring and I recommend it to people who are looking for a good read. Five stars!

Lys says

Is very well researched. Anise, the main character is relatable even though most can not understand the disorder she is suffering, the author portrays it realistically. It's a fast read.

Luna PenDragon says

I LOVED this book. I read this as a member of White Pine in 2009. Anise is a character that I found I could relate to even though we have almost nothing in common (we both like art and that's it). I really liked the way the story flows. The only part I didn't like was that the ending seemed rushed. The battle with eating disorders lasts for the individual's whole life, it doesn't just end happily. They struggle and relapse many

times. Eating disorders are the hardest kind of addiction to "CURE" and many people die during the struggle.

Heather says

I was happy to see that this was not only a Canadian Author (which my library neglected to indicate by fancy sticker) and took place in Alberta (not my province but still). The author did a mix of third person writing and journal entries. There was a clearly defined difference in writing style - not just indicated by the italics. The journal entries were typically poetry that Anise had written or lists on who she would better cope with her illness and personal life.

Gravity Journal takes place in a hospital where Anise is attending a program for anorexia. Here we get to experience Anise's difficulty in dealing with her anorexia, getting use to school, feelings, her boyfriend, and her family. I love that Anise doesn't use mom or dad or even her parents first name - no she uses the names she feels best describes them "Witless" and "Loathed". I found this to be very creative.

We don't have much interaction with other characters. We have some exposure to her brother, Marcel, very brief moments with her parents, and some time with her new boyfriend from hospital, Boyd. With the little bit of interaction you have with the people it's hard to decide whether or not you truly like the person or not. All you have to go on is the feelings that Anise has towards them. Other patients are brought in and out of the picture - as it would happen in Anise's experience with them at the hospital. Other characters, like the doctor, psychiatrist, the teachers, and the nurse, are interesting but not used much. We see how much she loves or hates the person and that's it. The only two adults that seem to help Anise through her problems/illness are the psychiatrist and one of the nurses. She trusts them and you can tell from their actions that they care about her.

Anise, and this book, are relateable but only from arms length. At no point did I feel an emotional attachment to her, nor did I get any feels from this book. However, I don't think every book needs to give me a million feels in order for me to love the book - or to learn from it. I haven't read a book yet that shows the experience of a person trying to heal themselves for a mental illness - especially in a hospital setting. I felt like Sobat provided an interesting depiction on what it would be like to have to go through this experience. Would a little more emotion be nice - well yes - but not fully necessary. I would have liked to know the time line. I know that she was there for at least 2 school semesters - so likely 8 months, but I don't know when she experienced what.

Overall, the book was a good read and worth borrowing at the very least if you're interested in the topic.

Liralen says

This might not be as bad as I remember, but I'm not reading it again to find out. What I *do* remember of it is that the writing was painful, the characters (but especially the parents) were caricatures, and the way the book treated the Anise's illness was surface at best.

Most of the ratings and reviews here are positive, so I suppose I'm in the minority, but my overwhelming memory of this book--even several years later--is of a clichéd and sloppy work. I hope for the sake of those who read it in the future that my memory is inaccurate.

Brit says

Good but really sad.

Natasha Deen says

A book that deals with hard topics and painful issues in a way that doesn't leave the reader depressed at the end. Definitely worth reading.
