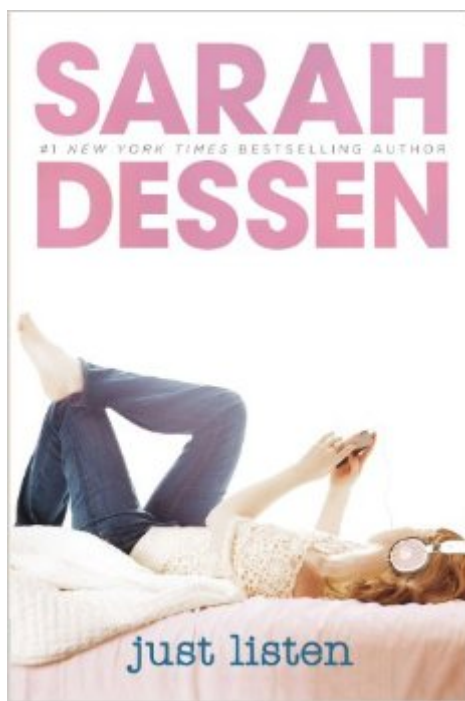


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# Just Listen



## Synopsis

To find the truth youâ™ve got to be willing to hear it.Â When sheâ™s modeling, Annabel is the picture of perfection.Â But her real life is far from perfect.Â Fortunately, sheâ™s got Owen. Heâ™s intense, music-obsessed, and dedicated to always telling the truth.Â And most of all, heâ™s determined to make Annabel happy. . .Â âœThis is young adult fiction at its best.â • â”School Library JournalÂ Also by Sarah Dessen:Along for the RideDreamlandKeeping the MoonLock and KeyThe Moon and MoreSomeone Like YouThat SummerThis LullabyThe Truth About ForeverWhat Happened to Goodbye

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (360 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #25,453 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Music #31 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Siblings #54 inÂ Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Emotions & Feelings

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Sarah Dessen's latest novel focuses on Annabel, the youngest in her family and the sweet, nice one who avoids confrontation and, ever since becoming best friends with the popular-yet-caustic Sophie, avoids standing up for herself. Her family's attention is centred around her older sister Whitney and her eating disorder, and Annabel's white lies - telling her mom she's fine, not discussing the night when she and Sophie stopped being friends - keep things going smoothly. It's not until she meets Owen Armstrong, another 'outcast' at school who quotes Anger Management phrases at her, that she becomes aware of how often she lies, and more importantly, how often she

simply fails to tell the truth. This is a story about a lot of things, from complex family relationships to the world of modeling to the importance of music, but mostly it's the story of one girl finding her voice, and letting people hear the sometimes painful but always true things that she needs to say.

How beautifully written this book is, I cannot even begin to explain, nor would I ever do it justice. It's hard to believe that Dessen's books keep getting better and better, because I always wonder how she's going to top the last one. Somehow, she always does, and in a way that leaves you desperate for more. I have never been one to re-read books, but I absolutely cannot lay this book to rest. I want to re-live the story, because I can't bear to let the characters go. Annabel is facing the hardest school year of her life. She's dealing with a lot of family issues including her sister's severe battle with anorexia, and trying to tell her mother that she desperately wants to quit modeling. Her ex-best friend Sophie no longer talks to her, because she thinks that Annabel slept with her boyfriend, but the truth is far deeper and the worst part is that nobody knows. Now that her friends have turned on her she has nobody until Owen Armstrong, the most unlikely person, befriends her and makes her see life in a new light. Dessen did a beautiful job of portraying family relationships and how difficult it can be when you have to sacrifice for them. You feel so much a part of this book that it's as if you are sitting at the table with them arguing, crying, screaming, laughing, talking, or holding one another. The struggle with friendships is so real and honest that I'm sure every one of us can relate in some sense to the loss of a best friend, or a misunderstanding that never was resolved that Annabel deals with on a daily basis. The pain she has to endure while desperately hiding the truth from everyone else is incredible and you feel so deeply for her that it may bring you to tears or just want to reach into the book and give her a big hug. Every young woman should read Dessen's books, but especially this one. It has so many lessons to offer girls on topics that are extremely important for them to be aware of. Everything from love and loss to anorexia and rape, this book has it all and it is so very beautifully done. I cannot express enough just how highly I recommend this book to women of all ages, but especially to high school girls. Dessen is absolutely brilliant.

Just Listen Sarah Dessen Genre: Realistic Fiction Annabel Greene plays a girl who has everything in the commercial for Kopf's Department Store: she is the top student, popular cheerleader, dazzling prom queen surrounded by friends. In real life though, Annabel Greene is the total opposite. She has no best friend anymore because of Sophie, who ended up spreading rumors about Annabel after one little mistake that wasn't even Annabel's fault. Not only that, but Annabel has to deal with the awkward times at home with her sister's eating disorder, and Annabel not being comfortable

about life and speaking her mind at all. Then she meets a guy named Owen Armstrong, who isn't your usual Romeo, but Annabel learns something very valuable from him... truth. Owen Armstrong is a high schooler who is never parted with his ipod or CD player. Before Annabel was rejected by all of her friends, she had heard that Owen was a freak. Annabel had wondered what he was always listening to. When they become friends, he amazes her with his honesty and confidence. Soon, Annabel is telling Owen all of her feelings that she has wanted to get out for a long time, and they become close until she makes a big mistake-again. I highly recommend this book for readers who like people like Meg Cabot and similar authors. Sarah Dessen has a way that keeps me interested in her story. If you have read certain books by Sarah Dessen too, you can recognise some of the characters in this story that is brought back from a different point of view which I thought was very cool. I enjoyed reading this book because I was able to put myself into Annabel's shoes, and I wanted to just jump into the book and be her!

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