



## Belly Up

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When 16 year old Serendipity Rodriguez attends a house party to celebrate the end of sophomore year, she has no intention of getting drunk and hooking up with a guy she's just met, let alone getting pregnant. To make matters worse, she has no way of contacting the father and she and her mother are about to move to a new town and in with her grandmother.

It's hard enough to start your junior year as the new kid in school, but at 5-months pregnant it's even harder. So when Sara meets Leaf, who asks her out and doesn't seem to care that she's pregnant, she finds herself falling.

Juggling the realities of a pregnancy with school and a new relationship are hard enough, but when Jack, the father of her baby, turns back up, Sara's life goes from complicated to a complete mess. With the help of her overbearing mother and grandmother, Sara will learn to navigate life's challenges and be ready for anything, as she prepares for the birth of her baby.

## **Belly Up Details**

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Author : Eva Darrows , Hillary Monahan

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## From Reader Review Belly Up for online ebook

### Dahlia says

Definitely on the lighter side of reproductive YA fiction, like Juno meets Gilmore Girls meets Tumblr discourse on gender/sexuality with a really sweet LI (who cooks! My Kryptonite) and very supportive friend group. (I would not be mad if the finished book had a little recipe section at the back - just putting that out there, Inkyard.) Also, a big heads-up to anyone looking for fat and/or questioning bisexual and/or biracial MCs.

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### Ash †Reviews of a FearStreetZombie† says

Belly Up was one of those books that you can't help but to enjoy... While it's good, but takes no time annoying you in between. I enjoyed it immensely and it had me cracking up so much that I teared up. But there were a lot of parts that just seemed to forced. Especially the Transgender parts. I get that some books talk about it to try to bring it to light and teach you about it. Belly Up seemed to just want to cram it down your throat along with race. It was forced, I can't tell you how many times race was randomly brought it. I just didn't get the necessity of bringing it up so often. The overuse of they/them just about made me want to punch someone in the face. Sorry, but when it is said every other word - it tends to drive you insane.

That being said, It really was a very fun and light hearted read if you could get beyond the sexual politics and race.

Sara was a character you can't help but to love. Same with Leaf. They are just so adorable. I love the relationships everyone had in this book but there were times when I thought she was being extremely disrespectful. Couldn't help but think most of the characters were pretty bland though - in a way that they seemed to be all the same. It wasn't until the middle to end of the book that that all seemed to separate and become their own person. I can't tell you how happy I was for Sara for being one of the few teen mom's that are blessed with loving people surrounding her. I wish more mom's got to feel that love. Young and old.

I would like to take this moment to say .... THERE WAS FREAKING ICP REFERENCES?! That made me feel so old. Lol I really wonder how many people will know the juggalo talk. Haha

Would I recommend this book? Highly. Because like it or not, this book really is awesome and has a ton of potential. It's a great quick read.

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### Candace Robinson says

At first this had a Juno vibe but then it got a little more serious with things going on in today's world. I tend to like to escape from that, and there was a lot of stuff thrown in. But I did really like Leaf!

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### Julie says

BELLY UP is just...such a pure read? It's funny and snarky and there's a lot of friendship and family

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relationships. Devi is Jewish and ace and the most supportive, lovely friend. Sara's mom and Mormor are wonderful and hilarious together. I loved Morgan and Erin and their relationship and how kind they were. And LEAF. Oh my God Leaf is just. He's kind and caring and loves to cook and he's so respectful and he's a fat Rom boy and I love him with all my heart.

And at the center of it all is Sara. Sarcastic, funny, brilliant, Sara. She was so wonderful and authentic and optimistic. I loved the voice Darrows used for her and I loved the way she thought things through.

This is absolutely a character-driven book, so if you're looking for something else, this might not be for you. Otherwise, it really is a way more diverse JunoxGilmore Girls mash up with the same kind of dry humor and family dynamics and I loved this romcom so much and cannot wait until y'all can read it.

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### **Laura says**

There is a sub-genre of romance books about the MC (Main Character) being pregnant.

I'm not sure why this is. I don't read a lot of romance books. But the cover of this one got me, and it sounds like an interesting read, so I chose to go in, knowing that this was about a girl, Sara, who is 17, and gets pregnant, and keeps the baby.

And if that was all there was to it, I probably would not have like the book at all. But Sara is a smart, witty girl. The people she is attracted to are also smart and witty. I love how she says she doesn't want to impose gender standards to her baby to be. That gender is fluid, and that she might be bisexual.

For example, this is a bit of dialogue involving Jack, the bio-father, and Sara:

...it's a girl, right?

"That's the assigned gender. I wanna keep doors open in case they choose another gender, later, though. But that's a talk for another day."

Jack paused.

"Yeah, okay, that's fine. I'm just going to tell my parents it's a girl. I don't think they'll get it otherwise.

Her boyfriend is Gray ACE. The lesbian couple that she hangs out with, one of them is transgender.

So, no this is not a typical teen romance, at least not as far as I can see.

So if you are into teen pregnancy romances, this book might be right up your alley.

Thanks to Netgalley for making this book available for an honest review.

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### **Leah says**

This book is just as wonderful as I was anticipating! Full review to come.

## Audrey says

1.5 stars

This review is based on an ARC of *Belly Up* which I received courtesy of NetGalley and the publisher (Inkyard Press).

Ahh, once again deceived by an appealing cover. This cover, it slaps you in the face that inside is a story about pregnancy, no? Well, it's not. (Okay, it *is*, but it's not.) Let me break down what this story is *actually about*.

30% food, food descriptions, "chzburgers", and oh my god shut up about food already, please? I get that our mc is pregnant but I *hate* when people talk about food all the time, and that topic came up over and over and over!

30% Social Justice Warrior lecturing, which ultimately just left me feeling small and scolded.

30% cringey banter. The mc said "amazeballs" unironically. My soul died a little bit at that moment, I swear...

5% my family is Swedish. We talk Swedish, we shop Swedish, most importantly we *EAT* Swedish! Swedish Swedish Swedish. Swedish...  
Swedish.

And finally, 5% oh I'm "preggers" lol. Wild.

**Tangent Time!** I love *Juno*. I typically don't enjoy movies *at all*, but *Juno* is one of my favorites and I could watch it repeatedly. So I know in the YA genre of things, *Juno* is like, a standard because Ellen Page is this quirky, non-serious teen saddled with a hugely serious thing. *Juno* pulls this off *flawlessly*, and in comparison, *Belly Up* feels like a lesser version. (And also, Juno and Paulie? Come on, we will never get a better young couple! While we're comparing these two stories, let me just mention that the relationship between Sara and Leaf is *empty*. Like, I felt nothing. She kept saying how she was so in love and overwhelmed, but I wasn't sensing that at all...)

Maybe I'm too old. Honestly, all I could think was "This novel is written for the 15-year-olds who can define *aesthetic*."

Anyway, I'm just genuinely upset that this book didn't reach my standards. I was so excited for this novel, crossing my fingers hoping that I would be approved this ARC. I even happy danced when I got it. I'm just gonna go wallow now, bye.

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## Book Chick (Tori) says

This one is hard for me to rate. I read it in one day, so there's that. But did I actually *\*like\** it? No, not really. It kind of had a "Juno"-ish feel to it at the beginning. But throughout the book I almost felt like I was being

scolded or lectured by a 17 year old about political correctness. And about food. Now, I'm married to a Polynesian, so I know, I KNOW how important food can be. But seriously, it got old. And I have no problem with her talking about sexuality or gender, but it almost felt forced. Kind of like when you read a Christian novel that sticks in preachy messages at random times and it throws off the flow of the book... That's how this felt. I don't know. I mean, I don't NOT recommend the book because I'm sure a lot of people would like it. Maybe I'm too old for teen/YA fiction, because most of it is annoying to me. Maybe it's because I'm a mom of teens and that amount of teen angst and drama in my life is enough? Who knows. I did appreciate how supportive Sara's family and friends were- we need more of those types of families and friends in this world. And where do you find a Leaf?? He was awesome.

Thanks to Netgalley and the publishers for the opportunity to read this ARC.

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### **Keirstin Smith (CloudOfThoughts) says**

Belly Up by Eva Darrows is a great story with insight to a teen pregnancy. From the hard parts to the easier parts, it follows one teens journey of pregnancy with a strangers baby. New school, new house, new life. So much for senior year with her bestie.

Thank you Netgalley and the publisher for an arc copy of Belly Up in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Sadie says**

This was SO WONDERFUL. I cried. It's funny and sweet and every single character is a precious angel snowflake I would die for.

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### **Dill Werner says**

I was a beta and sensitivity reader on this book for ace, nonbinary, and genderneutral language and topics. Although I usually don't read contemporary, I was so thrilled to be a part of BELLY UP. It's a diverse and delightful story about how life doesn't end with teenage pregnancy. It's merely starting a new chapter. The voice is told from a hilarious voice that only Hillary Monahan aka Eva Darrows can give. Don't expect a "Woe me" tale. Instead, you'll find, "Whoa, what's happening to me?" as Sara navigates pregnancy while entering a new high school, brushing off racial stereotypes, and making friends. The ending had me weeping with happy tears.

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### **Gina says**

I received an eARC of this book via Netgalley.

I loved this book! Everything about it was amazing! It had sweet contemporary romance without characters having to be conflicted and angry at everyone for most of the story. It had rep galore in many fashions! It read like I was having conversations with my own best friends and didn't take itself anymore serious than it needed to be.

Belly Up is the story of how a reckless night at a party goes from fun to life changing. When Serendipity, Sara, has a drunken one night stand as way of rebounding from her ex she finds herself pregnant his with baby. The story goes through her figuring out the ups and downs of what her options are and the results of those decisions.

The writing is spot on and I loved the humor so much. Multiple times I was giggling out loud at something Sara or another character would say. The one liners in particular were incredible! I loved the sass both Sara's mom and mormor (grandma) had throughout the story and how they were involved and included. Too often the adults in the teens life are glossed over in fiction and I'm glad they weren't in this. Even Sara's friends parents were mentioned and occasionally seen.

As for the representation, amazing! Darrows really packs diversity into this story and it all translates and works flawlessly for me. Not only do we have multiple sexual orientations represented but we have multiple religion and ethnicities as well. I greatly appreciate Darrows including variations of asexuality in her characters (gray ace and demisexual) and showing different diverse characters than we are use to seeing in other literature. The characters do a phenomenal explaining what and when things need to be explained without being rude or condescending about it. For example, I was completely engrossed when Sara was learning about Romani traditions and culture and the stories she was being told came naturally and the character was understanding of her ignorance instead of condescending about it. Another character starts her dialogue by telling Sara she is a trans queer girl and that if she has a problem with it then she can go find other people to talk to. The right to the point here is what's up attitude set the tone for her character and let you know what you needed without dwelling on the logistics of it. Other diverse characters are present and they all have their own way of showing you who they are in a very natural and very them way. All of these aspects to these characters lets the reader connect to them in a much more intimate way than one may be use to.

Overall I think this is one of my new favorites and I wouldn't be surprised if it stays in my top 5 on the year. I can easily see myself rereading since Darrows does an incredible job of making the dialogue, both inner and outer, relatable. It's also just an overall wholesome read without unnecessary drama. It was kind of refreshing in way. If YA contemporaries are your forte, do yourself a favor and pick this one up.

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### **Fadwa (Word Wonders) says**

this was such a cutesie read full of softness and happiness and I loved every second of it!! Getting pregnant as a teen isn't the best situation but it happens and I love how this book didn't make it to be this life shattering event, especially with a great support system.

Full review coming closer to release date!

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### **Tiffany says**

I received this book from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

This book at first made me nervous to read. I liked the movie Juno and I thought this book would be like it. First thing I want to talk about is the characters names in this book. They are weird. I mean Leaf and Serendipity? What the heck. I noticed that the main character loved to mention that her family was Swedish.

She mentioned it only five times a chapter. I swear. Sara aka Serendipity is one of the most annoying characters I've read about. She said the weirdest and most outrageous things. This book has got to be for older teens and not younger teens. I was surprised with some of the stuff she said. But the thing that annoyed me about her was how she didn't want to assume the gender of her baby. I understand that in this day and age that people want to be respectful of others and their own decisions but that baby hasn't picked what gender it wants to identify as and won't for some time. So it's okay for her to call it a girl. It seemed like a lot of characters in this book were from the LGBT community and I'm not for sure if the author had a reason or was just trying to make it full of people from this community. I don't like when authors put them in the books just to try to make the book diverse. It annoys me a lot. Maybe this isn't the case with this book I don't know.

The plot of this book was kinda boring. Sara doesn't do anything eventful. She starts off with having a one night stand and ends up pregnant. Then she's instantly hopping into a new relationship at her new school. I just thought that was odd. She kept saying oh he won't want to be with me because I'm pregnant.

The family is very accepting with her becoming pregnant and not knowing the father. All she has is the first name. It also seems like she doesn't even bother to look for the father of her baby. She just is like oh no one knows him and moves on. She didn't try that hard to find him at all. And we don't see her look for him at all.

Overall I didn't like most things in this book but I did like how the main character kept the baby and decided to finish up school. I admire her for that. The writing wasn't horrible and I was able to finish the whole book which is a plus.

I also want to say that just because I didn't care for the book doesn't mean you won't.

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## **Brittany says**

My first 5-star read of the year!

I stayed up way past my "bed time" to read Belly Up. The story was so honest, real, and raw. Let's not forget **hilarious**. This book was filled with laugh out loud moments, the one liners and jokes had me going.

There is a little bit of all types of representation in Belly Up. At first, it felt like the author was just throwing in everything she could think of, like a smorgasbord of representation, with no real reason. I looked outside that, though, because it wasn't about me . . . it's about others seeing themselves in a character. With that said, you can find a bit of ace, trans (MTF), questioning bisexuality, demisexual, and queer in one or more of the main characters.

I hated Mormor at first, but the crazy bat grew on me. I loved the support of Sara's family. I'm reading some reviews saying this is unrealistic. In some cases, it might be. However, I think it was realistic enough. Not all families bail on their teenaged daughter/granddaughter, etc. when she becomes pregnant. It's refreshing to see the positive, instead of all the negative.

I'm indifferent with the Jack ending, but this is a personal thing of my own reasoning. I can't say much about it without spoiling, so I'll keep it at that.

Read it! You'll laugh, you'll throw a shoe, you'll cry.

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