



The Best Kept Secret

Wendi Nunnery

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In high school, everyone has secrets. Even well-brought-up Emma Fraser.

Emma's sophomore year started out all wrong. First, her best friend Andy confessed to losing his virginity leaving Emma all alone in the V-Club. Then the rest of her friends got weird and suddenly Emma finds herself feeling like the people she knows best have become total strangers. And total strangers are becoming friends.

When Deegan Burke, a rich, gorgeous senior, asks Emma to be his date for the prom, Emma thinks her luck has begun to change. But rather than being able to bask in this newfound glory, her whole world starts to unravel. And when secrets that once seemed so innocent start to take a very dangerous turn, Emma discovers that true friends are friends no matter what...and some secrets aren't worth keeping.

The Best Kept Secret Details

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Author : Wendi Nunnery

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From Reader Review The Best Kept Secret for online ebook

Paige says

lololol this book has the same cover photo as The Summer I Found You and boy do I hope it's better than that disaster of a book

Cathy *Booklover4everandever* says

Such a good story

I don't even know where to begin. This story shocked me at the end that's for sure, never seen that coming. I love this book. It's so real and delves into a topic you never hear much about. It may be in a high school setting but I promise you the topics of this book are not something you think you would see in a high school....

Andrea says

I received a copy of this book from Goodreads First Reads

I loved this book. Simply loved it. I'm not ashamed to admit that I enjoy YA fiction. I also look forward to sharing it with others who enjoy these types of books.

I felt that this book was raw and honest. It wasn't pretending to be anything that it wasn't. It didn't try too hard. It is simply a book about teenagers and the issues that they go through as they navigate their lives. Keeping secrets, being mean to one another, hiding their feelings... Not everybody experiences the abuse from a classmate like Jesse takes from Deegan, but I have no doubt that such things have happened before. And the whole time, the book made you think and feel right along with the characters. You were proud of Emma and Elsie for actually going to the police. You sometimes wanted to kick Alex for being Alex. You really saw threw Deegan's charm to the evil lurking inside... It was a great read.

Gina Azzi says

The Best Kept Secret by Wendi Nunnery is a powerful and captivating read. The story highlights the ups and downs of main character Emma as she navigates her sophomore year of high school – and all the drama, uncertainty, and insecurity that goes along with it. Emma is an incredibly real character and her innocence and awkwardness is refreshing.

When Emma is asked to prom by popular boy Deegan, she's excited and hopeful. Especially when she learns that her secret crush, Jesse, is also going to prom with her friend Elsie. While it seems that Deegan and Jesse are constantly trying to one-up each other for Emma's attention, things take a very different turn during prom night. The secret that Emma learns threatens to destroy everything she thought she knew – as well as the lives of her closest friends.

The Best Kept Secret is incredibly impactful and the story will stay with you long after you finish the book. Wendi Nunnery writes with raw honesty, humor, and wit and I look forward to reading her future novels.

Claire - The Coffeeholic Bookworm says

'Tis another addition to my tear-jerker book list. And this one really wrecked my heart open. Couldn't even breathe nor sniff. I was just too emotional with all the events that unfolded. Emma, poor thing Emma kept me crying until my pillows were wet with tears.

Emma thought she knew everything she needed to know about her friends. She wasn't prepared when she realized she really didn't know anything about them, at all. Secrets aren't supposed to be shared. But let's face it. Secrets would only keep us wanting. What Emma discovered changed a whole lot of perspective in her life. What she discovered about bestfriend surely shocked her. Maybe it was better off when she didn't know Andy's secrets at all.

Best Kept Secrets tackled a lot of topics that are accordingly based on a teenager's life. Bullies, virginity issues, prom dates, teen sex, mean girls, sarcasm all over. Those were kinda hard to deal with. Those things could easily destroy a person. And those things could change one's life forever.

Gotta love this book. It brought out all my emotions in one roller-coaster ride. Wendi Nunnery deserves two thumbs up, an standing ovation and a round of applause!

Beth Rodgers says

'The Best Kept Secret' by Wendi Nunnery took me a few chapters to get into, but once I did, I was hooked. Not wanting to give too much away (it is called 'The Best Kept Secret,' after all), the story revolves around Emma, a sophomore in high school. Much of the plot deals with her relationship with her best friend, Andy. She also cycles between liking a senior boy named Deegan and Andy's brother, Jesse. Rounding out the main cast of characters, aside from Emma's parents, are her good friend, Elsie, and another girl, Georgia, the token mean girl whom Emma can't stand.

The first half or a bit more of the story was your typical contemporary young adult novel with romantic entanglements, unrequited crushes, and friendship troubles. Nunnery did a great job fleshing out the way Emma felt about Deegan, as well as the way she started to come to terms with her feelings for Jesse. Since Deegan was good friends with Andy, Emma got to spend more time with him, and the way she saw him act around Jesse made her begin to think twice about what kind of a person he truly was. The uncomfortable nature of his remarks about Jesse being gay, which had never been overtly stated by Jesse or anyone else at that point, were a sense of foreshadowing in the worst possible way.

When Emma is asked to the prom by Deegan, her heart leaps, partly because she hopes to be able to see Jesse there. Her emotions toward both guys lead her to a trainwreck of troubles at the prom, starting with a conversation she was clearly not meant to overhear between two people she thought she knew – or at least hoped she did. The conversation brings to light realizations that are not at all pretty, and which send the story into a downward spiral of uncertainty over what will happen next, and what should be done about what Emma now knows.

The barrage of 'what if' scenarios and revelations of truths that permeated the storytelling were rife with emotion. Any reader who doesn't feel a slew of emotions ranging from happiness to hope to anger and disgust, on to animosity toward anyone who has suffered at the hands of a bully will find this story compelling and relatable, despite the host of emotions plaguing them as they read it.

Beth Rodgers, Author of 'Freshman Fourteen,' A Young Adult Novel

Katyah says

The reviews of this book, alone, made me want to read this story. Yesterday I bought the e-book on Amazon, and today I'm crying.

This story really hit me in the feels, let me just say that. There aren't many stories that have made me cry, but this one absolutely did.

I was able to relate to Emma, and I understood where she was coming from as a teenage girl. That being said, I was so emotionally involved with everything she was going through that the note at the very end of this story made me scream. I literally screamed.

It really was a great book, and even though I'll be feeling the emotions from this story for the next few days, they are emotions I wish all books could make me feel. (FYI: still crying).

Rosie says

*I received a copy of The Best Kept Secret in exchange for an honest review.

Why do we do it to ourselves, fellow readers? Why do we read books that make us hurt inside, and would make me cry if I wasn't 90% Vulcan.

It's taken me a while to write a coherent review of The Best Kept Secret, and I do hope is his coherent.

Synopsis & plot

The Best Kept Secret follows Emma, a Sophomore student who is beginning to discover that she doesn't know everything about her friends, especially her best friend Andy. Amongst all of the excitement about prom, and attractive boys, she begins to find out what's really going on.

This felt a little like a book of two halves. The first half was about teenage drama; who's taking who to the prom, dresses, bitchy girls etc, which was fair enough, but it wasn't entirely gripping. The second half was much more interesting when we start to discover 'the secret'.

I truly felt for the characters and it made me feel hatred towards some of the other characters. Any author who can make you hate a character for the way they've behaved towards other characters, is a good author in my book.

The Best Kept Secret deals with a big, and awful topic. It's the first time I've seen that particular topic featured in a book, and I felt that it was handled well.

And the ending; oh it was it was heartbreaking, and very sudden. I would have liked a couple of more paragraphs, or maybe just sentences, after the end to find out what Emma's reactions were, though I'm sure that would have made it even more heartbreaking.

Characters

Our main character, Emma, is well-developed and is going through all the kinds of things every teenage girl (and maybe boys?) go through, which is easy for the reader to relate to.

Secondary characters, such as Andy, Deegan, and Jesse, are also well put together. That's not to say they're all likeable characters, because some of them aren't at all, and you actually feel like you hate some of them.

There are also parents present in *The Best Kept Secret*. Can you imagine it; a young adult book with parents?! The shock. The relationship between Emma and her parents feels a little too perfect at times, but it's nice that they're there and makes it feel more realistic.

World building

The world building isn't generally so important in contemporary novels, because it's not really necessary. I can imagine what a school looks like, what a bedroom looks like, so the world building was perfectly acceptable for me.

Conclusion

I finished *The Best Kept Secret* two or three weeks ago, and I've found myself thinking about it a fair bit over the past couple of weeks, and it's taken me a while to figure out exactly how I feel about it.

I conclude that it's a gripping, touching, and heartbreaking novel that deals with a serious topic, that sticks with you.

<http://www.eatreadglam.com/2015/06/th...>

Kathleen says

The Best Kept Secret is a compelling coming of age story that will pull at the heartstrings and stir the soul.

Author Wendi Nunnery weaves an emotional tale set in Cley, Georgia, that follows the trials and tribulations of fifteen year old high school sophomore Emma Fraser. This is a story that deals with the drama and angst of the high school years, as Emma discovers that she never really knew everything about her friends. From keeping secrets; to teenage rebellion; to young love; to the dreaded dilemma of being a virgin or going all the way; to the traumatic social issue of bullying and suicide; Emma and her friends embark on a journey where they try to navigate the slippery slope of life's experiences with a mixture of innocence, naivety, confidence, insecurity, fragility, strength, ignorance, maturity, pain, heartbreak, hope, and love.

The teenage years can be like a roller coaster ride where teens can experience the full gamut of emotions. For some it can be the best of times, but for others it can be the most difficult time to get through. The Best Kept Secret deals with a variety of relationships during the teenage years (family, friends, etc), and the cause and effect that the teens are exposed to from these relationships. The story has a mixture of rawness, tenderness, and painful reality that will captivate the reader as Emma and her friends stories unfold. The author keeps the reader engaged and wondering what the best kept secret is until the last quarter of the story, and while it is definitely not an easy story to read, it is a powerful story in which the author thoughtfully delves into the importance and reality of a variety of social issues that teens face. I couldn't help but reflect upon memories of my own teenage years, and like Emma, I could relate to a lot of what she went through. I would strongly encourage parents and teens to read this very relevant story.

The Best Kept Secret is a realistic, down to earth, and emotional coming of age story that will stay with you for a very long time.

Disclaimer: I received a copy of the book from the author / publisher in exchange for my honest review and participation in a book review program hosted by Chick Lit Plus Blog Tours.

<http://jerseygirlbookreviews.blogspot...>

Lauren G. says

Wendi Nunnery is an exceptional young adult author. In this story, she truly captures what high school is like, and all the trials and tribulations - alongside all the fun and joyous times - that high schoolers go through. Except... well... this story has a sad turn to it which will make you grab the kleenex (so be sure you have some close by!). You will be hooked into the story from the first line and you will not want to put the book down. Wendi's writing allows for you to really feel like you know the characters and are right there with them in the story. The end of the story will leave you wanting more - a trait of a very gifted author. Sequel, please! :-)

Paula Phillips says

If you enjoy high school novels , then this is the read for you as we meet Emma who is entering in with her best friends to tenth grade. When she recieves news that her best friend Andy just had sex behind the bleachers , at this point her heart breaks in two and makes me think of the reaction that Rosie had when her best friend Alex broke the news in the movie Love, Rosie. It seems that everyone is out having sex and that leaves Emma the virgin still. As the year goes on, secrets become the in-thing and soon Emma feels like she doesn't even know her friends and what is happening in their lives now. Emma is then asked to the school prom by the most popular guy in their school Deegan Burke and when Emma thinks that having this new status will change her life and be that "wow" moment, she will discover that being on top isn't as glamorous as it seems when you are actually in the "crowd". Soon secrets will start unravelling her perfect life she has created and Emma will discover that the people she thought she knew and loved , cared for - she really doesn't know them at all. The Best Kept Secret is a great teen angst novel where you will discover who your "real true" friends are and often the results will surprise you. Like most teen angst novels, The Best Kept Secret will send you on an emotional roller-coaster of a ride.

Patrick Hodges says

It's the best compliment a person can give to a book or an author to say that something within those pages made them think - deeply - about oneself, one's life, or one world-view. While on the surface *The Best Kept Secret* may seem like just another book about teen angst and the precariousness of high-school relationships, when the stress about the uncertainty of one's future crashes heavily against the awkwardness of one's present. Most of us went through that. Some of us are STILL going through that. Honestly, sometimes it's a wonder - to me, at least - that I survived at all.

Friendships that start during childhood often happen very organically, born from a mixture of innocence, convenience and proximity, much like the characters Emma and Andy. Despite being different sexes, they have been inseparable for years, and they've never kept a single secret from each other ... until now.

Because in those mid-to-late teen years, when it all becomes about who does what with whom (and sometimes who "does" whom, if you get my drift), secrets are as prevalent as grains of sand on the beach. Secrets that can test, or perhaps even destroy even the strongest of friendships. In the microcosm that is high school, childish things like schoolyard bullying mix with grown-up things like sex and relationships, blending together into one chaotic soup that make adolescence the minefield that it is.

Wendi Nunnery's writing style is so good, so authentic, and her story hits so close to home for me - and, I would imagine, for many, many others - that I know I will be pondering this book for many weeks to come. Every single character in it can be likened to someone we knew back then (or even, perhaps, the person that we WERE), and whether we loved those years or hated them, there is something for all of you in this book.

I would like to quote my single favorite passage from *The Best Kept Secret*, because there is so much profundity and wisdom in it that I believe it should be shared, whether you read the book or not:

The world is an ugly place sometimes. This is no surprise to anyone, young or old, but it seems like it can be easily forgotten. We walk past each other every single day but never notice the girl who is staring down at her shoes or the guy picking at his lunch, physically present but worlds away. We don't offer help because we don't see that there is a need for it. And we don't see the need because we aren't looking for it. And we aren't looking for it because we've been told, over and over again, that we have to be somebody important. That we have to create, accomplish, and hurry. And these words have built the wheels on which we rush past one another, barely stopping to say hello before the day is gone. And so are we.

Thank you, Ms. Nunnery. Sincerely. Thank you.

Amber Eckstein says

If you are look for a happy ending you shouldn't read this book.

This book is real. Down to earth. It is touching subjects that most authors stay away from. It is brave. Fearless. What Wendi did in this book was amazing. I cried like a freakign baby. Sobbed. I never thought I would sob so much. I am a cry baby but when at working, finishing the last few chapters. No I shouldn't have

done it.

You got the girl who is a virgin who everyone teases. Typical high school. The girl best friend. Boy best friend. The loner. The popular kid. Plus the token "bi***". Everyone has their secrets and purposely seem to hide it from Emma. Once she starts realizing the small things that have been hinted, everything starts to unravel in front of her. A bit of a love triangle but it changes. The ending have some tissue, it's a rocky road. I can't wait to read more of Wendi because man oh man. I don't know if I can continue after that.

Malissa says

3.5/4 Stars (I am torn)

So I am going to admit straight off that this is a tough one for me. This is an emotionally difficult book to finish and it feels wrong to say that I enjoyed the book even though I did because of the storyline. This is not a pretty story, there is a lot of heart break in this book, a lot of pain. But, there are also a lot of tender moments, moments of courage and triumph and a lot of love.

The hardest part for me with this book, the reason that I am struggling in between a 3.5 and a 4 rating is the end. The very last moment of this book breaks my heart. I literally felt my breath catch and tears fall and I worry for Emma, this fictional character, because I placed myself in her shoes and know that if this moment in time had ended the way hers did I would carry that with me for the rest of my life. I would always wonder if things would have been different had I just seen the note, if I hadn't brushed off the question about the books, if I hadn't lied to save face.

This book is a conglomeration of what-if's for me. What if Emma had truly listened, what if Andy wasn't such a jerk, what if they spoke up sooner, what if he'd just said something. I suppose in reality that is the way of life, we can always go through it wondering what-if, but it was so hard to 'watch' all of these subtle moments happen, moments where a life could have been changed and no one took the effort to do it.

I struggled with the best friend relationship between Emma and Andy, mainly because it really felt like Andy was a bit of a jerk and I couldn't understand why Emma would put up with that. Now he's a 16 year old guy so I suppose some of the jerk attitude has an excuse, but not all of it. And I pray that my two children don't treat each other the way Andy and his brother do (particularly the way Andy treats his brother) when they are high-schoolers. I guess it comes down to me not being a big Andy fan any way you look at it. I did however really like Emma's female best friend, Elsie. Although she is hiding a secret from Emma it is clear that she really cares for her and wants the best for Emma. I don't always get that feeling with Andy and I wish I did because they have been friends for so long.

Another aspect I really liked is the relationship between Emma and her parents. She has a very open (yet we aren't talking parent as the best friend kind of thing) relationship with her parents. They are allowing her to grow into herself and find her path while being there to guide her and discipline her when needed. I think it is the kind of relationship most parents hope to have with their teenage children, one of trust and respect on all sides.

I think that this is a worthy book, it is a read that could really change someone's life if picked up at the right moment. It is a tough read, my chest hurts just sitting here thinking back on the story, don't be afraid of it, but do bring your tissues. The true secret in the story doesn't happen till the last quarter of the book so there is a long build up and a lot of discussion about sex so this is a book for mature teens and adults. The bullying aspect in this book is painful to 'watch' and something that I think we all pray never happens, but deep down

we know things like this occur which is what makes this book so important. It is a intimate and real look at teenage life and how bullying whether it is as severe as in this book or not affects more than the person being bullied. It is also a reminder that we have to speak up, that we have to listen to our friends and family with open ears, hearts, and minds. We can't make assumptions, but we can try and talk to each other and if we do know something is happening we don't wait for someone else to talk about it.

This is a book that will leave a mark and while it is a painful mark to start with due to the story I think that it is a mark that can change a person and hopefully open our eyes to what is happening around us.

<http://www.readsallthebooks.com/2015/...>

Jennifer says

PSYCHOCAT READS REVIEW OF THE BEST KEPT SECRET

(I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. Originally posted here.)

THE BEST KEPT SECRET first popped onto the Psychocat Reads Review radar back in February when we were highlighting its publisher, BookFish Books. The author, Wendi Nunnery, stopped by for a guest post and included the blurb. I knew then that this book was destined to end up on our review list. Today, we're happy to celebrate the book's release and share our thoughts on why THE BEST KEPT SECRET should find its way onto your TBR list.

The Characters: From the very first paragraph we know two things - Emma is in tenth grade, and her life promises to be full of all the awkwardness associated with that age. Which also meant if the story delivered on that it was likely to be interesting. As an adult reading the book there were plenty of moments where you want to remind the characters that things change as you get older, but if you let yourself remember what life felt like when you were fifteen and sixteen years old it is very easy to relate to Emma's struggles. She's got a pretty strong sense of self, but at the same time is struggling with the changing landscape of her life. We've all be there to some degree or another. As far as teenage characters go, I actually liked Emma. Even when she's taken with a fit of teen drama, she's not written as a whiny obnoxious character. Kudos to the author for creating her the way she did.

While there are occasional mentions of other characters, the book really stayed focused on those that held a larger impact on Emma's life. You meet Andy, the long-time best friend that is struggling with his own challenges of being a sixteen year old boy. Then there's Elsie, the female best friend that gives a good balance to Emma at times. Emma's own parents make their appearances, lending a sense of structure and stability to her life. I enjoyed having a book with a teen character that wasn't waging war against her parents in fits of teen rebellion. Their close relationship with her was woven through the book in a way that I really liked and in many ways could relate to.

Then there are the two older guys (seniors) that play a big part in Emma's emotional turmoil throughout the story - Deegan and Jesse. These two characters could not be more different. Deegan is Mr. Popular and Jesse appears to be the quiet academic sort; however, they both add some mystery to the book as both the reader and Emma aren't quite sure what the deal is with them.

The Relationships: Despite the fact that sex and relationships is a prime point of discussion in the book, the

story isn't focused on a single romantic relationship. The story instead encompasses the relationships between Emma and the aforementioned characters and in some cases the relationships between those characters. This doesn't make the story any less complicated than a traditional romance. In fact, it sometimes makes it more complicated. It also make it a pretty realistic story of life as a teenager.

Other Things to Note: So this is the point where I can say that all the teen drama, angst, and general awkwardness was good, but as the book progressed I started to get this sinking feeling that something wasn't quite right. Of course, I can't go into any of the who, what, when, where, why, or how about that without spoiling stuff, and I refuse to write reviews full of spoilers.

Instead I'm going to leave you with these to gifs that might adequately sum up my reactions to a couple of key parts that make THE BEST KEPT SECRET jump out and make you react.

Jen's Final Review: 4 STARS! If you're looking for light hearted YA lit, you're barking up the wrong tree with this book. There are plenty of moments that might make you smile, but on a whole there's a more serious tone to the story. It's a great book about navigating the awkward teen years, staying true to yourself, and knowing that sometimes secrets aren't worth keeping.

Psychocat's Final Review: It's a good thing Psychocat isn't around a lot of teenagers. She'd be even more pissed off than she already tends to be, and they'd be covered in scratches. She seemed quite taken with the book, but some characters just insisted on crossing lines that even she took issue with.
