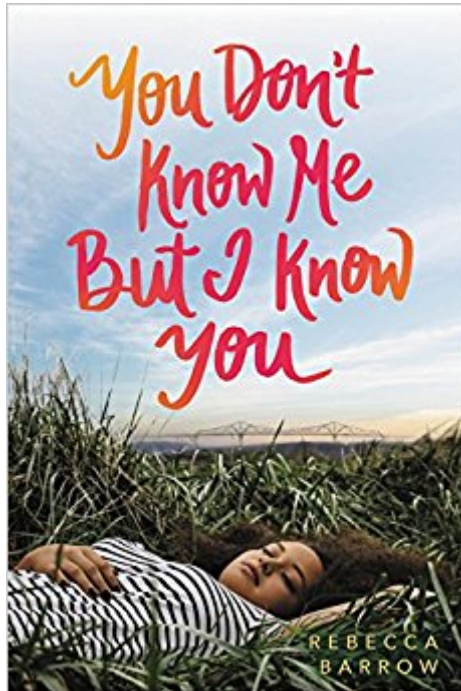




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You Don't Know Me But I Know You



Synopsis

Rebecca Barrow's bright, honest debut novel about chance, choice, and unconditional love is a heartfelt testament to creating the future you truly want, one puzzle piece at a time. There's a box in the back of Audrey's closet that she rarely thinks about. Inside is a letter, seventeen years old, from a mother she's never met, handed to her by the woman she's called Mom her whole life. Being adopted, though, is just one piece in the puzzle of Audrey's life—the picture painstakingly put together by Audrey herself, full of all the people and pursuits that make her who she is. But when Audrey realizes that she's pregnant, she feels something—a tightly sealed box in the closet corners of her heart crack open, spilling her dormant fears and unanswered questions all over the life she loves. Almost two decades ago, a girl in Audrey's situation made a choice, one that started Audrey's entire story. Now Audrey is paralyzed by her own what-ifs and terrified by the distance she feels growing between her and her best friend Rose. Down every possible path is a different unfamiliar version of her life, and as she weighs the options in her mind, she starts to wonder—what does it even mean to be Audrey Spencer?

Book Information

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& Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship

Customer Reviews

"[Barrow] steadily resists cliché and tired tropes all the way to the novel's deeply felt, unflinching conclusion. This compelling, closely observed debut charts its appealing characters' difficult journey with clarity and honesty." (Kirkus Reviews (starred

review))“It’s unfair to call this simply a book about teen pregnancy... Barrow has crafted soulful, complex characters who will resonate with readers who’ve had to contemplate the weight of their decisions upon their futures and themselves.”

(Booklist)“Audrey’s emotions swing wildly; she candidly portrays the all-consuming and delicate nature of her situation and the choice she faces. Debut author Barrow opts for realism over a scared-straight approach to teen pregnancy, which readers will appreciate.”

(Publishers Weekly)“In both its humor and in its aching, *You Don’t Know Me but I Know You* is the most honest book I’ve read in ages.” (Emery Lord, author of *The Start of Me and You* and *When We Collided*)“Both relentlessly honest and relentlessly hopeful, *You Don’t Know Me but I Know You* stands out as a book that cares profoundly about the power of friendship and the thrill of getting to know yourself. Above all else, it’s a testament to the bravery, brightness, and beauty of teenaged girls.” (Corey Ann Haydu, author of *OCD Love Story* and *Life by Committee*)“*You Don’t Know Me but I Know You* is a heartfelt, powerful examination of family: the one we’re born to, the one we choose, and the one that chooses us. Rebecca Barrow’s novel feels all at once heartbreaking, hopeful, and true.” (Janet McNally, author of *Girls in the Moon*)“Honest, nuanced, and achingly authentic, *You Don’t Know Me but I Know You*

“The whole world is full of people trying to get through, making the best of what they have, pretending like they can pull it off. And there’s no shame in that.” *You Don’t Know Me but I Know You* is a beautiful story of family, growth, and acceptance. It’s about making choices you aren’t ready for and finding the strength in yourself and those around you to know you will be okay. Audrey Spencer finds herself unexpectedly pregnant and must look at her own past, including her own adoption, as she faces questions she doesn’t know how to answer in this inspiring story of family and strength.

THINGS I LIKED

GIRL FRIENDSHIPS IN STORIES. SUPPORTIVE GIRL FRIENDSHIPS IN STORIES. I’m all here for female friendships shown in all their many layered facets. We see Audrey, Rose, Maria, and Jen celebrate and support each other. We see them fight and get angry. We see them forgive and grow. I just really loved seeing their interactions, and how their differences didn’t create problems that couldn’t be resolved. And I loved seeing Olivia become a part of their group too! I love stories about family, and I love that this book featured a non-nuclear family. I

love that we see adoption, and Audrey's mom isn't married, but in a committed and meaningful relationship. It's important to show that families come in many different forms and they're all valid. I love that we get a MC who's adopted, and her adoption is never used as a plot device to "surprise" or to create conflict between Audrey and her mom. I loved that there was no yelling, blaming, or shaming when her parents get the news about Audrey's pregnancy. And even when there are fights, they're from highly emotional situations that feel appropriate and honest, but they are always resolved. I seriously loved Audrey and Julian's relationship. They had so much fantastic open communication - about their fears and worries and hopes. It was great to see. They never blamed one another, and again their fights felt honest and in-the-moment, but they didn't let their anger fester. They were both supportive and talked about their options. I liked that we got to see cute moments of them being together and happy in the midst of their now hectic lives. Things I Didn't Like I liked how the fights were handled in their resolution, but I felt like miscommunication was the root of all problems in the story. Some of the fights, especially the smaller ones, were either miscommunication based or just because of highly charged emotions. While I understood the emotional toll and the uncertainty that led to miscommunication, I felt like some of the problems could have easily been resolved, if the open communication they had at the end of the fight was there at the beginning. This was a great story, with fantastic character dynamics that feel honest and real. I love stories about family and friendship and people caring about each other. I loved seeing Audrey's journey and seeing her opening herself to the possibilities of her future. You Know Me but I Don't Know You is a beautiful story of possibility, love, and hope that warms your heart. I received a copy from HarperTeen via Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review

I loved, LOVED this book, everything about it from the writing style to the subject matter to the characters. From the opening pages, I was hooked, right there at the party, buzzed and listening to the band. Add in the friends and long-term boyfriend and, hell, that pretty much was me in my younger years. There was such an ease and realism to the way the characters interacted. Audrey and Julian clearly adored each other, but they weren't wrapped up in a frantic, new-relationship drama that would have completely changed the dynamic of the book. All the relationships rang true. When Audrey and her friends fought, small misunderstandings that sometimes turned into much larger issues, I flashed back to high school. And the way Audrey's unintentional words cut her

mom so deeply...so painfully real that I wanted to cry for both of them. Audrey herself was fantastic, this complex character full of hope and love and as beautifully flawed as anyone. She was fascinated with the world through her camera lens, but she sometimes overlooked the things right in front of her. The author did an amazing job of writing Audrey's rollercoaster of emotions upon learning she was pregnant, especially the isolation she felt when it seemed like everyone was slipping away, just when she needed them the most. My heart ached for this girl. But there was so much more to this book than Audrey's pregnancy. It was about love and hope and the bonds, whether blood or otherwise, that connect families together. It was, as the book jacket reads, about wondering: "What does it even mean to be Audrey Spencer?"

There is so much to love about this book. First, the female friendships: SO real and complex. Audrey and her best friend Rose are fully realized young women with their own strengths and weaknesses and their relationship (as well as their relationships with the other friends in their orbit) is so well done. Audrey's world is populated with an interesting and diverse cast of characters. The way Audrey's reaction/decision-making process unfolds after she finds out she's pregnant is the best depiction I've read in YA. It is free of moral judgement, but rather centered in Audrey as a young woman who has the support of her partner and family, but ultimately must make her own choice for her future. I feel like this book is an important contribution to the literature of teen pregnancy. But it's about more than that. It's about an empowered young woman on the threshold of the next stage of her life.

This story deals with a sensitive subject matter that a lot of people may not like, it does not bother because it fits the theme of the book. It also made sense for the characters in this story. This was a heart warming story about love, family and friendship. It was so damn refreshing to read a story about a relatable group of friends. This was the most accurate representation of friendship I've seen in awhile. You don't have to agree with every single thing your friends do but you are still able to be there for them. Their decisions don't define who they are as humans. Also we do get to pick our family, because if we are lucky enough our friends become our family. This is so true, as someone who's always been closer with her friends than family, it was refreshing to read

I've read a lot of contemporaries this year, and *YOU DON'T KNOW ME BUT I KNOW YOU* is definitely a stand-out. Tender, heartfelt, and important. I loved this book.

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