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# The Lost Marble Notebook Of Forgotten Girl & Random Boy



## Synopsis

If I let you read mine, will you let me read yours? Forgotten Girl, a fifteen-year-old poet, is going through the most difficult time of her life; the breakup of her parents, and her mom's resulting depression; when she meets Random Boy, a hot guy who, like her, feels like an outcast and secretly writes poetry to deal with everything going on in his life. In *The Lost Marble Notebook of Forgotten Girl & Random Boy*, the couple's poems come together to tell their unique love story. The two nameless teenagers come from opposite sides of the tracks, yet they find understanding in each other when they lay bare their life stories through the poetry they write and share with each other. Through verse, they document the power of first kisses, the joy of finally having someone on their side, the devastation of jealousy, and the heartbreaking sadness of what each of them is simultaneously dealing with at home and hiding from the world. Finally they have someone to tell and somewhere to tell it in their marble notebook. This is the powerful story of two imperfect teens in first love who find solace in poetry. Sky Pony Press, with our Good Books, Racehorse and Arcade imprints, is proud to publish a broad range of books for young readers; picture books for small children, chapter books, books for middle grade readers, and novels for young adults. Our list includes bestsellers for children who love to play Minecraft; stories told with LEGO bricks; books that teach lessons about tolerance, patience, and the environment, and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 6 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up • Two unnamed teenagers find each other on a street corner and realize that they share a love of the written word. Forgotten Girl's parents have just split up and her mother has started drinking. Forgotten Girl copes by journaling about her life, feelings, hopes, and dreams. She meets a very cute boy on the corner one day, and their flirting really takes off when she discovers he is more than just a dude smoking and hanging out on the street; he, too, works through his feelings with a poetry journal. Their romance is chronicled in their verses • they grow close, meet each other's families (with little success), and eventually wind up sleeping together. When Forgotten Girl begins feeling smothered by Random Boy and befriends a boy from her school, things take a scary, violent turn. The book is intense, much like the young couple's relationship. Poetry perfectly captures the heightened emotions of first love. The novel's conceit (that it is Forgotten Girl's notebook and that Random Boy writes in it from time to time) does not always hold up • does he still get to read her journal after they break up? At times, the sophisticated phrasing and vocabulary hint at the adult author rather than reflect the authentic voices of two teens. Nevertheless, the story is realistic, gripping, worrisome yet hopeful. VERDICT Give this to fans of Sonya Sones and Ellen Hopkins. • Geri Diorio, Ridgefield Library, CT

"Told with such complete believability . . . Jaskulka's narrative explores the hows and whys of an abusive teenage relationship with heartbreaking honesty, and her delicate touch renders the dark story even more powerful. Graceful. Searing. Haunting." • Kirkus Reviews, starred review "Realistic, gripping, worrisome yet hopeful. VERDICT: Give this to fans of Sonya Sones and Ellen Hopkins." • School Library Journal "Forgotten Girl is a sophomore whose parents argue, scream, and slam doors. Looking out her bedroom window for salvation and fresh air, she sees Random Boy passing by • and soon her life enters a new downward spiral. In this twinned novel in verse, Jaskulka distinguishes the narratives by italicizing Random Boy's notebook entries. The author's terse poetic style suits their stilted emotions as girl and boy trudge through hardships in their homes and their own twisted bond. Don't judge this book by its seemingly lighthearted title or appealing cover; this story plumbs the dark depths of domestic violence." • Booklist "This debut novel-in-verse is both beautiful and rough around the edges.

Jaskulka handles her subject matter well, blending the poetry around the gritty details of the story. Each poet has his/her own distinct voice, making the transition between one and the other effortless. Both of these voices are real—real teenagers dealing with some major hardships. This is not an easy read; however, Jaskulka's characters pepper their story with cynicism and wit. Readers will laugh, cry, and find themselves nodding their heads. Fans of Sonya Sones and Ellen Hopkins will want to get their hands on this novel.

"An original love story, arresting and beautiful. Heartbreakingly honest. At moments frightening, but ultimately hopeful."

—Laura Whitcomb, author of *A Certain Slant of Light*

"Eloquent, lyrical, combustible, Marie Jaskulka's debut verse novel will draw you into the world of two teens whose thoughts and words resonate with raw beauty, love, and obsession. Jaskulka reminds us that, deep down, we know when love is real, and when we find it—we find our power."

—Bridget Birdsall, author of *Double Exposure*

"This is one of those books I wish I could travel back in time to give to fifteen-year-old me. It's a lyrical, raw, and honest account of love, losing yourself, and finding your voice, and with it, your inner strength."

—Stephanie Kuehnert, author of *I Wanna Be Your Joey Ramone*

The raw emotions captured in *Lost Marble Notebook* couldn't have been captured or expressed so perfectly in anything but prose. Paragraphs of descriptions and events would have drowned out the pain, the hope, the intensity of every feeling. We meet two people who are both so damaged you wonder if there's any hope. And through a series of painful events and actions you realize that it's not about hope - it's about the decisions and choices we make. It's not about hoping things will get better, it's making the choice to change and force things to happen. It's one of those books that sucks you in and when it's over you sit back and blink and wonder how your world could change so much in such a short period of time. This is my favorite book of the year so far, and I will be re-reading again soon and going very slow to savor the juicy quotes.

Best verse novel I've ever read. Emotional, heartbreaking, gritty, and even made me laugh several times, and then cry because my heart broke for *Forgotten Girl*. Her story will never be forgotten by this reader.

I loved this book! The characters, the story, the poetry. I also gave it to my babysitter and she read and loved it.

=)

Forgotten Girl has problems at home. Her parents aren't getting along anymore and her father leaves her and her mother behind. Her mother's reaction is a heavy depression and Forgotten Girl is all alone. That's when she meets Random Boy. He knows what she's going through and he seems to understand her. He comes from a completely different background, but they have something in common, broken homes and poetry. They write in verse and allow each other to read this personal poetry. They show their feelings to one another and they reply to each other's verses. They share all the previously hidden parts of themselves and a deep connection is being established. Will Forgotten Girl and Random Boy have a chance at true love? Are they perfect for each other and will they be able to forget their own pain through their special bond? Does their poetry work as a healing factor, one that will bind them forever, or will they go their separate ways in the end? Forgotten Girl & Random Boy is a beautiful book. I had tears in my eyes while I was reading the poems. They immediately touched my heart and their profound emotional level is fantastic. I loved that Forgotten Girl and Random Boy communicate through their writing. It's a fascinating topic and I was curious to find out what would happen to them. They are having difficulties at home and nobody cares what they're doing and who they are with, which makes them lonely and susceptible to destruction. Marie Jaskulka describes this in a raw and open way and I really loved that. Forgotten Girl & Random Boy has the most amazing verses. They're moving and compelling at the same time. The writing is accessible and easy to understand, which instantly made me feel connected to Forgotten Girl and Broken Boy. The verses are all stunning and I read them in one sitting. This is a book to read over and over again as every time something new will come to the surface. There are many different emotional layers that are waiting to be explored. Marie Jaskulka is a very talented author and I absolutely loved this book.

He was her Romeo. He heard her whistle from her upstairs window as he walked down the block, stopping he climbed upon her porch roof and made her visible again. Her parents shouting from below were drowned out as Random Boy invited her out into the night. Welcoming the attention, someone finally saw her again. His crowd was not what she was used to, for she was not used to any crowd, no friends were her surroundings. Random Boy stared at her; he just soaked her all in. It's funny how not much is spoken; their bodies do all their talking or it's just implied. What is spoken is flirty as most relationships are at the beginning but as time flows, their language changes. Their tongues become sharp, their words direct and accusing and their love

takes on a different meaning. This novel is written in verse, these two teens write down their story for their stories are alike in many ways. They both write poetry, their notebooks are a living testimony of the lives that they are living. Random Boy, his life at home, is far from perfect. He is his mother's protector; his father's rage gets out of control and Random Boy steps in. The strength and control that Random Boy has, my heart just breaks. Forgotten Girl, life at home revolves around her parent's drama and where does that leave her? As these two teens find each other, what is it that they are really looking for and will they find amongst themselves? I enjoyed the true honesty in the story; the abuse, the changes of the characters as they dealt with this new relationship, and their families which play a big role in the teen's lives. Random Boy's belief about girls causes some friction with Forgotten Girl and I enjoyed the tension that it brought to the relationship. I thought perhaps it could have helped their relationship had she done something different yet she choose to fight back. Her fighting back said something about her personality, and it altered their relationship. I thought the book did a great job showing how abuse can control a relationship and change the individuals involved.

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