



The First Time She Drowned

Kerry Kletter

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The beautiful struggle of a girl desperate for the one relationship that has caused her the most pain

Cassie O'Malley has spent the past two and a half years in a mental institution—dumped there by her mother, against her will. Now, at 18, Cassie emancipates herself, determined to start over. She attends college, forms new friendships, and even attempts to start fresh with her mother. But before long, their unhealthy relationship threatens to pull Cassie under once again. As Cassie struggles to reclaim her life, childhood memories persist and confuse, and Cassie must consider whose version of history is real, and more important, whose life she must save.

A bold, literary story about the fragile complexities of mothers and daughters and learning to love oneself, *The First Time She Drowned* reminds us that we must dive deep into our pasts if we are ever to move forward.

Praise for *The First Time She Drowned*:

"Lyrical, emotional...resonant." —*Entertainment Weekly*

"Beautiful and passionate . . . [Kletter is] a writer of great distinction and infinite promise." —**Pat Conroy, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Prince of Tides* and *South of Broad***

"[A] lovely and haunting keep-you-up-all-night heart-wrencher that is both beautiful and raw, painful and uplifting. It's utterly amazing. An incredible read." —**Jennifer Niven, New York Times bestselling author of *All the Bright Places***

"Sentence by sentence . . . one of the most lyrical novels I've ever read. Haunting and exquisite." —**Nicola Yoon, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Everything, Everything***

"*The First Time She Drowned* is an exquisite and masterful dive, a brave exploration into the complexities of family, and the saving grace of friendship. Kletter's writing is hypnotic, her characters alive, her story tragic, beautiful, hopeful. Simply put, this book is stunning." —**David Arnold, critically acclaimed author of *Mosquitoland***

"[A] beautiful, gut-wrenching ache of a story. If you are at all interested in books, this is required reading." —**Becky Albertalli, author of the Morris Award-winning *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda***

"The best writers are able to tell the most difficult stories with the most empathy, and that's just what Kletter does in this haunting debut. Complex, affirming, and beautifully written." —**Stephanie Kuehn, author of the Morris Award-winning *Charm & Strange***

"Gorgeous, sumptuously lyrical, luminous...a feast for lovers of language. *The First Time She Drowned* singlehandedly shatters every argument that YA books aren't fit fare for adults." —**Jeff Zentner, author of *The Serpent King***

* "[An] excellent debut novel....heart-wrenching....Readers who enjoy the suspense of unreliable narrators, as in Adele Griffin's *Loud Awake* and Lost or Stephanie Kuehn's *Complicit*, will appreciate this one." —***Booklist*** *STARRED REVIEW*

"This heartfelt, lyrical debut will strike a chord with older teens who appreciate contemporary fiction." —***Kirkus Reviews***

"An absorbing read." —***VOYA***

"Kletter's exploration of a dysfunctional family...is raw with emotion...a sophisticated read." —***School Library Journal***

"Emotionally devastating...a complex novel that ultimately uplifts." —***Publishers Weekly***

From the Hardcover edition.

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Jamie Harper:

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