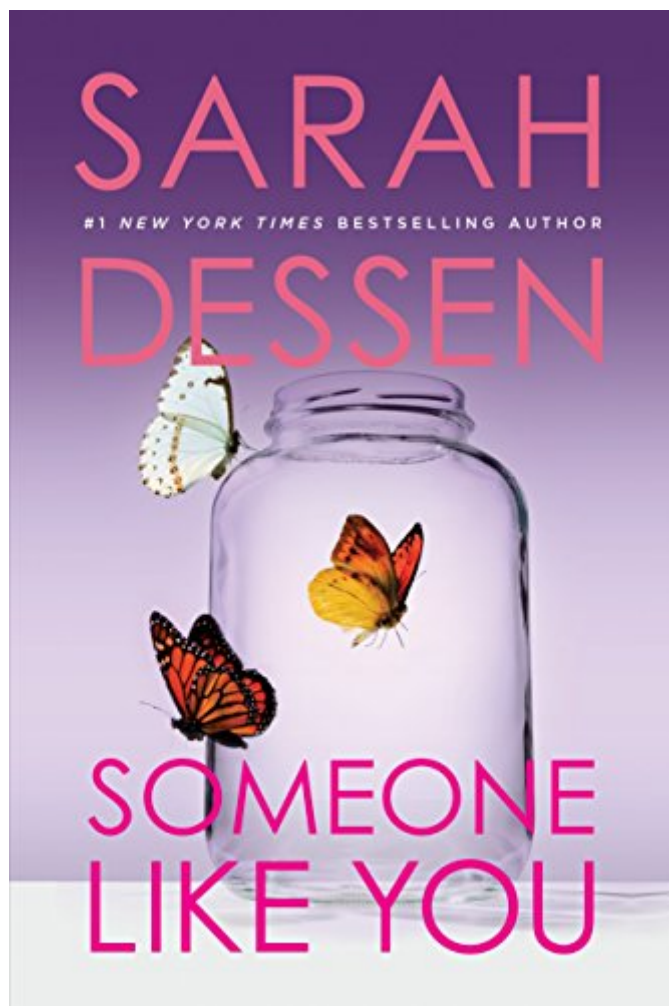




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Someone Like You



Synopsis

From the award-winning and New York Times bestselling author of *Once and for All* The world is a terrible place not to have a best friend. Â Scarlett was always the strong one. Â Halley was always content to follow in her wake. Â Then Scarlett's boyfriend died, and Scarlett learned that she was pregnant. Â Now Halley has to find the strength to take the lead and help Scarlett get through it. Â Because true friendship is a promise you keep forever. Â *

“Dessen has written a powerful, polished story.” •School Library Journal, starred review

Sarah Dessen is the winner of the Margaret A. Edwards Award for her contributions to YA literature, as well as the Romantic Times Career Achievement Award.

Books by Sarah Dessen: *That Summer* *Someone Like You* *Keeping the Moon* *Dreamland* *This Lullaby* *The Truth About Forever* Â Just Listen *Lock and Key* *Along for the Ride* *What Happened to Goodbye* *The Moon and More* *Saint Anything* *Once and for All*

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Customer Reviews

SOMEONE LIKE YOU opens on the main character Halley at "Sisterhood Camp," where she's supposed to be learning self-esteem and in turn, getting along better with her parents (read, her mom). Halley's mom is a psychologist, and prior to the start of the book the two were model parent-child relationship close. But over the summer, Halley and her best friend Scarlett have started branching out more and as a result, she's done the whole withdrawal from the parents thing. In the first chapter we learn Scarlett's love interest Michael Sherwood has been killed in a motorcycle accident and then just a few chapters later we learn Scarlett's pregnant. Sort of an interesting dilemma. Scarlett's mother encourages her to have an abortion, but when Scarlett refuses, her mom decides she'll put the baby up for adoption. Scarlett is also opposed to that. Now all of that is just the backdrop to what happens to Halley, our main character. The book follows her first love with Macon, who was also Michael's best friend. Both guys were pretty fast and loose with the ladies, and Dessen cleverly works that side of Macon into the story. The reader sees everything through Halley's eyes, so he starts out as this grief-stricken, but adventurous cute boy who often doesn't make it to school or encourages her to cut class or who drives to her house in the middle of the night. And while Halley thinks it's all romantic, the reader also begins understanding Scarlett's warnings and the cautionary tales from another girl who isn't exactly Halley's friend. The story culminates with Halley having to make a choice about who she really wants to be and how far she's going to follow Macon. Hence the title. You know me, I always seem to give Dessen's books A++s, but in this case I especially like how few if any of the characters in Someone Like You do what you'd expect. I like how Dessen works in Michael's official, model girlfriend's attitude of not really caring so much about families or doing the right thing and then contrasts it to Scarlett's choice and the subsequent fallout in public opinion. Even Macon's more than just a two-dimensional bad boy. So I highly recommend this book. Heads up to moms, the book does contain some language and scenes of alcohol and drug use, but these scenes are handled in an accurate way. I remember having the distinct thought that my daughters should read this book when they're in high school.

Halley and Scarlett have been best friends since they were little girls, so when Scarlett's boyfriend is killed in an motorcycle accident Halley rushes to her side. Halley comforts Scarlett during her time of sorrow and when Scarlett finds out she's pregnant, Halley is totally supportive of her friend's choice to keep her baby. But Scarlett isn't Halley's only concern. She also finds herself a boyfriend (a rolling stone who lives by his own set of rules) who expects more than she's ready to give, and she and her mother aren't exactly getting along as well as they used to. This story is broken down into

three parts. I didn't think the first part was too interesting. In fact, it was a bit boring and I didn't plan to read any further, but I kept reading and I'm glad I did because it picked up after Part I (I believe I would have been into the beginning much more if I could have gotten to know Scarlett's boyfriend before the motorcycle accident). So, this turned out to be a good read. The teen pregnancy was well-written, but the most interesting parts of the story were the conversations between Halley and her mother. Halley's father seemed to be a "passive" parent, but Halley's mother took care of business. And I liked the chocolate shake thing.

One of my favorite things about Sarah Dessen is how realistic she can be when it comes to how it felt to be a teenager. It's something that I think we tend to forget as adults, but reading one of her books really brings me back to how it all was. In fact, I would say that any parent to a teenage girl would be wise to pick up some Dessen as a method to better understanding their daughter. Although Scarlett's pregnancy is certainly an important part of this book, the story is shown from Halley's perspective. This gives a great insight into what it's like for a teenager going through a lot of different things - high school is hard enough when everything is as normal as possible, let alone dealing with your best friend being pregnant, and having your first relationship with a bad boy. What really struck me was that in the scheme of things, Halley could be considered the "good" one out of her and Scarlett, yet Halley's mom treats her like she's the one who has ended up pregnant. Granted, I wouldn't love the idea of my daughter breaking curfew and hanging out with a boy I didn't know, but Dessen does a great job of reminding you that...this is what being a teenager is like. Regardless of how good or bad my boyfriends were in high school, I didn't want to introduce them to my parents because it would be like giving up some independence. And honestly, breaking curfew and cutting classes is the least of the bad things a kid can be doing! I had also forgotten what life was like before cell phones - this book was written in 1998 and we so didn't have phones like the kids do now. It made for an interesting dynamic that just doesn't happen anymore, with parents having more control over when the kids can use the phone, yet less of an idea about where your kids are at when they aren't home. I loved this little reminder of what things were like back when I was in high school. This is definitely considered young adult fiction, but I loved it nonetheless. There's a lot of YA stuff out there that I read and just can't get into, but Sarah Dessen is never one of them. I feel like her books always tell a story I can identify with, even though I haven't been a teenager for quite some time. And for the record, I totally do not miss high school.

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