

# THE WAY I USED TO BE

by Amber Smith

Published 2016

Rating (0 stars is the absolute worst, 10 stars is the BEST BOOK EVER)



Genre(s):



Contemporary/Realistic



Action/adventure



Science Fiction



Fantasy



Romance



Horror



Mystery



Nonfiction



Historical fiction



Other:

The Way I Used to Be follows, Eden a shy band girl starting high school, whose life changes after she is sexually assaulted by her brothers best friend in what was once the comfort of her own bedroom. The novel follows Eden throughout high school as she struggles to process her trauma and cope with the aftermath of the assault. As a result, she distances herself from her family and abandons many of the interests that once defined her. Slowly losing the person she used to be, Eden begins spiraling into unhealthy behaviors such as excessive drinking and partying. Through Eden's story, the novel reveals both the hardships of trauma and the difficulty many victims face in speaking the truth. Although Eden's story is fictional, it reflects the painful reality experienced by many girls.

One of most impactful aspects of the novel is how realistically Eden's emotions and behavior are portrayed after the assault. Instead of immediately healing or speaking out, she isolates herself and makes destructive choices, showing how trauma can slowly affect every part of someone's life. The novel also highlights how difficult it can be for victims to tell the truth, especially when fear, shame, and pressure from others are involved. Through Eden's experiences, the author creates a story that is heartbreaking but also significant because it raises awareness about the long-lasting effects of sexual assault and the importance of support and understanding.

Truthfully, this book can become graphic and is not always an easy emotional read. However, the storyline was very captivating and especially revealing about what it can be like to live with the effects of sexual assault. Overall, The Way I Used to Be is a powerful and emotional novel that stays with readers long after they finish it.

By Sofia R, 11th grade, enjoys reading contemporary, fantasy, romance, & action/adventure