



Rape Girl

Alina Klein

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Valerie always wanted to be the smart girl. The pretty girl. The popular girl.

But not the rape girl.

That's who she is now. Rape Girl. Because everyone seems to think they know the truth about what happened with Adam that day, and they don't think Valerie's telling it.

Before, she had a best friend, a crush, and a close-knit family. After, she has a court case, a support group, and a house full of strangers.

The real truth is, nothing will ever be the same.

Rape Girl Details

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From Reader Review Rape Girl for online ebook

Angela S says

I've recently had the honor of reading an ARC of Rape Girl (release date Aug 15 2012). Rape Girl inflamed my anger, touched my heart, and gave me hope. Our main character, Valerie, is like so many girls we know - eager to please, willing to break a few house rules to gain popularity, and dying to get some attention from her crush. We see in her the girl who could be inside any of us. Except then she shows us a bit more. It's bad enough that she has to go through the process of pressing charges and all that entails, but when that is said and done, Valerie has to go through more. The people around her, who should be supportive, don't believe her. It is truly devastating, and to think that this happens daily (and we know it does) is just awful. Yet Valerie shows us how someone ordinary can become extraordinary. I wanted to reach through the pages and hug her, tell her that she was a wonderful human being who didn't deserve to have this happen to her, yet I knew that she was going to be okay when all was said and done. I wanted to tell her I was proud and happy that she had found strength in herself. She was beautiful and brave.

In addition to the wonderful main character, Alina B. Klein does a superlative job of bringing all the secondary players into sharp, and realistic, focus. From the flaky best friend to the un-supportive school administrators. To the loving, and unsure-of-herself mother to the rapist's crazy, and somewhat scary friends. Everyone had their role to play and even though the book is written in first person, we were able to see how they all handled it, sometimes for good, sometimes not. I think the secondary character I loved the most was Sandrina. She seems to come out of nowhere, a girl who Valerie thought was basically her enemy, only she proves to be one of the few friends that Valerie can count on. I loved her charisma and how her slips of Spanish melded into the story so smoothly and made me want to run out and find a best friend just like her. I also appreciated the character of Wesley and what he brought to the table. With the subject of rape, it's easy to assume that the victims become regressed, fearful and shy away from boys. But that's not necessarily the case, and Wesley's role in the story and how Valerie deals with her feelings toward him illustrated that point beautifully.

Spoiler: (view spoiler)

The writing. I can't leave a review without touching on the writing. I thought the prose here was simply marvelous. It had a natural flow and incorporated many unique details that made the scenes come alive. It was witty and to the point. The book itself is rather short, but it says all it needs to say and then some.

This book deserves five stars, hands down.

Melanie says

This is the second YA book I've read on the topic of rape, but I was pleasantly pleased with how different Rape Girl was in terms of voice, premise, and style of writing. Rape Girl is about a girl who isn't afraid to speak about what happened, but when she does, suffers horrible and unexpected consequences in which she's called a liar because there's no way a smart, popular, handsome, religious young man could ever be capable of committing such a heinous act. Rape Girl is about a girl who openly admits she's a victim of rape, holds her ground to her claim, and doesn't falter in her strength to stand by the truth, even at the expense of losing

most of her friends, her respect in the community, and her life as she knew it.

I believe Ms. Klein has done an amazing job at pulling me in as reader by giving her MC a strong voice and by the use of her minimalist style of writing, which I am a huge fan of. This book had me emotionally invested and I found myself crying several times—something that is not very common for me when reading a book. I imagine some of it has to do with the topic of the story as I found myself crying when I read Ms. Klein's acknowledgement section where she mentions that she herself is a survivor, having been raped at the age of 16. Ms. Klein has obviously written this story from a very dark place and I applaud her strength to not only write this story but to write it with obvious skill in character development, plotting, use of voice, and pacing. I read this story in less than 4 hours. I've NEVER read a book that quickly, but the story and pacing were THAT good. I highly recommend this book!

Holly says

The emotion that I felt the most while reading this book was **ANGER!** Anger at Valerie's 'so called' friends and anger at our fucking legal system! I apologize in advance but this book is going to cause me to rant a little...you've been warned!

This is a story about a 16 year old who like many teenagers decides to throw a party when her mom is out of town simply so her crush will come. Like many parties this one got out of hand and there was drinking and way too many people. Throughout the party Val gets pretty drunk and throws up on said crush. Come morning she wakes to find everyone gone and sends her little sister out to play with the neighbor. She dozes and wakes to find her clothes mostly off and said crush all over her. She says no, yeah, you heard right, she said NO!! But he proceeded to tell her to be quiet and that she wanted it. Thinking that she doesn't want to scream and have her baby sister walk in on this she remains quiet.

Uuughh, this makes me angry just writing it! Valerie reports him and immediately becomes '*That Rape Girl*' as everyone at school refers to her. Her best friend doesn't believe her and drops her like the bitch she is! What was the worst part of this story for me is the reality of it and how it was the victim's responsibility to prove her innocence! **WTF?!** This boy is ultimately not charged because there were witnesses that saw her kissing him the night before...again **WTF?!!**

I know that this story is a work of fiction but in so many ways it really isn't! This shit happens every day and we have to live with a system that is so imperfect that it is scary! All that said, this is a nicely written journey of a young woman who stands up for herself and makes the right decision which ends up hurting her even more. But she is strong and I couldn't help cheering on her ability to move forward! All I have to say to that is **GIRL POWER!!**

*****This book was provided to me by Netgalley**

Anachronist says

Synopsis:

It is a story of a teenage girl called Valerie who got raped after a party in her own house by a guy she fancied; it is narrated by the victim herself and it spans a period of several months.

What I liked:

The book was well written but firstly and foremostly I appreciated the fact that all everything rang so true - the voice of Valerie, her reactions and the reactions of people around her. I know it because not so long ago I went through a similar situation in my family, which, unable to keep quiet, I described on my blog,. A short version: my cousin was raped after her prom ball by her date and his older brother who was a designated driver. She simply agreed to stop by their house after the ball and yes, most likely she drank one drink too many but she definitely didn't want to have sex, let alone with them both at the same time. They chose to understand her otherwise; then they claimed she didn't fight or try to defend herself or protest at all (well, she was drunk, right? Any half-decent guy would take her straight home). It was basically her word against their word. My aunt and uncle decided not to press charges, accusing my cousin that she'd led them on somehow. Plenty of other people thought the same. It was disgusting and harmful.

Date rapes or party rapes do happen all too often; well, in the case of Valerie we should actually call it a post-party rape but you know the premise: a boy and a girl are having a good time; the boy thinks the girl has nothing against sex so he continues his game although he heard her saying 'no'. Then the victim goes to the police and all of a sudden it turns out she is the aggressor, not the victim. I am yet to meet a rapist who calls himself so – instead they blame the other part for 'leading him on'. The excuses are surprisingly repetitive: girls/women don't know what they really want, they often say 'no' meaning 'yes', if they don't scream or fight or bite and scratch your face it means they agree (and even if they do it is nothing but a kind of foreplay, right?). It's so easy, after all most often than not the victim do feel guilty. She shouldn't have drunk so much. She shouldn't have stayed that long. She shouldn't have worn this or that piece of clothing.

Valerie undergoes several stages of a post-traumatic shock: disbelief, self-disgust, aggression, depression and guilt. Then she returns to school and attends a support group therapy so we can know how her situation is perceived by other people: other rape victims, her older brother, her mum, her best friend, Mimmi, and even Adam, the rapist. Who, of course, claims there was no foul play, everything was nice and consensual, he just had the bad luck of having sex with one mean girl who now wants to draw attention to herself and to ruin his future prospects as a Mormon missionary. A classic, don't you think?

I also appreciated the very realistic outcome of the lawsuit, which ensued (view spoiler) and the fact that Valerie found a way to get to terms with the whole situation.

What I didn't like:

It was too short – rather a longer novella than a novel. I read it in approximately two hours. It ended too quickly.

Final verdict:

One of these books you would like to read before anything bad happens to you or to your relatives, no matter male or female. Boys: if a girl says no, no matter how she expresses it, please **always assume *she means it and back off***. Girls: even somebody you know and like might be a potential rapist.

Tom says

One of the truest, most tragic lines in "Rape Girl" says that a rape victim is the only crime victim who has to prove her innocence.

My friend (and Chief Book Maven) Kelly ended her review by saying, "This is not light reading or in any way fun."

Damn skippy.

Teenaged Valerie lives in a small Utah town with her widowed mom and kid sister, Ainsley. Her elder brother Sam is off at college.

One weekend, Val's mom went out of town for a workshop. Sam was unavailable to come down and "babysit" his sisters, so Valerie was left in control of the house.

As high school kids are wont to do when left without adult supervision, Valerie and her best friend, Mimi, threw a party. There were mini-kegs and cocktails, and teenaged boys and girls, which naturally leads to making-out, etc.

Valerie had a crush on a jock named Adam. By the time Adam got to the party, Valerie was already drunk. When she and Adam went into the den for some privacy, she fell down and passed out, throwing up on Adam's Nikes as she did so. She awakened the next day, showered, threw up some more, etc, and fed her sister. Ainsley went next door to play, and Valerie went to sleep.

She awoke to find her yoga pants had been pulled off, and her tank top was up around her armpits. There was Adam atop her, holding her down, raping her.

What happens next is a no-brainer, right? She goes to the police, who believe a crime has been committed, then arrest Adam the rapist, put him in jail. The case goes to trial. Adam is convicted, and sent off to prison for a few years. Valerie returns to school, where her friends and teachers are horrified that Valerie was raped. They support her and reassure her, nobody more than her BFF, Mimi.

Now take that paragraph, and reverse everything. The police go through the motions, but don't seem to believe Valerie was raped. The prosecutor basically says, "Meh. It's going to be your word against his." At school, nearly all of Valerie's friends--especially Mimi--are convinced she's lying, and that she's fabricating "this whole rape thing" just to hurt Adam and make herself more popular. At one point, a couple dozen or so of these nice Mormon boys come in and tell The Principal that they, too, have had sex with Valerie. The prosecutor refuses to take the case to trial, because of lack of evidence. Eventually, The Principal actually makes Valerie sit down in a room with Adam, because Adam wants it.

The positive elements in "Rape Girl"--and there are some--include Valerie making some true friends, and her family going through hell, but emerging far stronger (like tempered steel) on the other side.

I've dated two women who were raped--at least, these are the only two where it came up during our conversations. One was date-raped a few years before we met; the other was raped after we stopped seeing each other. The absolutely sick, horrible truth is that life was easier for the one who didn't tell anyone. The one who was raped after our relationship filed charges against the bastard who raped her. She had to move

out of her neighborhood. In essence, SHE was put on trial, trying to get the police to believe she'd been raped. Even at her job, it somehow got out, and people talked non-stop behind her back.

The adjective hasn't been invented yet to express how fucking wrong this is.

That is why I got this book after reading Kelly's review: it's because this fiction is so horribly true.

This is a great book, beautifully written. The author draws from her own experiences as a survivor. This book saddened, angered, and uplifted me, all in a very short period of time. Nobody should have to go through this. Ever. Not Valerie; not my two friends.

Whether you're a high school jock in Utah, a dirtbag in Florida, or any other male anywhere, get this straight: No means no. Even for you, stud.

Highly recommended.

Debra Driza says

I have to tell you—RAPE GIRL was not an easy read. As I turned the pages, I was alternately horrified, furious, appalled, saddened, dismayed, frustrated, and yes, at the very end, hopeful. As the title suggests, this book is about a girl who was raped, and it doesn't pull punches. The author doesn't sensationalize, nor does she sugar coat with fancy prose. Instead, RAPE GIRL is an unflinchingly honest, all-too-possible account of a terrible crime committed against one teen girl, and an unflinchingly honest, all-too-possible account of what happens when that girl tries to stand up for herself and report it.

Like Daisy Whitney's The Mockingbirds, Rape Girl clearly shows how rape doesn't require being held at gun point, or having a knife jabbed into your throat. It shows how we, as a society, so desperately need to not only empower our daughters, but to also educate our sons on the responsibilities of accepting limits, respecting girls, and to teach them that entitlement and sex are two words that do not belong together. Ever.

In a limited number of words, this book manages to tackle the emotional rollercoaster that so many rape survivors experience and how overall, society still suffers from a "blame the victim" mentality. I cheered when the main character Valerie let go of the things she couldn't control—other people's perceptions—in order to be true to herself, while at the same time burned with the urge to punch the people voicing those ignorance-fueled perceptions in their respective faces.

This is a book worth reading, worth discussing with teens. Actually, I take that back. This is a book we NEED to discuss with our teens.

I'd also like to take a moment to applaud the author for the title. Obviously, she could have gone with something prettier, something less harsh, something not as potentially off-putting to the masses. Something that tiptoed around the issue so as not to offend delicate sensibilities. But, isn't that part of the point? That rape isn't something for girls to be ashamed of, that it doesn't taint them or make them weak or inferior or less than or carry any kind of negative connotation other than saying yes, a very awful crime was committed? Or at least, that's the way it should be. Repeat after me: Rape is not a dirty word.

But it should come as no surprise that the title is brave, because the story itself is brave, as is the MC Valerie,

for coming forward and speaking out. And, even though a terrible crime was committed against Valerie, you know that she's going to get on with her life. Maybe not easily, and certainly not without hurdles, but with determination and strength and the love of the people who truly count. You see, Valerie is a survivor, and I can't think of a more powerful message to send to other girls who are forced into becoming rape survivors too.

rameau says

This review can also be found on Book Girl of Mur-y-Castell-blog.

You've seen the title, you don't need to read the blurb. You already know what happens. Question isn't when or where or even how. It happens. Rape happens, and this is a story of one survivor.

This is a story about how that one moment changes everything. How it changes people around you, strangers as well as family and friends. How it turns reasonable explanations into malicious comments. How gifts aren't simple gifts anymore but something more distressing.

The rape itself isn't shown, but Valerie relives through it as she tries to cope with the ramifications. She has her family around her, her mother, little sister, and even her somewhat absent big brother. She has friends, and she doesn't have friends. There are other adults involved as well. Everyone has an opinion of what happened or didn't happen they either want to share with her or shove it down her throat.

And that's how it is in real life. Rape is everyone's business. No wonder so many--too many--go unreported.

While I loved the realistic touch of the story, the simplicity of the events unfolding, and Valerie's reaction to them, I also thought it could have been done better. For example, I doubt Valerie's little sister could have escaped the situation as unscathed as she appeared to both in school and at home. It was strange that the house, her home, where it happened never felt unsafe to Valerie, not even for a moment. I bought the anger, the hurt, the depression, guilt for feeling like a normal teenager for two seconds, and every other feeling, just not the ease of it.

I'm not a rape survivor, I'm one of the lucky ones, and yet one of the scariest moments I've read was in this book--the moment when Valerie has to face her rapist. I wanted to scream and shout *how could it be?!* when I know--or think I know--how easy it is for man to think like that.

I saw Angela suggest in her review that this should be compulsory reading in high schools. I have to agree:

Now repeat after me: no means **NO!** No exceptions.

I received an Advanced Readers Copy of this book from the publisher through NetGalley.

Rose says

"Rape Girl" is a relatively short read with a lot of impact on its respective subject matter. I'll admit I read this book inside an hour (it was around 100 some pages in my galley) and it hit me emotionally with quite a few turns, though there were some issues with it.

From the beginning of the narrative, you recognize that Valerie is a victim of rape, but the unfolding story focuses on what happened in the before and after. There's a brief exchange of Before/After incident narratives before the story returns to the present and steamrolls from there. You see the main character accounting for her story - the police involvement, the rape kit, the backlash and support from her peers. Valerie deals with fears that are both internal and external in the aftermath, and the backlash against her from people who once called her friends is very real. I appreciated that this narrative dealt with the reality of the perceptions and misconceptions put against people who are raped, specifically women who are raped, because in the unfolding scheme of rape culture - these viewpoints and stereotypes are very real.

It's a starting point that I think the audience that it's aimed for would be able to take something from, though I don't know if the narrative was nearly as intimate enough for it to have more impact than it did. I was missing the deep POV from this in places though I understood the difficult emotional place that the main character was. It certainly touched on a lot of arguments in the issues, but the characters themselves still felt at an arms length for their respective roles. The best friend that distanced herself from Val (Mimi), the boy who raped her (Adam - and I thought the scene at the end where she confronts and condemns what he did was potent in itself), the mother who's torn between her own issues and helping her daughter. Many of these characters (and more) could've had a bit more intimacy to bring their characters home more.

It's not the strongest, most intimate narrative I've read on this subject matter, but I think not only was it incredibly brave of the author to write this piece (as a survivor herself), but I also think this is a good starting point for dialogue about the matter, especially for young adults. I just wish it'd had a little more character intimacy, not just for the main character's perspective, but the development of the surrounding cast as well.

Overall score: 3.5/5 stars

Note: I received this as an ARC from NetGalley, from the publisher namelos.

Dana Alison says

What a wonderful novel!

As the title suggests, this book deals with rape, an issue that is still stigmatized and hidden from sight. But it far more than an issue book. It's a book about friendships, about family, about surviving, living, and even laughing after terrible things happen. In short, the book deals with questions and answers that all teens have to address, even while also shining a light on a particular issue.

Much of what I love most about this book has nothing to do with how Klein deals with the issue of rape. Instead, it's how she draws a main character who is both brave and afraid, all at the same time. Valerie, the MC, is not a saint, nor is she a bad girl who gets punished. She's a normal girl, so normal, in fact, that almost

every reader can identify with pieces of her. She wonders which top to wear with her favorite jeans. She worries that her lip gloss has worn off. But when the rape happens, she has to ask herself much harder questions. Should she tell? Who can she trust? Did she deserve this?

Recently there has been significant media attention around the scars left by bullying and LGBT youth. To me, this ties in to the stigma and shame rape survivors feel. Klein's book addresses this issue head-on, recognizing that speaking out isn't always the key to getting support. In fact, speaking out can bring with it a whole new set of challenges, rather than an outpouring of sympathy.

Klein's book is, ultimately, a hopeful one. Valerie's character arc from insecure teen to stigmatized whistleblower to survivor is a beautiful one to witness. *RAPE GIRL* does a lovely job of showing how and where courage grows.

Mike Mullin says

I can't imagine how much courage it must have taken to write this novel, which is loosely based on the author's own experience as a rape survivor. Not an easy read, but it is an important book--one all teens could benefit from reading.

Sally says

Oh wow, this book. It's absolutely heartbreakingly tragic to read. Valerie has a party at her place and the guy she likes, Adam, is there. The night of the party, she willingly goes off with him into another room... where she promptly throws up on his shoes and passes out drunk.

The next morning, he comes back to her place to "pick up where they left off". She wakes up with her pants off and her top all rucked up, and then discovers him there. She can't yell because that might draw the attention of her small sister who is playing outside :(

(view spoiler)

This was quite a quick read as well, which was nice - I would have liked more of the story, but at the same time it felt a good length. It wasn't too rushed or short at all. However, I would have maybe liked a bit more explanation behind the whole Mormon thing... it seemed to be made a point of, but then not really mentioned, which made me wonder why it was made a point of in the first place.

Elizabeth Drake says

Cover Impressions: I will be honest, the cover didn't wow me. It was the title and synopsis that got me interested. Perhaps it looks different on the physical copy, or perhaps there is some symbolism behind the

cover image that I missed. Either way - do not judge this one by its cover!

The Gist: Valerie wanted to throw a fun party and maybe flirt with her crush. She didn't know that within 24 hrs she would be labeled as The Rape Girl and that she would lose her friends, her reputation and her sense of self.

Review: Rape Girl is one of those rare books that wraps its tendrils around my heart and refuses to let go. I read it in pretty much one sitting, over a few hours and am still left with an overwhelming need to re-examine and discuss it. I want to make my friends read it, I want to bombard the author with my questions and, more than any of those, I want to get multiple copies for my classroom.

The first few chapters of this book are divided into Before and After. This is incredibly effective and reflects the way that many victims will always structure their memories. While we follow Valerie's rape and the aftermath, we do not get the graphic descriptions that can be common in other books on this subject and this allows it to maintain appropriateness for teens. Throughout this novel, we are privy to Valerie's inner thoughts and feelings as her friends desert her and her family struggles to deal with their own sense of guilt. The pain from each of these people is palpable and poignant.

The actions on the part of Valerie, her mother, best friend and even her rapist feel incredibly realistic. At one point, we hear from this young man and my stomach turned to ice simply reading his justifications for his crimes, knowing that a person with this deluded sense of entitlement as a man will most certainly assault another woman. While his words are chilling, they seem typical of a person who has convinced himself that he has done nothing wrong. I was also seriously disturbed at the actions of the principal. As a teacher, the thought that a man in that position could so blatantly side with the perpetrator of a rape makes me ill.

Rape Girl has easily made my list of top books for 2012 and is one that I highly recommend to both teens and adults.

Teaching/Parental Notes:

Age: 13 and up

Gender: Female

Sex: Kissing, Talk of Sex

Violence: Rape - No Graphic Descriptions

Inappropriate Language: Bitch, Fuck, Ho, Dildo, Ass, Whore, Shit, Bastard

Substance Use/Abuse: Underage Drinking

Jennifer Wood says

I didn't like this book. I didn't like it because of the way it made me feel. On the other hand, I don't have to like the way a book makes me feel to know it was a profound book, a great read. I devoured it in almost one afternoon, but had to take breaks when the subject matter overwhelmed me.

I remember when I was in school, the subject came up, and the consensus was to not tell, to not press charges, because the rape survivor was the one persecuted.

I loved that the rape in this book wasn't violent. It didn't leave obvious marks. There was nothing to scream rape. This book wasn't even totally about rape, but it was about a girl, a girl who had an experience and stayed true to herself. It was believable. It was about her family and her friends and her enemies. It was about a boy, who was---well, you'll have to read that part. I will say he was human. And it was about the potential future.

Lastly, it was a book about hope. A story of life. I want a sequel, because I want to see how Val goes on with her life and how school changes for her. I became invested in her and hope for the best. Val became more than a character in book. To me, she embodied that girl, the girl who didn't have a choice. The girl who we've all met at least once in our lives, even though we might not realize it. I admire that girl, and that's not something I give to many.

I don't know the release date, but I do know it will be pre-ordered, so it can go on my shelf for my children to one day read.

Sheri says

This was a relatively short story at just over 100 pages, but it really packed a punch. The story is about Valerie, your typical teenage girl who is looking for a good time just like everyone else. Her good time, however, ends with her being raped. We get to see very little of the events leading up to the rape, in fact, only a few hours. What this book deals with is the aftermath. You see rapes in books often, but never a book based specifically around the act.

Valerie's story, I suspect, is not that unusual. It was incredibly well written and very emotional. The author did not drag the story down with a lot of detail, but focused mainly on Valerie and her reactions to everything going on around her. It was heartbreaking reading about Valerie trying to 'get over it,' as the saying goes, and get back to her life. Because she chooses to face her attacker, she loses everything, including her reputation and her best friend.

I would have loved for this story to be longer so we could see where Valerie goes from here. She proves herself a strong individual and I would have loved to see a happy ending for her.

Angela says

I read this book in one sitting. I made no notes or highlights whilst reading it, nor did I notice any grammatical errors or spelling mistakes or clunky sentences etc. I did not even realise I had spent the good part of a Saturday afternoon sitting inside reading a book when it was glorious weather outside as I was totally engrossed in Klein's book from the very start.

Rape and sexual assault are very difficult subjects to write about effectively, and this book not only manages to do this but also throws in some punches at the same time. Reading the brief author biography at the end of the book, Klein mentions that she herself was raped as a teenager and by reporting this heinous crime inflicted on her, another five girls also found the courage to follow suit and come forward with similar stories. I can only applaud Klein for being brave enough to share this very personal part of her history, and

for having the courage for writing this book, which could only have opened old emotional wounds. My metaphorical hat goes off to you.

Now for the book itself: I am not going to give a synopsis of the story as the title itself pretty much explains the gist of it, but in a nutshell this is the story of a sixteen year old girl who is raped, reports the crime, and the subsequent repercussions. The rape itself is not detailed at all but certainly implied; there is no guess work needed here on behalf of the reader. I think if the rape was more detailed and violent, the impact the overall book would be lost. This book highlights that the majority of rapes (I do not know the official statistics unfortunately, but it is a very high number) are committed by someone known to the victim; it highlights that not all cases are even reported, or reported far too late for any justice to occur; it highlights the suspicions of a high proportion of people who think the victim is lying, and it also highlights how few rape cases that are reported even make it court (again, official figures unknown but it is a very low percentage).

The narrating voice of Valerie, our protagonist, is refreshingly realistic in a literary world full of Mary-Sue's. She expresses emotions of disgust, guilt, shame, disbelief and anger, all hinged with a note of depression and sadness. As she goes through these emotions, so did I. I was disgusted at her treatment, not just the rape itself but also by people she called 'friends', who told her to stop lying, siding with her attacker and bullying her. The headmaster at her school was simply awful as well, singling her out as though it was she who was in the wrong and not the attacker, I found myself getting increasingly frustrated and angry at him. Due to Klein's superb writing, as a reader you understood why Valerie was ashamed of herself and why she blamed herself. Due to the actions of certain characters in the book, it was very easy to understand Valerie's disbelief and anger, and it was easy for these feelings to transmit to the reader.

Although the title itself gives a good indication of what this book is about, I do not want to give too much away so for once I am not going to discuss individual characters (other than what I have already said about Valerie). All I will say is that this is a touching, horrifying and very realistic portrayal of a rape victim and how she deals with it. I also think this should be compulsory reading in high schools, for both girls and boys.

Now repeat after me: no means **NO!** No exceptions.

An advance reader copy was kindly supplied through Netgalley.
