



# Bad Romance

*Heather Demetrios*

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## **Bad Romance** Heather Demetrios

Grace wants out. Out of her house, where her stepfather wields fear like a weapon and her mother makes her scrub imaginary dirt off the floors. Out of her California town, too small to contain her big city dreams. Out of her life, and into the role of Parisian artist, New York director—anything but scared and alone.

Enter Gavin: charming, talented, adored. Controlling. Dangerous. When Grace and Gavin fall in love, Grace is sure it's too good to be true. She has no idea their relationship will become a prison she's unable to escape.

Deeply affecting and unflinchingly honest, this is a story about spiraling into darkness—and emerging into the light again.

## **Bad Romance Details**

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Author : Heather Demetrios

Format : Hardcover 360 pages

Genre : Contemporary, Young Adult, Romance

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## From Reader Review Bad Romance for online ebook

### TheCrazyWorldOfABookLover says

Let me introduce you to the most emotional book you will read this year.

Bad Romance is one of the most *unique-gut wrenching-emotional-OMG I CAN'T PUT THIS DOWN-well written-Am I crying? Yep I'm crying again-* books you will read.

Heather's writing in this is just ... absurd. In the best possible way. If you don't read YA, she, my friends, is the author that will change your mind.

This is like an incredible mix of Dusty Innocents + It Ends With Us.

Bad Romance starts at the end - told from the heroine Grace's POV, the story reads like a letter to her boyfriend Gavin as she tells him about her difficult home life, what it was like to meet him, fall for him, and shows him and the reader piece by piece how the end of their destructive relationship comes to be. Her voice is incredibly relatable, surprisingly witty, and her hindsight about what she's realized and the parallels to her home life are just done so brilliantly.

*"A year from now I'll be screaming Fuck you, FUCK YOU into a pillow because I won't have the guts to say the words to your face. But right now, a boy is staring at me from the end of the hall and even though he doesn't say a word, he's claimed me. I'm new territory and you've planted your flag."*

I just want to point out I loathe those preachy types of reviews where people talk about the effects a book will have on the world or the importance of the theme it's portraying. I'm just..I'm not one of those reviewers. Read what you want. Take from it what you want. **But I will be preachy in this review.** Because I honestly think this is one of the most powerful and encouraging books I have ever read. You may not get this if you've never had a Gavin of your own. But that's okay. This is still something everyone should read.

*"Maybe the only way you really know you love someone is if they can break you with a single sentence."*

I was literally sucked into this story from the very first sentence. I felt like I was living this tale with Grace. I was there when her parents treated her like she was unlovable. I felt what she felt when Gavin came along. When he finally noticed her, swept her off her feet and made her feel like she was worthy of love. When he said those sweet lines that must have made her heart flutter and face smile so bright. Those lines that made MY heart flutter and cheeks hurt. I fell for him right alongside her, and my heart was crushed with hers when

it all went downhill. And I think because from the very start we all know how this is going to end, the fall was that much harder. And the emotions this book pulls from you are just that much stronger. I honestly had to stop a few times and just collect myself because of the emotions this was making me feel.

**This book is tough. It's poignant and painful and will resonate and stay with you for a very long time. I am telling you now it's going to crush you just a little.**

This story is told in such a brilliant way that you cannot help but be enraptured from start to end. Simply outstanding and HIGHLY recommended.

Bad Romance is out now! | <http://amzn.to/2tKbIlC>

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### **Lala BooksandLala says**

There were some things that bothered me in this book, but the overall message is important and done well, so I'm rating up.

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### **Hulya Kara Yuksel says**

***"A year from now I'll be screaming Fuck you, FUCK YOU into a pillow because I won't have the guts to say the words to your face. But right now, a boy is staring at me from the end of the hall and even though he doesn't say a word, he's claimed me. I'm new territory and you've planted your flag."***

This book was so freaking good. I loved it, I hated it. My emotions are all over the places right now but in the end I FUCKING LOVED EVERY WORDS IN THIS BOOK VERY, VERY MUCH!!! I highly recommend it. ;)

And I'm going to tell you a story and this my Bad Romance.

This book brought my some old memories with my ex. And of course it wasn't started all bad in the beginning but when you get over that thin line "that's it, I'm done this fucking dance with you over and over again" So I burned all that bridges because unfortunately after some point, love is not enough when other person always takes away your power and empty your soul with his requests. He was my 1st serious boyfriend and I was a V while we were dating (I was still a V until I married with my husband. Yeah, I'm an old fashion girl! I wanted to wait, so what?) Anyway he always expected me to show him affection in the public like all the time (to hug him/kiss him like we glued each other) or when we sit in the cafe or when we were walking in the street he always tried to stick his tongue into my mouth until I can't breath or he wanted to make out in the cinema or Ohhh my love, I want give your birthday present in the hotel room when I'm all

alone with you (because he decided that I'm not comfortable in the public to show him how much I love him!!!... Well, let me tell you something. When someone hugs you like an octopus all the time, eventually you will get uncomfortable in the public... Anyway I said no to him and my answer broke his poor little heart and this was our -The End-) He was like a baby which he needs 24/7 attention from me... Anyway things like that made me into depression and all I was doing talking, talking, talking with him and my god, it made me so fucking sick to my stomach to repeating myself to him. It was so damn exhausting, he took all my life energy. Whenever I explain myself to him, he says he understands me and after that he apologize to me for not to push me again etc but still he always did the same things over and over again. And I tried, tried, tried to save us but when I broke up with him almost after 1 year, I was the happiest girl in this damn earth. After him there will be no more headaches, no more scars on my lips or on my face... So yeah, I did a right thing for saying goodbye to him...

Ps. I'm sharing this personal thing with you because if you're in this kind of relationship, please leave that asshole ASAP! Do not make the same mistakes I did... Please! ???

Oh I almost forgot, Gavin fuck you!!!

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### **destiny ? [howling libraries] says**

First of all, this is one hell of a heavy book, so I want to start off by saying that the book (and this review) come with trigger warnings for **abuse** (in every possible way: mental, emotional, verbal, physical, sexual, and parental), **attempted suicide**, and many **suicidal thoughts**.

With that said, let me be candid: this is the most authentic, honest, and true-to-life portrayal of an abusive relationship that I have ever seen in a book. I have never wished so badly *not* to relate to a story, but if you changed a few names and faces, you would find a younger me between these pages. And if you, too, can find yourself mirrored here, please proceed with the utmost self-care, because Grace's story is a tough one to read, but it's even tougher to remember in your own experiences.

*Maybe the only way you really know you love someone is if they can break you with a single sentence.*

*Bad Romance*'s depiction of abuse is one that many survivors know too well: a relationship that starts off beautifully and carefree. If there are red flags (and let's be honest—there almost always are), they're quiet ones, easy enough to ignore or explain away. Have you ever heard the story of the frog in boiling water? If you drop the frog right in, it will jump out immediately—but if you put him in while the water is lukewarm, and slowly up the temperature, the poor thing will never know the danger it's in until it's too late and the damage points have started racking up. That's this story.

*I don't realize now, but this is the moment. The moment when the rest of my life in high school—the rest of my whole life—will change. The moment when I begin to lose a part of myself I'll have to fight like hell to get back.*

What makes *Bad Romance* unique, besides its pull-no-punches attitude and the authenticity that could come only from the heart of someone who's been there (and sadly, Heather Demetrios has), is the format that it's written in. It's a mixture of first and second persons, and it reads almost like a long letter from Grace to Gavin, set *after* she has gotten out of the situation. While its time frame makes it hopeful, as you always know that *there will be an "after"*, the phrasing directed right at her abuser gives it a spurned, angry edge that's practically tangible. I feel that it's a brilliant writing decision for the story at hand; while it wouldn't work for *every* contemporary novel, it magnifies the impact of this one tenfold.

*The sad swims through your veins, dives right into the middle of your chest with no help at all from me.*

There's also a *lot* of chatter about suicide in this book: before the relationship forms, Gavin has survived one suicide attempt already, and throughout the book, his endless, looming threat to try again acts as a heavy-handed and disgusting manipulation tactic in the relationship. That said, I appreciated that I never felt as though depression or suicidal ideation was being demonized in any way; Heather Demetrios makes it clear that these issues are related to his manipulative and abusive tendencies, *not* just his depression or anxiety.

*Now I look at that girl who adores you, who thinks she's safe with you, and I want to scream at her to jump out of that car and run like hell. Because you won't be her happy place for long.*

There's also something to be said for the fact that Grace is living in an abusive home, where she faces constant neglect, harassment, and assault from both her mother and step-father. There's a *lot* of psychology to unpack behind the fact that many individuals who miss or overlook the early red flags in abusive relationships do so because terrible behaviors have already been normalized in their lives (hence "generational curses" and cycles of the like). My only complaint is that I do feel like Grace's mother is let off the hook rather easily near the end of the book, but I feel that it's important to remember that abuse victims can still abuse others, too, and there's no excuse or justification for that.

*This is something else I will learn while I am with you—not now, but later: there are so many ways to drown.*

There's a lot more I could tell you about this book, like the ways it made me recognize behaviors in my past relationships that I hadn't faced yet, or the passages that helped me reevaluate my own past and recognize the healing I'm still working towards. I could tell you that certain aspects of this story paralleled the end of my worst relationship like a perfect mirror, and how much I appreciated the way Heather Demetrios doesn't shy away from pointing out the problems in some of those coping mechanisms, too. I could tell you that, on a happier note, there's an underlying current throughout the story of musicals and theatre and plays, and there's girl-on-girl friendship and loyalty for days.

But honestly, at the end of the day, all I want to tell you is that this book is incredible and cathartic and honest and brutal and bold. And I want to tell you that if you, too, have been in Grace's shoes, it can be so much better than that. **If you need help or healing, please seek it, because you deserve the stars.**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE**

**National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE**

**National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD**

**Love is Respect: 1-866-331-9474, loveisrespect.org, or text "love is" to 22522**

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You can find this review and more on my blog, or you can follow me on twitter, bookstagram, or facebook!

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### **Maram says**

I think that this book did deliver an important message on how harmful toxic relationships can be but the writing style wasn't executed to my likings nor did it have an impact on me :/

rtc.

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**THIS COVER IS FREAKIN BEAUTIFUL AND THE STORY SEEMS LIKE IT'S GOING TO CRUSH ME IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY ... I'M READY**

**BUDDY READ with tabbes trash and ghostie** (i'll link them when i'm on my lappy)

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### **Lucia says**

This woman changed my perception of YA contemporary novels and I couldn't wait to read this novel. Fortunately, Mrs. Demetrios did not disappoint.

I really liked writing style and storyline. I loved that as main focus of her book, author picked a topic that is not much present in YA genre - toxic relationship and dating abuse. It is very important topic and I am so grateful that this novel depicted it in very fitting and realistic way.

**Mrs. Demetrios sure knows how to write powerful YA contemporaries.** She presented deep and super personal insight into the mind of teenage girl who went from I-want-your-babies-because-you-are-perfect kind of first love into being trapped in toxic prison of unhealthy obsessive relationship and then tried to fight her way out of it.

*„I gave you my heart on a silver fucking platter and you ate it, piece by bloody piece.“*

Mrs. Demetrios made me feel SO MUCH while reading this book and that is a compliment I do not give very often.

Bad Romance is a kind of Young Adult novel that adults can and teenagers should read!

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## Laura says

*It's only later that I'll see you're feeding me rehearsed lines and perfectly timed smiles and gasps and tears that come at precisely the right moment. A year from now I'll be screaming Fuck you, FUCK YOU into a pillow because I won't have the guts to say the words to your face.*

*But right now, a boy is staring at me from the end of the hall and even though he doesn't say a word, he's claimed me.*

*I'm new territory and you've planted your flag.*

Such a powerful read! Truly so, so important. This is the story of a toxic relationship told so incredibly well. Grace is looking back on her relationship with Gavin from the very beginning through a letter to him giving the reader an inside look with deep and personal insight into the mind of a girl who finds herself in a relationship with a controlling, manipulative, dangerous guy. The writing style works perfectly here. It's told in second person making it more relatable and even emotional as Grace is looking back in hindsight on things. This creates a tone that feels regretful. I dare you not to feel any emotion while reading this.

*I'm the girl who's desperate to get out of her small town because if she doesn't she knows she'll die. She knows her soul will start to rot, like fruit gone bad.*

What I enjoyed even more is Grace's toxic home life and how that influences her desire to be loved. Grace's mother got remarried and stopped caring about her kids. All she cares about is keeping her new husband "The Giant" (as Grace refers to him) happy. The Giant is emotionally abusive and expects Grace to wait on him hand and foot. She legit gets torn a new one if she didn't make him a sandwich to pack for his lunch. It's disgusting. And it doesn't help matters that Grace's mother has OCD constantly having Grace clean every aspect of the house. Sometimes she'll refer to her mother as "Contrite and Subservient Female," while giving herself the moniker "Beaten-Down Daughter." It is all very heartbreaking, easily making you feel all types of emotions throughout.

I found Grace's voice so relatable. This only ups the ante on the power the story holds because it makes it feel like this could be you or anyone you know. Starting the story from the beginning works effectively because we can fall in love with Gavin through Grace's eyes even knowing it will all turn poorly. I do appreciate Grace's strong female friendships with Natalie and Alyssa. It's always good to see supportive, healthy friendships between girls.

*If I were writing a musical about us, I wouldn't start where we're at right now, at the end. I would want the audience to really get how I was able to fall for you hook, line, and sinker. Girls don't fall in love with manipulative assholes who treat them like shit and make them seriously question their life choices. They fall in love with manipulative assholes (who treat them like shit and make them seriously question their life choices) who they think are knights in shining armor.*

The writing is so strong, beautiful and evocative. I felt so many emotions throughout. And could personally relate to certain aspects. I applaud Heather Demetrios for writing a story on such a difficult topic. I hope this gets in the hands of many readers. It could open up very important conversations and hopefully change lives.

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## Beverly says

This is a great book for teens and young people who get into sticky relationships with manipulators. As real as it gets, *Bad Romance*, has such verisimilitude I knew it had to be based on her own experience as the author admits in the afterward. Her friends kept telling her, "Break up with him.", but it's not that easy sometimes.

Personally, I loved the author's descriptions of hanging around with theater kids, which I did in college. My sweet boyfriend was a drama major and those scenes in the book ring so true. There really is a lovely camaraderie there, not felt in any other group. My art major friends were nothing like them. Each of us were separate, and had no feelings of being a tribe united for a purpose. They had their own language even and I was very envious.

I also liked the way the author linked her Mom's situation with her own. Grace yearns to be free from the strict rules, household drudgery, and violence she endures at home, only to make the same little world for herself in her social life.

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## Elise (TheBookishActress) says

There's a scene in this book that I have never been able to get out of my mind, in which Grace's mother yells at her over a cutting board, and makes her late for school, and Grace just closes down. She just keeps crying and crying. And I think a lot of reviewers might have thought of that as her being whiny but that was me. That was me so many times. Because it's not that one thing, it's everything, piles and piles, shrinking you into nothing but a vehicle for the anger of others.

*Each lie is something that's mine, that my mom and The Giant can't take away from me.  
Each lie reminds me I'm an actual person with rights and desires and the ability to make choices on my own. Each lie is power- control over my life.*

**This book is incredibly triggering.** I'm going to say that first, because it's both the worst and best part of the book. *Bad Romance* brought back Real Things for me. It was actually incredibly difficult to read some of the scenes because I *knew* those feelings. It was just... it was a lot, and I don't want to downplay that. But the way this book treats abuse literally means so much to me, and I cannot even explain how deeply I relate to Grace.

*Bad Romance* is so incredibly *real* and realistic. I almost wish it hadn't been so realistic, but god, you guys, reading this book was such an **emotionally cathartic** experience. I cried, like, eight times. But not because it was sad. And I think it will be if you've ever been through abuse, parental or spousal or otherwise. This is a story about getting *out*.

I guess I'm going to talk now about **why this book is one of my favorite representations of abuse of all time.**

*It's not bad one hundred percent of the time, but if anything good happens, there are always*

*strings attached.*

► I loved that **positive girl friendship** is what pulls Grace out of her tailspin. Nat and Lys were seriously the greatest characters, both hilarious and kind and funny but also complicated. The support group they formed was *so* good.

► Adding on to that, I'm happy the book wasn't about a romance pulling her out and Curing Love. There *is* a sort-of-positive-future-romance which was sweet, but it was more playing into Grace's character development than anything else. Which is exactly how I think romance should be used in books like these.

► Okay, I absolutely *adored* that emotional abuse was given the same weight as physical abuse. Because abuse is not about the actual physical acts - it's about the fear, the feeling of pain and worry and like only one person in the world loves you but do they? do they really? can anyone? Gavin is physically aggressive, but does not hit Grace - and the relationship is *still qualified as abusive*.

► I loved the way Grace's treatment by her parents played into her later relationship. And, um, I loved the portrayal of her mother as both a sympathetic figure and an abusive mother. I loved how nuanced her character was without being forgiven by her daughter. Usually, **books either want to make the abuser full-on terrible or full-on redeemable** and I *hate* that trend. Grace's mother isn't a mindless creep. And yet she is still not redeemable or forgivable to Grace - I honestly don't think Grace will ever see her as either - and that is *okay*. More nuance without forgiving abuse because they had your best interests at hearts, please.

► Grace's **inner monologue**. Okay. So this is the thing about this book that I genuinely think is unbeatable. Demetrios' author note is very clear that she experienced something like this, and y'all, it totally shows. It was me and she wasn't the villain and she wasn't the whiny girl who would get put in her place by her well-intentioned parents at the end.

► I think that more recently, I've been feeling this lack of internal criticism of relationships. You become so grateful to just be tolerated that you'll put up with anything, because hurting is ungrateful, and you blame everyone a little bit, but deep down you sympathize with everyone but yourself.

I don't know how to end this. There's nothing I can say to sum up how meaningful a read this book was for me.

I think my reaction to this one was a deeply personal one - not everyone is going to love this as deeply as I did, and I think some might even find it *too* personal. It might end on one of the most hopeful and cathartic notes of any book ever, but it hits *really* close to home. But, yeah, for me personally, this one was fucking soul destroying in a good way. I love this book.

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### **Emily May says**

*Something in me is dimming, something that I already know I can't get back. But you're worth it. You are. I will tell myself this for several more months. And when I realize you aren't worth it, it'll be too late.*

4 1/2 stars. **This book had a really powerful emotional effect on me.** I hadn't meant to, but once I'd started, I had to finish it in one sitting, so I found myself wide-eyed and blinking back tears in the early morning hours. This is what I'd hoped The Girl Who Fell would be.

It is such an emotional ride with vivid, evocative writing. Demetrios is fantastic at both introspection - examining the way Grace thinks and how she gradually slips into a toxic relationship - and building a visual of this suffocating suburban California town. Ultimately, she shows how a difficult home life and unsupportive parents can lead a young girl to look for love in all the wrong places, and how abuse is cyclical in nature.

*That's how the worst year of my life starts—in a Mustang with steamed-up windows, with a beautiful boy who cries.*

I like that the author writes about poor kids, both in this book and in I'll Meet You There. Middle/upper-middle class kids get a lot of coverage in YA, but the poorer kids less so. Here, Grace lives with her mother and abusive stepfather. Her mother plays the role of "Contrite and Subservient Female" and her stepfather is "The Giant". The severe emotional abuse present in their relationship will serve as a comparison as Grace's relationship makes its own downward spiral.

The thing that Demetrios does better here than Parker did with The Girl Who Fell is that we can easily see the attraction of Gavin. He is both unique to this book and yet he fills a role that is utterly timeless - the tortured bad boy who needs Grace's help to get his life on track. Bad Romance made me understand how a person could need someone enough to ignore the controlling behaviour; how a person could feel responsible for someone else's well-being.

You can feel the suffocating nature of everything throughout - Grace's small town, her life with the parents who make every day torture, and Gavin. **The familial relationships are so complex and heartbreakin**g. I spent most of the novel HATING her mother, and yet there were moments where it was hard not to find sympathy for her. Even Grace's disgusting stepfather is allowed human moments that make him more than a mindless villain.

Still talking about relationships, the triad of amazing female friendship that is Grace, Nat and Lys is just... **perfection**. They make an odd group with Nat being an "evangelical Christian" and Lys being a "socialist lesbian", but they are the perfect friends and bring some light to this otherwise very dark story.

The narrative is a **dramatic second person, past tense**. Somehow, it works very well. Grace addresses YOU, as in Gavin, and narrates from a place where the worst has already happened. This is a technique that I find I almost always like. You might assume the inevitably takes something away from the tension, but I think the opposite is true. Even as you fall in love with Gavin alongside Grace, you can feel the change coming. You know disaster is just around the corner and you are powerless to stop it. It's awful and intoxicating.

Such an important and powerful read.

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## **Kelly (and the Book Boar) says**

Find all of my reviews at: <http://52bookminimum.blogspot.com/>

***“I gave you my heart on a silver fucking platter and you ate it, piece by bloody piece.”***

Welcome to a review via giffery that is sure to put at least one song on a never-ending loop in your brain for the remainder of the day . . . .

*Bad Romance* is the story of Grace and how she almost lost herself over the course of . . . .

It's a story that shows . . . .

***“Girls don’t fall in love with manipulative assholes who treat them like shit and make them seriously question their life choices. They fall in love with manipulative assholes (who treat them like shit and make them seriously question their life choices) who they think are knights in shining armor.”***

I wanted to read this as soon as I saw the title. Because duh . . . .

And just look at that cover? I diiiiiiiiieeeeeeeeeeee.

My old lady brain failed me and I didn't realize that I had had a most excellent experience with Heather Demetrios in the past, so I went into this with high hopes yet low expectations. This is another selection that, although as far as I know is not yet challenged, would be a great candidate during this Banned Books Week since it addresses some seriously heavy subject matter that pearl clutching parents across the country would not want their children to read about. That would be a shame, though, because these are exactly the types of stories that **need** to be told.

While Grace's home life and upbringing may have made her easier to manipulate than some, her relationship with Gavin felt pretty fathomable to me. Who wouldn't want to date the handsome rock star? Why wouldn't she take his side when he said his ex was cheating – after all, she **was** always flirting with other dudes. And really isn't it just respectful to not be touchy-feely with other guys if you are in a committed relationship? Grace agrees that it is. But where do you draw the line? At what point do you realize that you pretty much always do what *he* wants to do. That if you don't, he gets mad – or hangs up the phone – or peels out down the street and you end up doing nothing at all because **he** was your plans for the evening. When do you tell him to cut the shit and quit being such a drama llama? When does it sink in that when he shows up at your window in the middle of the night or spends hours across the food court watching you while you work at the cookie store that . . . .

***“Your boyfriend’s creepy.”***

Is it about the same time you discover this song isn't nearly as romantic as you once thought it to be . . . .

At what point do you find the courage and strength within yourself to tell him . . . .

When he tells you he hates you? When he calls you a whore? When he leaves bruises on you when you're trying to get away, but he's not done talking to you yet? When he rapes you? When?

While this may have been just a bit too long for me (I hate making that complaint because I sound like such a dimwit) – it is probably necessary to keep beating some readers over the head with examples of abusive behavior like Demetrios does here. At some point maybe there's a girl (or a boy) who will recognize that their relationship might be unhealthy too and they will get out of it. And to anyone who feels stuck in a situation like this and has a boy(or girl)friend who threatens to kill themselves should you break up with them? This is what you do . . . .

Middle fingers up. For real. Then call their parents, tell a school counselor, call the cops, whatever. But get yourself out first.

#### **ORIGINAL "REVIEW:"**

When you is poor so the \$9.99 price tag is making you have a sad, but discover the porny librarian already has you covered . . . .

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#### **Manju says**

*"I blush, pleasure blooming in my chest. I don't know it now, but there will be a garden inside me soon. And it'll grow thorns."*

So Grace has a very troubled and stressful relationship with her mother and her stepfather. They treat her very badly but Grace is counting the days till she graduates from her school and fly away to NYU, New York. But things always didn't happen the way you planned them to be.

Gavin survived a suicide attempt after his girlfriend break up with him. Grace who is head over heels in love with Gavin got scared and wrote a note to Gavin telling him how she likes him and how good he is. And things changed, Gavin start noticing her. they soon start dating and what was a perfect, dreamlike relationship for Grace, soon turned into a poisonous, violent, and suffocating relation.

it is so easy to ask/expect girls to walk away from such toxic relations but this tells you it is not so easy. how that significant one broke you inch by inch, manipulate you, blackmail you, tells you how he loves you and will die without you and you're the sole reason he lives for...

this also gives us insight into the mind of a broken girl who thought she could be the saving angel of that broken and beautiful boy. whenever she tries to walk away he turned himself into a helpless boy, who only needs you to live.

I usually like my romance stories to have a happily ever after but this is something that teaches us that not every crush can turn into "the one", and not every relation can survive with your one sided efforts.

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### Trina (Between Chapters) says

[ Abusive romance, abusive parents, suicide attempts and suicide ideation described in enough detail to be very triggering, rape, some fat shaming and slut shaming that is challenged on page immediately, flippant teenage attitudes and language toward mental illness which is only sometimes challenged. (hide spoiler)]

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### Taylor says

#### UPDATED with COMPLETE REVIEW:

*"When you're a stupid girl in love, it's almost impossible to see the red flags."*

I'm going to be straight with y'all, I have never – in all of my history of reading – related more to a fictional character than I did with the MC of this novel. Grace felt it about Whitman and I feel it about Demetrios: she "gets what it feels like to be me so hard."

In fact, the musical-loving, NYC-obsessing, 11:11 wishing, *Rent*head Grace and I could practically be the same person...except for one thing. One glaringly obvious difference between my fictitious BFF and myself: I've *thankfully* never been trapped in a toxic and emotionally abusive relationship. And watching how someone I identified with so strongly – someone intelligent, funny, and kindhearted – could enter into, justify, and remain caught in a ***Bad Romance*** provided a perspective and an insight I'd formerly never understood.

When you're raised on *Disney*, it's easy to champion the HEA (happily ever after). It's easy to grow up believing that you'll quickly find your OTP (one true pairing) and live out the remainder of your days in a castle on the hill. Add in the rom-coms and majority of romance novels we're fed as teenagers and it's easy to see why – despite the obstacles or character flaws – we expect that happy ending – no matter what. As we grow older we find out the journey isn't always so easy and is often sans an Alan Menken arrangement. Boo, hiss.

***Bad Romance*** provides a much-needed voice by pointing out that not every relationship is salvageable or more importantly "the one." That not every charismatic, arctic-eyed bad boy is "savable." That sometimes the actions we're repeatedly presented with as romantic or stemming from a place of concern are actually crazy possessive and stemming from a place of control. That sometimes you simply have to #ChooseYou.

This book gives readers a "lusciously crass" and intimately personal insight into the good, the bad, and the ugly of relationships gone wrong and I can't recommend it enough! I'm not delving into the plot because I think it's better to go in blind, but this book opened my eyes to a mentality I never fully understood and had a terrific balance of light vs. dark. Even though it sounds grim, there's a lot of laughs along the way, an exit strategy, and a confidence-boosting ending that gives you a cathartic charge. Pick this up! Trust me!

**P.S.** I couldn't find a way to work these in, but I needed to share some quotes that spoke to me along the way:

*"How do boys do that? How do they make your whole body combust just by looking at you?"*

*"The pages are brittle and yellowing already, stained with the hope that bled through my finders, a new girl in a new town looking for something epic in her life."*

*"Sometimes you punch walls, doors, anything to break the skin that's holding in the demons."*

*"I owe you this..."* If you've read this book message me so we can talk about this!

*"The world, I remind myself, is mine, if only I have the courage to grasp it when the opportunity is given to me."*

### **Original Review:**

*"G is for Grace."* #ChooseYou RTC.

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**may ☺ says**

So, so, so, so, so. I honestly don't know *how* I feel about this book bc

1. THE MESSAGE IS SO BLOODY IMPORTANT
2. However – the book itself sorta dragged.

I know right, my explanation is as good as every other “3-star rated book” which is to say, *not very good*.

*"That's how the worst year of my life starts—in a Mustang with steamed-up windows, with a beautiful boy who cries."*

On one hand, this book portrays the absolute terror that is toxic, abusive relationships in such a realistic way, while on the other hand, it just wasn't powerful enough to evoke anything deep in me.

And that also could be because the reader is told EXACTLY how this story ends from the very first page.

Which is like, yeah, hella anticlimactic.

Our main character, Grace, writes this book in the format of a letter addressed to her abusive, manipulative ex, retelling the story of their relationship but from **her** eyes.

The first book that I read by Heather Demetrios, *I'll Meet You There* absolutely CRUSHED me and I assumed that this book would strike that similar chord. Alas, (or maybe it was a good thing) it did not.

I think the difference with *I'll Meet You There* was that I found myself relating to the characters more on a personal level rather than just observing them in a scientific manner (which is what happened with this book).

Gavin, the trash bin ex-boyfriend, honestly started off as the perfect guy but develops quite quickly into a manipulative a\*shole. I felt like the ENTIRE plot of the story was just Grace and Gavin fighting and making up in record time and while yes, it does show how HARD it is to get out of an abusive relationship, I feel like it just DRAGGED ON excessively.

So yeah, instead of crying my eyes out, I was like, WHEN ARE WE GETTING TO THE GOOD PART?

Did I cry at ALL? Well, yes I did. There were about 4 tears that were shed but that was more for Grace than the situation at hand.

ALSO GRACE'S FRIEND'S ALYSSA AND NAT ARE TOP NOTCH THE GREATEST FRINEDS EVER OH MY GOD.

SO TO RECAP:

1. TOPIC is so important. Get that self-love y'all
2. Kinda boring tho
3. Friends are the world

*"I gave you my heart on a silver fucking platter and you ate it, piece by bloody piece."*

That's all I got.

3.5 stars!!

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my soul was just crushed by Our Dark Duet so what better way to overcome my grief by picking up *another* soul crushing book

genius i know

***Buddy read*** with the kids, kid #1 & kid #2

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