



# Other Sister

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## **Other Sister** S.T. Underdahl

Josey Muller's regular life--studying with her best friends, planning for the Hollidazzle dance, and gossiping about hot guys--is shaken like a snow globe when her parents drop an A-bomb: she has a sister! Pressured to give up the baby they conceived in high school, her parents are overjoyed to reunite with Audrey. Even Josey's brothers are cool with it. No longer the only daughter and the "smart one" in the family, Josey struggles to accept her infuriatingly friendly, witty, and talented older sister. But feelings of betrayal and jealousy threaten to boil over when she learns that Audrey is on her way to becoming a psychologist, Josey's life goal. Just when she's given up on ever feeling like a sister to this stranger, a new side of Audrey is revealed . . . and their real-life nature versus nurture experiment offers a fresh start for them both.

## **Other Sister Details**

Date : Published March 8th 2007 by Flux (first published March 1st 2007)

ISBN : 9780738709338

Author : S.T. Underdahl

Format : Paperback 256 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Parenting, Adoption

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# From Reader Review Other Sister for online ebook

## WCPL Teens says

Josey is a typical teenager living a typical life, until she finds out that her parents had a child when they were teenagers and had to give her up for adoption. When the child contacts Josey's mother, a reunion is planned, but Josey feels like she's been displaced. Will she learn to accept her new older sister?

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## Heav says

This was a really great book about a sisters reunion to her family and other siblings. I really enjoyed how the story was told and the perspective. I also like how there was also a sub plot and not just this one main plot about Audrey and Josey. Great book.

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## Karisa says

Wow! This book was surprisingly amazing! I just can't explain how good it was. Also it's kind of late at night and I can't really think that much about what I want to write... There were so many good things in this book... I loved Josie and her family; their family was dealing with interesting circumstances and it was very interesting to see how they dealt with it. I liked that the point of view was coming from Josie. It was a great book with good closure at the end. I'm glad everyone could get on with their lives and forge good relationships... :)

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## Yolanda says

I really enjoyed this book. It was a serious subject but it wasn't a heavy read. The point of view of the main character, Josey, was pretty realistic. I wouldn't necessarily say that this book would by any means help someone who is going through this type of a situation, but I would say that this would be a good book for anyone who wanted to read something of a more serious nature.

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## oliviasbooks says

This story told in the voice of fifteen-year-old Josey Muller, only daughter, but middle-child of a set of three, narrates the rare case of a couple who had been pushed to give up their baby for adoption, when they were still high-school-students and stayed together against all odds to start a family later on.

Josey's parents cannot believe their luck, when Audrey at the age of 25 contacts them via the adoption agency in order to get to know her birth mother and is suprised by being presented a complete set of parents and a few siblings in addition. They see their chance to at least partly make up for the decision they resented for the past quarter of a century. A holiday in Mexico with the whole family including Audrey's fiancé seems

to be the perfect way.

Perfect is a word that tastes bitter in Josey's mouth, though. For her newly acquired sister is flawless in every way and - worse - she looks and behaves like an older, more sophisticated version of Josey and has already reached all the goals Josey wants to grow up for: She successfully studied psychology and has started her first job as a psychologist in Minneapolis, she is treated by her mom as if she were the best friend everything else is unimportant compared to and her fiancé reminds Josey strongly of Brandon Burke, the school's football star Josey and her two best friends have been pining for since forever.

How can her brothers swallow the strange jumbling of family dynamics so unaffectedly? Don't they feel like a kid conceived to be a poor consolation prize compared to the lost dream-daughter?

Do not expect outrageous and unexpected turns in the plot or the digging up of hair-raising and well-kept secrets. Just prepare for an insightful narration of an unusual family reunion and the consequences for the family members involved. An narration brushing up some strong emotion nonetheless, because, as we are told in the end, it is autobiographical.

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## **Suniti Patel says**

What would you do if you discovered a secret that changed your life? I've just read an amazing book that's about a girl named Josey Muller whose life changed when she discovered a new sister. The book is called "The Other Sister" which was written by Susan Thompson Underdahl. It was published in 2007 and the author, Underdahl, had wrote this book from experience. She is a practicing psychologist and has first-hand experience with birth-family reunions.

There were many quotes in this book. One quote I enjoyed is the one on page twenty-seven. It says, "The boys in our class are so juvenile." I think it's my favorite because mostly every girl thinks boys are stupid and dumb and I find that pretty funny. Now, there are the important quotes and I think the one on page thirty-three is important. The quote is, "It was funny I thought; we hadn't even met Audrey, her sister, and she was already making a big impact on our lives. Little did I know that it was only the beginning." I think this quote is important because when Josey discovers she has a sister, a lot of confusion and questions run through her mind. She knows that everything in her life will change and that. No longer the only daughter and the "smart" one, she'll struggle to accept her friendly, talented amusing sister.

I obviously think the two main characters are Josey and Audrey. Both of them finding out that they have a sister is big for both of them while they thought they never had a sister. So let me tell you about what Josey is like so you get the picture. This loving girl is 16 year old where her regular life is of homework, guys, and gossip. She's a sophomore searching and finding her way in the world of becoming a psychologist. She has her two great bestfriends who love gossip and the loving boy who the three crush on, Brandon Burke. She's a blondie with loving brown eyes that Charlie Goodall, Brandon Burke's hot best friend, loves. One day when Josey is coming home from a full stomach of m&ms, doritos, and diet coke at her friend's house, her mom drops an a-bomb on her; she has an older sister she never knew about. This is where I introduce Audrey, the second important character, who is a 25 year old psychologist engaged to her fiance who happens to look like guess who? Brandon Burke! Audrey does look like Josey though she's more of a brunette and has hazel eyes. The two sister are alike but also have their differences. As they first meet in beautiful Mexico, they give each other their heart of their favorite soda, diet soda.

Every book has its own theme and one for this one would probably be the strong love of family. As you can see now, this book is about a 16 year old who has her normal life of high school until she finds out she has an

older sister she never knew about. She takes a deep breath and learns to accept her funny, talented sister. She learns the love of a great family. What would you do if you find out you had an older sister?

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## **Ian Wood says**

This is the complete review

<http://ianwoodnovellum.blogspot.com/2013/08/the-other-sister-by-st-underdahl.html> as it appears on my blog. Any links which may be in the blog review are not reproduced here.

Note: Mild spoilers!

Susan Thompson Underdahl is a psychologist who has experienced the very story she relates in this novel, and relate she does. I don't know how much of it is fiction and how much is actual memory, but I do know this was a novel I read through from cover to cover in one sitting, and I enjoyed it immensely. Afterwards I found myself wondering how the Josey's real life counterpart felt when she learned that this novel was coming out.

The novel is about Audrey, an adoptee, contacting her birth mother and discovering she has a birth father married to that same mother and she has two brothers and a sister in that same family. I can;t imagine what kind of a shock or revelation that would be to a young woman. Underdahl was the 'Audrey' of this novel, but she told it from the 'Josey' perspective which is interesting, and is perhaps what I might have done if I'd been in her position. I think she was able to empathize with Josey so well because in some regards, Audrey and Josey were the same person while at the same time being quite different, having gone through very different experiences and having an outlook on life which differed in many ways.

Josette, sixteen, is the middle child, with an older brother Jake and a younger brother Julian (yeah, I know). She's a straight-A student who wants to become a psychologist. She has two best friends, Sarah and Britt, and comes home one day after studying with them to discover that her mother has some news about which she's very nervous about sharing with her daughter. Josey has never seen her mother quite like this. Why her father isn't present for this discussion I don't know. I found that slightly disturbing, but his absence at that particular time is actually a part of the story in a way; it's a harbinger of the relationship between Josey and her parents which bubbles up later in the novel.

Josey (I don't like that name, neither in its full version nor the diminutive) is hit rather harder than her brothers by this news. Why her mother chose to tell her before she told either of the sons, and especially given that one of the sons is older, is also dealt with later in the novel. I think in this case it was a wise decision, but later, the parental decisions were not so wise in these events!

Since the real story took place twenty years before, Underdahl chooses to address the lack of Internet and email by giving Audrey an aversion to tel phone contact and having the initial correspondence take place via snail mail, although the very first contact, not with Audrey but with a social worker, comes by phone. The purpose of the call to ask Anne (Josey's mother) if she's averse to her adopted daughter contacting her. Anne gives the go-ahead and soon receives an intelligently-written letter from Audrey tentatively opening the lines of communication. There's a photograph enclosed, of Audrey and her fiance. Audrey looks very much like Josey.

This is the first of a series of crises through which Josey goes. The next is when she learns that Audrey is a psychologist. Josey now feels that she has lost her position as only daughter, and as senior daughter, as well as being 'replaced' by someone who looks like her, has usurped her career goal, and is occupying almost all of her mother's attention. It's heartening to see how Josey, so young and so struggling, steps up to the situation. I doubt that I would have handled it so well at her age.

Yet despite her rather heroic struggle, she is struggling. Her parents arrange for a meeting in Cancun - neutral ground - so that they can all meet and get to know one another. Because Anne works for an airline, she's able to get discount fares and they occupy a small villa, and spend three all-too-short days together, but Josey notices that Audrey is crying at one point, and when they part at the end of the vacation, she says something mean to her new sister and, too late, regrets it.

In the end it's all resolved and the outcome works for everyone, but there is a journey before Josey can get there, and it's a journey with some surprising revelations about her calm and confident older sister. But this is something you will have to find out for yourself. Despite the misgivings I had after reading Susan Underdahl's bio (she knew a ghost for eight years? She can sometimes breathe underwater?) which made me doubt her veracity in other regards, this novel is all I'm reviewing here, not the author, and the novel is well-done, sensitively written, inventive, entertaining, and very enjoyable. I rate it worthy!

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### **Lynne Spreen says**

Young adult fiction isn't my thing but I enjoyed reading this and Underdahl's other book, Remember This. I especially enjoyed the author's sense of humor, and she does tension well. Also the pace was just right. A good read.

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### **Tan B says**

Originally reviewed - 5/20/08

I'm always up for a good story about someone who was adopted and finds their family. But S.T. Underdahl, who was adopted and found her family, takes a different approach and tells this story from the other sibling's POV. By doing so she gives readers a chance to see how an adopted child re-entering the lives of the family they never knew effects the way siblings may feel about the new development and an effective way to deal with it. I for one would have loved to hear what Audrey had to say on this matter, but when I read this book I couldn't help but sympathize (a bit) with Josey. S.T. Underdahl writes a touching, realistic story of a girl dealing with the knowledge of the sister she never knew and feeling like she has to compete for the spotlight which was sometimes always on her.

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### **Jamie Diehr says**

IS A GOOD BOOK =]

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## **Michelle Truong says**

Meeting a new sister..wonder what that is like.

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## **Hatsune Miku says**

The other sister is a great novel. The story takes place in modern day society, when a girl finds out that she has an older sister, that was given up for adoption, before she was born. And funny thing, they look just alike!!! So if you want to read a book, filled with action, and real life situations, read The other Sister, by S.T. Underdhal.

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## **laaaaames says**

I should have loved this book because I am a nut for fiction about discovered family members. HUGE NUT. I have been eager to read this book since discovering its existence, so it was huuuugely disappointing not to like it.

My main problem with this book was the voice, which felt about three years younger than it was supposed to. Every time I realized Josey was supposed to be almost sixteen I had to kind of shake my head and force myself to believe it. I couldn't find much that was authentic there.

It's interesting that this story is based on Underdahl's life, because the inauthenticity coursed through all aspects of the book to me. Constantly I'd think, "would any human actually react that way to hearing that/seeing that/being told that/etc.? No." It's one thing to have a real situation you want to commit to the page; it's quite another to actually bring that to life, and for me it just failed at so many steps along the way.

BTW if I had had to read the words "Diet Coke" or "Holidazzle" one more time I would have punched someone's knees.

(read: 3)

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## **Jennifer Wardrip says**

Reviewed by Randstostipher "tallnlankyrn" Nguyen for TeensReadToo.com

Everyone hopes that they have a normal family with very little or no secrets among them, and for Josey Muller, it seemed like she had that life. She had a mother and father who loved her and two brothers who, although they can sometimes drive her crazy, care for her, too. But then Josey's life turns upside down when her parents tell her that her brothers aren't the only siblings that Josey has.

Josey also has a much older sister, Audrey, the daughter that her parents had to put up for adoption, hoping that she would get a better life. Audrey is getting married and thought that this would be the perfect chance to find her birth parents and possibly even meet up with them. At first Josey is perfectly fine with the whole

ordeal; that is, until the day she will finally get to see her sister draws near, and the entire situation becomes all too real for her.

Josey's entire life that she was so used to was officially going to change. She wasn't going to be the only daughter and sister in her family, and her parents are beginning to forget about how she feels. What's worse is how Josey's dream of becoming a psychologist has already been accomplished by her older sister, which only makes Josey feel inferior to Audrey.

The only way Josey can deal with these occurrences is to take a step back and truly see not only how she feels but also how her sister feels. But will Josey give this situation a chance?

THE OTHER SISTER was completely real and meaningful. Having Josey as the main character just gives the book the perfect tone it needs to truly capture the essence that a teenager would feel when something unexpected pops up in their life. A very unique story with an ending that was surprising and perfectly written, THE OTHER SISTER was a great debut from S. T. Underdahl.

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### **Jane Healy says**

Josey is the only daughter in an ordinary family. She leads an ordinary teenage life--until she learns that she has another sister, one her parents put up for adoption years before they were married. The emotional impact rings true, keeping readers wanting to know how Josey and her family copes.

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