



## Best Friends

*Martha Moody*

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## Best Friends Martha Moody

When Clare Mann arrives at Oberlin in 1973, she's never met anyone like Sally Rose. Rich and beautiful, Sally is utterly foreign to a middle-class, Midwestern Protestant like Clare—and utterly fascinating. The fascination only grows when Sally brings her home to L.A. Mr. Rose—charismatic, charming, and owner of a profitable business shrouded in secrecy—is nearly as compelling a figure to Clare as he is to his own daughter. California seems like paradise after winters in Ohio. And Clare begins to look forward desperately to these visits, to carefree rides in Sally's Karmann Ghia and lazy poolside days.

As the years pass, Clare becomes a doctor and Sally a lawyer, always remaining roommates at heart, a plane ride or phone call away. Marriages and divorces and births and deaths do not separate them. But secrets might—for as Clare watches, the Rose family begins to self-destruct before her eyes. And the things she knows are the kinds of things that no one wants to tell a best friend.

## Best Friends Details

Date : Published (first published 2001)

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Author : Martha Moody

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Genre : Fiction, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review Best Friends for online ebook

### **Amy says**

One of the most boring, lame ass books ever!

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### **Carol Hunter says**

From the title I thought this would be a really light-weight book, however, the depth and complexities of 2 women and their friendship over time were thoroughly explored. This is an edgy friendship book.

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### **Nina says**

I enjoyed this book, I was surprised that so many people didn't like it. Whilst Sally and Clare are deeply flawed characters, I enjoyed the book for its honesty and realistic portrayal of the complexities of life, relationships and friendships, none of which are ever perfect.

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### **Erika Nerdypants says**

Come on! To begin with, this was the author's first book. I can think of many authors who have made less credible attempts at first novels and have gone on to become well read and respected novelists. Who ever said protagonists had to be likeable? Both Clare and Sally were multi-dimensional characters, and that's what you want in a good book. I agree that at different times while reading this I found it difficult to like either Clare or Sally. Clare seemed self-absorbed and egotistical for much of the time, only to unexpectedly show us her softer, caring side. I frequently perceived Sally as immature, and for someone who opened a law firm for women, remarkably uninformed of women's issues such as pornography. There are many redeeming qualities in this book, the writer touches on relevant social issues with a great deal of honesty and sensitivity. I would not call this a flimsy book, so if you expected a light hearted beach novel I can see why you would feel disappointed after reading this book.

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### **NATUI says**

I can only give this book three stars and am pissed I have to do so. It started off SOLID. As the plot line progressed, it got darker, more convoluted, and more irritating. I am absolutely one for a dark story. Usually even in darkest character one find a quality that is redeeming enough to continue the read. As much as I loved the girls in the beginning, their life choices continued to spiral out of control, and all you could do was sigh and think "For the love of Pete, will one of you stand up and do one tiny redeeming thing in your life?" It was completely irritating, and I'm only giving it the three stars because the beginning was so promising. I'm not sorry I read it, but I'm left at the end with a very dissatisfied feeling. Maybe that is what the author wanted, but I'm not dissatisfied in a good way that makes my brain tingle, just an irritated one.

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### **Jenna says**

3.5 stars. not spoiler-free.

this book was alright. my aunt read it and gave it to my mom and i found it one day and decided to read it. it didn't suck. can you tell that i don't really know what to say about it?

it didn't really have a plot. it was just about these two best friends throughout like 20/30 years of their lives together. the protagonist wasn't very good, like as a person. it read well. i got through it quick and i understood everything.

things i liked: clare was an aids specialist in a time when aids was scary and mostly unknown. clare finally had a daughter. clare never lost sally as a friend. it was half set in ohio, so i got most of the references to places so that was pretty cool (i even toured oberlin, didn't apply).

things i didn't like: sid. peter. sally having six kids. clare not getting ted in the end. the name of clare's daughter (aurelia). sally selling her law practice to run pornography distribution. ben. mark petrello. clare's dad dying. sally never letting her dad go. clare always running to LA for sally (just move there babe). sally moving to idaho. sally getting a millionaire's house and running out of money.

it was all just kind of plain.

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### **Rebecca McNutt says**

Not a bad book, just incredibly preachy and sappy. I loved the retro Seventies setting but otherwise it's a story we've all heard before in one way or another.

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### **Katherine says**

I'd really like to give this 2.5 stars, and then some specific parts 3.5 stars, but I guess I have to be decisive. This is a fast read and was good for my purposes (vacation reading), but I'm not sure I'd recommend it. The one aspect of women's friendship that I think the author did a good job of capturing though, was that even when someone is indisputably your best friend, you can still sense a fragility there. That is, because the loss of the friendship would be so devastating, fear of that loss can make you a less than perfect friend. You have to have a strong sense of self to get past that. I don't know if that message was intentional, but I connected with it. Other than that, I'd give this book a pass.

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### **Elise says**

I put this on my "read" list because, technically, I did read almost 50% of it. After 208 pages, I just had to stop. This story has no plot, no storyline and utterly uninteresting characters. After the first 100 pages, I

thought, "Maybe if I keep reading, I'll see where this is going." Nope, because as far as I can tell, it's going nowhere. If it does somehow manage to pick up after page 208, then shame on the author for wasting 200 pages of drivel to get the reader to the point. The book is 483 pages. If you can't grab me before I'm almost 50% done with the book, then you've failed mightily.

Best Friends by Jennifer Weiner is much, much better. Try that one instead.

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### **Karen says**

Having a group of women friends I call my best friends - women I have known forever - "celebrate a 40th birthday in vegas" best friends, this book was certainly a let-down. It will create some good discussion at my book-club next month, though. It has lots of "themes" woven in and out of the lives of the two main characters (the "best friends"), interesting themes worthy of book club discussions. But I would never suggest any of MY best friends read this, because the way these women treat each other is no way best friends act.

The narrator, Clare, becomes completely absorbed in her best friend's life. She has no control over her own life, consistently lets life happen TO her, and is almost completely without any joy whatsoever. She is a perfectionist and a control freak, yet takes no control, nor responsibility for herself. I get it. That is part of the story. But it is annoying. And it's totally unrealistic that Clare, an AIDS specialist, would sleep around so much without protection. The author does address this at one point. Still...

One redeeming factor is the book does offer a handful of interesting life observations - worthy of an interesting book club discussion, as I've already noted. For instance in one conversation between the friends. "It doesn't seem right that he should make money off people who repel him," says BF1. And BF2 responds, "Who better to make money off of?"

Finally, the book is chock full of great vocabulary - like usage of the word, "swarmy".

All in all, the book is pretty darn depressing. Hey, I like a good tragedy any day, but not like this. I'd recommend it to someone looking for a lighter version of a John Irving novel.

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### **Rita says**

Got the book in a big box from a friend, Kay, and wasn't going to read it but then did anyway. The interest to me is its generation -- main characters are my sister's age, and it's a reminder of how things were in the 60s - California was THE place to be/go, it had such a reputation in the rest of the country at that time. Well, it still does, but then it was so clear-cut, California was sun and fun and way-out unconventional behavior where more or less anything goes. You could go to Calif. to start a new life.

And - coincidentally - my sister actually did head for Calif. right after high school and stayed right there on the west coast.

Drugs were new to most of us, and we started hearing about them; birth control was new; homosexuality was starting to be talked about.....

The book [2001] reads like a memoir of the author. Most of the brief incidents are anecdotes without any

[literary] function. Cannot explain their inclusion unless the author just happened to remember them in her own experience. I would certainly never re-read the book or recommend it to anyone.

Main character is an AIDS medical specialist so you learn something about patients, symptoms, lifestyles, reactions of family members...

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### **Rachel says**

OMG! This was the book that wouldn't end. It said some relevant things about male/female relationships as well as relationships between women, but the plot twists were odd and pointless.

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### **Nancy says**

At first I wasn't sure if I wanted to get into a book that was 483 pages, but once I did, I really liked it. Martha Moody is an excellent writer, she has the kind of phrasing that makes you pause every so often and appreciate her way with words. I really looked forward to reading Best Friends every day for a while now and I have a feeling I will miss Clare and Sally.

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### **Florinda says**

Based on some of the info in Martha Moody's online bio, I infer that that this book has certain autobiographical elements; like Clare, Moody is (was) a physician, and she has had the same best friend since college. I hope there aren't too many similarities other than that - if you choose to read the novel, you'll see what I mean, but I don't want to give any spoilers.

For the most part, I found this book rather irritating. The writing was pedestrian and I didn't like the characters very much, but the story itself was interesting enough to keep me reading - and that's the annoying part. If it had been duller or more offensive, I could have bailed on it more easily, but I wanted to see how it turned out; and frankly, I kept hoping it would get better and I would like it more. However, it generally didn't resonate with me emotionally, and I didn't get much of a sense that the characters grew or developed; life just kept happening to them, and they kept making questionable choices. The parts I liked best actually had little to do with Clare and Sally's friendship; I was more interested in Clare's medical practice as an AIDS specialist in Ohio, and I sometimes got the sense that Clare was more interested in Sally's Southern California home and life than she was in Sally herself (which was reinforced by Clare's initial reaction to Sally's move to Idaho).

Best Friends seems to be a pretty popular novel, so it clearly appeals to a lot of people, but it just didn't click with me. I think women's long-term friendships can be great frameworks for novels, but to cite one example from my recent reading, I thought it was done better here.

I read this for my book club. I suspect I may have a minority opinion of this one, but no one likes everything - and just because it wasn't my thing doesn't mean someone else won't love it.

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## **Joy says**

This is one of those books that you might give up on before it gets good. For me, it took at least 100 pages before I really got into it. And then, all of a sudden, I was flipping through pages like a mad woman, staying up late when I should have been sleeping.

It's the story of two girls who meet in college, and it follows the ebb and flow of their friendship as they become adults. I've read a few reviews and some trash the book because it seems impossible that these women go through so much, and that they don't always seem like that good of friends at all. I didn't get hung up on either point because those details kept the story moving for me. And really, sometimes reading about a wacked-out family is a good reminder that your own family is pretty darn normal.

This is one of those take it or leave it books. Read it, stick with it and I think you'll like it. But you're not going to suffer a huge loss if you don't pick it up either. (I guess the author won't be including me on the back cover of her next memoir, huh.)

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