



# Someone Else's Life

*Katie Dale*

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When seventeen-year-old Rosie's mother, Trudie, dies from Huntington's Disease, her pain is intensified by the knowledge that she has a fifty-per-cent chance of inheriting the crippling disease herself. Only when she tells her mum's best friend, 'Aunt Sarah' that she is going to test for the disease does Sarah, a midwife, reveal that Trudie was not her biological mother after all...

Devastated, Rosie decides to trace her real mother, hitching along on her ex-boyfriend's GAP year to follow her to Los Angeles. But all does not go to plan, and as Rosie discovers yet more of her family's deeply-buried secrets and lies, she is left with an agonising decision of her own - one which will be the most heart-breaking and far-reaching of all...

## Someone Else's Life Details

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Author : Katie Dale

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# From Reader Review Someone Else's Life for online ebook

## Amanda says

Rosie Kenning lives in Bramberley, England and is seventeen years old. Her mother, Trudie, has just passed away after an eighteen-month long battle with Huntington's disease. Rosie quit school to take care of her mother after she was diagnosed and had the help of her mother's best friend and nurse, Sarah as well as her Nan. Now Rosie is on her own, grieving for her mum and worried about the possibility that she will suffer the same fate as Huntington's disease is hereditary. It's then that Sarah reveals to Rosie that there was no way that Rosie could have inherited it as Trudie was not her birth mother. This news kickstarts Rosie's search for her birth mother, taking her to America with her former boyfriend, Andy.

Someone Else's Life by Katie Dale features Rosie's perspective as well as the perspective from an unnamed girl which added some mystery and confusion to the beginning of the book. At first I had no idea who it was, then I thought I'd figured it out and then there was a twist and it was not who I suspected at all. It's actually quite hard to talk about this book without being able to talk about some of the characters but I don't want to spoil it as that particular surprise is one of the better aspects to this book.

I was interested in this book and how it would deal with such a serious disease and I felt Katie covered that well but the other plot line, that takes over the book, caused a lot of constant and predictable drama.

Rosie, Rosie, Rosie, I really wanted to like her. She's spent eighteen months of her life caring for her mum, she left school, her friends have drifted away and now all she can think about is the fact that she might die from the same disease. You'd think going through something like this would bring on maturity and level-headedness but in this case it hasn't. Rosie is quite immature, she's also angry (understandably) and she doesn't communicate well choosing instead to omit the truth or flat out lie. There were times when I felt for her, she's just lost her mum then found out that she wasn't her real mum but she was also a whinger and turned on the people who had been there for her, like Sarah and Andy.

So, the plot point that I'd really like to talk about, leads her on a search for her birth mother who she traces to America. She's now an actress and when Andy mentions his plans for a year abroad, Rosie goes along, leaving out the fact that she's only going to track down her mum. It's over in America where all the drama starts and this book started feeling like a very long episode of Gossip Girl.

We meet a whole new cast of characters and the perspective switches between Rosie and one of the new characters. The perspectives switched too quickly for me, one minute I'd be reading about Rosie and too soon the story would switch to the other point of view and then back again, it felt dizzying.

Most of the second half of the book involved someone trying to have a conversation, then someone would end up admitting something and another person would carry on and yell and then storm off. Eventually they'd return, another conversation would take place or they'd walk in to a scene already happening, another misunderstanding would occur and someone else would storm off. It all became too predictable and soap opera-ish, ag! It got to the point that I really wanted to put this down but I forced myself to read to the end and found a predictable ending waiting for me. It did tie everything up, which I'm a fan of but it just seemed like it took a long time to get there.

At the end Katie includes some more information about Huntington's disease which I'm sure would be

appreciated by anyone who picks up this book because of a personal experience.

Overall I found this to be drama-filled story about an extended family, that took away from the original seriousness of the beginning. I know other readers have enjoyed it more than I did, so don't let my feelings put you off if this book sounds like your cup of tea.

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## **Liana says**

OH MY GOD

OH MY GOD

OHHHHHH MAAAAAAAAAAAAAH

GAA  
AWD

It's been a while since I've read a contemporary story, and this was exactly what I needed. Honestly, I was sick of all the dystopia and sci-fi and fantasy I've been reading a lot recently, and I just needed some good-old contemporary in my book reading life.

Anyways, this was a recommendation from a friend (Cindy that's you k). Her recommendations are 95% PERFECT. At first, I was reluctant to read this because, well. I judged it. Again. Dangit, whenever a book seems so oh-so-boring, it ends up being the best book ever! Gah.

What I found ironic about this read was that in my biology class, we're currently doing genetic disorders and diseases. And this book just so happened to educate all of us about Huntington's disease. It was pretty interesting!

This whole entire storyline and plot was ridiculously complicated, and it became even more complicated at the near end. In the beginning, I was confused at who was narrating what, but all my questions were answered by the end of the book. If you try to explain this plot to someone, it's not gonna happen because it's too complicated to explain. That's why people have to read this book to see for themselves. (;

Let me do character discussions. Every character is active in making the plot work, which I like a lot because there's that thing I love called character coordination.

Rosie- I like Rosie, but it seems like she's too mature for her age because of what happened to her mom. It's always the parents that leave the burden upon the children, ain't it? Well, anyway. I like Rosie even though she irritated me a lot throughout the book with her reckless actions... But she's pretty responsible and independent. I like that.

Holly- At first, I liked her, and then she was a bitch. And then she was a bigger bitch and then I became indifferent at the end. I could care less if she lived or died. I hate her that much. But I really understand her feelings-- what if some random girl waltzed into your life and took your whole family away? And what if all of that interfered with your engagement and your pregnancy? I can understand her but I don't know why she didn't put out more tolerance. And even if she couldn't control her anger she didn't have to get frickin' *even*.

Andy- Andy seemed like an impatient guy in the beginning, and I didn't really like him that much. But

throughout the book, when Rosie hurt him so much, he still came back for her and forgave her for everything. And he made the romance perfect, too! He didn't even have to be a hot and sexy and cocky male character for me to love him. Gotta love Andy!

Josh- He wasn't a really important character, but I've got to say, this guy is very, very loyal, and he wouldn't storm off angrily. He would try to fix things, not stand there watching as the love of his life runs away from him. Josh is amazing!

Katharine and Jack.. well. They make a cute couple. LOL. K.

I love the romance in this book, seriously. Usually, I would view romance as the main and most important aspect in a book, but this book centered on family problems and drama and I liked reading about that a lot. The romance just made it 100x better.

Overall, you can tell I loved this book.

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### **Abbie says**

[I also felt really sorry for Holly. She did annoy me at times with the way she was acting, but with everything that was going on, it was understandable. (hide spoiler)]

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### **Giselle says**

Now this is what I call a dysfunctional family! Secrets, romance, drama to the max - Someone Else's Life is a story that will make your jaw drop, along with having your life feel especially normal.

Mostly character oriented, this book is deeply emotional, with endless twists that turn it into a true roller coaster ride. I can see it come off as overly dramatic, but I personally really enjoyed getting surprised by the turn of events; never expecting things to get so tragic, so complicated. Rosie's life goes into a complete free fall after she finds out she's not really who she thought she was. As secrets starts to unravel, I found myself caring more and more about this girl, about everyone involved in the situation.

Huntington's disease is not widely known or acknowledged. I only gained what I know from the TV series House, where I learned there is no cure, and how terribly heartbreaking this disease becomes for everyone it touches. The worst part is deciding, do you get tested? Would you want to know if you're going to be doomed to this illness? Although we don't experience Huntington's first hand in the book, it's a big cloud that is constantly looming inside the pages. In spite of the story being quite complex, the book is easy to understand, and with its shocking plots twists, plowing through it is effortless.

I'm a bit undecided on how I feel about the romance. I thought it was very sweet at times, but I would get fed up with the on-again off-again scenarios. Andy, her boyfriend, seemed to never make up his mind. When they were "on again", though, it was very cute. I also enjoyed the journey itself- seeing New York especially, is always magical. Katie has this great ability to casually blend in all this magic, romance, and even humor in such a deep, emotionally charged book and have it all somehow work.

Reminiscent of a Jodi Picoult book, *Someone Else's Life* is a story that will easily have you engrossed in the overwhelming dramatics of Rosie's life. With a great cast of characters, deeply rooted emotions, and life altering decisions - there is something for everyone in this novel.

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For more of my reviews, visit my blog at **Xpresso Reads**

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## **JeanBookNerd says**

Katie Dale's *Someone Else's Life* is a riveting story right from the start. It was a midweek evening when I started on this book and thought I would start by reading the first few chapters right before going to sleep. After the first chapter, my evening plan of going to sleep was non-existent. I found myself absorbed by its engaging plot and unforgettable characters. Dale puts together a mix of tragedy, heartbreak, and drama about a girl's self-discovery voyage in finding her place in this world.

The plot revolves around seventeen-year-old Rosie, who's mother was a victim of Huntington's disease. Fearing that she might have this devastating illness, she plans on getting tested, but not before her mother's best friend tell Rosie that her deceased mother is not her biological parent. Armed with the news, Rosie plans on locating her real mother.

It was an emotional roller-coaster ride from the first page to the last. I found this book to have a deep message behind Rosie's story. It will motivate readers to some long deep thoughts about one's identity, relationships, and the general meaning of life. This delightfully charming novel is easy to relate to, especially for ones who have lost someone dearly. Dale's story of Rosie is very captivating and we learn that people, blood-related or not, who truly love and care about you is what makes them family.

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## **Giselle says**

A finished copy was provided by the publisher for review.

What happens when the truth comes out?

We're introduced to Rosie, whose mother just died of Huntington's disease. The loss of her only parent is too much for Rosie, as her thoughts are painful memories of the way her mother was before the disease took over her body. She's not alone because the boy that she loves Andy is there for her and together they go in a vacation. What Andy doesn't know is that Rosie is looking for her real mother, her biological mother. Her mom's best friend Sarah has told her the biggest secret of all, she was swapped at birth.

I absolutely devoured this book, just because I couldn't stop reading it. When one problem was resolved, another popped right up! It was a little intense at times, knowing how some of the characters reacted. I admired Rosie, her tenacity to do the right thing always made her look like the "bad apple" to others, yet in spite of everything she has been through, she always came out stronger and wiser in the end. I couldn't care for Molly's character, even though I did pity her. She acted like a spoiled child, when things did not go her way.

What a heart warming tale of family relationships! You'll love this tale! I know I did.

#### QUOTES

"You are the decisions you make. The things you do. The people you love and who love you. They're the things that really make you who you are."—Jack

"The truth may hurt, but lies—they're vicious. They hide coiled up inside you, ready to strike without warning, without your even knowing they're there."—Holly

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#### Isamlq says

One not so little secret leads to another then another then another. So where do I start? There was a lot of drama in this one and things did get a bit *much*. Both girls found themselves in situations not quite perfect, so I do understand why they felt the way they did, and I do understand the jealousies and insecurities that crept up. Still that one sad situation was permission enough for one or both to act the way they did had me frustrated. They could be so selfish; they could zero in on their woes so easily paying little heed to what their actions cost others.

The characters could frustrating as said, but there is no denying that their history is filled with heartbreak: first a debilitating disease, then discoveries of real mothers and real fathers and later still bigger secrets. It's no surprise that they felt the way they did, but it was an effort to go through each reaction they had. Other than the two though, there's Andy. This boy could frustrate me too. Because he's always left behind, he was prone to doing the same. Goodness! I wanted him to pick a path and stick to it. And there were all other people too, other people whose own histories allowed for more drama. 'Twas a bit much, honestly.

Thanks NETGALLEY!

**2.5/5**

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#### Kirsty says

Someone Else's Life was described to me as a Jodi Picoult novel for Young Adults and that description is totally spot on. It has the all the same qualities of a Jodi novel and was a brilliantly awesome read.

I loved several things about this book

I loved Rosie as a main character and really warmed to her quickly. She has dealt with so much in her recent past and as the differing revelations are unveiled the emotional stresses put on her start piling up thick and fast. Seeing how she deals with them was absolutely fascinating. It wasn't just Rosie, all the different characters you meet have their different personalities and quirks which I loved.

This book was brilliant at pulling out all the stops when it came to the twists and turns in the plots. There were several times when I was stunned by the latest revelation or by what had just happened. This meant I

just had to keep reading to find out what was going to happen next and therefore meant I finished it in one sitting in a matter of hours.

Katie's book was wonderfully raw and emotional throughout which I think was the real strength of the book and was the main reason why you were drawn completely into the world of the characters.

All in all a brilliant book which kept me hooked from the first to the very last page. I am so excited to see what Katie writes next.

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### **Nicola says**

Wow, *Someone Else's Life* completely blew me away. It was so good! The premise is really excellent- and sad! Rosie's mum has died from a disease called Huntington's. I'll be honest and say I knew nothing about Huntington's before I read this book. I'm sure I've heard the name before but I didn't know what it really was or what it did to people and their families. This book was incredibly informative about the disorder and I definitely feel like I learned something from reading it. Besides losing her mum, Rosie is also dealing with the terrifying 50/50 chance of having inherited Huntington's herself.

As you can imagine, Rosie's world is pretty crazy. But it doesn't stop there. At the beginning of this novel, she finds out that she does not, in fact, have Huntington's. Not because of luck- but because her mother was not actually her mother. Rosie was switched with another baby at birth. She is of course in shock and determined to find out the truth about her past. In the midst of her grief, she throws herself head first into this task.

Rosie's journey is a scary one. She goes off with her ex-boyfriend Andy to the US because that's where her birth mother is. I was completely captivated by this story and gripped the whole way through! The writing is excellent and nice to read. There are a lot of twists thrown into this book. Some of them were predictable but some of them took me completely by surprise. I never knew what was going to happen next and was really worried for all the characters. Every step of the way, Rosie's situation becomes more complicated and I couldn't wait to see how it was going to end up.

My only problem with this book is its length. It's almost 500 pages and while this would be fine if the book warranted it, I really don't think it did. The two POVs probably made this book much longer than it really needed to be. Other than that though, *Someone Else's Life* is a beautiful and educational story about family, loss and ethics. I would certainly recommend it!

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### **Jamie says**

Where do I even begin with this book...

I'd love to start with a plot summary but even if I could keep track of everything that happened I don't think there's enough space to write it all out. There were pregnancies and TV stars and long lost relatives and dramatic airport scenes and debilitating diseases and last minute international flights and people getting hit by cars just to name a few. So basically, if it's happened on a soap opera it probably happened in this book.



But if I had to summarize what I think to be the main story line it would be this:

The story follows two girls, Rosie and Holly, who were switched (not accidentally) at birth. When Rosie find this out from her family friend, the midwife who switched the two girls in the first place, she goes off in search of her family in America. When she finds them drama ensues, especially over the fact that Holly's biological mother (the one who raised Rosie) recently died of Huntington's disease which means Holly has a fifty percent chance of having it herself. As if this wasn't enough, Holly is (unbeknownst to anyone but herself) pregnant.

Now let's go to Holly. She was probably my number one problem with this book. I honestly believe she might be the most annoying character of all time. She's immature, selfish, and completely irrational. The story alternates speakers between her and Rosie and here's how I would breakdown Holly's chapters:

70%: Hating Rosie because she was "stealing her family" despite the fact that her dad told her every other page how much he loved her and how she would always be his daughter.

20%: Yelling at people, most often her dad and Rosie.

8%: Worrying about her baby and almost telling her dad she was pregnant before getting interrupted.

2%: Feeling sorry for Rosie because her entire family died (but this was always short lived)

And Rosie's section of the book wasn't much better. Her boyfriend left and came back I would say no less than 15 times throughout the book so that unnecessary drama took up much of her side of the story.

The only reason I even continued reading was because I had to know whether or not Holly, and her baby, had Huntington's disease. So after lots of indecision and multiple doctor's appointments, the results came back... AND SHE DIDN'T LOOK AT THEM.

After all that she decided she actually didn't want to know whether or not she had the disease. Now I understand that's a decision a lot of people make and I respect that, it's totally up to them, but it doesn't stop me from wanting to know.

Then around page 452 of 453 everyone realizes that hey, blood doesn't really matter, your family is the people who raised you. And so after "the craziest few weeks ever" they all go on with their lives as planned and swear to keep in touch via skype and all that.

I can honestly say this is time I will never get back.

(If you're wondering why I rated this 2 stars even after this scathing review it's because my personal rule is if I finish the book I can't have disliked it that much and therefore it's lowest grade can be 2 stars)

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## **Irena says**

What a complex story this one was!

4,5 stars to be precise.

It's been days since I've read this book and I still haven't made up my mind about how I feel about it. I know I liked it, and I know I found it to be a very complex story. Although I didn't have any expectations about the story it still went into a whole another way, the way I couldn't imagine it would ever go.

After reading it I had so much to think about. I still have! I knew switching babies is illegal for reason, but I had no idea that baby-swap could have such a drastic consequences.

Even if this book is a ya genre, all the time while reading it I had a feeling I was reading an adult book. In my opinion, it shows a quality of the story and story -telling .

My relationship with the main characters was also the complex one. I could relate to Rosie and I liked and understood her almost the whole time, even when I knew her actions could have drastic measures, I was still on her side.  
(view spoiler)

The only reason I didn't rate this novel 5 stars is it's end. I expected more from it.

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## **AH says**

Someone Else's Life by debut author Katie Dale is not the type of book I would usually read. I tend to avoid books about fatal illnesses and their aftermaths. They're just not my sort of book. I was pleasantly surprised by this book and I enjoyed reading it.

Someone Else's Life is told from the point of view of its main character Rosie. Rosie is an 18 year old girl who has just lost her mother Trudie to Huntington's disease. Actually, Rosie started losing her mother about 18 months earlier when the disease began to debilitate her mother.

Rosie is a devoted daughter and she puts her life on hold to care for her mother. Rosie is grief stricken and when she decides to take the test for Huntington's, a family friend makes a startling confession. Rosie is not her mother's biological daughter. She cannot have the disease. Relieved, Rosie sets out to find her biological mother with the help of Andy her boyfriend.

Andy and Rosie take a trip to New York City together and Rosie catches a glimpse of her biological mother, a movie star. She manages to meet her, but things don't go well. Rosie and Andy end up in Providence where Rosie meets her father.

Part two of the book is told from two points of view: Rosie and Holly. Holly is Trudie's biological daughter. Both girls lived incredibly parallel lives: they are the same age and they are both engaged to be married.

Holly is not happy with Rosie's intrusion into her family's lives. Rosie feels that she needs to tell Holly about Huntington's. Holly's life is completely disrupted.

A word about Huntington's disease – it's kind of like a genetic lottery disease. Huntington's is fatal and if a person carries the gene, they will get the disease and die. If they have a child, there is a 50% chance of that child getting the disease. Huntington's attacks between the ages of 30 – 45 and it is like a cross between Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

Some people decide to take the test to know for sure. Others do not wish to know for many reasons. Sometimes it is pragmatic – they will lose their medical insurance.

The author presented the subject matter well and for the most part the disease was in the background. The book is well written and raises some interesting ethical dilemmas. This book is suitable for older YA readers and up.

*Thank you to Netgalley and Doubleday Canada for a review copy of this book.*

**Review posted on Badass Book Reviews.**

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### **Amy Lignor says**

When we first meet Rosie, she is standing by her mother's grave in a beautiful gown and stiletto heels, paying homage to the fashionable, happy, and amazing woman who was her beloved Mom. Rosie's mother has been taken to heaven after her bout with Huntington's Disease, and all Rosie can think about is the fact that she may just have the gene that will lead her to the same demise.

Rosie was her mom's miracle baby to say the least. At forty-two, her mother gave birth to her - the same night her father died in a car accident on the way to the hospital. And the readers are soon taken back into another life - a life when Rosie was younger, in love, and was simply waiting for her life to begin.

Now, all she does is wonder - she sits in fear just waiting for the doctors to say that Huntington's is her fate. What she doesn't expect is to be told that her entire existence has been an absolute lie. Her mother wasn't her mother; in fact, her real mother turns out to have her own story of fear and fame that Rosie ends up delving straight into. On top of that, Rosie's real father is also still alive, and raising a girl who should be Rosie.

In essence, the basis of this intricate tale is an easy one. Would you want to know? Every human on the planet is facing death at some point, but if you did find out that there was a chance you had a gene that would destroy you, would you want that information ahead of time? Would knowing that you are on the 'list' to be taken early make you hole up in your house and wait for the inevitable end, or would it make you seize life and enjoy every day that you have left?

This story is truly deep, with a lovely romance and a strong female character who does everything within her power to discover all she can about her past in order to have a future. Ms. Dale has offered a truly beautiful story that will have readers completely engrossed in the eventual outcome.

Until Next Time, Everybody.

## **TheBookSmugglers says**

Warning: this review contains spoilers. The book is full of twists and though I usually prefer not to spoil twisterific books, I feel that I need to this time, in order to express my feelings about this novel. You have been warned.

Rosie's beloved mother Trudie has just died of Huntington's disease, a debilitating condition that ravaged her mother's mind while Trudie watched helplessly. Now she has to face the fact that there is a 50% chance that she could have inherited the disease herself and she needs to decide whether to take the test or not. That's when Sarah, her mom's best friend, tells her the truth (twist!): Trudie was not Rosie's biological mother and she Sarah, swapped Trudie's dying baby for Rosie. Rosie narrates part of the story but the chapters alternate between her and an anonymous, secret narrator.

Rosie then starts to investigate and (so very easily) discovers who might be her biological mother – Kitty, an actress working in LA – and together with her boyfriend Andy embark to the USA to find her. Not that she tells Andy her true reason for going off him and he thinks they are simply enjoying a gap year starting in NY. Coincidentally (twist!), Kitty is actually in NY at the same time but doesn't really take that well when Rosie shows up. Heartbroken, Rosie decides to go on with their travels but Andy had overheard something (so very easily) and plots to stop by a fish and chip shop where (twist!) Rosie's biological father lives. He welcomes Rosie with open arms (so very easily) but unfortunately, the same can not be said about Holly, Trudie's real daughter, the baby that should have died (twist!) but didn't, who was also the anonymous narrator (twist!) and who now must face the truth about her family and face that fact that she might have Huntington's. To complicate matters further, Holly is also secretly pregnant (twist!) and her decision might impact not only her life but also that of her secret baby.

This is a review that almost didn't happen – I put the book down twice (you know, because of things like sleeping and working) and every time it was a struggle to resume reading. I just couldn't connect with any of the characters or the story at all for a myriad of reasons.

First of all, the plot contrivances drove me bananas. Things happened so easily and so quickly with no real emotional development. This is a really important factor because *Someone Else's Life* is supposed to be about real grief and life-changing decisions and yet, all the emotional reactions to such tremendous events (death, life-threatening illnesses, lies, lost families, etc) were very superficial. Rosie might tell us that she loved Trudie more than anything else but she takes off as soon as her mother is dead and barely even thinks about her, for example. And what's up with all the plot twists? My feeling is that the plot twists trumped character development to the overall detriment to the story. The twists kept coming one after another with little to no time taken to explore their meaning to the lives they affected. Yes, characters reacted to them but the emotional conundrums they engendered were surface deep and more often than not ensuing developments were extremely melodramatic and often relying on big misunderstandings and things like mobiles phones that didn't work, messages that were never received in order to lead to more tension. Exclamation points worked in lieu of true expressions of emotion and dramatic lines like ("It's all MY fault", "it's all HER fault") were repeated and repeated and repeated.

Everybody in the book is good and accepting (except for one character but more on that in a bit) and there

are no real consequences for the midwife who committed a very real crime. It is one thing to explore the fact that suing her for malpractice at this point in time would do no one any good but I felt that this decision was reached through hand waving (she had good intentions after all) rather than exploring all the ethic, moral implications of her actions.

Finally, perhaps my greatest point of contention with the novel and what made me feel really uncomfortable is how ALL teenagers in the book are prepared to be together-forever with their high school sweethearts and ready to be parents at 17/18 except for the one female character who wanted a career more than she wanted children or family and therefore was the only EVIL character in the entire book.

Disappointing.

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## Evie says

**\*\*\*Originally posted to: Bookish Book Blog |YA and Adult Book Reviews, Author Interviews, Guest Posts, Giveaways and news! ^\_\_^**

Katie Dale concocts a deliciously compelling blend of personalities, heartbreak, and family drama, in a story of one girl's journey of self-discovery and finding her place in the world. *Someone Else's Life* is a compulsively readable novel, and one that is sure to resonate with its readers.

The plot line focuses almost entirely on Rosie, a seventeen-year-old girl who just lost her mom to Huntington's Disease and is now terrified by the possibility that she herself might have inherited the disease. Just as she's about to get tested for it, her mother's best friend, Sarah, tells her the truth. And the truth is heartbreaking. Rosie's mom was not her biological mother. Devastated, lost and confused, Rosie decides to find her real mother, and she will travel across the continent to trace her.

Rosie's story was a deeply moving one. From the very beginning every page is loaded with her emotions. And they are very convincing, vibrant, even gut-wrenching at times. The love she has for her mother is deeply felt, and her regrets about the past and her fears and hopes about the future are heartbreakingly real. She's a very relatable protagonist, and one that you can truly connect with. Katie Dale did a really great job crafting her character, as well as all the other fantastic protagonists in her novel - to the point that you really don't feel like you're reading a YA contemporary book, more like you're listening to a story told by your best friend. There's a very comforting feeling of familiarity to this book. The characters described in it could be people you pass by on the street every day. Their worries and dreams, all the battles they fight - they're the same worries, drams and battles that we experience every day. Perhaps that's why this story made such a huge impression on me. I was really moved by it, really glued to its pages, hungry for more, impatient to find out what will happen to Rosie, Andy, aunt Sarah, Nana, and Kitty Clare.

Speaking of characters, I feel that I need to mention how delighted I was with Rosie's strong personality. This girl went through so much and yet there was no self-pity, no whining, no throwing fits nor crying into the pillow for hours. She was such a reasonable, understanding, patient, compassionate and forgiving character. So tough, brave and determined to find true happiness, taking special care not to hurt anyone else in the process. I loved her. I really did. I cheered for her, and laughed and cried with her. Andy, too, was a very thoughtful character. Unlike many boys in YA literature of modern times, he was not a picture perfect. He had his flaws and that made me like him even more. It made him real. Sure, he was handsome, caring and supportive. He was also quite romantic and swoon-worthy, but at the same time he had his bad (or not-too-

good) moments, when he couldn't understand what was happening with Rosie and the frustration coming from that would make him impatient and angry. And that was perfectly fine, because that's how normal people react. Like I said, Katie Dale did a phenomenal job fleshing out her characters and breathing life into them. I was completely and utterly impressed!

The plot line itself is a harrowing one. At times it will make you sad, at times it will make you smile or even laugh. Few scenes might make your heart pound faster. Ultimately, though, it will make you think. If you're anything like me, you will be thinking about this story long after you'll turn the last page. This book does that to you. Rosie's lively first-person narrative will inspire some long hours of pondering issues ranging from identity, self-acceptance, to family and relationship complexities, along with deciding what truly matters in life. Anyone who has ever dealt with death in family, or wondered about their place in the world, will find it really easy to relate to this beautifully-written, charming novel.

And it will also teach a you a very important lesson: that the blood-relation does not make a family. People who truly love you, care for you, and accept you for who you are - they make a family. And the love that comes from that transcends blood.

Katie Dale has written an intimate and authentic portrait of a teen who finds herself struggling to embrace her uncertain future. It's a fabulous read. I strongly recommend it!

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