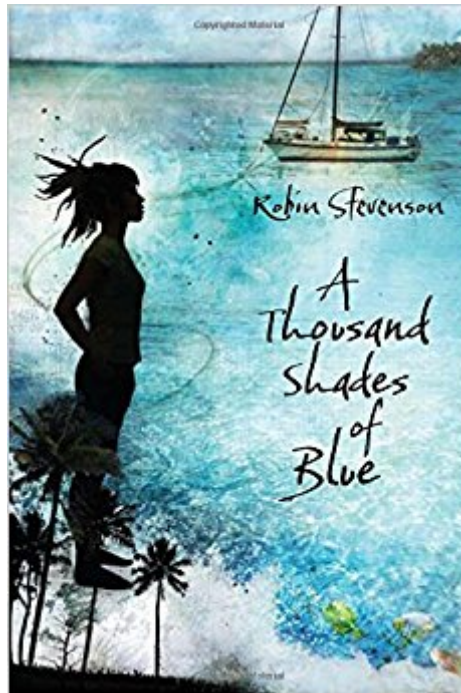


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A Thousand Shades Of Blue (Young Adult Novels)



Synopsis

A sailing trip to the Caribbean might sound great, but sixteen-year-old Rachel can't stand being trapped on a small boat with her family. She misses her best friend and feels guilty about leaving her older sister Emma, who lives in a group home. Her father is driving her crazy with his schedules and rules, her brother is miserable, and there is never anyone her own age around. Worst of all, there is nowhere to go when her parents fight. While their boat is being repaired, the family spends a few weeks in a small Bahamian community, where Rachel and Tim discover a secret which turns their world upside down and threatens to destroy the fragile ties that hold their family together.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 600L (What's this?)

Series: Young Adult Novels

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Orca Book Publishers; First Edition edition (October 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1551439212

ISBN-13: 978-1551439211

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.6 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,463,948 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #66 in [Books > Travel > Caribbean > Bahamas](#) #171 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Marriage & Divorce](#) #195 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs](#)

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

Grade 8-10 • In an attempt to bring them all closer together, Rachel's parents uproot her and her younger brother to sail the family boat down the East Coast and through the Caribbean. Rachel, 16, is totally against the idea; she doesn't want to leave her older sister, who suffers from a brain injury and lives in a group home. They will be gone for an entire year, which chaps Rachel's hide big time, and then she discovers along the way that her mother is having an affair with a smarmy, married yachtsman. Taking comfort in her friendship with older, freer Becca,

Rachel begins to strike out on her own, sneaking out at night to have a few drinks; hear music; and spend time with a smooth, 25-year-old drifter. From struggling with her desire to lose (or hold onto) her virginity to feeling anger toward her mother and pity for her clueless father, Rachel comes across as a real teen with whom readers will identify. Using the small boat as a setting highlights the cramped, suffocating feeling many young people have when spending a lot of time with parents and siblings. The book has no easy answers, and the family's problems are not anywhere near solved in the end, giving the novel a refreshing realism.

—Nora G. Murphy, Los Angeles Academy
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Rachel knew that her mom and dad had been having problems, but she's dismayed when they take her and her younger brother, Tim, out of school for a year to sail in the Bahamas. There, Rachel's emotional state vacillates between boredom and disdain. While in port awaiting repairs, the children see their mother in a compromising situation and, unable to voice her feelings even to Tim, Rachel becomes increasingly angry, restless, and reckless. Through a convincing first-person narrative, the novel portrays a family of unhappy people going their separate directions but occasionally finding ways to come together and even to support each other. Rachel's seething resentment toward her parents is clear, but so is her slowly growing appreciation of her family members as individuals. Though the occasional crude word will keep this paperback out of some high-school libraries, the writing's emotional honesty and realistic dialogue will appeal to many teens. Grades 9-11. --Carolyn Phelan

Wonderfully easy to read. Stevenson deftly handles her teenage protagonist's confusion, concern & growing independence. Her finest achievement is that, though we see them only through sixteen year old eyes, we never doubt the authenticity of Rachel's family and wider world. Thoroughly recommended.

Rachel is a sixteen-year-old daughter trapped on a year-round sailing trip aboard a small boat with her dysfunctional family. Her dad, a child psychologist more in tune to the problems of his patients than his own children, suggested the trip to repair the rift between the family. However, Rachel feels guilty leaving her mentally-impaired older sister behind, along with missing her friends. Rachel's parents continue to fight on the trip, her brother, Tim, seems to be bitter and the fringe hoping to hold their parents together, and Rachel never has anyone her age to be with. Ultimately, Rachel and

Tim discover a grave secret that they are afraid to confront, threatening the continuity of their family that they wish to hold onto. I enjoyed this story, as it had a page-turning plot as Stevenson effectively sets up the suspense so that the reader feels the need to continue reading the story to its ultimate conclusion. Along with some coming-of-age storyline, A THOUSAND SHADES OF BLUE provides for some interesting characters and a creative setting. I only wish that the author chose to develop her characters a bit more, and elaborate on the beauty of the Caribbean and the surroundings, adding further depth to the story. Reviewed by: Andrew S. Cohen

A year long voyage to the Bahamas may sound like the dream vacation, but to Rachel it is a disaster waiting to happen. Ever since Rachel's sister moved out, her parents have been fading away. Rachel's distraught father is suddenly trying to "patch things up" by taking them on this sailboat adventure; and Rachel's mom is becoming more distant than ever. Fake even. When their boat's rudder is cracked, her family is stuck in Georgetown where Rachel and her brother Tim are once again faced with an ugly secret. Then there's Col, the cute twenty-something guy from The Flyer. Will the secrets and lies destroy Rachel's family, or will Rachel destroy herself?*****A Thousand Shades of Blue is a unhappy look into the life of one imperfect family....with some major issues. And what family truly doesn't? Rachel's voice is the voice of hundreds of girl who suffer from a distressed family. Her father is a workaholic who never pays any attention to her and her mother is a complete emotional wreck, so naturally the glue that holds the family together is coming unstuck. Rachel reacts, of course, makes some wrong choices and discovers that lies are the true enemy of families. With that said, I can honestly say this is an edgy book and if I had known what it was exactly about, I would spare myself reenactments of true events. In the end, A Thousand Shades of Blue brought a positive message about families and looking for the "cure" in the wrong place. Though I would never react the same way Rachel did, I feel many girls could relate to Rachel's feelings of pain and the hurt of just being ignored. This book may very well be somewhat of an answer to those who are going through tough family times. I neither encourage nor discourage reading this book-it is entirely up to you since it is a mutual subject. "Two feet and ten feet are shades of blue as different as misery and bliss, but when you are floating in between, it's not so easy to know if you have enough: enough happiness, enough love, enough trust. Our family is far from perfect, but maybe there's still enough there to keep us going." - Rachel

About the Author Robin Stevenson has written six books for young adults including Out of Order, Impossible Things, Big Guy, Dead on the Water, and her latest book, Inferno which recently came out in April. She lives in B.C, Canada.

Genre: Realistic/Contemporary, Tragedy Age Group: YA, ages 15+ or mature readers Content:

language, family violence, and sexual situations

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