



## The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore

*Pippa Wright*

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Friendship is like a shark: it has to keep moving forwards to survive.

Esther and Laura have been best friends since they were seven. Quite a bit has changed since then . . . They've swapped school for full-time employment, boyfriends for bugaboos, experimental hair-dye for salon-preened locks - and their friendship has evolved just as much. But they remain close, knitted together by the bonds of time . . .

So when Esther is told that Laura has gone missing, she immediately leaves her husband and small child for San Francisco and begins to trace her friend's last movements. All she has is an email from Laura: 'I'm channelling Drew Barrymore, as ever. The Gospel, right?'

In trying to understand why Laura has disappeared, and what on earth Drew Barrymore has to do with it, Esther needs to look back. Back at the secrets woven into their friendship and the truths she's avoided facing for so long.

## **The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore Details**

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Author : Pippa Wright

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## From Reader Review The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore for online ebook

### Laura says

Sadly have to agree with a few others on here. Wasn't a particularly compelling read and the climax was a huge let down. I did finish it though and it helped pass an afternoon in the sun.

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### Agi says

You may already know that I am not the biggest fan of the cinema, I'd rather prefer to curl up on the sofa with a good book, but it was also the title of this book, "The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore" that caught my attention. I have waited for this book already last year, so when it finally arrived on my doorstep, I don't have to tell you how excited I was, do I? I've read Pippa Wright's previous books and I enjoyed them, and I was truly curious what she has prepared for us this time. I would say that her books are a little more serious in tone than your usual chick - lit, and as much as "Gospel" was different to those previous reads, this is my Pippa's favourite book yet.

The story follows two best friends, Esther and Laura. They are best friends since school. Now they're both adults, they have their own lives, but when Laura goes missing, Esther drops everything and goes on a journey to find her. Lately their friendship naturally chilled a little, what with Esther having a little boy and Laura being in the US, in Napa, working in a vineyard - it was in fact her boss, Stanley, who let them know that Laura's gone.

The only lead that Esther has are Laura's emails. In one of them she writes she's going to follow the "gospel according to Drew Barrymore" - the girls believe that they Drew's life is a reflection of their lives. What happened with Laura? Is Esther going to find her?

Esther and Laura couldn't be more different and couldn't have different life approach, attitude, vision of their future, plans. It is as it usually is, no matter if we read about sisters or best friends, one is the good one and the other is the not so good one, and the first must always save a bottom of the second. One is the most beautiful, the one that everything comes naturally and easily to her, is in the popular gang at school, while the other must fight for everything. It was the same with those two girls, Esther was the most organized, while Laura was the free spirit who always put herself in troubles. This friendship was so complicated, and Pippa Wright writes how it really is in life and real friendship: Laura and Esther can't live without each other, but there is some kind of competition between them, and as much as they are cheering on one another, I have also had a feeling that they are secretly happy if one of them fails, if one of them is on trouble.

The story is alternating between Laura and Esther, between past and present. We know from the beginning that Laura is missing and here is when the adventure starts. Thanks to the coming back to the past we get to know the girls, and we of course form an opinion about them. I can't say that I loved one of them more, because I had issues with both of them, although of course Laura being Laura, I couldn't help but have my heart beating stronger towards Esther. Laura comes as an aggressive parasite in this story, to be honest, a girl who learnt how to wonderfully use people to her advantage, and Esther of course played this game, being there always when her friend needed her and taking a back seat when there was no such need. I couldn't help it but I just liked Esther more, even though there were moments that she also totally played on my nerves and I so wanted to shake her and change her attitude, which was a little too doormat - like for my liking.

The switching between past and present and also between the points of view is done seamlessly and it is very easy to follow.

As I have already mentioned, I am not the biggest fan of films but I can understand people who are fascinated by cinema. I was also curious how much Drew Barrymore is going to be in the book and how much the lives of our characters are going to mirror Drew's life. I find it a great idea and I think the author did a brilliant job here. And even I, such a laic when it comes to actors, could easily find situations relating to those of Drew's and how there were moments that the girls' lives so much reminded hers. It was absolutely new and totally fresh idea to me, this of living life according to the life of Drew Barrymore - BUT of course not too literally, and this whole idea seemed really absolutely natural, not too forced, and it just happened by itself.

"The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore" is really a coming of age story. The author has brilliantly portrayed the main characters through all their years, and showed how much and in which direction they were both developing and maturing. I absolutely love when characters in the book, in this case Esther and Laura, move, they're mobile, they change throughout the story. Pippa Wright has, with a very sharp eye, described the mechanism of friendship, not the easiest one, and showed how complex and ungrateful can it be, but that there is really nothing better than a real friendship, no matter how raw it is.

What I also enjoyed is the fact that I am a girl from Drew Barrymore generation, too, and was growing together with her - in totally different background of course, but all the mentions of the 80's were so familiar to me. The whole story in fact has sounded very realistic, it was very easy to imagine the clothes, music, parties that Pippa writes about. And exactly, I almost forgot, grrr, Pippa's descriptions are one of the best ever - she describes situations or places in a brilliant way, but not with too many words. You know how sometimes the authors concentrate on writing long passages about nothing in fact, which often makes the books totally kaput, but Pippa has written in a very well - balanced way, with not too much, not too less, which makes the book outstanding!

But don't be mistaken, the book is not only about antics of two girls growing up together. No. The story is full of twists and turns and it is more serious in tone than your usual chick - lit. It is not a book when, while reading, you will be laughing out loud, no, you'd be rather holding your breath at the unexpected turns. The writing style, although so smooth and easy to follow, is also more serious, but very engaging and just makes you want to turn the pages and see what's going to happen. It was fast paced, with a hint of mystery to it.

I absolutely liked how Pippa solved the plot of Laura disappearing. We know that she's gone and we, together with Esther, follow the clues and suggestions that should - if we're lucky - to help us find her. It ended to my absolute satisfaction and I, in fact, loved the last few pages. They were poignant and gentle and make the perfect ending to the whole story. It is really a great book about friendship and its nature and complexity and Pippa Wright has done a brilliant job. Highly recommended read.

Copy received from publisher in exchange for a review.

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### **Jolien says**

actual rating: 2.5 stars

I didn't really know how to rate it. This book took me weeks to finish though I didn't dislike it. The problem I

guess was that I wasn't hooked AT ALL. I didn't connect to the story or the characters maybe because I'm a lot younger than they are in this book.

The story just didn't interest me that much. I wanted more mystery. But I didn't hate it or anything so yeah 2.5 stars. It was ok. Nothing more nothing less.

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### **Anna (BooksandBookends) says**

*I received a free eBook copy of this book by the book's publishers via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

Laura and Esther have been best friends practically all of their lives. As time passes, their differences are greater than ever. The gorgeous Laura has little desire to settle and enjoys a multitude of lovers whereas Esther longs for one true love and a family to settle down into. When Laura mysteriously disappears one day from her new life in America, Esther is left to question how close their friendship actually is...

The book flits between present day and Esther's recollections of her childhood and growing up alongside Laura. I really enjoyed how Wright has written the story in the manner as it slowly reveals more and more information about the two girls and how their lives have shaped them into the people they are in the present day. Drew Barrymore and her 'gospel' is what links the two women together and makes a brilliant basis for the different chapters in their lives. With quotes from films spanning their lives, it really made the characters come to life.

When Laura disappears, Esther has a trip of a lifetime. With only a few emails and her knowledge of Laura, Esther is faced with the challenge of finding her best friend in a country she has never been to. The people she meets along the journey may not be as reliable as she may first think, and can friendships be rekindled when they've seemingly become a whole world apart?

A brilliant read and definitely a great summer book! 5/5 stars.

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### **Sarah says**

This book is very real. At times I didn't like either of the main characters, but I got their friendship as unhealthy as it is. I got the I love you/ hate you aspect of female relationships. Did I feel a bond to either woman? No. But I wanted to know what happened to them in the end. I think this one will stay with me for awhile.

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### **Leah says**

The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore is Pippa Wright's fourth, long-awaited novel (having been delayed last year – boo!) and as soon as I heard about it, I was quite excited to read it. I'm not a massive Drew Barrymore fan (I can take her or leave her and don't know the last film of hers I watched) but I love, love, love books with a theme. Especially when that theme is worshipping a pretty awesome actress. Who better to draw inspiration from than Drew, who's a fairly impressive person?

Another big plus for the novel was the nostalgia factor. I was born in 1990, and I am very much a 90s kid, with cassette tapes and walkmans and Nokia mobile phones which were the iPhones of today, and to wander back through that time and delve into Esther and Laura's friendship was amazing. Friendships are different nowadays, at least I think so. There aren't really any people I can call a friend, never mind a best friend, that's just always been something I don't excel at, not helped by the fact we moved to Europe in 2003, cutting me off from all of my friends at the time and it's pretty hard to make friends when you don't speak the language of the country you now live in. But, I'm okay that way.

Now that that means I don't like to read about a good friendship book, because I do. I LOVE THEM. There's something about reading about girls who meet and bond over an owl missing its head, as they argue about who is Gertie from ET (Confession: I have never seen ET). From then on, Esther and Laura were there for each other for everything and we get to see that as the novel progresses, with the two storylines. The first is Esther in the present day, in first person, trying to find Laura who has gone missing in California (no, not in a Gone Girl way, though I was worried for a millisecond) and then we go through Drew Barrymore's filmography and see how it relates to the two girls – growing up, getting first boyfriends, falling out, making up, we get to see their friendship in every stage, the good and the bad. It's hard to quantify their friendship, though, because it's not quite the toxic relationships from say Something Borrowed from Emily Giffin, but nor is it perfect. There's ructions and arguments and resentment on both sides. But, all that's really important to know is that when Laura needs Esther, Esther is there, and vice versa. Laura might have been a touch selfish, and perhaps not put as much in to the relationship as Esther, but she wasn't awful and you can tell that they both really care about each other, even at the bad times.

The Gospel According To Drew Barrymore is one of the most compelling books I've read for a while, especially in the Chick Lit genre, which hasn't been good to me so far this year. I really do think more authors should write books about friendship because I love them so much, and they should also set those books in the 90s because the nostalgia just blows my mind and makes me miss simpler times, before mobile phones that are like spaceships ;). Pippa Wright is a fantastic writer and to see how much her writing has evolved since Lizzy Harrison is so, so great. I loved the flashbacks, I loved the first- and third-person narratives, and I loved unravelling the friendship between Esther and Laura. It's easy to look at and judge someone else's friendship but until you're in that situation, you can't really judge. Sometimes you have to bite your tongue and just be there for your friend, be their constant, when they need you even if it isn't always reciprocated. It's nice to be reminded every now and again that friendship isn't all happiness and roses and butterflies, sometimes it's simply sticking chewing gum on a broken owl, to make sure it's never found out that he's really headless.

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### **Laura says**

This was a surprisingly good read! It was so cool to slowly see the development of Esthers and Lauras friendship and how things slowly unraveled. I loved the way it was written, the change between the present and the past in the chapters and how stuff just slowly made more sense. I also loved that it wasn't focused on romance, but on friendship. The up and downs of it, but also how great and important friendship is. The Gospel according to Drew Barrymore made the story even more intersting and very unique.

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### **Natalie TBGWP says**

Sometimes a super pretty cover and a great blurb is all a book can offer you. And I'm afraid to say that this is one of them. A slow pace, a to-ing and fro-ing from past to present story with not much plot, and to be fair an ending that really is an anti climax. For me it was a big let down.

I've read books by Pippa Wright before and I have loved them. She's charming, funny, and has great characters. For some this will be the same. Unfortunately, I just couldn't get into the pace of the book, the mindset of the characters, or the charm that Drew Barrymore was supposed to bring with her.

2/5

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### **Melissa says**

I could relate to this book in some ways. A lot of it reminded me of my relationship with my BFF...all the ups and downs, but knowing we still love each other at the end of the day. Some of the conversations between Esther and Laura could have been ripped right from the e-mails between me and my BFF. Also, I've seen most of the Drew Barrymore films that were referenced, so I knew what was being talked about. They did leave off *Boys on the Side* and *Riding in Cars with Boys*, both of which would have fit well into the "gospel" at various times. The story also reminds me of *How I Met Your Mother*, as we're not only guessing where Laura is and why she disappeared, but also who Esther's husband is supposed to be, based on memories from their past.

The parts from the past reminded me of the book *One Day*, as they usually took place during the span of a day and were during assorted years while the two girls were growing up. Maybe it was the British flair, as well, such as references I wouldn't have gotten unless I grew up in the UK. Having said that, I think the story could have been fine if some of the flashbacks had not been there or had been shortened a bit. Sometimes they went on for quite a while before getting to the point. However, I did laugh out loud at times. It would have been interesting to have both Esther and Laura's perspectives. Perhaps Laura would have seemed like more of a sympathetic character if that were the case. The story was all from Esther's perspective and led readers to feel that she was always being "wronged" by Laura.

Overall, *The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore* was an easy read and a great way to spend a lazy summer day stuck indoors to avoid the heat. There is a lot of heart to it and it emphasizes how important our female friendships are, no matter the length.

Movie casting:

Laura: Krysten Ritter

Esther: Emily Blunt

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### **Sharon says**

Thought I would really enjoy this one as much as I have the previous books of her that I have read but this one was a real chore to read, I only persevered as I HATE giving up on books.

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### **Kim says**

I must admit the title intrigued me with this book. The two friends watched Drew Barrymore films as youngsters- and hopefully this will help Esther during the course of the book.

The story is about 2 friends- Esther and Laura. When Laura doesn't turn up for work in San Francisco and the police aren't actively searching, Laura decides to leave her family in England to go and look for her. The book deals with the past and present and the complexities of their friendships over the years. Esther comes across as a very sweet character whereas Laura uses people to her own advantage. The trips back to their childhood days was a blast to the past.

This is the first book by Pippa Wright that I've read and I do have the Foster Husband on my kindle to read soon.

Many thanks to the publisher and Net Galley for a copy of the book.

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### **Book-shelf Shelf says**

I thought this would have a bit more of Drew Barrymore in it, however the references are good and picked some amazing films. The story is about growing up and friendship, the boundaries and how far they can be pushed. I loved the book and couldn't wait to be able to have a spare hour to get back into it. However, the ending was disappointing and not what i was expecting after all that had gone on. The story flits between the past and present of the two girls, which is done brilliantly, so i can't understand why the end was so rushed. However the story is a very well written and enjoyable read.

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### **Paris Baker says**

Originally posted on Paris Baker's Book Nook.

As a Drew Barrymore fan and roller skater, I was all over this as soon as I saw that cover. The blurb quickly intrigued me, so many thanks to Pan Macmillan for the review copy.

Esther and Laura have been best friends for practically their whole lives. Now, all grown up, their lives have drifted apart somewhat, though they've kept their friendship. With Esther settled down in the UK with a husband and baby, and Laura off working at a vineyard in Napa, it's fair to say their lives have taken very separate paths.

When Laura suddenly disappears, Esther drops everything to go and find her, and is forced to question how much of their friendship has really lasted the years and distance.

As a Drew Barrymore fan, I really enjoyed the way the girls, Laura in particular, lived her life by the gospel according to Drew. I thought the links to Drew's films were cleverly written and subtle enough to not seem ridiculous.

I also enjoyed the stark contrast in personalities between Esther and Laura. I can't say I overly connected with either – finding Laura conceited, selfish and inconsiderate, and Esther too much of a push-over, and generally a bit of a doormat – but these contrasts are what made the story work, especially as they grew up into more independent women.

Pippa has done a great job of keeping the reader intrigued, switching from present day to flashback sequences that offer more insight into Laura's persona, and adding several twists and turns to the story as you work along with Esther to piece together the clues of Laura's disappearance.

The Gospel According to Drew Barrymore is an original read, offering an entertaining and insightful look into the very heart and depths of both human character and friendships.

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### **Melissa Taylor says**

It was not at all what I expected - for a start Esther goes to the Napa Valley, not San Francisco, to find Laura - but I did enjoy it. I struggled with the back and forth between past and present at first but I did like how real their friendship felt and how the small details became relevant. I thought it ended a bit abruptly and it is quite slow-paced, but overall an enjoyable read.

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### **Catfairy Books says**

Omg omg! Say what?! This is totally a must read!

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