



## How I Lose You

*Kate McNaughton*

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What happens to a story when it ends too soon?

When Eva and Adam fall into bed one Friday night, tired and happy after drinks with friends, they have their whole lives ahead of them. But then their story ends.

How I Lose You is a love story told backwards – the story of Eva and Adam, which is warmer and funnier and more beautiful because we know it is going to be interrupted. It's a story Eva thought she knew – but as she will discover, it's not just the ending of the story that she got wrong.

## How I Lose You Details

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Author : Kate McNaughton

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## From Reader Review How I Lose You for online ebook

### Hannah says

I requested this mainly based on the tagline: "This is the story of Adam and Eve. It ends on page twelve." I mean, that is just brilliant and how could I not? But the book just was not for me. I made it about 50% in when I decided to call it quits. I want to emphasise that this is not a bad book at all. It just did not work for me. I expected something different and I thought the playing with different timelines and the framing device would work for me brilliantly (I do love stories told unchronologically!) but it just didn't. I think my main problem was that the story itself was kind of flat and uninteresting. I am just not that interested in people falling in love (at least not in books). The grief part of the books worked better for me: here I thought the circular way Kate McNaughton writes her paragraphs was done beautifully. Sadly this part of the book took the backseat to the love story. I also struggled with the dialogue a whole lot and did not think it felt quite natural. I don't usually focus on dialogue in books but this just turned me off.

So overall, just not my type of book and very different to what I expected.

I received an arc of this book courtesy of NetGalley and Transworld Publishers in exchange for an honest review.

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### Anne Goodwin says

There's a refreshing honesty in the author's depiction of how, even in the most loving relationships, we don't always share our best sides with our partners, or forgive them when they do the same to us, illustrated in dialogue, complete with pauses think with meaning, that would work well on stage. On occasion, however, this style slowed the novel down too much for me. It picks up when she travels to Berlin when it becomes a genealogy narrative, with sharp observations of how we might continue to believe the family stories bequeathed to us by our parents long past the age when scepticism usually creeps in.

Full review

Even loving marriages have secrets: How I Lose You & Fire Sermon

<http://annegoodwin.weebly.com/1/post/...>

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### Belinda Munro says

3.5 stars. The writing in this book is quite good- the author is clearly very talented. It was however not quite what I was expecting and hoping for and I found it jumped around too much for me to become fully engaged in. The topic of grief was explored beautifully, however it felt very long and just didn't keep my interest. I was left feeling a bit depressed after each chapter- perhaps it just wasn't the right time for me to read this one. Would read more from author in the future.

Thanks kindly to Netgalley, publisher and author for the opportunity to read and review this book.

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### **Rachel says**

A solidly interesting and compelling read, and involving interesting characters who really pulled me in. There were also several poignant and thought-provoking moments that made it worth reading. I couldn't give it more than three stars, however, because some plot elements were rather forced, and coming up against these moments were a bit jarring and took me away from what was working in the story. A lovely read overall and well-written.

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### **Sara says**

Unfortunately I just couldn't get through the book and stopped reading half way. The grief that poured out from the main character was palatable and the storyline too monotonous.

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### **Lauren says**

The premise of the book, that the husband died on page 12 but that this was not the main event of the book, was what drew me to read it.

I loved the storylines as they unfolded, even though this plot device did not fully stand up and the story was not what I imagined it would be at the start... it is still 4\* from me even but I do think the plot could have been delivered differently.

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### **Esther Reeves says**

Initially I was gripped by this book, as I started it while lying in bed next to my sleeping husband. It made me very reflective. Then as time went on the jumping about in time became irritating and a lot harder to follow. I took a while to get through the middle section of the book, and I started to wonder on the detail around the Carmen, Henry And Georgie part of the book. It all seemed kind of pointless. I also thought this about the awards night and the almost infidelity with Tom. What did it really add to the story? That their relationship wasn't perfect?

When Eva was in Berlin it became more interesting again. I enjoyed the budding relationship with Ulrich and the mystery of discovering what really happened to her mother's family. I would have liked a different ending, one which sees Eva on her own but okay. I would have liked to hear the eventual conversation between mother and daughter. An apology to Ulrich wouldn't go amiss either.

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### **Rachel Hemmings says**

I picked this book up due to the line "when Eva and Adam fall into bed one Friday evening, tired and happy after an evening with friends, they have their whole life ahead of them. But their story ends on page 12" I tried my best with this book and gave up as it was so mundane and was boring me to death! I really tried to get into it but it was a book about boring married life switching to before and after.

Would not recommend

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### **Lyn Quilty says**

A book that takes the reader on an emotional roller coaster. I found it especially sad as a friend has recently had her husband die and I was constantly thinking of her as Eva struggles with her loss. Clever plot line, I liked the time shifts. Recommended.

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### **Hayley says**

I've been sat here a while thinking how to review this book in a way that will do it justice.

This book starts with Eva and her husband Adam returning home a little drunk from a night out with friends. The next morning Eva awakes to a devastating loss.

The book starts in a way with the end and then we go back to how Eva & Adam met at university, how she falls in love and then back to the present on how she deals with grief and makes her tentative first steps forward in building a life without her love.

I didn't expect this book to give me such an emotional gut reaction. It made me stop and think about how lucky I am to have my husband and how much I love him. It actually kept me awake at night thinking how very short life can be and how we have to appreciate what we have whilst we have it.

McNaughton's expression of grief in her writing is profound. It's heart breakingly beautiful.

Eva goes back to her family's roots in Berlin (a place where Adam had worked for so many years, although she had never joined him) and makes a remarkable discovery about her own past.

I didn't want this book to end. I wanted to keep on reading about Eva and what life held for her next. I cannot recommend this book enough.

I would like to thank Hannah Bright & Penguin Random House for a copy of this book in exchange for a review.

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### **Nia says**

Kate McNaughton's debut novel, *How I Lose You*, is utterly devastating by page 12. After a tipsy night with friends, Eva and Adam head to bed feeling happy and full of the promise of married life. When Eva awakes the next morning to a terrible discovery, it seems that their story is over. I must admit that those first pages made my heart ache and I could not control the tears that threatened to spill over with every word I read. McNaughton is not cruel and unforgiving, however; starting from this terrible moment, she slowly and carefully weaves the tapestry of Eva and Adam's life together, each thread as rich as the last. Through this emotive narrative Eva becomes a friend and the reader makes each discovery about her relationship with Adam, and her own life, alongside her.

McNaughton's depiction of grief and mourning is stunning and thoroughly empathetic. As Eva struggles to come to terms with the life changing events of that Friday night, she looks back over a life she thought she knew; her history, her relationships, her identity. Eva stumbles across some secrets that Adam kept, some truths she cannot face, and jumps to the wildest conclusions – what was Adam really doing on his frequent trips to Berlin? Who is the mysterious woman that crops up in his research files and emails? McNaughton exposes the idea that we never fully know the person we share our lives with; our homes, experiences, hearts. They always have a secret side, a past you can never know, thoughts you can never share. Both unsettling and honest, a series of revelations lead Eva to understand more about the man she loved, but less about herself. Her memories of Adam and the life they shared become fixed, stronger, rooted, but her own identity and the history it is based upon, told and re-told with passion and pride, crumbles and weakens. The most startling and fascinating discoveries made by Eva are about her own past and future. Through loss, Eva reconnects with Adam and finally discovers her true self.

How I Lose You is a complex and multi-layered novel. Each setting – London, Berlin, New York – is richly depicted with sensory detail. Place and memory intertwine, until they are both inextricably linked; the lives of others who occupy these spaces become part of Eva's own. Eva is a rounded character, full of complexities, insecurities, inconsistencies. Her journey from that Friday night, back through her past and into her future, is poignant, revealing; she learns stark truths about herself, and reflects on memories that may have not been quite as they seem. Throughout it all, Adam is a constant, and their relationship is played out in thoughtful scenes, loving and tender. Their bond is deep despite attempts by external forces to break it. McNaughton uses How I Lose You to remind readers to live each moment fully and to share life with one another, as it is terribly fleeting. Although this is a novel about loss, trust, identity and history, it is centred around love, for others and for yourself. It is beautiful, both devastating and gentle; an uplifting novel that finds hope in the darkest of life's moments.

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How I Lose You is published on 8th March 2018 by Transworld Publishers, an imprint of Penguin Random House UK. Thank you to Transworld Publishers and NetGalley for a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

## **Beverley says**

How I Lose You is a clever and well-crafted novel with an extraordinary and deftly handled narrative structure. Beginning at the end of Eva and Adam's story it flashes back to fill in their history whilst also propelling us forward as Eva adjusts to her new life.

It is very difficult to categorise How I Lose You, on the one hand it is a love story – we meet Eva and Adam as undergraduates, we see them as friends, we see them fall for each other but then, something awful happens and it becomes a book about the beauty of life, melancholy and love. It is very literary in places, words are used to great effect and there are some wonderfully beautiful passages and moments.

This is a book about grief, loss and love, and although it is both sad and devastating, I found it very uplifting. I do feel though that I didn't feel what I was 'supposed' (for want of a better word) to feel when reading this book. Others have said that they were overwhelmed by it and found it incredibly emotional, and whilst I did find it extremely sad in places, I didn't feel the gut-punch of grief that comes with becoming emotionally invested in a character in a book only to have them taken away from me. The back-to-front narrative

structure meant that I knew the end and I found the novel to be incredibly bittersweet. It got deep into my head and into my heart.

Eva and Adam are both compelling, well written characters – as is their relationship. Kate McNaughton has a knack for writing the nuances of relationships, we are voyeurs in the will-they-won't-they of friends Harry and Carmen, we feel Eva's worry at meeting parents for the first time and the adjustment in their social circle after losing Adam is subtly and adeptly handled. I loved that the characters were not black and white, Eva in particular deserves sympathy but she does surprising and upsetting things that test your sympathy for her.

This is a very clever book which I gobbled up in a few hours. It is a beautiful, deep and emotional read. I loved it.

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### **Jenna Morrison says**

Kate. McNaughton has found such a unique way of telling this story. Starting at the end of their relationship, and in such a heartbreak way, means throughout the book you can look at their story in a very different way.

The narrative splits between the aftermath, and Eva looking back at how their relationship panned out. The characters and their emotions are written beautifully, which means difficult topics are handled well.

I highly recommend this book, just be prepared for an emotional read.

Thank you to the publisher and NetGalley for a copy of this book.

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### **Christine Rennie says**

Whilst the beginning of the book was really engrossing the rest of the book, didn't really live up to expectations or the reviews. I found at times it was getting very tedious but maybe that is me. Read it and found out for yourself.

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### **Katherine Sunderland says**

This is a beautiful read which is not only full of heartache and heartbreak, but also full of heart and warmth. It is an emotional read and yet, despite the palpable evocation of grief and loss, McNaughton has balanced it with a story that offers hope and acceptance.

This is a story about Eva and Adam, but we know from reading the front cover that is not going to be a happy one. From the opening, as we are only just beginning to get to know our protagonists, we are faced with Adam's death. And Eva, confident in love and comfortably settled, with a future, suddenly finds herself alone and adrift. Adam dies in his sleep after a night out. I found this a really interesting plot point and thought that the moment at which Eva realises he is dead was very well handled and presented. There is no sensationalised accident, or emotive dramatisation of Adam being a victim of someone else's mistake or

malice; there is no lingering illness or suggestion that Adam is in any way at risk of dying - she just suddenly awakes to find he has ceased breathing. It's powerful.

Throughout the novel, McNaughton's writing feels authentic and real. Eva's character is well crafted, always believable and McNaughton manages the balance of evoking the various stages and degrees of Eva's grief with conviction and sensitivity. There were some scenes that were incredibly powerful and there were some sentences that stopped me in my tracks. There are some lines that are so resonant and thought provoking that any reader will be challenged to consider their own mortality and the feelings they have for those around them. I really enjoyed the mix of dialogue, passages which told the story and then the interjections of more direct, perhaps more philosophical or poetic passages as Eva muses on - or tries to accept - her situation. The undulating rhythm of the prose is used effectively to tell both a story of a young couple as they fall in love and a contemplation on love and loss.

The structure of the novel is also very effective. It moves backwards into the past to show the reader Eva and Adam's relationship which helps lift the atmosphere of the novel, as well as reveal more about the characters. Then there is a contrast from the moments set in the present, which to begin with are much bleaker but develop to tell a new story. As the novel progresses, the author weaves in more threads, plot lines and interesting revelations which suddenly begin to take the novel in a different direction. At 400 pages long, McNaughton has enough time to make this a more complex and multilayered novel and to make it more than just a tale of a woman rebuilding her life. I never once felt that the novel was slowing down or over written but enjoyed spending the time with the characters and their journeys.

I liked this novel because there were so many elements to it. I liked Eva's physical journey as she seizes upon a random email in Adam's inbox, leaps to conclusions and takes it upon herself to follow the source, expecting to find one answer and actually finding something she could never have predicted - just as she had been unable to see the direction her life was going to take at the beginning of the story. I liked Eva's emotional journey as she grieves, has to deal with everyone else's grief and tries to rebuild her life. I liked the mystery surrounding who Adam had been communicating with and why, and the impact this has on Eva. I thought the ending was extremely satisfying - pleasing, affirming and right.

There are elements of David Nicholls' One Day in parts of this story but there are also elements of something more literary. The writing is beautiful and at times full of real melancholy, yet other times, lighter and with a more deft touch. McNaughton is clearly a very talented writer with a love for words, language and characters. Her depiction of emotions is flawless and her exploration of human nature, love and relationships is poignant and insightful.

We think we know how this story might end. We think we know Adam - or think we have been reading the clues correctly. But, just like Eva, there is an unexpected journey ahead with an ending that is not obvious, yet proves just how you can find yourself at the point when you are most lost.

If you want a story to immerse yourself in then this is the one. McNaughton's power to entertain as well as move is impressive. This is a special read and I highly recommend you do not miss out on How I Lose You.

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