



34 Seconds

Stella Samuel

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Nikki and Will fell in love a lifetime ago in Deltaville, Virginia. Now living in Colorado with her family, Nikki is invited to attend Will's wedding back in Virginia where she finds her past staring her in the face. Will never wanted a wife, and he broke Nikki's heart long ago. Nikki knew what she wanted: a strong, happy marriage and children, a future. She found those things when she married Chris, and she and Will managed to grow their friendship after heartbreak.

A year after the wedding, Nikki is faced with her painful past again. She soon discovers she must find the strength to help Will on his own personal journey. In thirty-four seconds, she sees him slip from her life forever. Watching Will cross over to his fate, her past collides with her present, and Nikki learns she's never been in control of her own destiny. Her own journey back to her family in Colorado becomes one of self-discovery. With the help of Will's voice to carry her across the country, Nikki must decide how she will move forward.

34 Seconds Details

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From Reader Review 34 Seconds for online ebook

TDCbookreviews says

Nikki and Will were once in love. A long, long time ago... but some loves never die. This heartbreakingly beautiful story will be pulling on your heartstrings from page one.

Now grown up and living in Colorado with her husband and two children, Nikki has the life she wanted. Will, her summertime love from long ago, is still back in small-town Virginia and is getting married; the man who said he'd never be married, with a family, is finally settling down. Well, Nikki is a big enough woman to go and see her friend be happy.

Then she gets a phone call that changes her life.

This story is very much a "me before you" vibe, but with a history to it. We get lots of flashbacks from Nikki's perspective about how she met Will, and their sweet moments together; plus a long, beautiful letter from Will to her explaining all that he could explain with his words. If you like Romeo and Juliet kind of love stories then for sure pick this one up, but clear your schedule, distractions and grab the kleenex box (or two)! Amazing story; 4 stars.

Stacie says

Nikki and Will had that summer romance that every girl dreams about. They sat on the beach, they took long walks, and Will sang Nikki the songs they wrote together. Their romance was full of passion and Nikki thought they would be together forever. Instead, Will wasn't "marriage material" and ended their relationship. Nikki now lives in Colorado with her husband, Chris, and two young children. Her past is being brought back to the front of her mind because she is traveling back home to Virginia to attend Will's wedding. Will and Nikki have maintained a solid friendship over the years, talking weekly, even after Will broke Nikki's heart. A year after Nikki revisits her past by attending Will's wedding, she must again confront it in a much more heartbreakingly beautiful way, by returning home to Will for his final journey.

Samuel's debut novel is full of emotion, romance, heartbreak, and love. Nikki flashes back often to her time with Will while she is getting her children breakfast, while they nap, and lying in bed. The passion she and Will shared seems to monopolize her thoughts and takes her focus away from her family. Attending Will's wedding was very difficult for Nikki and she spends a large amount of time obsessing over Will rather than enjoying the festivities and her family. I found Nikki's whining and obsession became a bit annoying as I traveled through the story.

When her weekly phone calls with Will stop abruptly after the wedding, Nikki is confused and hurt. She can't understand why Will no longer is making their friendship a priority and his new wife isn't offering any information. A few months later, Nikki is summoned to Will's bedside, and again, the story focuses on Nikki's obsession with her memories of Will. I found the flashbacks to Nikki's relationship with Will to be a bit boring at times. The first few gave a nice picture of the intensity of their romance and the passion Will and Nikki shared, but after awhile, I started skimming them as they were a bit repetitive. Samuel is extremely talented in her writing and I'm sure worked hard on the editing process, I just felt like it was a bit much. The words to the many songs that Will and Nikki wrote were written from the heart. A neat addition to this novel

would be a recording of these songs!

When Nikki returns home to be with Will, I felt like his final days were a bit too bogged down in the details. I understand the difficulty associated with someone in his final days without the minutiae of details, including pages of him thrashing in bed or unable to get off the floor. Her focus on Hospice and the wonderful care they provide to patients and their families is commendable. She shows that the final days can be anything but smooth and predictable, but with guidance from Hospice, they can be an invaluable resource.

I think Samuel has a knack for romance writing but needs to find a more concise way to tell the story that will keep readers from skimming. Less is more.

Kaitlyn (ktxx22) Walker says

Man o man!!! 2nd DNF of the year. This book is NOT my style. I am not going to rate it but I will say it is well written, and if you are into contemporary/romance/coming of age! This is the book for you! I cannot remember where I got this copy from... Goodreads or a book company here on Instagram. Either way it was a giveaway win! And I'm happy to pass it on to someone who can appreciate this type of book.... aka not me.

Cathy Brockman says

4 meows 2 purrs (low sexual content)

34 seconds is a very poignant story about young love, first love, true love and love and life in general. Be sure to have a box of tissues in hand you are going to need them.

The story is beautifully written about a woman now married, facing the loss of her first love and now best friend. The story is told both in present day and memories making it very powerful. Stella paints a beautiful picture of Deltaville and Will. I could just imagine Will sitting on his boat with his guitar one blond curl flopping into his face. She made my mouth water for some shrimp or crabcake.

I will warn you if you have ever dealt with a loved one and cancer or hospice this could be a trigger for you.

Jessica Heath says

This book took me through an incredibly beautiful journey of love and loss. The love that was expressed in this story, is a love, many only dream of having. I highly recommend you read this book, and let yourself get lost in the story. Not many books make me cry but this one did. Great book over all.

Marla says

I loved this book. filled with such emotions this book caught my attention from the beginning till the end. the way the author wrote this book was almost the way my mind would think. I can not say enough good things about it.

Tania Gerard says

When I started to read 34 seconds I thought I was reading a story about another woman, but as I turned the pages I understood I was also reading a story about myself. Stella Samuel connects motherhood and romantic love in a way that is easy to see how we become who we are in the process of our dearest losses. A book that will keep you awake until you finish the next chapter (and maybe one more).
