

Dana Alexander
RIFF PART 2

Contemporary realistic Fiction

- takes place in modern times
- possible, can actually happen

"**Realistic fiction** is the term used to describe stories that could have actually occurred to people or animals. The possibility exists that the events or similar events could have taken place."

Haylie Jones = Female protagonist - 14 years old freshman

- Green eyes, Dark Brown hair
- Skinny, undeveloped body
- only child (no siblings)

Starting her freshman year of high school. Her mom died over the summer, committed suicide because she suffered from bipolar disorder. Haylie moves to a new school because her father wanted to get her out of town and allow the two of them to start over. Her father is very loving and **supportive** and understands that Haylie is having an extremely difficult time coping with the loss of her mother. **Flashbacks** to incidences with her mothers mood swings and events leading up to her mothers suicide:

1 flashback:

extremely happy: *mother woke her up early one morning when Haylie was 10 and was dressed in a red dress, heels, and wearing pearls and makeup. Told Haylie to hurry up and get dressed, they were going to the city to see a Broadway show even though Haylie had a big assignment due that day. The two of them went to the city and laughed and joked and had a great time. The two sat on the train on the way home with their arms wrapped around each other. The two discussed how much they loved each other and how happy they were to be mother and daughter.*

extremely sad: *That night Haylie was getting ready for bed, her mother came storming in screaming at her. Screaming about how much she hates Haylie and how Haylie takes her mother for granted and never tells her that she loves her. Mother starts knocking everything off of Haylie's dresser and throwing things across the room. Screaming crying and going ballistic yelling at Haylie. Haylie extremely confused because she had just spent the day together having fun and enjoying each others company. Haylies father comes running in and hugs her mother from behind and carries her out of the room trying to calm her down. Father comes back in an hour later after finally putting her mother to sleep and kisses Haylie goodnight. "Haylie, you*

Commented [1]:

Loving supportive family is a reoccurring theme throughout these novels.

Commented [2]:

Coping with loss is a major reoccurring theme throughout YAL novels.

Commented [3]:

Stylistic technique used throughout the 3 novels.

know your mother loves you so much and you know that she cant help those outburst sometimes but its not her talking its her illness”

Flashback which slowly unfolds throughout the novel:

On Haylie’s 14th birthday (May 21) she woke up with a note taped to her mirror that says “Happy Birthday Cupcake, your present is in the laundry room, Love always Mom” Goes down to laundry, finds mother hanging. There is a present wrapped in pink and gold wrapping paper, with a shinny bow on the top sitting on the floor. Haylie has never opened the gift and constantly has flashbacks to that morning.

Commented [4]:
Flashbacks

New School “Charlesville High School” :

First day of chemistry class teacher (Mrs. Rogers) introduces Haylie to the class as the new student and assigns her to be Blake Cunnings’ lab partner. No one from this new town knows about Haylie’s mother’s death.

Blake Cunnings: 15 year old, Sophomore. Brown hair, blue eyes, muscular build **Love Interest**

Commented [5]:
Love interest is a very common theme among almost all young adult literature books.

-Very smart, stand off-ish, star of the lacrosse team.

-Haylie is instructed to sit next to him during their chemistry class because he has the only open seat in the class next to him and she becomes his lab partner for the remainder of the school year.

-First day Haylie says Hi to him and he seems completely uninterested in her or in the class in general.

-He Seems nervous about talking to Haylie and she can’t figure out what she is doing wrong or why he does not want to speak to her.

Commented [6]:
Protagonist constantly feeling targetted and undesirable

-He is mysterious and sad

(His older brother was recently killed in a drunk driving accident) - Although everyone else in the town knows about it, Haylie is unaware of this, but eventually will find out when he confines in her)

Commented [7]:
Loss of a loved one: common theme

-She feels an instant attraction to him when they first meet, she has never really experienced what it feels like to be attracted to someone before (hormones are changing)

Commented [8]:
First love: new feelings of attraction that may have never been felt before because of change in hormones, onset of puberty. Common theme among YAL novels because this is a typically new experience for many young adults.

-As the two of them begin to work on an assignment after school for their chemistry class and begin spending more and more time with one another, they begin to fall in love.

- They begin opening up to one another and relying on each other for emotional support to get them through their tough times with coping with the loss of their loved ones.

Commented [9]:
Common theme among the 3 novels, as well as among many YAL novels.

-Lacrosse team is constantly busting on him for liking Haylie because she is not physically “developed” and is extremely shy and quiet. The lacrosse team is convinced that Blake is just trying to take Haylie’s virginity.

Commented [10]:
Jock acting “too cool”

Commented [11]:
Sexuality and experimentation, fear of dying a virgin or fears of losing virginity. Found in many YAL novels including Perks of Being a Wallflower, A Fault in Our Stars, and Thirteen Reasons Why.

(This creates a conflict because he can't tell the team that he goes to Haylie for emotional support and cries to her constantly because he fears that that is not "masculine" and the team will make fun of him even more. Haylie gets upset one day when the lacrosse team is making comments about Blake having sex with her (even though they never have) but Blake doesn't stand up for Haylie or tell the team that they are wrong. Haylie gets upset because she feels stupid and used, "why is he one way with me but then acts completely different in front of his friends and teammates?"

Sophie Wineback: 14 year old Sophomore **Best Friend**

- Friends with Blake
- Strawberry blonde hair, blue eyes,
- very bubbly outgoing personality
- Introduces herself to Haylie right after class ends, insists on showing her around the school
- becomes Haylie's best friend and the first person that Haylie confides in about her mother and the fears that Haylie has about one day becoming crazy like her mom.
- Although Sophie at first seems to be a bubbly, easy going, happy girl, she too has deep dark secrets.
- Sophie asks Haylie to "ignore the things you hear about me and please remember that the girl you met today is the real me"
- Haylie quickly begins hearing rumors within the first few weeks of school about how Sophie is a **slut** and how she is constantly sleeping with guys every weekend. This does not make sense to Haylie because Sophie does not seem like that type of girl. Haylie keeps the rumors she has heard to herself.
- Sophie and Haylie's friendship grows more and more as Haylie Sophie and Blake begin hanging out on a regular basis.
- Sophie is happy that Blake and Haylie are becoming an item.
- One weekend Sophie invites Haylie to come to a party with her and Blake. Haylie goes. While at the party Sophie gets extremely drunk and Haylie walks in on her having sex with a random guy from another school.
- Haylie can't believe that the rumors are true and confides in Blake about it.
- Blake tells Haylie that she needs to not judge Sophie so hard, but instead maybe she should talk to Sophie and find out why she is the way she is.
- Sophie and Haylie have a long talk and Sophie breaks down hysterically crying to Haylie. Sophie tells Haylie that when she was a freshman she went to a party and was drugged and raped by multiple guys on the football team all within the same night. They took her virginity and her dignity. After that night the football team began spreading

Commented [12]:

Common style usage of having 3 main characters, protagonist and then 1 female character and 1 male character, generally all friends with one another.

Example:

Perks of Being a Wallflower: Charlie, Sam, and Patrick

A Fault in Our Stars:

Hazel Grace, Gus, Issac

Commented [13]:

Reoccurring theme: Fine line between prude and slut is a common conflict and theme used within YAL novels.

example:

Perks of Being a Wallflower, Sam used to be a "slut", slept around with older men and everyone in the school looked down upon her for how she acted. She acted this way because she had been raped when she was younger, but no one knew that.

example 2:

Thirteen Reasons Why
"best ass in the class"

rumors about Sophie and how she is a slut, and how “SHE came onto all the football players and they felt bad for her so they let her perform sexual acts with them.” Even though this was not true, Sophie was so embarrassed about getting raped that she never told anyone about it, she only told her good friend Blake. Ever since then, Sophie feels that if everyone is already going to think she is a slut, she might as well embrace it and give herself the bad reputation, but at least she is doing it herself.

- From then on Haylie tries to help Sophie by making Sophie realize that that is not okay and that they need to tell the police or an adult. Haylie also makes Sophie realize that having sex with random guys is not going to solve anything and Haylie helps Sophie to overcome her binge drinking and sexual actions on the weekends.

Throughout the novel Haylie is coping with the loss of her mother and her own internal struggle. She fears that she too will end up having bipolar disorder like her mother, even though she does not. She fears that if people get too close to her they may start to see signs of mania with her and that she will end up hurting the people she cares about, the same way her mother hurt her and her father.

Throughout the novel Haylie is constantly contemplating opening the present that her mother had left her. The present is symbolic of her past and when she finally opens the box she is letting go of her past and all the pain that has been carried with her.

What is in the box?

Commented [14]:

Trying to help her friend overcome her struggles and get the correct help that she needs. Common theme among YAL, adolescents helping one another overcome their struggles. Friends who are there for each other.

Commented [15]:

common themes

Commented [16]:

The same way Hazel Grace from A Fault In Our Stars calls herself a “grenade” because she fears getting too close to people because if she dies, which could happen at any time due to her cancer, she will end up hurting those who care about her.