



## Whatever Life Throws at You (Entangled Teen)

*Julie Cross*

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Life loves a good curveball...

Seventeen-year-old Annie Lucas's life is completely upended the moment her dad returns to the major leagues as the new pitching coach for the Kansas City Royals. Now she's living in Missouri (too cold), attending an all-girls school (no boys), and navigating the strange world of professional sports. But Annie has dreams of her own—most of which involve placing first at every track meet...and one starring the Royals' super-hot rookie pitcher.

But nineteen-year-old Jason Brody is completely, utterly, and totally off-limits. Besides, her dad would kill them both several times over. Not to mention Brody has something of a past, and his fan club is filled with C-cupped models, not smart-mouthed high school "brats" who can run the pants off every player on the team. Annie has enough on her plate without taking their friendship to the next level. The last thing she should be doing is falling in love.

But baseball isn't just a game. It's life. And sometimes, it can break your heart...

## Whatever Life Throws at You (Entangled Teen) Details

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## From Reader Review Whatever Life Throws at You (Entangled Teen) for online ebook

### Allison says

Am I going soft? I feel like I've been stumbling upon a lot of awesome reads lately! I had really been looking forward to this book. I fell in love with Julie Cross's writing when I read Third Degree earlier this year and couldn't wait for her next novel. I'm happy to say that I loved Whatever Life Throws at You even more than Third Degree!

The positive parts of this review will likely be rather short and generic. I find it easy to moan and complain about all of the things I hated about a bad book, but a lot more difficult to gush about a book I loved. I feel like positive reviews are all positive in the same way (Anna Karenina anyone? Ha!). Nonetheless, this book deserves a review because it was awesome!

#### What I liked:

1. Jason Brody. Duh! He was so dreamy. As far as book boyfriends go, Jason Brody will definitely go on your list. He has a rough past- juvenile criminal record, he's a high school dropout, his mother has disowned him- but he's doing his best to be the best man that he can.
2. The positive female friendship between Lenny and Annie. Lenny was an interesting one, but she was loyal. She wasn't always the most stand up person, in general, but she was on Annie's side.
3. Annie. I love her character. I hated how she had a tendency to choose inaction instead of actually making a decision or solving a problem. When faced with a dilemma, she'd just do nothing. Or she'd do the "high school" thing and act totally immature and impulsive. Somehow this didn't seem inconsistent. Quite the opposite, actually. I could kind of predict what Annie's next move would be while reading. Cross's characterization was incredibly thorough. I felt like I knew Annie well.
4. The supporting characters! Lenny, Annie's dad, Savannah, Annie's grandma, Annie's mom- all of them were so well written and added a lot to the story. Some of them were amusing, some were supportive, one was awful, but all were well written! I loved all of them!
5. The ending. I loved it. Such a great ending! A little cheesy, but come on, everyone loves a little cheesy every once in a while.

#### The Peeves:

1. I really hate how Julie Cross makes her characters write Facebook and Twitter statuses in all of her books. It's like she's already resigned to the fact that no one will be reading her book in 50 years. In my opinion, books that include references to popular technology are dating themselves. Facebook and Twitter may not be something that people use in 10 years and as a result, someone reading this book in 2024 will probably think it's a little silly. The thing that aggravates me the most about Cross's use of social media in her novels is that, for the most part, the references could be completely omitted and the narrative wouldn't suffer at all. This is especially true for Third Degree- removing the twitter statuses made by the MC would go entirely unnoticed by the reader. In order to omit the Facebook status updates from Whatever Life Throw at You all Cross

would have to do is make general references to Brody's social media presence.

2. You won't get any slut-shaming from me, but Brody was portrayed as very promiscuous in the beginning of the novel. Annie was aware of his "habits" and found them revolting, but she still had a big crush on him? This was very confusing to me.

3. Brody is his last name. Everyone (including Annie) call him by it throughout the entirety of the book. There's one time where she refers to him as Jason and it's in her head. I didn't like this at all. If his last name was Smith or Williams it wouldn't have worked, but since Brody is a common male first name as well, the author got away with it.

4. This is probably a silly thing to even bring up, but it's my review and I can. Cross misuses the word "nauseous" in every novel of hers I've read. In her defense though, this is one of those words that is misused so often that the dictionary has been rewritten so that the wrong usage is now the "right" one. (Did you know that "literally" now means "figuratively"? Seriously. Our population is so stupid that this change was made.)

"Nauseous" means causing nausea or disgust. So for example: the rotten orange was nauseous because it made me feel sick to smell it. **NAUSEATED** is the word we're all looking for. You feel **nauseated**. I feel **nauseated**. We all feel **nauseated**, but no one is nauseous unless you haven't showered for a couple of days.

I know, I know, I'm a complainer, but this is a 5 star read. I definitely recommend it!

This review is also posted to my blog: Crazy Something Maybe

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**Paula M. of Her Book Thoughts! says**

You can also read my review [HERE](#).

Still not sure but what I'm sure is... **I LOVE THIS BOOK. I DO. OMG WITH ALL MY HEART!!!** Which is a surprise because have you seen the reviews of the author's other books? Yeah that's why my expectation wasn't that high. This book definitely surprised me.

**Annie is such a cool chic.** She's a sporty one. Her father used to be this famous pitcher (i'm sorry if my terminologies isn't right) All I know that her father used to be a hotshot in the baseball game until he had cancer and have to cut off his leg. **You guys, the relationship between Annie and her father is phenomenal.** It was absolutely well done. To the point that I was jealous of their relationship and wishing I have that as well. (yea I have father issues) Anyway, it's one of my favorite aspect from this book.

The characters were authentic, likeable and made me feel what they're truly feeling. **DO YOU GET THAT?**

When you read a book and keeps saying 'yes I know what you feel. stop you're making me feel emotions!' I guess it's because of Julie Cross's amazing writing. She's on point. **Also, THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT? So good and wonderfully done.** I love how seeing Annie grow. And making decisions for herself and her father and her grandma.

For a week now, I've been mulling on why I loved this book so much. I mean, I've been reading YA/NA contemp for like, forever, and to be honest this is not THAT new. I've read this storyline before. Met some cool chic like Annie before and totally swooned before I met Jason Brody. But I realized this: **Whatever Life Throws at you has a heart.** It touched me. Crept inside of me and I have a feeling it won't let go. It's not just pure fluff but it's also has a message and a lesson. **I JUST LOVE IT OKAY**

The romance was funny and HOT and totally adorable. I don't know how Julie did that but she just made it. From the first chapter that Annie and Jason Brody met I'M ALREADY ROOTING FOR THEM. They just match you know. This pair is my OTP and I love how their relationship sailed.

### **JASON BRODY.. HOW DO I EXPLAIN JASON BRODY?**

You know what? I can't.

Do I recommend this? YES. To who? TO YOU. TO YOUR FRIEND. TO YOUR NEIGHBOR. TO EVERYONE. TO SPORT MANIACS. Be warned though. Whatever Life Throws At You might have a cute and fluffy blurb, but it has it's steamy moments. Not a lot but it will sure make you blush.

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### **Jaclyn says**

\*4.5\*

AWWWW THAT WAS SO SWEET!!!!

*"You are intimidatingly handsome. I'm just now getting used to looking at you."*  
*"And you are intimidatingly pretty."*

Really loved this one! It follows 17 year old Annie who's father become a baseball coach set to train super hot 19 year old Jason Brody! It's a story about baseball, romance, family, and self growth. And it's got an extremely sexy pitcher who has officially been added to the book boyfriend list like Jason Brody, can you be more perfect?! \*drools\*

*I don't know when this happened, but I know for sure tonight I've developed a big fat crush on Jason Brody, and unfortunately there's a club forming and membership is growing with every inning he pitches.*

So obviously I loved the romance between Brody and Annie. The way they meet is hysterical and I was dying of laughter and butterflies so many time during this book! But initially, they don't really hit it off. On

the surface, he seems as if he gets around all time, he's apparently an "ex convict" and somebody she should stay clear off. But in reality, he's not a bad guy AT ALL! And I loved how they became friends first and got to know one another before jumping right into it. It was an extremely well developed relationship. Clearly, they have a spark and mutual attraction immediately but Julie Cross took the time for the characters to build a friendship and then have it turn romantic and it is literally the CUTEST THING EVER! THE BANTER, the text messages!! Ahhhh!!! And it has that summer romance feel too it, that just makes you SWOON!

But they hide their relationship because she's the coaches daughter, and he's on his way to becoming Rookie of the year. It's a very sweet romance and it has that forbidden tone to it.

*"I think you're a good person," I say quietly, before slipping the bed to retrieve my clothes. He exhales, and his eyes meet mine.*

*"All I know is that I want to be the person you and your dad think I am. Maybe even more than I want to be a great pitcher."*

I also LOVED the BASEBALL aspect!! Baseball is one of my favorite sports so it was really cool to read about her describing the game, watching Brody play and work his way up. It was very intense and some of the highlights of the story for me (next to the romance of course)

*Pressure is just that-pressure. It's all in your head. It has nothing to do with what you can or can't do.*

Another part that I loved was how important family was. Annie's relationship with her father is truly something special and was really great to read about. I loved all that she learned from him and how they were there for one another. And her friendship with Lenny was really nice to see too!

The only thing that frustrated me as I was reading it was this constant "age" mention and how kept being brought up! He's only about 2 years older! It's really not a big deal but I guess her being in high school, I can see how it's a big deal to her. But as a 24 year old, I was like "it's not that bad, why do you keep talking about it?!" Annie continues to strive not to look like a child to Brody, but like seriously he's not THAT much older than you! I can see from her perspective but it was still a little annoying to read. I did appreciate her character growth though and that ending was ADORABLE!!!

Overall this is a great summer romance book to get lost in and you've got to meet Jason Brody!

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**Jenny - [TotallybookedBlog](#) says**

**4.5 "I LOVED THIS BOOK" Stars**

*"You are intimidatingly handsome. I'm just now getting used to looking at you."*  
*"And you are intimidatingly pretty."*

This standalone coming of age story was so sweet, so cute yet moving and just what I needed at the time. It wasn't overly angsty, the characters won me over and I was left with a huge smile on my face, feeling all warm and mooshy inside as I became swept up in those heady feelings of first love

Even though I'm not that well versed in the sport of Baseball it didn't matter because I loved this sports themed romance that stole my heart. This book made me want to grab a hot dog and check out a game! The banter between Annie and Brody was so much fun, the Facebook status updates had me giggling and the inner voice of Annie was a gem. Yep, I was on a **book high** through their whole story.

***“God, you’re like, the corniest nineteen-year-old in the history of nineteen-year old. I plan on being way cooler when I’m your age.” – Annie***

I shared the characters joy, heartache, tears and laughter. Not only that I shared in their happiness, hopefulness, the pain and confusion of two young people feeling love for the first time and it was heart-warming to say the least.

***“You trust me, right?” Brody***

***“I Trust you with some things, just not everything...yet.” Annie***

***“Good answer.” Brody***

Annie Lucas is seventeen, her father Jim has been offered a coaching position with the Kansas City Royals. Annie is very supportive of Jim's job opportunity and agrees to move with him. This man has seen his share of pain and Annie is there for him at all times.

Annie's had to grow up fast and in some respects she showed a maturity beyond her years, but would then show her impulsive youthfulness that would remind me she is a young lady on a road of self-discovery. Sure she made some silly decisions but they were always with the best intentions, though not always with the best executions.

***“Everybody’s afraid of something, Annie.” Brody***

Jason Brody stole my heart completely. Sure he's cocky. Who wouldn't be with the talent he possesses at only 19. After all, he's young and has a shot at the majors but fitting in with an older, experienced team causes him to feel on the outer despite his natural talent.

This guy was carrying so much baggage from his past. He'd made mistakes and he's not allowed to forget them as reminders are always there of what a mess he made of his life. Brody had to prove himself to his coaches and his team, and to a degree, himself. Arrrgghh there were times I just wanted to reach through my Kindle and give him a big hug. He broke my heart at times with the way he was treated.

**‘No one deserves to be alone at nineteen.’**

His feelings for Annie were beautiful and the pair of them had me giggling, swooning and loving every minute I spent with them. Oh and did I mention he speaks the odd bit of Spanish? Yppers he does! He could speak Spanish to me alllll day!

Together Annie and Jason bring out the best in each other. Brody is the calm to Annie's exuberance, and Annie gives Brody a much needed confidence boost. For Brody, years of being told he wouldn't amount to anything, of feeling useless has had him questioning his ability and his worth as a man.

***“All I know is that I want to be the person you and your dad think I am. Maybe even more than I want to be a great pitcher.”***

Whatever Life Throws at you was exactly what I needed! It was fun, quirky, moving and so beautifully sweet! I was completely smitten and fell for this book hook, line and sinker! Wonderful. Just wonderful! Grab it! I think you'll love it!

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### **Claire Robinson says**

#### **4 - I don't know when this happened... I know for sure... I've developed a big fat crush on Jason Brody. Stars.**

Julie Cross is the queen of NA in my opinion. Her stories are full of life, love and laughter and although not full of overly descriptive sexy times, her books still offer the reader buckets of sexual tension and sweet romance.

I loved Annie and Jason, polar opposites to some extent, but at heart pretty they are similar in their goals for life, both from broken homes, both overachievers at a young age, and both are struggling to make a life for themselves in the new and not always friendly environments that they are living in.

The gradual development of their relationship (and this is something Ms. Cross, does extremely well, if you love this title check out *Third Degree*) as well as their story as a whole gives you a huge amount of insight into Annie and Jason together, as well as Annie's general day-to-day life struggles.

I loved Jason, a guy with a bit of a past, trying to make good on the opportunities he has been given, trying to live the 'persona' of an up and coming sports star in the public eye, as well as be a perfect gentleman in private. There were parts of this book where I had more than a few sniffles I can tell you. I loved the texting between him and Annie, and their running together. This is a guy that makes the effort to be there for her when it really matters.

**"This is much better in real life," ... "so much better than the fantasy."**

Julie Cross is a firm favorite with me, and *Whatever Life Throws at You* is certainly another 'Home Run' in my opinion. I cannot wait to see what this extremely talented author has in store for her readers next.

ARC generously provided via Netgalley, and it was my pleasure to provide the above honest review.

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### **Sara►[hiatus] (Ink Is My Sword) says**

#### **3.5 "Loved the healthy sex talk" Stars**

"Pressure is just that—pressure. It's all in your head. It has nothing to do with what you can or can't do."

► **FULL REVIEW NOW POSTED**

I re-read this and ended up enjoying a bit more than the first time, so my re-reading binge has been totally worth it. Kudos to me!

**A light, enjoyable, YA sports romance book, that's what this was.** It didn't mind blow me though.

The thing that **I loved the most about this book** was how our characters talked about sex. And yes is kind of weird to start a review like this, but I am tired of YA novels just pretending teenagers don't talk about sex in everyday life with friends or significant others. It wasn't exactly explicit but it wasn't the "bee talk or something people do when they have a sexual attraction to each other" type of talk. It was more profound and natural, *it was healthy*. Big fan of this because they talk with each other and made sure everything they did was okay with the other person, yeap consent on point.

**The characters** were likable and we went in more depth than I thought. Annie was mature and understandable when it came to her family things, I loved how strong her connection with her dad was. Brody was a cool guy, and he really seemed to care. Although I wish we had more of his past story handed, so the bond with his character could grow. To be honest, here I was really invested in Annie's dad story and Savannah. I would love if Julie wrote a companion novel about the romance between this two. I **WOULD READ IT**. Oh, and the granny was adorbs and pretty funny at times.

**The romance** was cute and it certainly was developed. This book is **insta-love free zone**, so hurray! I loved their small interactions and all, but I will be honest, I didn't though the secret part was necessary. Everything would have been easier if they had just been honest from the start. And I get she was 17 and he was 19, but to be honest it wasn't a fucking huge age gap. The thing that didn't make it 4 stars for me was (view spoiler) Apart from that, both characters incentivized the other to grow and reach their full potential and I loved that.

**The plot** was light and not boring. It wasn't the most exciting thing I ever read in my life, but it kept me intrigued, although many turns were a bit predictable. I felt the whole conflict happened in the last 30 pages, and this was a huge contemporary book, so maybe I am a bit disappointed more things didn't occur.

I always have a soft spot for sports romances, so I liked how baseball and running were incorporated. ~~although I have zero knowledge in baseball~~.

I honestly don't know how great of a review this is, but I found pretty difficult to express my thoughts on a book that I liked, just average. But I always try.

**A perfect summer read, I recommend.**

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**Pearl Angeli says**

**4.5 Jason Brody Stars!**

This book makes me want to read more **sports romance** books. It's a Young-Adult-slash-New-Adult read that is all kinds of cute and adorable. I enjoyed every bit of it not just because everything was swoony but because the book also depicts life lessons and narrates a touching family drama that will make your heart melt. It wasn't just all about falling in love with someone but it also deals with family issues and morals.

When 17 year-old **Annie Lucas** met the gorgeous 19 year-old baseball pitcher **Jason Brody**, she didn't expect herself to get infatuated with him after their series of encounters. Annie's dad is Jason's and his teammate's new coach, and she's just a high school student. Thus, falling in love with him meant she's on her way towards *forbidden love*.

I had a very great time diving into this book. The connection I had with the cute characters, the beautiful settings, the drama aside from the romance, and the sporty theme was so unexpected. It didn't fail to hold my attention and got me all wrapped up more than I thought I could. In the end, it put a smile on my face.

I especially felt connected to the **characters**. Both Annie and Jason Brody are likable characters. Annie is one responsible girl. Her attitude is typical 17 year-old but I like her because everything she says and does are on-point and the way she cares for her dad makes me want to hug her. Jason, on the other hand, is amazing. Apart from the fact that he's seriously a hot athlete, he's very different compared to some dudes in sports romance books that act like they own the world. Although Jason was every girl's target in this book, still, he doesn't abuse his popularity and play around women. He's just... so perfect! And very ideal.

When it comes to the **romantic aspect**, well.... I really loved the fact that there was **NO INSTA-LOVE**. The romance was developed naturally. Annie and Jason's chemistry here was off the charts as well. I was literally rooting for them all throughout the book!

What I also loved was how Julie Cross described the dynamics of baseball game here. I was impressed. I mean, I'm not a baseball fan and I only know few basic rules about this sport but it felt like I was watching a real live baseball game because of the way the action in the field was being described. Bravo to that!!!

All in all, Whatever Life Throws at You is a great sports romance book that I will **highly recommend** to everyone. It's quickly engaging and with likable characters and side characters (**Lenny London** included).

*"Life is funny sometimes... the worst possible things can get you to the best possible places. If you just enjoy the game."*

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**Amy (Foxy) says**

4.5 baseball stars!

**"Where's that story?"**

A forbidden romance blossoms between **Annie** who is a 17 year old high school girl and **Brody** who is 19 year old baseball player for the Kansas City Royals. Annie, has grown up without a mom but instead with the love and devotion of her father. Brody, on the other hand, has given his family so much heartache and grief that they basically disown him. Overcoming defeating circumstances Brody lands a pitching position for the major leagues. As the new pitching coach, Annie's father, takes Brody on as his personal project to make him a more rounded person.

While this was a mild forbidden romance, low on angst, it was an enjoyable read. And holy moly, what Brody whispers to Annie in Spanish had me swooning. I didn't think to translate what he said to her until I was over half way through the book... I'm glad I did because it changed how I viewed him and his actions. Once I knew what he had said I thought back through the book on different things that had happened **and smiled.**

What perfect timing for reading this book because the **World Series** just happened. It was fun to open this book and find out it was about the KC Royals and then to see them play in the World Series on TV added another element to reading this book.

This was my first book by Julie Cross and I'm adding her to my must read romance authors list. If you like sports books and romance than give this one a try. One of my favorite types of movies to watch are sports movies especially real life sports stories. Throw in some romance and give me some popcorn and I'm a happy girl.

### **Standalone**

\*\*Complimentary copy in exchange for an honest review.\*\*

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### **Allison says**

I do not remember a book that has required so much eye-rolling while reading as this one. I picked this book to read because I wanted a cute, fluffy YA romance and the reviews were all pretty solid. Not to mention, I love baseball. This book should have been right up my alley, right? Wrong.

First things first, I probably should have been more committed to the idea that the baseball-related things presented in this book wouldn't be the most realistic. That was my first mistake. No major league baseball team would have a minor league reliever who has never pitched in the majors be the Opening Day STARTER. None. Easy fix: just have Jason Brody be an ace reliever. Have him close out games throwing 100mph fire and he can still be a star. None of this reliever turning into a starter throwing six innings nonsense. Then, he pitches three innings four games in a row. But, he was just starting so why is he now relieving? Then, he is coming into the game in the third and pitching for the last 6 innings? Does this team have no other pitchers? I'm so freaking confused. Also, just the way that the baseball culture was presented was really weird and kind of took me out of the story. For example, I really doubt that [spoiler] there would be paparazzi in a club in Missouri to take pictures of the players' kids partying. Baseball players are rich, sure, and baseball players are in the public eye, sure, but they aren't like other celebrities. They (and their kids) certainly do not get followed by paparazzi everywhere they go. I don't know. Like I said, probably

should have not assumed it would be super realistic but, man, this was all hard to swallow. I felt like the book was painting baseball culture as a place where all of the kids go out and party and cause trouble and the more established players are assholes to the rookies and it's all women and money and contracts, just, no. Baseball does have it's problems - sexism, homophobia, whatever - but none of these real problems were presented here. (Well, I guess one of the veteran players does basically suggest the that main character sleeps around a lot! WHAT. SHE'S 17 AND HE IS A GROWN ASS MAN WITH KIDS HER AGE. WHAT!)

Baseball aside, I couldn't really stand the main character, Annie. The thing I dislike the most about Annie is her constant shaming of other girls or women. I get it, she's a teenager with a crush and you never want to see your crush hanging out with other girls that aren't you. But, COME ON. The way that she talks about the other girls that Jason is with is disgusting. She even recognizes that she is "stereotyping and being judgmental" but does nothing to fix it. Why, why, why?! One line says "instead of finding bimbos to bang he's thinking about me?" My eyes are so far back in my head. Does Annie realize that her perfect crush would also have to choose to "bang" these "bimbos"?! I cannot stand her. Even after she learns that her beloved pitcher is not, in fact, sleeping with every woman he sees, she is still so annoying. She whines and complains and, my GOD. Like, she goes to her beau's mom's house without asking him to get information that he is not comfortable with her getting and I just can't. "As if I actually know how gangs work." As if anyone in the book knows how anything works, apparently. Then, when Jason/Brody/Whatever gets mad at her for doing this, she's all like, well I just had a really shitty time going out in the rain and, like, I really don't think it's fun to be getting yelled at right now. You're 17, Annie. You're not 10 or 12 or even 15. Stop whining. OH MY GOD. When Jason Brody calls her out I'm SO STOKED. SHE THINKS IT IS STUPID TO APOLOGIZE. SHE LITERALLY SAYS "THAT'S FUCKING STUPID." This book, y'all. "Why did he have to call me a child?" Oh, I don't know, Annie, maybe because you are acting like one ALL THE TIME?! The only thing I find interesting about her is that she is a super good runner but that kind of disappeared. There are characters that are written as crappy people that I can still appreciate and then there is Annie.

Overall, this book was a struggle to get through. I had too high of hopes when I started it and by the end I was just laughing at how much I wanted it to be over. Disappointingly crafted characters, so many baseball inaccuracies, unsexy sexy times. There was one line that really just stood out as one that illustrated everything I dislike about this book and it was Annie's commentary on how a number five mid-relief pitcher DARE speak at a dinner party they were having. There is no such thing as a number five mid-relief pitcher. You are either a middle reliever or a number five starter. And, Annie, when you're being a whiny brat, someone else might want to talk to fill the awkward silence.

And, of COURSE this close-turned-super-reliever-turned-starter pitched a perfect game to send the team to the World Series in his second ever start.

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### **Keertana says**

When it comes to authors, like Julie Cross, whose past work has received a variety of mixed reviews, I hardly know whether or not to invest in their trilogies. Is it worth my time to dive into those three books? Or am I doomed to emerge unhappy like countless readers before me? When *Whatever Life Throws at You* landed on my doorstep, though, I figured I had the perfect opportunity. Not only could I sample Cross's prose, but it was a contemporary stand-alone and bound to bring a heady dose of swoon into my life.

I found a lot to love within the pages of *Whatever Life Throws at You*. Cross's latest centers around seventeen-year-old Annie Lucas, a hard-core runner whose dream is to land a scholarship for track. Her

father, once a major league baseball player who retired prematurely while battling cancer, has just been offered the job opportunity of a lifetime to return to baseball, this time as a coach, and Annie refuses to allow her father to give up this chance. All she wants is to see him happy and if that means moving across the country to an all-girls high school, it's a small price to pay. In Missouri, though, Annie doesn't expect to run into the Royal's new--and *very* attractive--pitcher. Nor does she expect to fall for him as hard as she does. Brody and Annie start out as mere friends but is Annie truly a match for a nineteen-year-old on the verge of stardom? And even if Brody finally sees Annie as more than a little-sister figure, there are always consequences for every action...

At the center of *Whatever Life Throws at You* is a strong father-daughter relationship which I fell head-over-heels for. When it comes to familial relationships, sibling bonds or parental struggles are often emphasized in YA so I appreciated the breath of fresh air Cross brought with Annie's relationship concerning her father. Annie and her father are best friends, practically. He's supported her all her life, especially with her mother breezing in and out of the house, and Annie both looks up to and respects him immensely. I really felt the strength of their bond, even early in the novel, and their growth arc throughout the novel is incredibly real-to-life. Moreover, I enjoyed how Cross juxtaposed the ease of Annie's relationship with her father to the turmoil of other parent-child relationships in the novel. Annie may not have a steadfast mother or a whole lot of wealth, but her father makes up for all of it.

Annie's relationship with Brody is additionally at the forefront of this novel. Brody is nineteen-years-old, out of high school, and about to become a star baseball pitcher. Annie doesn't expect him to like her, let alone care for her in any capacity, but as they spend more and more time together she can't help but begin to fall for him. What I love about their relationship is that it begins firmly as a friendship and their understanding of each other, their trust in one another, and the affection they share is a cornerstone of their bond. Brody has so many hidden layers to him beyond his ability to pitch and as Annie peels those back, slowly, the entire novel opens up in new and unexpected ways. What's more, I love Cross's decision to explore the sexual aspect of Brody and Annie's relationship. Cross doesn't romanticize sex, for one, which is a relief. What's more, instead of simply jumping from making out to outright sex, Cross fills in the gaps, proving there are more ways than one to grow physically closer to a partner. More often than not, these ideals are glossed over in YA and I give Cross props for approaching sex in YA in a new and improved light.

Yet, where *Whatever Life Throws at You* falters is in the dilemma built up over the course of the story. For one, it felt far too superficial and inauthentic for me to truly invest in and by the time all hell broke loose, I simply felt removed from the novel. What's more, it feels jarring against the backdrop of such a mature, realistic YA contemporary. Another aspect of the novel I felt could have used a dose of improvement were Annie's friendships outside of Brody. In her entire high school she makes exactly one friend and, even then, though their interactions were more frequent in the beginning of the novel, they almost entirely peter out by the end when the entire focus shifts to her romance with Brody.

So. Not. Cool. Yet, regardless of that, *Whatever Life Throws at You* is a sweet, swoon-worthy contemporary to curl up with for a few hours. I know next to nothing about baseball and still wound up enjoying it--there's just something about all the sports-related novels that are so much *fun*, what with all the fake tension about a game being lost--so I'd certainly recommend this to readers. Its positives outweigh its negatives by far and I'm looking forward to reading a voice as natural and authentic as Annie's from Cross soon.

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**FMABookReviews says**

I loved this book! Color me impressed! I don't know if this author spent time in Missouri, specifically Kansas City, or just did her research, but this is the first book I have read that didn't make me cringe. (I am sure there are more out there, I just haven't found them.) From the weather - which on any given day can change 5 or more degrees, to people mistaking Kansas City Royals for being located in Kansas - they are in Missouri, Julie Cross thankfully wrote a book with accurate facts. *"Apparently Kansas City is the barbecue capital of the world."*

*"All I know is that I want to be the person you and your dad think I am. Maybe even more than I want to be a great pitcher."*

I began reading 'Whatever Life Throws At You' last year when the Kansas City Royals were in the pennant race and eventually went to the World Series. (Yes, they lost, but we don't talk about that around here.) But my reading schedule and life got busy and I had to put the book aside. Gratefully, this week I was able to pick it up again because this was a gem! Many friends had read and loved it so I knew I was in for a treat.

When 17-year old **Annie Lucas** finds out her dad is being offered a pitching coach job for the Kansas City Royals, she pushes him to take the job. She knows it's a tremendous opportunity for her father. They have a fabulous relationship. He is a single parent - even though he is still married to her mother.

19-year old **Jason Brody** is given a chance of a life time when he is called up from the minors to fill in for an injured player. Being a rookie with a shady past looming over him, Brody knows he needs to prove himself worthy of respect and a long-term contract. When Annie's dad Jim provides words of wisdom, Brody listens and takes action, he soaks it up, earning Jim's respect. This is something new for Brody. His past created tension with his mother and he is on his own without any family, so essentially Jim is the first person to show pride in his accomplishments.

But Jim isn't the only one who noticed Brody. Annie has been appointed to tutor him for his GED and the more she spends time with him the more she sees the real him, not the "philandering" ball player he is made out to be.

*"I don't know when this happened, but I know for sure tonight I've developed a big fat crush on Jason Brody, and unfortunately there's a club forming and membership is growing with every inning he pitches."*

I appreciated that this author respected the age of these characters in her treatment of sex and the situations that were important to them. Jason took such great care of Annie, wanting to take things slowly and respected her at every turn. He was what I would hope for my daughter!

*"Listen to me, Annie. You are amazing. You don't need to make out with me or any guy like me to figure that out. Don't sell out because you're worried about not being someone's type."*

There are many things I liked about this book. It was FUNNY, yet there were moments where my heart was in my throat. The side characters were fabulous! Lenny was fantastic and I would LOVE to read her book! She was a terrific friend, strong, independent and courageous.

This was a fantastic coming of age story! With solid characters and plot that never wavered.

As a side note: I would definitely recommend this book for a young adult. Not a teen. The sexual situations while not extremely explicit, were too advanced for a teen reader. (IMO)

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### **Grace (LovingDemBooks) Z. says**

**Buy this book HERE on Amazon or buy this book HERE on BookDepository with FREE WORLDWIDE SHIPPING**

*I received a finished edition of this book from the publisher for free in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own.*

**3.5 of 5 stars (Please read my rating system further below).** I found this book relatable to on so many levels (not just because this book being about a sport, since I play one very vigorously). It was the characters in this book that really stood out to me because they were so genuine and each one was unique in their own way. Personalities of characters really stand out to me while I'm reading, and the fact that there were so many diverse ones made me love this book even more. I found this very refreshing because while reading *Whatever Life Throws At You*, I really could connect to Annie (the protagonist) on a deeper level because I've been through the things that Annie had to go through, because of me being an athlete, and because of her strong bond with her father. Did I also mention that Jason Brody was just purely **irresistible**?! He cared so much for Annie, and the ending was absolutely perfect. I would totally recommend this book to someone who loves witness lots of character development in a protagonist and someone who loves to laugh and smile, **a lot** (: {get it}

**My rating system: (I do use half stars.)**

**5 - I do not use the 5 star.** Not because a book might not be worthy, but because a book is never perfect.

**4 - I loved it!** There weren't too many flaws, and I had no trouble getting through it. (A 4 star rating is the highest rating I've ever given a book.)

**3 - I enjoyed** the book, but there were flaws that made me enjoy it less.

**2 - I finished** the book, but there were too many flaws for me to enjoy it.

**1 - I could not finish** the book, and I probably did not finish it....

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### **Fran says**

**Athletes are definitely my favorite type of heroes** so when it comes to sports reads, I may be a little biased in my ratings. This book is especially a pleasant surprise because I am already missing the World Series, which just recently ended, and the Kansas City Royals had a dream run before losing to the San Francisco Giants.

I enjoyed this book so much, I had a big fat grin on my face right from the first few chapters. I even stayed

up really late—1:30 AM is *really* late for me, considering I can barely stay awake at 10 PM these days—just so I could read "*one more chapter*".

I love Annie Lucas' character because she's funny and thankfully not annoying at all. Of course, Jason Brody is so dreamy, anyone would want him as a book boyfriend. I also love how **there wasn't much angst, but it wasn't exactly an insta-love kind of thing either**. This was just a **cute, fun, light read**.

I also like how each chapter starts with a series of Facebook status from Annie, Lenny, and Brody.

**Annie Lucas:** States I've visited in the last 2 days—Arizona (hot, dry, familiar), New Mexico (why not call it Arizona? What's the point of separation?), Texas (slept through it). Oklahoma (hot cowboys at rest stops that hold doors open and call me ma'am, MORE PLEASE!), Kansas (Toto, we're totally not in Arizona anymore)

*6 hours ago, near Wichita, KS*

If you're looking for **a good standalone NA book**, you might want to check this out.

Life is funny sometimes...the worst possible things can get you to the best possible places.

If you just enjoy the game.

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### Aimee ♥ | Aimee, Always says

Four things you'll absolutely love about Whatever Life Throws at You:

**1. Annie was such a fantabulous protagonist.** She was a responsible young woman who didn't whine or bitch about her life problems. At times, she was also pretty **feisty and sassy**, which made her character totally relatable. I also adored how passionate she was about running. She also constantly put into consideration other peoples' feelings and situations, making sure to give way to others. In short, **she's a main character you could definitely use as a role model**.

"Pressure is just that--pressure. It's all in your head. It has nothing to do with what you can or can't do."

**2. Jason Brody is one swoon-worthy guy.** Jason's the exact opposite of your typical douchebag hero in most new adult novels--he's **sweet, caring and hilarious**. He's also realistic in a way that he made lots of bad choices in the past, but he's trying everything he can to fix his mistakes and to be a better person.

**3. The ship is very shippable.** Annie and Jason have so much chemistry together, and you're going to love them. They have some pretty fun and cute back-and-forth banter. **They also went through that friendship stage before being attracted to each other**, and it was glorious seeing their relationship progress.

"I'd rather be alone than be head over heels in love. It's like being drunk. Your IQ drops a hundred points and you make stupid choices."

**4. Family plays a big role in this book.** Annie has such a strong bond with her dad, and it was heartwarming to see how much they cared for each other. They pushed each other to be better, and they were always making sure that the other was all good, healthy and happy.

**5. FEELS!** You are going to feel everything Annie feels--the sadness, the need and the love. There are tears (both happy and sad), laughs and swoons.

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### **Reanell Tisdale says**

Wow. This book. AMAZING!

I'm going to try my best at putting words together to tell you how much I loved this book. I just want to scream at everyone and say **READ THIS BOOK!!** That should work right? LOL.

*Life loves a good curveball....Isn't that the truth?*

Annie Lucas is a seventeen year old girl who lives with her father(Jim) who lost his leg due to cancer, and her grandmother who has Alzheimer's. Her mother isn't in the picture but Annie is perfectly fine with that. Jim is offered a job as a pitching coach for the Kansas City Royals by his long time friend Frank Steadman. Frank just started his job as the new general manager and wants Jim to work with a young pitcher named Jason Brody.

Jim and Annie pack up with grandma and leave to Missouri. The first encounter with Jason Brody was hilarious. Locker room and Jason in a towel...makes for a good combination! And Annie's reaction to this is one of my favorite parts of the book. But Annie soon realizes that Brody(as she refers to him) is a playboy and somebody she shouldn't be crushing on.

The character development in this book is absolutely amazing. I think I loved every single character in it. Brody and Annie's relationship is one that I am going to remember for a long time. My absolute favorite part of this book is when Annie tells him she is struggling with spanish. He whispers spanish in her ear....she doesn't know what he said. **USE TRANSLATION PEOPLE!** You have to know what he says to her. When the words were translated, I sighed with adoration. So sweet and romantic. **SERIOUS BOOK LOVE!**

Bravo Julie Cross you have a winner with this one! This coming of age love story is one that will touch the hearts of many. I laughed, I cried, and during some scenes almost had a heart attack. It has everything I love in a book. I don't know what else to say other than....**BUY THIS BOOK ON RELEASE DAY!**

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