



How to Deal

Sarah Dessen

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Rule #1: There are no rules Just when you think you've got everything figured out for yourself, things get turned upside down. Families change. Lives end. New lives begin. And love sneaks up on you when you least expect it. The trick is finding that one person you can always count on, that one person who will throw out the rules and help you figure out how to deal with it all.

Here, from acclaimed author Sarah Dessen, are two books about girls who stick together and manage to get it right -- the two books that served as inspiration for the film *How to Deal*, starring Mandy Moore. Read them, and you'll see where Halley and Scarlett's story began.

For more on this hot new movie check out the official *How to Deal* website!

How to Deal Details

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Author : Sarah Dessen

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Genre : Young Adult, Romance, Fiction, Teen, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit

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From Reader Review How to Deal for online ebook

Stephen says

Read both books before AND saw the movie and never really made the connection. Of course Trent Ford was NOT the guy I would have pictured in any of the roles in the books but he is eminently watchable.

It was interesting to see the two plot-lines melded into a single movie but it kinda begs the question as to whether these books are a bit low on content. I mean one slim volume by C.S. Forester has been made into a six hour mini series.

Also, it may just be the masculine perspective but this may have just been too much back to back Sarah Dessen. (And that from a guy who refers to pints of Häagen-Dazs as single serving size) Her work requires just the right mind-set for me to really enjoy it.

However, if you've NOT read Someone Like You and That Summer this is a great way to get two Sarah Dessen's on the cheap.

Christy says

Someone Like You was a 5-Star book, and That Summer was a 3-Star one so the rating is a compromise. I still can't fathom how they turned the two into one movie. I think trying to smush the second into the first would ruin them both.

Meganm922 says

Review originally published at Love Literature Art and Reason

After reading my first Sarah Dessen book recently, I realized I've had this sitting on my shelf for a few years. I remember watching the movie when I was younger and liking it. I don't know what took me so long to finally pick this up or read a Sarah Dessen book!

How to Deal was a great combination of two Sarah Dessen novels: Someone Like You and That Summer. Someone Like You was the longest and first of the two books and involved characters I was familiar with from the movie, Halley and Scarlett. That Summer had some events that I remember from the movie, but involved a character named Haven. Both were similar in themes and I see why they were chosen to be combined to inspire the movie.

It was kind of cool reading the book because it was written in the late 90s. There was this one part about how Halley's boyfriend kept calling the house phone after 10:30pm and she couldn't get him to stop, so she held the phone by her head at night and tried to pick up on the first ring. I don't know that teens nowadays understand that because most of them have their own cell phones they can control the ringer volume on and it doesn't bother their parents at all when someone calls. I remember the terror of getting some boy's number and hoping you didn't get his mom on the phone when you called him after school when I was teen! I loved

that I could relate to parts of the book in this way. I don't think the book is too outdated for modern teens, but it contains just enough 90s and 2000s things that make it great to read if you're an adult, too.

My favorite thing about the book was how the characters grow, make mistakes, and change. These aren't YA contemporary books that are about summer romances that last forever. Instead, they focus on coming of age, dealing with issues, and how a summer romance might change you forever, but might not last. I liked the complication of it all and the fact that it wasn't a light boys-fix-everything kind of book. I loved the main characters and appreciated the way they grew throughout the stories. I didn't care much for Macon in *Someone Like You*, but I thought he was necessary in order for Halley to grow, change, and understand herself a little better.

I definitely recommend *How to Deal* and I'm sure I'll read more Sarah Dessen books in the future.

Carla says

Carla Money

Baltz

Pre-AP English 10

6 March 2009

How to Deal by Sarah Dessen

How to Deal by Sarah Dessen is about a teenage girl, Halley, whose life is changing. She has always let her mother tell her what to do and she did it. After she meets Macon, she begins to rebel against her mother's strict rules. She begins to hang out with the wrong people and try drugs. Her mother notices her changing behavior and confronts her. She says, "Now, since you've been hanging around Macon you've been caught skipping school, broken your curfew, and your attitude is always confrontational and difficult." Her best friend, Scarlett, finds out that she is pregnant and this does not help Halley's relationship with her mother. Halley soon has to learn to make the right decisions in her own life.

The book begins when Halley is at a sisterhood summer camp. She gets a phone call from Scarlett, who is crying. Scarlett is usually the one who is comforting Halley, so she knows something is wrong. Scarlett asks her to come home because her boyfriend, Michael, has died. Scarlett would not do that unless she really needed Halley, so Halley called her mother and persuaded her to come get her and take her home. When Halley arrives home, Scarlett is sitting on the front steps where they first became friends. They go to the funeral and after the funeral they offer Michael's best friend, Macon, a ride because it is raining. That is the most contact Halley had had with Macon up to that point.

Halley is the main character. Her best friend is Scarlett and her boyfriend is Macon. Halley has to deal with having her first boyfriend and her best friend being pregnant. She does a good job at first, but soon it gets out of hand. Macon is driving by her house every night wanting her to come with him, but her parents won't let her. He is getting pushier and she is getting nervous. Halley also promised to help Scarlett with the baby situation. They have to tell her mom and go to doctors appointments. Halley tries to juggle it all.

Macon is Halley's boyfriend. He is the "bad guy" in school. The book says, "he didn't seem to have a curfew." He would always be out late at night driving past Halley's house and beeping the horn. While Halley never gets into trouble, Macon has perfected the art of getting out of trouble. They are an unlikely and couple and everyone talks. He is into drugs, drinking and parties. Not Halley's normal scene. At first he seems shy, but as the reader gets to know him, they see he has a temper. He gets Halley into situations where she has to make tough decisions.

Scarlett is Halley's best friend. She finds out she is pregnant after her boyfriend died in a motorcycle

accident. She tells her mother and her mother immediately takes her to get an abortion. Scarlett becomes afraid and decides not to go through with it. She never considers abortion again. She makes the choice to keep the baby and does the research. She knows it will be hard, but she also knows she has friends and family who will help her.

I liked this book because Halley is a normal teenager. She is a person who is like many of my friends before she meets Macon. After she meets Macon she does not let her personality change. She is still herself; she just has different decisions to make. The part of this book I did not like was Halley's father. He is a very static character. He barely says anything. It seemed like he did not care what his daughter did with her life. The theme of this book is to know how you want to be treated in life. Halley had a lot to learn with her first boyfriend and with her mother. Macon said things to her and treated her in ways she did not like. Her mother still treats her like a child even when she is a teenager. It takes her a while, but Halley eventually realizes she can confront these people and tell her how she wants to be treated. She can only hope that they will respect her. And if they do not, she does not need them in her life.

Page count: 486

Genre: romance

Katy says

I brought this on vacation to New York City and read it. It was easy to put down. I liked the first book included in this edition, but the second one wasn't that great. I thought the teen pregnancy-dead boyfriend thing was interesting.

Shawna says

I, like a lot of other readers, saw the movie first. I didn't realize when I started reading Dessen that she was the author of *Someone Like You*. LOVED the book. . . way better than the movie and for obvious reasons. The book fleshed out a lot of the story for me. And I liked Macon a lot more in the pages than on the screen. It seemed an honest and optimistic approach about issues that seem to get swept under the rug in more conservative families. I appreciated the choices that Halley made for herself and I enjoyed watching the two girls grow up together and lean on each other. Reminded me of my good friend in highschool. . . still a friend to this day.

Caroline says

The first book, *"Someone Like You"*, was an excellent book, but *"That Summer"* wasn't that good. They were pretty similar, so it was a surprise when the author said, "I can't imagine how they can be combined!"

Margaret says

This is an odd movie version package of two Dessen books, *Someone Like You* and *That Summer*, of which I like *Someone Like You* quite a bit more. I really like how Dessen delineates Halley and Scarlett's close but not always perfect friendship and her sympathetic portrayal of teen pregnancy. *That Summer* pushes fewer buttons, I guess; I didn't like Haven, the protagonist, as much as I did Halley and Scarlett, and I wasn't as interested in her issues with her family. Still, it does have the insight and depth of characterization that I love about Dessen.

Texaslibrarylady says

I usually love the somewhat formulaic but entertaining YA romances by Sarah Dessen. Unlike her best efforts, however, *How to Deal* does not present gripping characters or plot. *Along For the Ride* and *The Truth About Forever* are far better written books.

Terr says

The most pleasurable aspect of *How to Deal* was reading about the unbreakable bond between Halley, the stubborn protagonist, and her best friend Scarlett. Their love for each other really made me think of my friends, and how much I should cherish them for being in my life. Their friendship is stronger than anything I've ever seen, they would literally do anything for each other, which I thought was incredibly considerate. This book teaches you about dealing with situations in your everyday life. For example, Halley leaves her sisterhood camp, basically ending her summer, just to go home and take care of her best friend. Scarlett's boyfriend has just died in a motorcycle accident, and she is absolutely devastated. And I just adored Scarlett's character, because she was so brave and strong-willed, basically the ultimate best friend you could possibly have, and not even in a cheesy way.

When Halley returns home, Scarlett immediately informs her in secret, that she is pregnant with Michael Sherwood, her boyfriend's, baby. I just felt terrible that she had to deal with the burden of not being able to confront her mom about everything.

I wasn't used to seeing her this way. Scarlett had always been the stronger, the livelier, the braver. The girl who punched out Missy Lassiter, the meanest, most fiendish of the pink-bike girls that first summer she moved in, on a day when they surrounded us and tried to make us cry. The girl who kept a house, and her mother, up and running since she was five, now playing mother to a thirty-five-year-old child. The girl who had kept the world from swallowing me whole, or so I'd always believed. (P. 20)

Not only is Halley taking care of her pregnant, best friend, but she is also trying to manage her new boyfriend, Macon Faulkner. I was really hypnotized by Macon, because I just found his character so intriguing and sexy. And I know I sound like such a girly- girl right now, but the fact that he played the bad-ass, naughty boy, made him all the more enjoyable. However, in the midst of the book, he decides to pressure Halley into having sex with him, and that's when I decided that he was a complete idiot. He had the personality of a very hormonal girl, on her period, and I found myself wanting to punch him in the face. One minute he's saying, 'Don't worry Halley, let's wait.' Then the next minute he's trying to have sex with her on her own bed, and then tries once again at a New Years Party. And Halley's mother does not

know a thing about the sex, but all she knows is that there is a boy in Halley's life, and he needs to get out. I found Halley's mother very nagging, when it came to Macon. She's a teenager; let her learn from her mistakes, you can't protect her from everything.

In the end, Halley decides to leave Macon, and I was on the fence about her decision, and I think I still am. On the one hand, I fell in love with the image of him that I had in my head, but on the other hand, he was a jerk to Halley. He turned her into something she never intended to be, and I think that I'm a little happier that she leaves him, because it shows how much her character grows from a stubborn girl, to an open-minded teenager.

Monica Fastenau says

Read the full review here: <http://newberyandbeyond.com/my-introd...>

The two books contained in this package are *Someone Like You* and *That Summer*. Neither of them really struck me, and I think part of the reason is that they're dated. For example (slight spoilers ahead!), in *Someone Like You*, the main character's best friend gets pregnant. With her boyfriend out of the picture, she must decide if she wants to keep the baby, all while continuing to navigate the dangers of high school. Meanwhile, the main character has to make the decision of whether or not to sleep with her own boyfriend, a bad boy character who is starting to get pushy. It's a decent enough book, but I've seen this plot so many times before. Maybe when the book first came out, it was less of a cliché, but reading it in 2015 was a bit disappointing.

The second book, *That Summer*, I actually enjoyed a bit more. Fifteen-year-old Haven is having a tough summer, with her cheating father marrying his mistress, her mom contemplating big changes in her own life, and her difficult older sister planning a wedding of her own. With all of these pressures, Haven can't help but think back to a better summer, when her family was intact and her sister was dating a boy who helped bring them all closer together. Unfortunately, she soon discovers that even these happy memories weren't all they seemed. Although not much happens in this book, I still found it less predictable than *Someone Like You*.

Rayne says

As someone who grew up with YA books, apparently this wasn't a thing before the 90's, there are a lot of problems I have with some YA writers. Some authors think that teenagers are these hormonal, fight-with-my-friend-once-and-we're-not-friends-anymore people, they're only partly right.

I won't say there aren't teenagers who fight with their friends once and they're not friends anymore, there is something special about Halley (which I was pronouncing Hailey in my head for the longest time) and Scarlett's friendship. Even when Scarlett comes forward and tells Halley she's doing something for the wrong intentions, and Halley attacks her, she doesn't stop being her friend. This book rings with a truth that most books attempt to achieve and fall completely flat. Completely flat.

It's imperative, as teenagers, to have someone to fall back on. If the authors I have in mind had their way, they wouldn't have someone in their corner they fully trusted. Because what fun was it to have someone you

trusted fully and completely.

Halley's relationship with her mother is something I've seen based in reality. And the realization that she can't go through life without her is also something I've seen based in reality. All in all, this book was a breath of fresh air. It touched on poignant and important topics and how they shaped Halley as a person.

Kaycee says

Facts about the movie:

- 1) It's based on a book
- 2) Written by Sarah Dessen
- 3) Based on 2 books
- 4) Both books are included in this edition

I learned when I opened the very first page of this book that the movie was actually based on two books written by Sarah Dessen. She provides an introduction on the combination of the books in this edition and how the movie was written cohesively into one. She mentions that there are similarities between the two characters from both books - sadly, I never found it. I did like the first book, *Someone Like You*, better than the second one, *That Summer*. When I finally finished reading both I still haven't figured out the similarities between the two.

Can someone please explain this to me?

Marsha says

"How to Deal" is actually a package of two novels from Sarah Dessen, which were used as a basis for a movie starring Mandy Moore. The first novel "Someone Like You" I absolutely loved. It is a young adult novel. I thought it was so well written that it reminded me of why I came to like reading so much. The descriptions were not overdone. There was just enough description to feel involved and the dialogue feels real and not forced. The story revolves around two female friends. One of the friends got pregnant from a high school boy who recently died from a motorcycle accident. The other gal meets a "wild boy" who is pressuring her to have sex with him, but seeing what happened to her best friend, makes her cautious about her decision. However, she wants to feel mature and grown up, so what should she do?

The other novel, "That Summer" was good, but in my opinion, not as good as "Someone Like You." It too is a young adult novel, but also enjoyable. The main character's sister is getting married. However, she reminisces about one of her sister's former boyfriends, and wishes that her sister could be with him again. However, without giving away any spoilers, she finds out that things are not always as they seem.

Emily says

I love the movie *How to Deal*, so I decided to read the books. I personally liked *Someone Like You* more

than That Summer. I think it's because Macon is such an intriguing character, and I personally thought that in the movie, he was made out to be a better guy.
