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# The Pieces of Ourselves

Books Reviewed:

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Editor's Choice:

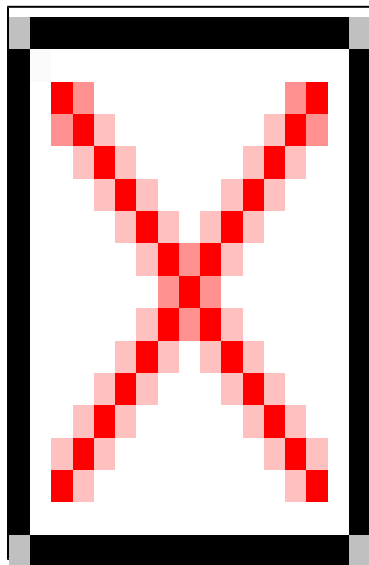
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4



[4]

This character-led mix of romance and historical detective story slowly builds in intensity and draws the reader in to Flora's lonely, fearful, painfully honest but ultimately hope-filled world. Flora's life is constricted and defined by the mental health-related 'incident' that led to her leaving school right in the middle of sitting her GCSEs. This manic episode led to therapy, medication, a diagnosis of Bipolar 11 and to a hidden away life of work in a country house hotel. When Hal arrives at Hopwood Home to research a missing World War 1 soldier Flora's help is offered by the hotel manager. Flora used to love history before the 'incident' but now the idea of spending time with a stranger is a nightmare. Gradually though, as Flora and Hal begin to piece together the story of World War 1 soldier Albie and his lost love, housemaid Iris, stories, settings and timelines between present and past seem to merge as Flora and Hal too begin to fall in love.

Flora's narrative voice is believable and moving. Her struggles with her mental health are presented in an empathetic way and her descriptions of her thought processes as she desperately tries to work out which are manic responses and which are true give the reader real insight into what having Bipolar entails. Both love stories, historic and contemporary, are gripping and convincing and as the timelines dissolve and stories entwine the reader will be drawn into this emotional, honest, poignant and powerful YA novel with its themes of mental health, self-acceptance and lost and found love.

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