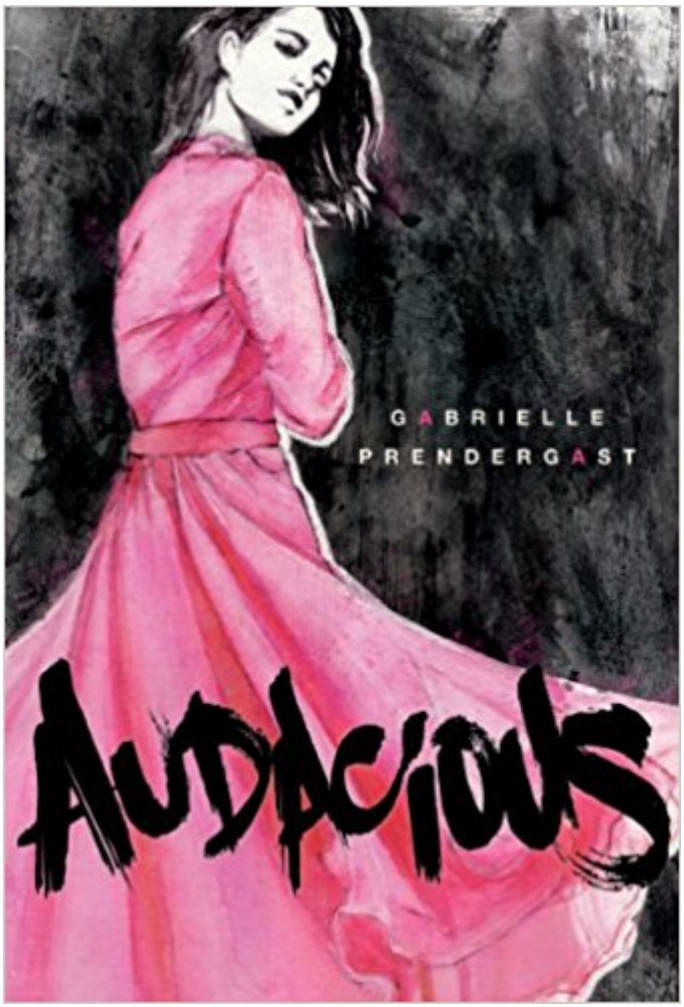
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Audacious



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Synopsis

Sixteen-year-old Raphaelle says the wrong thing, antagonizes the wrong people and has the wrong attitude. She can’t do anything right except draw, but she draws the wrong pictures. When her father moves the family to a small prairie city, Raphaelle wants to make a new start. Reborn as "Ella," she tries to fit in at her new school. She’s drawn to Samir, a Muslim boy in her art class, and expresses her confused feelings in explicit art. When a classmate texts a photo of Ella’s art to a younger friend, the fallout spreads throughout Ella’s life, threatening to destroy her already-fragile family. Told entirely in verse, Audacious is a brave, funny and hard-hitting portrait of a girl who embodies the word audacity.

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Customer Reviews

When a family moves to a new town and a bigger house, it doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t always mean a fresh start. In PrendergastÃ¢â ¬â„¢s affecting novel in verse, school life doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t change, just the names of the bullies do, and family life doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t change, it just unhinges at another address. Determined to be different at her new schoolÃ¢â ¬â •to fit in and belong for onceÃ¢â ¬â •Raphaelle begins calling herself Ella. But Ella is the same person that she always was, and after she meets Samir in her art class, her life spirals out of control again. In deft, layered verse, Prendergast chronicles her heroineÃ¢â ¬â„¢s desperate search for a positive identity. Young love, religion, politics, prejudice, and the meaning of art in society all factor into RaphaelleÃ¢â ¬â„¢s acceptance of herself and her family in all its complexities. Many readers will recognize both her tendencies

toward self-sabotage and her growing belief in herself, and they will likely want continue this journey in the planned sequel, Capricious. Grades 8-11. --Gail Bush --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"[An] action-packed coming-of-age tale fraught with familial and societal dysfunction...Prendergast offers great insight into teen psychologyÃ¢â ¬â •especially that of the outcastÃ¢â ¬â •and boldly probes sensitive topics like religious prejudice, sex, censorship and eating disorders. A provocatively modern test of understanding difference." (Kirkus Reviews 2013-09-15)"The verses flow well and readers will connect with Raphaelle and her desire to reinvent herself. Fans of Ellen Hopkins are sure to like this book." (Library Media Connection 2014-03-01)"The novel contains multiple, adeptly intertwined plotlines that touch upon an extensive range of issues...A wonderfully fast-paced novel that mature teens are sure to embrace." (School Library Journal 2014-02-01)Ã¢â ¬Å“Fans of Ellen Hopkins and Sonya SonesÃ¢â ¬â„¢s novels in verse will delight in PrendergastÃ¢â ¬â„¢s rich, riveting story, first in a planned duo...Prendergast demonstrates a powerful understanding of the adolescent search for identity, and her writing uses the verse format to great effect, with an honest teenage voice, a willingness to play with poetic form, and an intensity that arises through the condensed language.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Publishers Weekly 2013-09-16)"In deft, layered verse, Prendergast chronicles her heroineÃ¢â ¬â„¢s desperate search for a positive identity. Young love, religion, politics, prejudice, and the meaning of art in society all factor into RaphaelleÃ¢â ¬â„¢s acceptance of herself and her family in all its complexities. Many readers will recognize both her tendencies toward self-sabotage and her growing belief in herself, and they will likely want continue this journey in the planned sequel, Capricious." (Booklist 2013-11-01)"In deft, layered verse, Prendergast chronicles her heroineÃ¢â ¬â„¢s desperate search for a positive identity. Young love, religion, politics, prejudice, and the meaning of art in society all factor into RaphaelleÃ¢â ¬â„¢s acceptance of herself and her family in all its complexities. Many readers will recognize both her tendencies toward self-sabotage and her growing belief in herself, and they will likely want continue this journey in the planned sequel, Capricious." (VOYA 2013-12-01)[Starred review] "Prendergast's sophomore YA novel is aptly named, both for the fierce spirit of its narrator, Ella, and the choice to tell her story entirely in verse...The verse bolsters character...[and] also allows Prendergast to take a jagged, piecemeal approach to telling Ella's story, a sort of diary structure that feels intimate and believable...The refusal to stick to one particular style, form, or rhyme scheme is an apt reflection of Ella's tumultuous teenage state...Prendergast asks concrete questions about faith, art, and politics that are sometimes avoided in YA...In Ella, Prendergast has

created a voice that is definitely audaciousÃ¢â ¬â •but also utterly real and memorable." (Quill & Quire 2013-10-01)"This stunning, potent novel-in-verse delivers a riveting story and a character who is independent yet unsure, brave yet vulnerable, and so utterly true to herself. Readers will revel in every carefully chosen word and image. Prendergast has created a magnificent portrait of high school life, of first love, of a family in crisis. She raises challenging, intriguing questions about religion, women in society, art and self-expression. She takes on so many things in this book and yet the reader never feels overwhelmed, it never once feels like too much. The poetry format is used to brilliant effect, compelling readers to slow down and savour each exquisitely crafted poem, and to enter more deeply into EllaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s mind and heart." (Canadian Children's Book News 2013-09-01)"Prendergast has written a stunning young adult novel which shows the coming-of-age process of a strong and independent young woman who wants to express herself through her art... Audacious is written entirely in verse, but readers will hardly notice this fact after the first few pages. Somehow, the author manages to create fully formed characters, interesting dialogue and a series of events which tell a complete story while using a minimum of words. Prendergast says enough that readers have a clear sense of plot, setting and characters, and yet readers are able to fill in any blanks with their own imaginationÃ¢â ¬â •a perfect combination!" (CM Magazine 2013-09-20)"Smart, funny, clever and bold. Ella is a quirky, appealing character with a complicated back story and realistic, identifiable problems...Explores important, highly topical themes in an intelligent way." (Resource Links 2013-12-01)

Who Would I Recommend This Book To?Anyone in the mood for gritty, teen fictionA book that does not skim lightly over the "hard stuff"Something that is brutally, sometimes painfully honestBeautiful, thought-provoking writing styleFans of Ellen Hopkins, Laurie Halse Anderson, and David LevithanWhat Was My Reaction After I Finished This Book?Why the hell would Audacious end like that?Background & BackstoryI haven't heard about this book too much throughout the Blogosphere. The only reason I picked it up at all was because of Jayne @ Fiction_The New Reality's and remembered that she loved it. It was on my library's featured shelves, and I wasn't even sure it was the correct book, but I opened it, saw the verse, and immediately put it in the pile of books I was going to check out. What I will say is that you have to be in the mood to read Audacious, as it was a dark novel, and not for the faint of heart. Also, if you're in the mood for some gorgeous writing that will make you think. Because of the writing, this review will be a quote review, and frankly, I am wondering how I didn't tab every single page in this novel.Quote Review"I feel like a shirtThat's been washed too many times.Faded and worn.I've run my entire love-life cycleBeginning, middle

and endWash, risne and dryIn one 24 hour period."---P170The best way to describe Audacious is.... Audacious. It's the kind of book which deals with a mature subject matter and doesn't blur any lines. There isn't a single line that speaks lies. If Audacious was known on a more national level, I am 100% certain that it would be added to the ever-growing list of banned books in schools. Now I'm certain that there have been books written about censorship and making mistakes by spreading images/information via social media. Yet, I'm sure that those books don't take the approach that Audacious does. While other books may be seen as cautionary tales, or asjudgements made from people observing the situation. Audacious was real, raw, and intentional."I recognize the desperationThe careful measuring of every word and moveThe calculationCan I afford to slip today?Where am I on the populometer?.... A liability with my mismatched shoes..... Me, they know, they can't afford"--- P45.I know not many people have heard of the book I am about to mention, but I sincerely think more people should, and that book is Dear Nobody: The True Diary of Mary Rose. This book was similar in terms of voice, risky decisions the protagonists make, and the quality of content. Instead of trying to explain myself (again) when it comes to the brutal authenticity of events, all you have to do is read the review."Faith is lostMorals are challengedI long to curse, and paint nudityAnd reveal lies and weaknessAnd stupidity.I long to draw the eyes of otherTo themselvesAnd their failingsAnd away from meAnd mine"--- P32.The difference between Raphaelle and almost every other main character of these types of stories (where everything goes to hell) is that what Raphaelle did was deliberate. Call it risky, call it genius.... call it stupidity, whatever label you stick on it, the fact remains that Raphaelle acted with a purpose and she knew what trouble she could/would get into because of it. Even though I thought Raphaelle made -what I would consider- a bad decision, I 100% see where she was coming from and think, if I was in her situation, that I would have made the same decision."Real art requires risk, she saysAnd a certain willingnessTo be exposedAnd vulnerableNot to scrutiny but to criticismAnd even condemnation....Well done"---P163.It is no secret (IRL or online) that I hate Common Core with a fiery passion. It is also no secret that Raphaelle despises conforming to the norm, fake or jaded people, and the general group mentality that tends to show up in High School in general. Now, I'm not saying that I would do something as drastic as Raphaelle to show how much I disagree with Common Core, but I know that I have the same level of intense feelings as her and might, if provoked, do something as risky. So even though everything has gone to hell by the time the quote is said, I know that Raphaelle (as well as myself) feels so liberated and ecstatic that at least one person saw my intentions as they were and applauded them."The sun peaks up slowlyRays bisect the dusty skyLong thin strips of cloud, like stretched out ribbonsIlluminated by fireDrift away, their night-time condensation

dissipated"--- P21."SnowflakesFalling so softly,like thieves in the frozen night.They steal the city."---P61."Empty spaceIt says more about youAnd what you intended to sayThan even the artwork itselfEveryone knows what should be thereMy piece is up in the libraryAnd that insipid watercolorAnd in between we left a largeEmpty space"---P230.If you haven't noticed, the number one reason Audacious received a 5 star rating from me is because of the quote-worthy quotes. I mean, this is a Quote Review for heaven's sakes. The three quotes above are the most powerful ones in the entire novel, and they deserve to be painted on walls and have Etsy boards created with the."GodWhere were you when Gabriel died?Where were you when they bulldozed Samir's homeOr when his cousins died?When buses blow upWhen bridges collapseWhen little children starveor drownGet shotOr rapedDo you watchor look away?"---P246.Prendergrast also brings up the concepts of faith, god, and destiny a lot, especially with this quote. While Raphaelle puts a somewhat negative spin on them, as a reader, you also know that this is why some people don't have faith in a god. Because, if God is responsible for everything that happens, why does he let death, sorrow, and suffering happen? And if these horrible events happen in order to teach humanity a lesson, why is it that those particular people are the ones chosen to suffer?"Quaint, the idea that love isUnquestionable undefeatableEndless fathomlessStrong as time andTenacious as space butIf love is never to be testedOr challenged then it is worthNothing."---P320.I gotta say, I didn't particularly like the characters of Audacious. Raphaelle was so indecisive when it came to the poor excuse for a "love triangle" that was also a case of insta-love as well as lust. She was so desperate at times that it was pathetic and her negativity kind of brought my mood down a little when she said certain things [see quote above & below]. Don't get me wrong, I love a different, eye-opening perspective, but Raphaelle said some things that I kind of took personally and was offended I know you're thinking I have lost my mind for being offended by what a book character said, but it's true."I'm like a flowerWhose petals are being plucked awayOne by oneOr falling to the groundTheir purpose served"---P283.Factors ~My favorite kinds of books are the ones that have lasting effects on who I am, and this is one of them.I did not give Audacious the full 10/10 stars because of the ending, and annoying love triangle.How Likely Is It That I Will Read The Sequel?75% ~ While I loved the book, it would have been so much better if the last 30 pages were just chopped off. Maybe Prendergast felt the pressure to write a sequel, which is why she left a lot of loose threads. I for one, would have enjoyed seeing a companion novel about some of the minor characters, and would really enjoy reading from their perspective. Nevertheless, I will warily read the sequel. It is rare that a book as powerful as Audacious will have a sequel just as good, or even better. So I will go into it with my hopes not too high.Would I Buy It?Audacious is one of those books

that I would buy even at the full $17.99 price. While reading the book, I placed over 18 slips of papers between pages so I could go back and relish in the beautiful writing. I would jump on purchasing it the minute I saw it in stores so I could have my own copy to annotate.How Likely Is It That I Will Re-Read?My best bet is that I will re-read Audacious in a year or so when I'm in the mood, and I am sure once I own it (whenever that is) that I will go back and re-read certain sections and/or quotes that I found inspirational.Conclusion: Audacious is a risk that Predergrast obviously took with a whole-hearted plunge into the deep end of literature. Just like what Steve Jobs said, "You can quote it [the book], disagree with it, glorify or vilify it, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things..." The only thing you can't do is ignore Audacious.

THERE IS SO MUCH TO LOVE ABOUT THIS NOVEL:* I love novels in verse, not only because I enjoy a great poetic turn of phrase, the economy of words, and the use of purposeful vocabulary, but it's also about all that white space. I enjoy allowing the words to breathe in that space, filling me up with meaning and significance in context to the story.* While I am not a huge fan of YA romance, I AM a HUGE fan of YA characters who tackle large issues--racism, hate crimes, cultural differences, LGBT issues, abuse, sibling rivalries, war, poverty, religion, disenfranchisement, crime (and punishment), etc. etc. This book more than satisfies there (but be weary somewhat: see CONS below).* I completely devoured the idea that Ella/Raphaelle were nearly two different people, with 2 perspectives and approaches to life, and that were at complete odds with one another. As Ella finally admits toward the end, perhaps she has a desperate need to seek attention, hence the Raphaelle personae, which is cutting, daring, contrary, instigates, agitates, shocks, disgusts and divides. The Ella personae is something she longs to be ("normal," gregarious, content, etc.). I love the push and pull of this conflict within her, and I actually wish there was a bit more of this in the novel, but that may just be my personal preference. I think Prendergast does a fine job perpetuating this conflict throughout without overdoing it.* The main characters were well drawn and compelling: Raphaelle and Samir (an Arab-American with whom Raphaelle falls in love). Becoming absorbed in both characters individually made their time together in the novel even more potent. Through Ella (Sorry. I keep changing up her name), I learned details about Samir's culture and why their relationship (emotional and physical) will have severe limitations, unless they take drastic action (read the book! ;) to be together, completely so. And though I do not typically enjoy YA romance, their cultural differences made their togetherness more substantial for me. I couldn't wait for them to be together again.* Art. I love how art is used in this book, by both Ella and Samir (and David, too, I guess). Art is often a very strong vehicle for characters, but particularly for the conflicted, troubled,

confused, suffering, and victimized. I really love how Prendergast uses Ella’s artistic temperament, style, and talent to bring out her personality and the rage and fragility within her. You certainly see it with Samir, too, who is no artistic slouch himself (It has been my experience that it is more often a female YA character who becomes art-absorbed, wielding its power as a substitute for voice. It was good to see Samir so art-engaged and capable too, and for whom art becomes a necessity).SPOILERS and CONS:Well, those are the major strengths of the book, as I saw it. I have two criticisms, however, and the first has to do with a point I made above that I thought was a real strength for this novel. The major issues infused in this story become overwhelming at one point and all at once. Perhaps Prendergast wants it that way, so we can feel Ella’s great frustration and conflict, but it almost became ridiculous for me. Within a fairy short span of the novel, nearly every major issue comes to a head, and you suddenly realize it all sounds rather unbelievable: Mom’s bulimia lands her in the hospital; Ella’s sister has a severe asthma attack, also landing her in the hospital, and at the same time Mom heads in; Ella is accused of child pornography and hauled away by police, spending the night in "jail

Audacious. A very fitting title to the YA novel that Gabrielle Prendergast has put together .It is a very fast reading verse novel. I had no idea before reading this book that there was such a thing as a verse novel. This format gives a chance to keep sentences short, like poetry, but the narrative is well defined.Audacious is first, of two novels. It started the story of Raphaelle, a girl in the 11th grade who runs afoul of the popular girls in school, the school principal, and the law as she begins to sabotage her own life. She was raised Catholic but no longer goes to church with her mom. She meets a boy named Sam, who turns out to be more than a friend.I can’t really sum it up more because I would be giving away major spoilers. I can see teens flocking to this one because it handles a lot of the same issues that every kid in high school has, to one extent or another with gritty reality. And the shock of the most audacious act Elle pulls made me shake my head, we tell our kids (or in my case, grandkids) to act like you would like to be treated and obey laws. But Elle has no qualms about doing what she does.I keep hinting, you need to go read this one because it is interesting and well done.

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