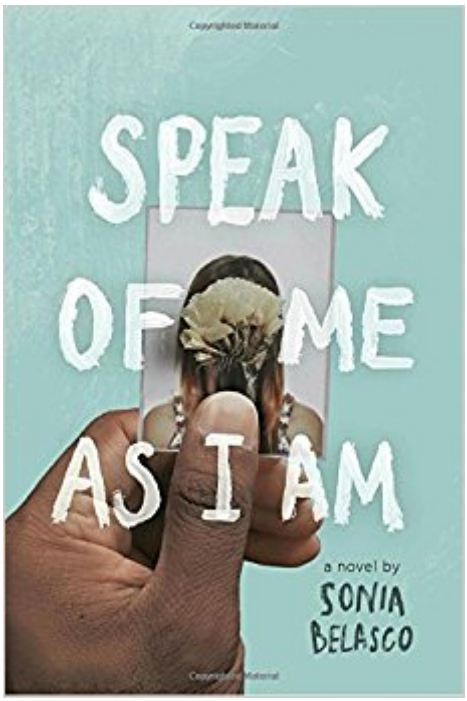
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Speak Of Me As I Am



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Synopsis

A moving story of grief, honesty, and the healing power of art Ã¢â ¬â •Ã Â the ties that bind us together, even when those we love are gone.Melanie and Damon are both living in the shadow of loss. For Melanie, it’s the loss of her larger-than-life artist mother, taken by cancer well before her time. For Damon, itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s the loss of his best friend, Carlos, who took his own life. Ã Â As they struggle to fill the empty spaces their loved ones left behind, fate conspires to bring them together. Damon takes pictures with CarlosÃ¢â ¬â„¢s camera to try to understand his choices, and Melanie begins painting as a way of feeling closer to her mother. But when the two join their schoolÃ¢â ¬â„¢s production of Othello, the play they both hoped would be a distraction becomes a test of who they truly are, both together and on their own. And more than anything else, they discover that it just might be possible to live their lives without completely letting go of their sadness.Praise for Speak of Me As I Am:"Debut author Belasco adeptly captures the tribulations of high school life while also celebrating art’s ability to help clarify and contextualize its joys and sorrows. . . . The novel’s most intriguing character . . . is grief itself, which the author illuminates, examines, and dissects with a surgeon’s precision and the gentle touch of an artist. A stirring account of the trials of adolescence."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Kirkus ReviewsÃ Â "This book will undoubtedly be compared to Rainbow RowellÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Eleanor & Park. . . .Ã Â Teens seeking a quieter but no less moving story will find this book a perfect read."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Booklist"Never maudlin, always authentic, the portrayal of their struggles to deal with grief and with love will resonate with many teens."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •VOYA"A good purchase for realistic fiction collections and for readers looking for books about survivorÃ¢â ¬â„¢s guilt and healing." Ã¢â ¬â •School Library JournalÃ Â "BelascoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s novel sends a powerful message about the complicated nature of grief. . . . This powerful,Ã Â emotional work should be earmarked to be aÃ Â favorite with teen readers."Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •BookPage

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Customer Reviews

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Sonia Belasco (thestrangestofplaces.tumblr.com) has spent much of her professional life working with teenagers as a mentor, tutor, and therapist, and she is often inspired by their passion, creativity, and strength. She will watch almost any TV show about high school and has seen every contemporary movie that involves dance battles or superheroes. She is a native of Washington, DC, and currently lives in Philadelphia, where she is trying to acquire a taste for cheesesteak. You canÃ Â follow her on TwitterÃ Â @SoniaBelasco.

The path to healing is steeped in pain, but Melanie and Damon find each other in their time of need, both of them still reeling from devastating loss. I loved MelanieÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s complicated love for the parent she lost, by a daughter who often felt eclipsed by her motherÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s larger than life presence. DamonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s struggle to come to terms with his best friendÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s suicide is palpable on every page. You know thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s

more to the story; you just donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t know what until the end. Gorgeous writing, Shakespeare, and romance are added bonus points to this poignant and powerful story

I loved this novel by Sonia Belasco. The characters are so real, deep, rich, vibrant. You want to become friends with them, and you do, you're there, sharing their lives, their grief. Because "Speak Of Me As I Am" is a story about grief, very vivid and explored in depth from two different perspectives, two different experiences, Damon's and Melanie's. Different, but shared. It is interesting, riveting, how Sonia Belasco weaves these stories together. This is also a story about love and becoming you more than anything and it is beautifully executed. I want to give this book to everyone I know.

One of my favorite things about a good book is when the characters are people I want to spend time with, and this book delivers that to a T. It's not just the two POV characters, but the people in their orbit. A definite re-read, because I will want to spend time with them again. It's the kind of book I wish I had at times in my life when I was dealing with loss, and I am so glad that it's there for other people. Beautiful prose, beautiful feelings, and a lovely sense of hope.

I loved this book for so many reasons. Belasco is skilled at writing about grief, how it can paralyze you until you embrace it as part of who you are. She understands how you can know someone better after they die and you peruse their stuff. Belasco writes like a dream, in graceful soothing sentences, and the characters she creates are fully human. I especially like the way she captures the lives of teens growing up in a city, how the city challenges and thwarts them and how they make it their own by creating special shared spaces. I read this book straight through in one sitting and I highly recommend it.

What a tremendous writer; full of wit, animated detail and themes to contemplate. While the book was not my preferred genre, the author's talent is undeniable.

This is an instant classic. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s one of the few books that IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll hold onto and continue sharing over a lifetime. I recommend it to EVERYONE, of any age, though it should be especially helpful to young people who feel alone with emotions that are hard to express.

Speak of Me As I Am is modern and timeless and oh so human. It is a book for anyone who has

ever grieved or loved. It is touching and deep, and it is real and simple. It is about those special people, our people, who the luckiest of us find in the world, and the least fortunate of us lose too early from the world. This is a terribly special novel from a most perceptive and intelligent writer. Everyone should read it!

Great novel! Very interesting use of multiple narrators, each with their own distinct voice. The dialogue is witty and tight, and the author's ability to juxtapose extremely difficult, dark topics with a keen sense of humor is impressive. Highly recommended!

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