

MEET THE AUTHOR



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How did you get the idea for *A Bad Boy Can Be Good for a Girl*?

The title came to me first; I remember very clearly scribbling it in my notebook on a slant and underlining it three times. As soon as I saw it in black and white, I knew what themes I wanted to explore. Next came the voice of Josie, although she did not yet have a name.

What do you hope readers take away from your book?

I hope it makes readers introspective about aspects of love and relationships, that they think about who they are, who they want to be, what is right for them. I also hope it sparks discussions; gets people talking about their experiences—past, present, and future. And that it resonates with women of all ages, since most of us have had an experience with a relationship that taught us something new about ourselves.

What do you wish for young women to know about themselves?

That they can trust themselves. Listen to their own voice and not doubt it so much. Make mistakes and still be okay. Following your own gut and instincts will always serve you better than following someone else's lead.

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Ages 14 and Up ♦ 0-385-74702-0

READING GROUP GUIDE
Wendy Lamb Books/Random House

ABOUT THE BOOK

Josie, Nicolette, and Aviva get mixed up with a senior boy—a cool, slick, sexy boy who can talk them into doing almost anything he wants. In a blur of high school hormones and personal doubt, each girl struggles with how much to give up and what ultimately to keep for herself. How do girls handle themselves? How much can a boy get away with? And in the end, who comes out on top?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Discuss the title. Do you agree with it? Why or why not? How did this bad boy end up being “good” for each girl in the novel?
- Josie admits that “lately/I don’t have as tight a grip/on my confidence.” (p. 3) Do you think this affected her actions? How? How can a girl keep her confidence up in unsettling situations?
- Josie says, “It’s pretty amazing/to find out new things about yourself/when you think you already know every inch/of your own personal landscape.” (p. 79) What did she learn? What can you learn from her?
- Nicolette believes sex is power. The power to decide who, what, when, and where. That moment when a boy wants to be with her and nowhere else is intoxicating for Nicolette. Do you agree? How do you think attitudes have changed over time about sex? Is this a modern notion? Would your mother agree with Nicolette? Your grandmother? Is sex a type of power? If so, who has it?

- Both Aviva and Josie end up ditching their girlfriends for a guy. What do you think of their actions? How can you keep your friends and have a boyfriend? How do you balance the old with the new?
- Both Nicolette and Aviva believe what they are feeling is love. But like Kristen tells Aviva, “...we call it making love, *they* don’t.” Do you agree with her?
- Compare the actions of the three girls. What can you learn from each of them? Who do you feel most sorry for? Why? Who do you relate to the most?
- Each of the girls begins to lose their own identity as they become wrapped up in this all encompassing relationship. Josie has to concentrate to remember her own favorite things, Nicolette loses her veneer of control, and Aviva lets him call her by a name she hates. Is this letting go of yourself in a relationship inevitable? Can it be prevented? How?
- The author never names the boy. Why do you think she made this decision? What percentage of young men do you think treat women in this way? Do young women hold any responsibility for it? How much?
- How can reading a book like this prevent a girl from making the same mistakes as its characters? What have you personally learned by reading about Josie, Nicolette, and Aviva?

ACTIVITIES

Find a theme song for each character. Choose lyrics and music that represent each girl’s story best. In a short journal entry, explain your choice.

Continue the novel by writing Kristen’s story in the breathless free verse style that Tanya Lee Stone does.