



Before I Fall

By Lauren Oliver

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What if you had only one day to live? What would you do? Who would you kiss? And how far would you go to save your own life?

Samantha Kingston has it all: the world's most crush-worthy boyfriend, three amazing best friends, and first pick of everything at Thomas Jefferson High—from the best table in the cafeteria to the choicest parking spot. Friday, February 12, should be just another day in her charmed life.

Instead, it turns out to be her last.

Then she gets a second chance. Seven chances, in fact. Reliving her last day during one miraculous week, she will untangle the mystery surrounding her death—and discover the true value of everything she is in danger of losing.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

In this *Groundhog Day* meets *Mean Girls* teen hybrid, Sam Kingston is pretty, popular, and has a seemingly perfect boyfriend. But after a late-night party everything goes terribly wrong, and the life that she lived is gone forever. Or is it?

At the start of *Before I Fall*, Sam is self-consumed and oblivious about the impact of her actions on others. But as she repeatedly experiences slightly altered versions of the hours leading up to her death—and her relationships with friends, family, and formerly overlooked classmates bloom, end, or shift—it's impossible not to feel for the girl whose life ends too soon. Oliver's adept teen dialogue and lively prose make for a fast, page-turning story in which the reader is every bit as emotionally invested as Sam. --*Jessica Schein*

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—Samantha Kingston has worked her way up the popularity ladder; now a senior, she and her three best friends rule their school. On Cupid Day, Sam expects to receive Valentine roses, to party with her friends, and to finally (maybe) have sex with her equally popular boyfriend. The last thing she expects is that she will die, but in the final moments of her life, as she hears "a horrible, screeching sound—metal on metal, glass shattering, a car folding in two," everything turns to nothing. Only, it is not the end for Sam. She wakes up to start the same day over again, and again; in fact, she relives it seven times. At first, being dead has its advantages, as she realizes that nothing worse can happen to her. She first conducts herself with reckless abandon, seducing her math teacher and smoking marijuana. It is difficult to feel pity for Sam; she is snobbish, obnoxious, a cheater, and just plain mean. However, her gradual and complete transformation is so convincing that when she finally puts others before herself in order to save another life, it is moving and cathartic. The deepening relationship between Sam and Kent, her childhood friend, is sensitively described and the most complex and compelling relationship in the story. Although somewhat predictable, the plot drives forward and teens will want to see where Sam's choices lead. Fans of Gabrielle Zevin's *Elsewhere* (Farrar, 2005) will enjoy this almost-afterlife imagining.—*Amy J. Chow, The Brearley School, New York City*

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Review

"Oliver, in a pitch-perfect teen voice, explores the power we have to affect the people around us in this intensely believable first novel...This is a compelling book with a powerful message and should not be missed." (ALA Booklist)

"Before I Fall is smart, complex, and heartbreakingly beautiful. Lauren Oliver has written an extraordinary debut novel about what it means to live—and die." (Carolyn Mackler, author of *Tangled* and *The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things*, a Printz Honor book)

"This story races forward, twisting in a new direction every few pages, its characters spinning my emotions from affection to frustration, anger to compassion. You'll have no choice but to tear through this book!" (Jay Asher, author of the New York Times bestseller *Thirteen Reasons Why*)

"Samantha's attempts to save her life and right the wrongs she has caused are precisely what will draw readers into this complex story and keep them turning pages until Sam succeeds in living her last day the

right way." (Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA) (starred review))

"Oliver's debut novel is raw, emotional, and, at times, beautiful....readers will love Samantha best as she hurtles toward an end as brave as it is heartbreaking." (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sheryl Vaughan:

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Valerie Gray:

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