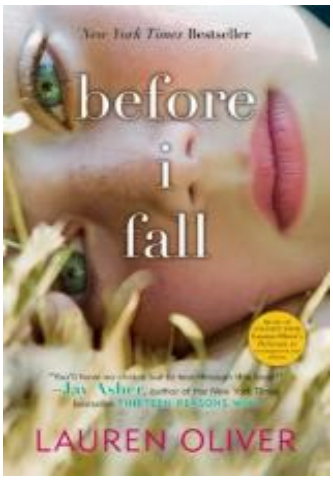
ReadingGroupGuides
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Before I Fall

by Lauren Oliver



About the Book

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.

Discussion Guide

1. What does it mean to be popular? What makes someone popular? Sam says ?there?s no point in analyzing it? because there will always be a line between the haves and nhave-nots and ?it?s just what happens? (p. 18). Do you agree?

2. Describe Lindsay, Elody and Ally. In what ways is Sam like them? In what ways is she different?

3. Day One Samantha says that being cruel is ?just the kind of thing that kids do to each other. It?s no big deal. There?s always going to be a person laughnig and somebody getting laughed at?The whole point of growing up is learning to stay on the laughing side? (p.5). Do you agree? Why or why not? What do you think Juliet would say about this reasoning?

4. How does Sam get to the top of the social ladder? How does Lindsay get --- and keep --- her position there? Why do you think Sam and her friends follow someone like Lindsay, even when it means turning on others?

5. Early in the book, Sam is willing to lash out at Juliet but unwilling to confront Rob and let him know that he?s ?full of it? (p. 119). How do you explain this distinction? What makes it easy to torment someone you hardly know but difficult to speak honestly with someone you care about?

6. Why does Sam at first decide that she will have sex with Rob, and why does she eventually decide not to? Do any of the characters? attitudes toward sex remind you of your own? Do you believe that having sex makes you different or makes you see things differently? What do you think a person?s first time should be like?

7. Describe Sam?s relationship with Ken. What does she want from him, and how does her attitude toward him change over the course of the story? Does she deserve to be with him? Is he right to tell her that she?s too good for some of the poor choices she makes? Why or why not?

8. What do you think about Sam?s comment, ?A good friend keeps your secrets for you. A best friend helps you keep your own secrets? (p. 107)?

9. On each day of her death, Sam is startled by a sense of possibility and the notion that anything could happen. How does that feeling change over time? What do you make of the day when the ?line loses meaning? (p. 194) and Sam decides to smoke in the bathroom with Anna Cartullo, kiss Mr. Daimler, and generally live without thinking of consequences?

10. Sam tries to excuse herself from some of the terrible things the other girls do to Juliet until she realizes, ?It was. It was all of us? (p. 385). Do you agree? Should you be held accountable for the actions of other people in your group? Is it as wrong to be a bystander as a perpetrator? Explain.

11. How would Sam have been different if she?d been friends with Anna Cartullo or the Pugs on Day One? Would she have been any more or less sympathetic a character?

12. Sam reminds the reader that ?we?re the same, you and me? (p. 132). What?s your reaction to that assumption? Do you find yourself passing judgement on Sam or other characters at any point in the story? Do you think you?d do things differently if you were in Sam?s situation the first time around? Does Sam deserve to die?

Author Bio

Lauren Oliver is a screenwriter, media entrepreneur, and author of multiple *New York Times* bestsellers, including DELIRIUM, PANDEMONIUM and REQUIEM in the *Delirium* trilogy; BEFORE I FALL, which was adapted into a feature film; PANIC, which was adapted into an Amazon Prime series for which Lauren wrote every episode and served as executive producer; and the *Replica* duology.

Lauren founded the IP company StoryGiants, helping to package and edit nearly 100 other novels. She also cofounded Incantor AI, devoted to ethical treatment of IP in artificial intelligence technologies for media and entertainment.

Raised in Westchester, New York, Lauren attended the University of Chicago and got her MFA from NYU. She now divides her time between Maryland and Los Angeles.

Critical Praise

"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."

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Publication Date: March 2, 2010
Genres: Fiction, Young Adult 12+
Hardcover: 480 pages
Publisher: HarperCollins
ISBN-10: 006172680X
ISBN-13: 9780061726804