



All Alone in the Universe

By Lynne Rae Perkins

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"Before last summer Maureen and I were best friends....At least I think we were. I don't know what happened exactly. As some people who get hit by trucks sometimes say, 'I didn't see anything coming.'"

When her best friend since the third grade starts acting as though Debbie doesn't exist, Debbie finds out the hard way that life can be a lonesome place. But in the end the heroine of this wryly funny coming-of-age story--a girl who lives in a house covered with stuff that is supposed to look like bricks but is just a fake brick pattern--discovers that even the hourly tragedies of junior high school can have silver linings, just as a house covered with Insul-Brick can protect a real home. This first novel shines--fun, engrossing, bittersweet, and wonderfully unpredictable.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

PW called this first novel about a 13-year-old girl's feelings of abandonment when her best friend finds a new buddy "a lively coming-of-age story filled with touching moments." Ages 10-up. (Mar.) n

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From School Library Journal

Gr 4-8-Debbie feels that she is "all alone in the universe," when her best friend Maureen suddenly starts spending all her time with their classmate, Glenna. As Debbie mourns her changing relationship with Maureen, she slowly begins the process of forming new friendships. This touching story by Lynne Rae Perkins (Greenwillow, 1999) of friendships lost and made, told through Debbie's first person point of view, is deftly narrated by actress Hope Davis. Davis believably portrays Debbie's confusion, sadness, and general moping about. The only downside to this audiobook is that listeners don't see the appealing illustrations by the author that appear in the book. This excellent audio version will appeal to upper elementary and middle school girls.

Lori Craft, Itasca Community Library, IL

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From Library Journal

Grade 5-8-Debbie and Maureen are in middle school; they've been best friends since third grade. At least they were until Glenna Flaiber arrives on the scene and becomes a major threat to their relationship. Debbie is comfortable being "Frick and Frack," as her father calls them, and becoming like the Three Musketeers is not appealing to her. When Maureen and Glenna vacation together and begin to share secrets that exclude her, Debbie begins to feel "all alone in the universe." In truth, Maureen likes both girls, but Glenna's constant presence is hard for the jealous friend to take and Debbie is gradually pushed out of the picture. With the help of a caring teacher and some new adult friends, she realizes that Maureen, not Glenna, is ultimately responsible for ending their friendship, and that's what hurts the most. Debbie is gently guided along to reach out to some new girls, and finds that she can be friends with many different types of people. The ending is realistic. There are no magical solutions or potions that bring the former friends back together. As in real life, growth occurs, relationships change, and the girls move on. A poignant story written with sensitivity and tenderness.

Roxanne Burg, Thousand Oaks Library, CA

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Candy Yazzie:

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