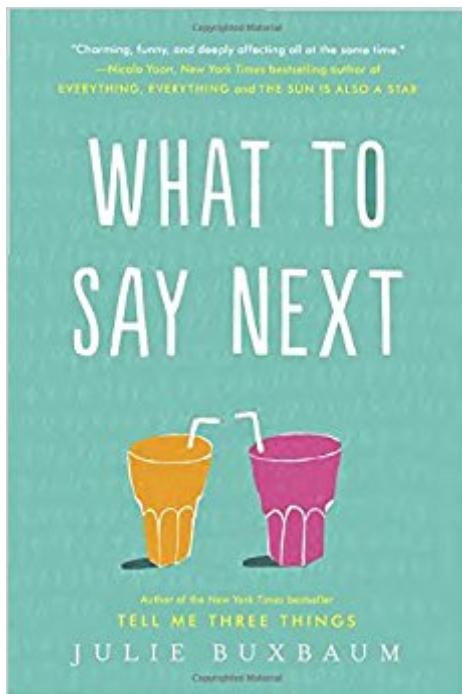


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What To Say Next



Synopsis

"What to Say Next reminds readers that hope can be found in unexpected places." — Bustle.com From the New York Times bestselling author of *Tell Me Three Things* comes a story about two struggling teenagers who find an unexpected connection just when they need it most. Nicola Yoon, the bestselling author of *Everything, Everything*, calls it "charming, funny, and deeply affecting." Sometimes a new perspective is all that is needed to make sense of the world. KIT: I don't know why I decide not to sit with Annie and Violet at lunch. It feels like no one here gets what I'm going through. How could they? I don't even understand. DAVID: In the 622 days I've attended Maplevue High, Kit Lowell is the first person to sit at my lunch table. I mean, I've never once sat with someone until now. "So your dad is dead," I say to Kit, because this is a fact I've recently learned about her. When an unlikely friendship is sparked between relatively popular Kit Lowell and socially isolated David Drucker, everyone is surprised, most of all Kit and David. Kit appreciates David's blunt honesty—in fact, she finds it bizarrely refreshing. David welcomes Kit's attention and her inquisitive nature. When she asks for his help figuring out the how and why of her dad's tragic car accident, David is all in. But neither of them can predict what they'll find. Can their friendship survive the truth? Named a Best Young Adult Novel of the Year by POPSUGAR— "Charming, funny, and deeply affecting all at the same time." — Nicola Yoon, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Everything, Everything* and *The Sun Is Also a Star* — "Heartfelt, charming, deep, and real. I love it with all my heart." — Jennifer Niven, New York Times bestselling author of *All the Bright Places*

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Customer Reviews

What to Say Next View larger

"Buxbaum uses split first-person narration to give readers striking insight into both teens. . . . Readers will easily see David as a complex, brilliant individual. Discussion of Kit's family and heritage bring additional complexity and depth to his portrait of grief and recovery."--PW
"Charming, funny, and deeply affecting all at the same time."--Nicola Yoon, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Everything, Everything* and *The Sun Is Also a Star*
"Heartfelt, charming, deep, and real. I love it with all my heart."--Jennifer Niven, New York Times bestselling author of *All the Bright Places*
"Told in the alternating voices of a girl whose world has been shattered and a boy who is the only person in her life who sees her clearly, *WHAT TO SAY NEXT* is about the power of connection and the beauty of compassion. With sensitivity, wisdom, and heart, Julie Buxbaum weaves a story in which loss and grieving are balanced by humor and insight. This novel is so compulsively readable that you'll be surprised how deeply your emotions are stirred."--Christina Baker Kline, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Orphan Train*
"Julie Buxbaum has written my perfect love story--two brave, flawed characters ditching the idea of 'normal,' falling in love, and finding the unanswerable answers to life in each other. I adored it."--Cath Crowley, author of *Graffiti Moon* and *Words in Deep Blue*

JULIE BUXBAUM is the author of the New York Times bestseller *Tell Me Three Things*, her debut young adult novel. She also wrote the critically acclaimed *The Opposite of Love* and *After You*, and her work has been translated into twenty-five languages. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband and their two young children. Visit Julie online at juliebuxbaum.com and follow @juliebux on Twitter.

I just loved *Tell Me Three Things* by Julie Buxbaum so as soon as I knew she was writing another YA novel, I pre-ordered it and dove right in. I read this wonderful, serious, funny, definitely sad book in one day, but the SAD was integral to the story of Kit Lowell sitting at David Drucker's lunch table. Kit is popular but grieving the death of her dad and really can't deal right now with her friends' company, sympathy, etc.(not that she tells them this). Kit sitting with David (OMG, their growing

friendship was palpable, sweet, engrossing) changes his (and Kit's) life. David and Kit were such authentic characters; you rooted for them, wanted to punch them (you will see), and you hoped & prayed their friendship was strong enough to survive reality that is HS life. The book is told in alternating chapters by Kit & David and really spoke to me about them as real teens. David was such a great character, being on the spectrum of autism (which he doesn't really think he has) and totally supported by his family was so nice to see in YA literature. But I really liked the way Buxbaum let us see David's thoughts (and desires) about Kit. She becomes the reason he really tries to be more normal- his sister is away at college & they do a lot of FaceTime- Miney helps & supports David. Due to his sister's deep abiding love- David keeps a notebook on his thoughts of his classmates, who to talk to, and who to stay away from. He has been bullied by Justin & Gabriel since middle school and this is detailed in his notebook too. But as he comes to wonder & rely on seeing and talking to Kit everyday at lunch (his sister tells him to text Kit too) you see his awkwardness but since he is so intelligent and his sister has tried to drum normalness into him, David becomes so much more to Kit and to the reader. You feel his loneliness, his yearning, his intelligence as he begins to look Kit (and others) in the eye, uses his headphones less, look around as he walks in the school halls. I really enjoyed the new David with clothes and haircut (just as everyone else does, but Kit already saw that David) and I loved David's honesty when he told Kit she was beautiful and in his thoughts how he loved her just as she was (with or without makeup, nice clothes, smiling or crying) I just could not put this book down, Kit and David are two protagonists I really enjoyed getting to know, teens will like the HS drama, develop empathy for those who are different and despise the horrible bullying for teens like David.

Sometimes you follow the work of a writer based on their early work, which is what I have done with Julie Buxbaum. I am sure that there are others that have done the same but I have followed the writer's work since I read "The Opposite of Love," one of my favorite novels. Her most recent young adult fiction novel focuses on Kit and David, two teenagers from opposite ends of the high-school food chain. David is on the spectrum and as a result, is socially awkward and keeps his distance from the rest of his peers. One day, Kit sits down at his table during lunch. After 622 days of sitting by himself, David might have a friend. Kit isn't feeling like herself after her father's death in a car accident. On the one-month anniversary of his passing, she sits down next to David at lunch, and finds herself enjoying his company. The rest of the novel is a progression of their friendship. It's easy to settle into the book and begin to root for

them. I loved how unsure of each other they were at the beginning, how awkward but cute their dynamic was. To be honest, I wasn't sure how much of the book I could finish. I lost my dad in a car accident and Kit's grief felt so real to me at times. but it was funny, and interesting, and I just fell in love with their voices, the thoughts in their heads. The romance in the novel wasn't too much, and I like how Kit's friends weren't mean girls to her when she stopped hanging out with them. Also, +++) that Kit was half-Indian & her mom is from India! It was great to have representation and to see bits and pieces of Indian culture shown throughout. I guess I dropped it a star because while I really enjoyed the novel, I was on the fence about the end. I didn't think that the plot twist was necessary and perhaps could have just been incorporated into the storyline, but it was still such a good read.

This quick, sweet, and endearing romance tells the story of Kit and David. It tackles the heavy themes of death, disability, mental health, and family. Kit is just trying to piece her life back together and the tragic death of her father in a car accident a month ago. When she sits next to David at lunch, it's simply to get away from her friends and have a little time to herself. But he surprises her when he starts to speak in his direct and honest way - something Kit finds refreshing. The two begin an unlikely friendship that changes both their lives forever.

I've long been a fan of Julie Buxbaum's and I think she's really hit her stride with her YA novels. Last year's *A Tell Me Three Things* was fantastic, and this book is too. David--a boy with Asberger's--jumps off the page and makes you fall in love with him, even as he's screwing up his newfound friendship with Kit. There's a mystery here too--how did Kit's father die--that drives part of the plot. But it's the voice of the two main characters and narrators that's the real gem. Two flawed people, finding one another. Highly recommend

I just finished reading "What To Say Next", and I hated to see it end. I loved, loved, loved it! After reading "Tell Me Three Things" I knew I could expect a wonderful read, and Julie Buxbaum didn't disappoint. This woman can write! Now I will have to hunt down everything else she's written! The subjects of autism and Asperger's are explained and handled so perfectly in this book, it should be required reading. My heartfelt thanks to Julie Buxbaum for what I consider a perfect book!

Julie Buxbaum has knocked another ya novel out of the park. Kit and David feel like students I

know, real people. Their families are close to their kids, but no suffocatingly so. The other teens in the novel are developed, yet their maintain the shallow people teens sometimes are. This is an important novel for all, and there is a great deal of smiling that takes place during the reading. I'm so pleased Kit and David entered my life. I'll not soon forget them.

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