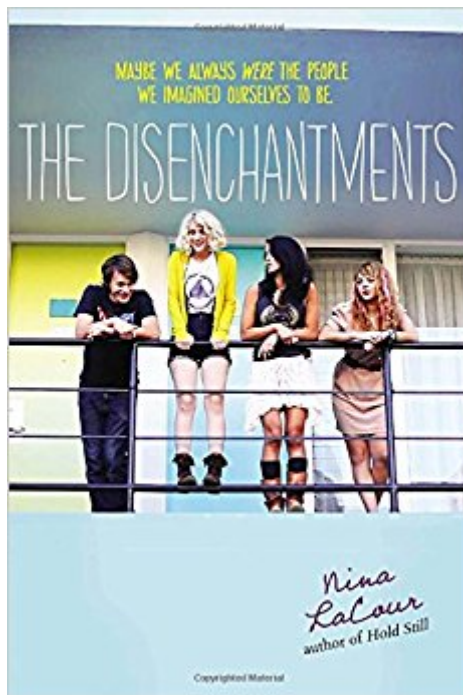


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The Disenchantments



Synopsis

From the award-winning, bestselling author of *Hold Still* and *We Are Okay*. Colby and Bev have a long-standing pact: graduate, hit the road with Bev's band, and then spend the year wandering around Europe. But moments after the tour kicks off, Bev makes a shocking announcement: she's abandoning their plans - and Colby - to start college in the fall. But the show must go on and The Disenchantments weave through the Pacific Northwest, playing in small towns and dingy venues, while roadie- Colby struggles to deal with Bev's already-growing distance and the most important question of all: what's next? Morris Award finalist Nina LaCour draws together the beauty and influences of music and art to brilliantly capture a group of friends on the brink of the rest of their lives.

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Customer Reviews

"A rich tapestry that will make readers confident that they are in the hands of a master storyteller."--Kirkus Reviews, starred review
"Enchanting...this realistic novel will hit home."--School Library Journal, starred review
"Astonishing."--Booklist, starred review
"Make this book a part of your collection--you will not be disappointed."--VOYA, starred review

Nina LaCour (www.ninalacour.com) is the author of the award-winning *Hold Still* and widely acclaimed *The Disenchantments*. Formerly a bookseller and high school English teacher, she now writes and parents full time. A San Francisco Bay Area native, Nina lives with her family in Oakland, California.

I loved LaCour's *Hold Still* and boy did I love this one too! Colby is such a great narrator. He loves Bev, she has been his best friend since forever and he can't wait to go on tour with her all girl band, The Disenchantments, before he and Bev tour Europe. They have decided not to go to college like everyone else. The other band members are Alexa (younger sister to Meg and still in high school) and Meg (will be dropped off to college at the end of the band's tour) while Colby is the driver of his uncle's prized Melinda, set-up guy and go to guy for everyone. He is an awesome artist, so is Bev, which makes it even more difficult when Bev acts very strange at the start of the tour and tells Colby she applied to RISD and will attend in the fall!!! Colby is stunned because Bev gives him no explanation, but Meg and Alexa make him feel great. They go to some interesting stops on their tour, get involved in trying to solve a tattoo mystery, and meet some "different" people, places, etc. There were so many great quotes, Colby SEES things and his comments are insightful, thoughtful, yet you know he is clamoring to find some meaning in this tour and what should he do now that they are not going to Europe. The more I found out about Colby's friends and what made them unique, LaCour's writing, setting, characters were all so memorable. I am not into tattoos, still am not after reading this book, but I do like the murals and graffiti artistry. Recommended!

THE DISENCHANTMENTS is nearly everything I hope for when it comes to good contemporary reading. It's gritty, it's fun and at its core it's an emotional piece about being at the cusp of the rest of your life. It portrays a week in the lives of four friends who are on the edge of either glory or failure. Recently graduated from high school, Colby, Bev, Meg and (soon to be free, after just one more year of high school) Alexa set out on the road trip of a lifetime, touring the northwest coast in their (not so good) grrl rock band (Colby is the "roadie"). It's so much more than the cover makes it out to be. Plot: 8 Upon reading the blurb above, the story sounds fairly straight forward: boy joins band on tour, boy secretly loves girl, girl lays major bombshell on boy. But really, this book shows us so much more than that. It was refreshing to read a story from a male perspective. A male with strong emotions and opinions. A male with a very miniscule sense of "self". This is his story, as well as the story of the rest of the band, their families and the people they meet along the way. In a way, it is a story fairly similar to that told in the feel-good book, *Where the Heart Is*. (Ever hear of that one? I honestly couldn't help but make comparisons while reading. Good comparisons.) The bombshell given to Colby in the beginning is a Big One, and I'm fairly certain he felt much like Novalee did when she was abandoned at a Walmart in the middle of nowhere. He then encounters numerous people on his

continued journey, encounters that lead him to his ultimate destiny (more or less). My only gripe is that I really, REALLY hope there will be a sequel. I grew to love these guys so much that I really want to know what happens to them next. Also, there were more than a few loose threads left in the end; a couple giant question marks that I'm dying to have answered.

Characters:

There's a girl on the cover, but the story is told by a boy. Got that? Good. I fell in love with Colby for all his insight-fulness, his artistic talent similar to my own, his connection to the world and all the things in it. He really is my kind of guy. I love him for his innocence and for his innocence lost. I love him because his voice is what drives the story along. He may be a slightly emotional boy, but I am very grateful that throughout the book I never forget that he was, indeed, a boy. Some authors fall into a gutter when trying to depict the point of view of a male protagonist. Nina LaCour pulls it off with artistic precision. I also loved the characters, Meg and Alexa. They are polar opposites, and the adopted daughters of two gay male partners. One (Alexa) is stuck in the hippie karma-loving 70's and the other (Meg) is the poster child of the 80's. Their stories and the secrets they have to share really made me feel connected to them in a way I didn't think I would going into the book. The same can be said about the plethora of other characters introduced along their road trip. The only character I had some issues with is Bev. She was a real mystery for most of the book, and because of this I had a very hard time sympathizing with her, even up to the very last page. I can see why Colby loves her, but man! "she didn't quite win me over." She is one of the major reasons I desperately want a sequel. I really do WANT to like her!

Setting:

Road trip! Who here doesn't like road trip novels? Raise your hand. If your hand is raised, then perhaps this book isn't for you. We spend most of the book either in a VW bus, a hotel room or in some stranger's house. Each location has a personality all its own and Nina has an artistic (there's that darn "artsy" word again!) way of making it flow with the story in both mood and tone. She also uses the setting to flesh out her characters, which is a must for any road trip novel. Nina LaCour excels in this area. So if (like me) you love road trip stories and meeting plenty of new faces along the way, this book will be right up your alley.

Pacing:

The story is told in only the matter of a handful of days. Each day receives its own chapter. Plenty of detail is given in every chapter. Each location has some impact on the overall story. Few words are wasted, and few characters met along the way can be considered insignificant. Whether or not you like every stop is up to you, but I loved meeting both those who do little more than discuss something as simple as having a "type" of beer as well as those who contribute in greater ways, like making us contemplate the different aspects of "love". It's the diversity of the situations involved that make every piece of the story that much more engrossing. The pacing is

spot on because of this, even if you do wish that you knew exactly what the heck is up with some of these characters as you're reading. Style: 9 This book just lets you be one of the band. By writing the story in the point of view of a male roadie, Nina has thrown a wrench into her story that differentiates it from other contemporary YA. Her writing style is smart and cool all at the same time. No excuses, it's all laid out there to the reader. She knows how to keep the dialogue real and far away from the wooden territory. But one thing that also comes with realistic language in the rock and roll world of our youth is some fairly strong language. This prudish mommy will accept that, but 1 Style point is also taken away because of it. (Booo, Hiss! Prudish mommy!!!) Also included within these pages is talk of drug use, underage drinking, sex and sexuality. Will this book provide you with the answers to the meaning of life? No. But it will provide you with plenty of hours of escapism, where you can once again (or for the first time ever) stand on the precipice between being a child and growing up. And THAT my friends makes for a mighty fine book indeed.

Oh. My. God! I LOVE this book!! *hugs book and dances around room* Read this, ya'll! This book is everything you would expect going on tour with a band should be. It was entertaining, crazy, dramatic, full of heart and so much fun! The Disenchantments are the worst girl group, but you will have the best time seeing them. Bev, Meg and Alexa may not be technically good, but they are so passionate about their music and love what they do so much, that people can't help but have a great time while at their shows. The summer after graduation the girls hit the road for their tour, along with Bev's best friend and loyal roadie, Colby. I loved that this was from Colby's point of view. I haven't read very many books with a male point of view and Colby had a great voice. It was fun being inside his head while on tour with three girls, one of them being the love of his life and also the girl who's just informed him that she is abandoning their plans. I don't know about most people, but when I was a teenager I never really thought of guys having the same types of emotional reactions to things that girls did. Obviously guys have feelings, but it was cool to read Colby reacting to Bev's news in the same way I might have at that age. He was pretty brave, too. When facing a sudden uncertain future, I don't know that I could have stayed in the van. Meg and Alexa were so much fun. They are sisters and complete opposites, but they balance each other out so well. Alexa is the planner. She keeps schedules and lists, and does her best to keep them all on track. Of course, on any good road trip, things never go exactly as they are planned. Meg is a little more carefree and is about living for the moment. One of the best detours in their trip, was a direct result of one of Meg's impulsive moments. Bev was the hardest character to get to know. After bailing on

her plans with Colby, she stays pretty closed off for most of the tour. We get some background on her, from flashbacks, but it isn't until the end of the book that we start to see who Bev really is. In the end they are four friends, who are just regular teenagers, that are about to start their lives in separate directions. This is such a great story of growing up and figuring out who you want to be. Plans are a great source of comfort, but life can't really be planned and the best things come from the unexpected. I went back and forth during this whole book on how I hoped it would end, and even though it didn't turn out exactly as I imagined, the ending was my favorite part of the whole story. It was the exact ending that all of these characters needed and it left me feeling excited and hopeful for their futures. After this book I am a huge fan of Nina LaCour and I can't wait to read what she has for us in the future. I recommend this book to anyone and everyone, it's feel good and honest, fun and dramatic, and has everything a story like this needs :0)

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The Disenchantments

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