



Lock and Key

By Sarah Dessen



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Lock and Key By Sarah Dessen

A New York Times bestseller

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Unlock your heart and the rest will follow.

Ruby is used to taking care of herself.

But now that she's living with her sister, she's got her own room, she's going to a good school, and her future looks bright.

Plus there's the adorable boy next door.

Can Ruby learn to open her heart and let him in?

"All the Dessen trademarks here" —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up—Ruby, 17, is taken in by her older sister and brother-in-law when her mother abandons her. Ruby and her sister haven't spoken since Cora left for college a decade earlier. She moves from a semi-heated, semi-lighted farmhouse to a McMansion in a gated community. The theme of abandonment permeates the narrative—Ruby's mother's disappearance, Cora's perceived abandonment, and all of the small abandonments around every corner throughout Ruby's life. The plot hinges luxuriously on character arc. Ruby's drama of pathological self-reliance to eventual trust plays out through thoughtful, though occasionally heavy-handed, inner monologue and metaphor. As always, Dessen's characters live and breathe. Ruby's sweet hipster brother-in-law and Nate, the freakishly affable hottie next door, are especially vivid, and Cora's change from bitter control freak to sympathetic co-protagonist is subtle and seamless. Though Ruby and Nate don't have quite the cinematic chemistry of many of Dessen's couples, their cautious friendship into romance seems that much more realistic. The author's feel for setting is as uncanny as ever, and Ruby's descriptions of the homogenous nouveau riche Anytown are sharp, clever, and honest. The dialogue, especially between Ruby and Cora, is crisp, layered, and natural. The slow unfolding adds to an anticipatory mood. What's more, secrets and situations revealed in the second half of the novel are resolved more believably by already deeply developed characters. Recommend this one to patient, sophisticated readers.—*Johanna Lewis, New York Public Library*

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From [Booklist](#)

Ruby hasn't had much success with family. Her father left; her protective older sister, Cora, left; and her boozing mother finally leaves, too. Ruby is alone until Cora learns of her situation and swoops in. Suddenly, Ruby finds herself living with Cora and her wealthy brother-in-law, attending private school, and wondering just where she fits in. As in previous books, Dessen takes on a central theme—here the meaning of family—and spins many plots and subplots around it. Most prominent yet least successful is the thread about Cora's relationship with boy-next-door Nate, who rescues her when she needs it, but has difficulty accepting Ruby's help, tentative at first, when she discovers he's being physically abused. Nate seems too good to be true (as does Cora's husband), while his father is a caricature. And one of the most important elements, the issue of the girls' mother lying to them, gets lost. Despite the uneven narrative, Dessen's writing can be beautiful, and her story is involving. Grades 8-12. --Ilene Cooper

Review

Dessen's best since *This Lullaby* it will captivate all readers. *VOYA*, highlighted review

All the Dessen trademarks are here. *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Charlotte Gambrel:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information today can get by anyone in everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even an issue. What people must be consider while those information which is inside former life are difficult to be find than now could be taking seriously which one

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Richard Bennett:

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Daniel Slater:

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