

The Way I Used To Be

Amber Smith

Reviewed by: Xitlalli Santiago, 17

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“The Way I Used To Be,” by Amber Smith tells the story of Eden, a high schooler struggling with the aftermath of her sexual assault. It tells the story in 4 parts: freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior year. She struggles with her internal thoughts surrounding the trauma that has occurred to her, as well as trying to navigate through her new life in high school. She’s confused and hates everything she once loved, but she buries her feelings deep down, where no one can reach. She has to deal with all her relationships and thoughts as well as deal with the person the sexual assault turned her into becoming.

This is my favorite book of all time. I don’t think I had ever read a book that made me cry as much as this book did. Starting out the story with the unfortunate sexual assault really set in motion what type of book this was going to. Watching Eden struggle and make bad choices showed how deeply sexual assault affects people. You get a front row seat to a place of hardships, discovery, and strength. The most notable moment of the book was the end, when she told her brother of what had happened. I felt the weight off my shoulders the same time Eden did. This book will take you on a rollercoaster of emotions.

I recommend this book to young adult readers. It contains some graphic and explicit scenes starting off the first page. It deals with heavy issues like sexual assault and depression. I would definitely recommend buying this book. It’s a heartfelt book that you would probably want to read again.

Recommended Titles:

“Girl in Pieces,” by Kathleen Glasgow

“We Were Liars,” by E. Lockhart

“My Heart and other Black Holes,” by Jasmine Warga