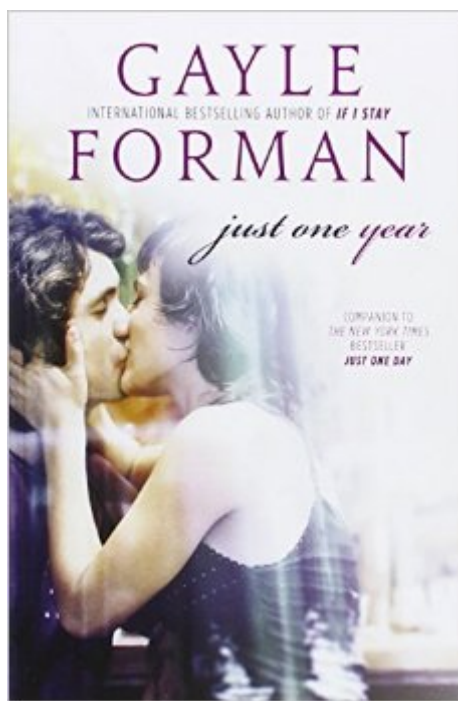


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Just One Year



Synopsis

The compelling companion title to the much-lauded *Just One Day* follows Willem's transformative journey toward self-discovery and true love, by the author of *If I Stay*. Picking up where *Just One Day* ended, *Just One Year* tells Willem's side of the story. After spending an amazing day and night with Allyson in Paris that ends in separation, Willem and Allyson are both searching for one another. His story of their year of quiet longing and near misses is a perfect counterpoint to Allyson's own as Willem undergoes a transformative journey, questioning his path, finding love, and ultimately, redefining himself. * "The complexity of Willem's character, the twisting plot, and far-flung settings (including the Netherlands, Mexico, and India) create an alluring story that pushes beyond the realm of star-crossed romance." Publishers Weekly starred review "As much a travelogue as it is a romance, this novel will appeal to fans of the movie *Before Sunrise* or Maureen Johnson's *13 Little Blue Envelopes* (HarperCollins, 2005)." School Library Journal "As [Willem] becomes engaged personally and professionally, readers will find their interest quickening, right up to the satisfying denouement." Kirkus Reviews

Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Speak; Reprint edition (September 30, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142422967

ISBN-13: 978-0142422960

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (267 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #70,440 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > New Experiences](#) #446 in [Books > Teens > Romance > Contemporary](#)

Customer Reviews

'It was like she gave me her whole self, and somehow as a result, I gave her more of myself than I ever realized there was to give. But then she was gone. And only after I'd been filled up by her, by that day, did I understand how empty I really was.' Finally. We have Willem's story. *Just One Day* left readers contemplating what possibly could have gone wrong, why he never came back to Allyson and if they were ever going to be able to find each other again. *Just One Year* possesses the same

melancholy feel as its predecessor with Willem stumbling around in an apparent daze, unable to trust the stability of his feelings for Allyson because after all... they only knew each other for a single day.'...it's Lulu I miss, and I know it must be displaced, my loneliness a heat-seeking missile, her the heat. Only I can't seem to find a new source of heat.'This is a tough one for me to figure out how I feel about. Willem was a tough nut to crack and I went through the majority of the book not feeling any sort of compassion towards him, no pity for his plight, when I think that would have been the regular response. He gave up his search for her very early on and considering we already know what Allyson went through physically and emotionally makes me sad for her. Willem was convinced to start looking for her again by friends and as much as he kept saying he was still looking for her that whole time, it wasn't an active search. It felt like he was simply sitting back and waiting for something to happen, for her to find him.'The truth and its opposite are flip sides of the same coin.'Willem's story became less about their romance and more about him discovering things about himself and becoming a better person because he met her. This is actually what I had originally hoped for her in Just One Day; for Allyson to recognize the incredibly transformed person she had become (and she did) but that even though it resulted from her meeting Willem that she didn't need him to continue to be as such. Willem found the independence and strength their meeting imbued and used it in a positive manner and while I'm glad at least one of them did this, I never quite liked Willem enough in order to root for him. I never saw what appealed to Allyson and I never understood quite why they transformed each others lives in the first place. While I'm glad to have the closure of Willem's side of the story, I still can't help but feel the ending would have benefited from... more. I needed to see Willem and Allyson's transformations being applied since we as readers were only afforded a quick glance before reaching the final page. Just One Year is a tale of transformation, of finding happiness, of finding love and finding yourself.

I wanted a love story, a finding of kindred spirits and a change of circumstances that allowed two lonely souls to discover that they can drop the masks and be themselves with each other. This book was a journey, but not a love story. It had Themes of identity and connection and it ended EXACTLY where Just One Day ended. So not satisfying! What did I want? I wanted to hear Willem side of the story and his intent to find his Lulu. I wanted the last 30% of the story to be what happened AFTER he opens the door and discovers that Allyson has found him. Does he change his man-whore ways. Is she the one? Was it all in his head or is she the one, the last one? Just One Day started their love story and made us yearn for their reunion, "I imagine my Lulu waking up the next day, finding me gone, reading a note that promised a quick return that never materialized. I

wonder, as I have so many times, how long it took her to think the worst of me." But as voraciously as I took this one in, the expected reunion and subsequent "love story" doesn't happen and was a REAL let down. Willem is depressed after losing his Lulu, but is it her absence or the desertion of his family? His father and grandfather were dead and his mother had always kept him at arm's length. "my mother and I, we both speak Dutch and English. But we never could speak the same language". There wasn't anyone who cared enough for him to feel that his life mattered. He was able to fill this void with the temporary adoration of fans of his acting and one night stands, but after meeting Lulu/Allyson, he woke up to the fact that he had been lost the last three years and was drifting. This story tells of how he puts his heart back together and discover who he is. Where the Just One Day paralleled Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, this one was a parallel of As You Like It and takes place mostly in Holland with Willem's friends playing subtle secondary characters. Willem identifies with Orlando, from the play, and discovers that his life experiences, especially his time with Lulu, start to make sense to him and gives him a life purpose. So, I wanted a love story and this was a boy coming of age story. While well written and full of interesting travel, I would probably not have purchased the book had I known. I wanted to know what happened when these two characters got back TOGETHER and what happens now that they are a year older and changed in so many ways. There was some fairly non-descriptive sex scenes (similar to book one only not with main character!) and some profanity. Would I/Did I buy it? Yes. Would I read it again? No. Would I recommend it to friends? Yes, but letting them know that it is JUST Willem's story.

I found myself completely uninterested, and at times downright bored, of Willem's tale. I was hoping Allyson would make it into the book sooner - that did NOT happen. A let down.

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