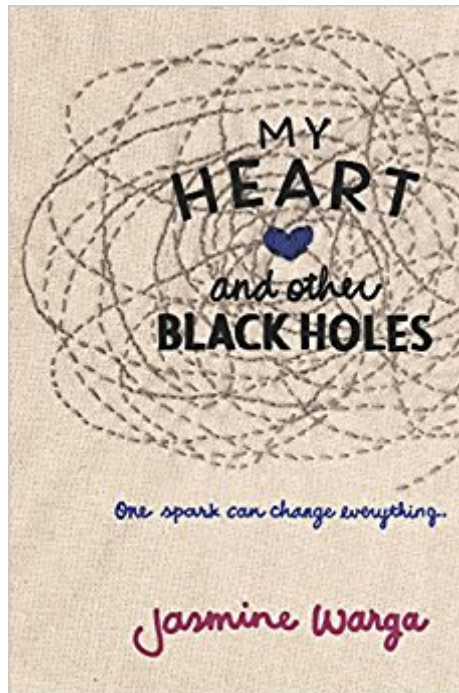




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# My Heart And Other Black Holes



## Synopsis

“Alive with intensity, gut-wrenching honesty, moments of humor, and of course heart. Not to be missed.” Nova Ren Suma, author of *Imaginary Girls* and *The Walls Around Us* A stunning novel about the transformative power of love, perfect for fans of Jay Asher and Laurie Halse Anderson. Sixteen-year-old physics nerd Aysel is obsessed with plotting her own death. With a mother who can barely look at her without wincing, classmates who whisper behind her back, and a father whose violent crime rocked her small town, Aysel is ready to turn her potential energy into nothingness. There’s only one problem: she’s not sure she has the courage to do it alone. But once she discovers a website with a section called Suicide Partners, Aysel’s convinced she’s found her solution. Roman, a teenage boy who’s haunted by a family tragedy, is looking for a partner. Even though Aysel and Roman have nothing in common, they slowly start to fill in each other’s broken lives. But as their suicide pact becomes more concrete, Aysel begins to question whether she really wants to go through with it. Ultimately, she must choose between wanting to die or trying to convince Roman to live so they can discover the potential of their energy together.

## Book Information

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Romance > Contemporary

## Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up Aysel Seran suffers from severe depression and is haunted by and ostracized on account of an act of violence that her father committed three years ago. She and the "black slug" inside her are convinced that suicide is her best and most sensible option. Although she doesn't

interact much with other people, concern about her latent self-preservation instincts leads her to partner up with Roman, another suicidal teen from the next town over. As they plan their suicide pact, however, her doubts begin to increase. Warga's debut, written (according to the author's note) after the loss of a close friend, often feels heavy-handed, especially when using physics (Aysel's a nerd and Warga has worked as a science teacher) as an emotional metaphor. Overall, the book addresses serious issues with complexity and humor, and allows the overlapping situational and chemical causes of the characters' depression and isolation to coexist in a very real and murky way. Aysel is a tough but likable character, at once jaded and appealingly naive. She's also Turkish, a daughter of immigrants in a largely white, small Kentucky town, a circumstance that the author presents without making it the focus of the narrative. The other characters are less developed, even Roman, who falls a little flat, but all are thoughtfully presented. A list of suicide and depression resources are appended. —Katya Schapiro, Brooklyn Public Library --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

—“At times poignant, bitter, and funny, this narrative captures [a] unique voice that questions what it means to die-and to live.” — (Booklist (starred review)) —“My Heart and Other Black Holes is alive with intensity, gut-wrenching honesty, moments of humor, and-of course-heart. This is an extraordinary debut by a striking new voice in YA fiction that left me in awe and moved beyond measure. Not to be missed.” — (Nova Ren Suma, author of IMAGINARY GIRLS and 17 & GONE) —“With high intelligence and a massiveness of heart, Warga gifts us with a novel that has the music of Mozart, the logic of advanced physics, and the vision to see the link between them. This is something utterly new, a book that is kinetic and beautiful and unexpectedly life-affirming.” — (Chris Lynch, National Book Award Finalist for Inexcusable and Michael L. Printz Honor-winner for Freewill) — “[The book] addresses serious issues with complexity and humor . . . thoughtfully presented.” — (School Library Journal) —“Earnest and heartfelt . . . any teen who’s ever felt like an outsider will be able to relate to Aysel and Roman’s fully realized characters.” — (Kirkus Reviews) —“Debut novelist Warga addresses adolescent depression and suicide with honesty and grace.” — (Publishers Weekly) —“Debut author Warga unflinchingly tackles the grim subject matter with empathy, sensitivity, and honesty, without trivializing her protagonists’ disturbing thoughts or emotions . . . [with an] utterly endearing romance.” — (The Horn Book) —“Warga delves honestly into the very difficult issues of teenage depression—sometimes sad, sometimes funny, but ultimately filled with hope.” — (Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA))

4.5 stars actually. I haven't experienced the kind of depression described in this book, but I have seen others around me experience it. In some ways, I wish that one of the characters had the kind of depression I've seen-- not depression precipitated by terrible events, but ye olde, life has a terrible, beautiful futility to it. But then again, there is an oddcouple at the heart of this. And I guess I understand the reasons the author chose to have tragedy behind both. Aysel and Roman make a suicide pact. But as they get to know each other, and each other's families, they begin to see something other than the "black slug" of depression in each other. Kudos to Warga for making Aysel a believable physics-loving nerd with a non-Anglo Saxon background. Also kudos to Warga for walking the narrow, tricky moral line between having Aysel and Roman remain loyal to their promises and to each other and the need to tell others when someone in your circle is suicidal. So where does the half star get lost? I am uneasy with the way the story resolves. There seems to be an about face and some instant forgiveness, and I wondered if it could be all that easy, especially with the inescapable tragedies facing both of them. But all in all, a very worthwhile read. If only for the way Aysel talks about her depression and how it affects her outlook on almost everything.

A relatable quick read that skips around and tastes like Whoppers. This a 3 that should be a 2.5, but I'm too much of a wimp to do that. Before I even started this book, I was slightly rooting for them to... die. Or, mostly Ronan. I'm not morbid, I just didn't want them both to necessarily survive. I also believe that something is wrong when all you can do is imagine the leading main character with an 8-year-olds voice. The story seemed to skip around, and lost the central voice of the story, the main reason Aysel wanted to commit suicide. The two main characters relationship also sped up very quickly. It went from a 4 to a 9. This story was like wanting a Snickers but you could only get some Whoppers (the chocolate malt bakey things). If you're easily pacified with quick read (2 hours, tops) then knock yourself out with this book. The main reason my rating isn't a 2 is because I found it quite realistic. Being around the same age group, I was able to relate to multiple characters. And there you have it. Thanks for reading.

It may be a morbid theme, but it was so uplifting to follow Aysel's path. I really enjoyed this book. I would recommend it, maybe not to someone suffering from dark depression as that may not be suitable.

“Sometimes I wonder if my heart is like a black hole-it’s so dense

that there's no room for light, but that doesn't mean it can't still suck me in. Aysel is a physics nerd. Roman is a basketball star. What they have in common is they both want to die and seek out a suicide partner online. Aysel's character is what you would picture of a suicidal teen. Her depression forces her to see the worst; her mother's frown is because of Aysel, people talk behind her back waiting for her to turn into her father, her half-sister living as if Aysel didn't exist. As she starts to regain hope you slowly start to see behind the veil of her depression that maybe the world doesn't hate her as much as she thought. Roman's character is different. He is a former basketball star and shows no outward sign of being depressed until Aysel looks closer and sees herself in him. His depression comes in the form of guilt over an accident that happen almost a year before the story takes place, in which he is sure is his fault. My physics-nerd half is a little disappointed that Aysel, being a physics-nerd herself, didn't mention the titled "Black Holes" as much as I would have liked. There was plenty of talk of kinetic and potential energies, but only once (maybe a couple of times) when a black hole was mentioned as a comparison to depression. The individual emotions of the two main characters is what makes this book stand out. One character trying to find a connection and another trying to disconnect; both feeling different emotions and having different reasonings but coming to the same conclusion. It's a slap in the face to Aysel (as well as the reader) that anyone can be suffering from depression no matter how well put together they seem on the surface. I would have liked more interactions with minor characters. I'm a sucker for good minor characters and there was so much potential in Aysel's half-sister and Roman's former friends to be good minor characters. Overall, I would recommend My Heart and Other Black Holes to anyone who likes realistic fiction with light romance and heavy on the psychological side. Definitely an author to keep an eye on. [www.readingbifrost.com](http://www.readingbifrost.com)

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