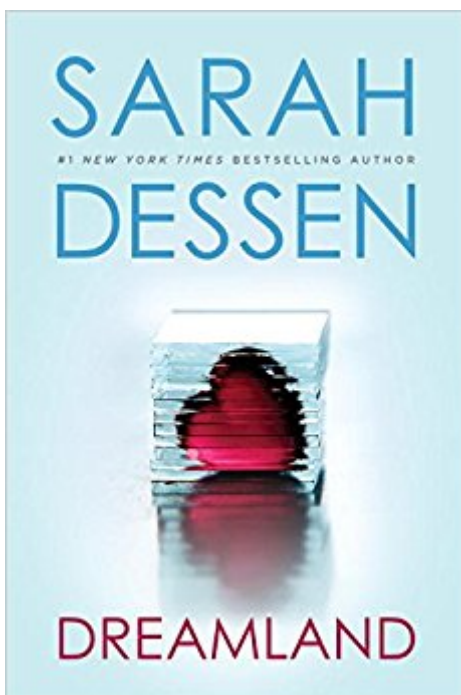


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# Dreamland



## Synopsis

From the award-winning and New York Times bestselling author of *Once and For All* Love can be a very dangerous thing. After her sister left, Caitlin felt lost. Then she met Rogerson. When she falls in love with him, nothing seems real. But what happens when being with Rogerson becomes a larger problem than being without him? Another pitch-perfect offering from Dessen. • Booklist, starred review Sarah Dessen is the winner of the Margaret A. Edwards Award for her contributions to YA literature, as well as the Romantic Times Career Achievement Award. Also by Sarah Dessen: *Along for the Ride* *Just Listen* *Keeping the Moon* *Lock and Key* *The Moon and More* *Someone Like You* *That Summer* *This Lullaby* *The Truth About Forever* *What Happened to Goodbye* *Saint* *Anything* *Once and for All*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Strange, sleepy Rogerson, with his long brown dreads and brilliant green eyes, had seemed to Caitlin to be an open door. With him she could be anybody, not just the second-rate shadow of her older sister, Cass. But now she is drowning in the vacuum Cass left behind when she turned her back on her family's expectations by running off with a boyfriend. Caitlin wanders in a dream land of drugs and a nightmare of Rogerson's sudden fists, lost in her search for herself. Why do so many girls allow themselves to get into abusive relationships--and what keeps them there? In this riveting novel, Sarah Dessen searches for understanding and answers. Caught in a trap that is baited with love and need, Caitlin must frantically manage her every action to avoid being hit by the hands that

once seemed so gentle. All around her are women who care--best friends, mother, sister, mentor--but shame keeps her from confiding in any of them, especially Cass, her brilliant older sister, whose own flight from home had seemed to point the way. Dessen has here created a subtle and compelling work of literature that goes far beyond the teen problem novel in a story rich with symbolism, dark scenes of paralyzing dread, quirky and memorable characters, and gleams of humor. With the consummate skill and psychological depth that brought her praise for *Keeping the Moon*, she explores the search for self-identity, the warmth of feminine friendships, and the destructive ways our society sets up young women for love gone wrong. (Ages 14 and older) --Patty Campbell --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Caitlin O'Koren has always had to follow in the footsteps of her perfect older sister, Cassandra (homecoming queen, soccer star, student body president, soup kitchen volunteer). When Cassandra runs away from home, Caitlin finds herself trying to fill the gap Cass's absence creates. Shortly after, when she meets mysterious Rogerson Biscoe (a bad boy of the type Dessen hinted at in *Someone Like You*), Caitlin sees a way to forge a path for herself, away from Cass's shadow and the expectations weighing on her. Rogerson seems vaguely ominous, but Caitlin is taken by surprise when he first gets violent with her. Unwilling to give up the freedom she thinks her relationship gives her, she withdraws from her friends, starts failing in school and drifts into confusion. Her parents, the stereotypically meddling mom and stiff, emotionally distant father, and her close neighbors, two touchy-feely ex-hippies, are so caught up in their own concerns, and particularly in Cassandra's disappearance, that they fail to notice the difference in Caitlin (including what seems to be alarming physical evidence), pushing the limits of plausibility. For all these shortcuts, however, the characterizations have an unmistakable depth; readers may grow impatient with Caitlin and the obliviousness of her nearest and dearest, but they will believe she is real. Ages 12-up. (Sept.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Since I have read *Dreamland*, I honestly believe this and *Catcher in the Rye* should be taught together to make examples. Such as peer pressure, drugs, being on your own, relationships and things that happen in everyday life. Both books have something to say of their own. *Dreamland* was such a page turner that I couldn't put it down. It is an example of the thoughts and activities in a teenager's everyday life. *The Catcher in the Rye* caught my eye. It is a fairly good book in its own twisted way. This book is based on some of the similar views as *Dreamland*. Though various parts of

the book may seem unrealistic, both books still prove a point.

I read this as a young woman, and even now as a woman at 28 it still is as good as ever. Caitlin allowed someone to come into her life at an all time low, drowning her even further below the surface. She was a girl just by the people she cared most about. But the story is so much more than that, it's a story of self discovery, and forgiveness. I'm so happy I decided to give it another go.

When I started reading *Dreamland*, I felt like it was going to be a book I struggled to finish. I just couldn't get connected to Caitlin and I felt like I was reading from a distance instead of being right there. About halfway through, that changed. Caitlin has always lived in the shadow of her older sister, Cass. So when Cass leaves one night without warning, Caitlin feels like it is her responsibility to step up and fill in that "perfect child" role. At the same time, she doesn't want to be Cass. She doesn't want to have to be perfect. She's confused and doesn't know which way to go. Her confusion ends up leading her down the wrong road, sending her life spiraling down a hole she never thought she'd end up in. In the attempt to step out of her sister's shadow, she falls into Rogerson's. The relationship between these two is heartbreaking, horrific, and realistic. Caitlin's confusion over how she feels about Rogerson is what makes it all worse because I can understand her thinking. Reading about her struggles made my heart ache for her. He met her when she was already down and only brought her lower. I think the reasons I didn't find myself completely loving this book are because of that initial disconnect between me and Caitlin, as well as how blind those closest to Caitlin were. Out of everyone that knew and loved her, not one took enough notice of her downward spiral. I understand why it was done that way, but I still wish one of them had shown something more. *Dreamland* is a quick read, but a powerful one. It shows that sometimes the weak are actually the strongest and that what we see on the outside may only be an illusion.

**POSSIBLE SPOILERS** *Dreamland* by Sarah Dessen is a story that follows Caitlin after her sister Cass ran away on Caitlin's sixteenth birthday. Caitlin's world seems to spiral away until she meets Rogerson, a strange guy with awesome hair and whom Caitlin feels at ease with, someone she can be anyone with. She's happy and in love and everything seems perfect, until Rogerson starts to beat her. I'll be honest, I haven't read anything from Sarah Dessen and didn't think I would like any of her books. All I hear is "Sarah Dessen" this, "Sarah Dessen" that, and because she's that "well known", I didn't think I would like her books. But, had this sale and this book was pretty cheap, and I ended up getting this book pretty much free. For the most part, I enjoyed this book. I thought it was

beautifully written and it's easy to see how Sarah is a good writer and has a lot of followers. But there were issues I didn't like about this book. For the first half, it's all about how Cass leaves and Caitlin doesn't know what to do, that she joins cheerleading but still feels out of it, that she loves Rogerson, that she doesn't know exactly what he does, and that she smokes. Then, at the halfway point, we get the actual story where Caitlin is beaten by Rogerson. It's not a long story at all, so it could have been a lot longer and more detailed. But it's not until the halfway point that a major event happens, one which is described in the summary? The first half almost seems like... a waste because there isn't much that happens. At least enough to affect the plot. Caitlin starts smoking cigarettes and pot and there's also abuse as well mentioned in this story. I do see a lot of comments saying that it's "darker" and not "appropriate" for younger children. But the reality is, it's not that bad and there are worse things out there. You let your kids watch the news? Watch movies? Watch tv? Go on the internet? Yeah, I'm pretty sure that what's in here isn't as bad as elsewhere. However, the issue I have with all of that is that it doesn't seem like Caitlin really is doing any of it. What I mean is that it doesn't seem like there's any side affects. Smoking pot doesn't do anything? No one notices the smoke smell of cigarettes and pot around her? No one notices any side affects from them? No one? And when Caitlin goes into rehab, there are no withdrawal symptoms that she faces or endures? Really? It just seems so... fake and unrealistic. When Rogerson starts beating Caitlin, you feel it, almost. You can see why she doesn't want to leave him. I liked how Sarah explored the abusive relationship. That it was more detailed, more explained, how a person becomes attached to the abuser. It also strikes me odd that no one notices or even suspects anything about Caitlin. I mean, I can see it to a degree, but to the severity that Sarah has it seems a bit implausible. As long as it was and as distant Caitlin was, there had to be someone that suspected something. But I guess everyone is wrapped up so much in their own problems, they don't notice anyone else's. For the most part, I did enjoy this story. I thought it was a beautiful story that wasn't about something normal and everyday. It was different. I didn't like how things became resolved so quickly, how there was no side affects and it didn't even seem like she had been on drugs, how no one really noticed, or how it was too short and sometimes very dull. Overall, though, not bad. I'm not sure if I would recommend this book but it is a quick enough read. Not entertaining enough to keep me reading straight through, but short enough for a quick read. For my first Sarah book, it's not bad, but I don't think it's enough to really be all Sarah Dessen crazy.

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