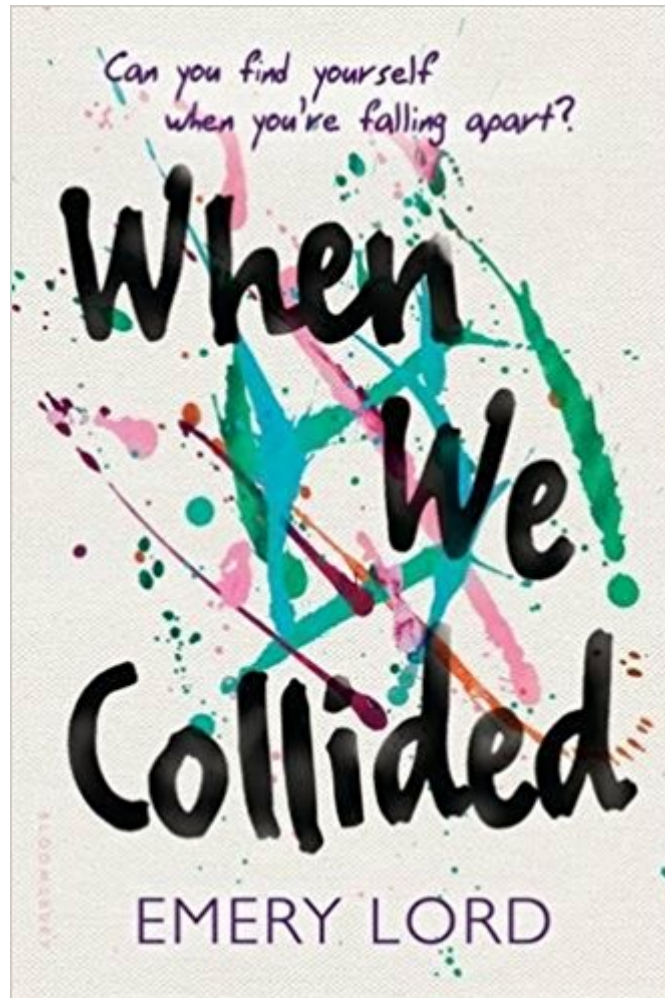




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# When We Collided



## Synopsis

Seventeen year-old Jonah Daniels has lived in Verona Cove, California, his whole life, and only one thing has ever changed: his father used to be alive, and now he is not. With a mother lost in a deep bout of depression, Jonah and his five siblings struggle to keep up their home and the restaurant their dad left behind. But at the start of summer, a second change rolls in: Vivi Alexander, the new girl in town. Vivi is in love with life. Charming and unfiltered, she refuses to be held down by the medicine she's told should make her feel better. After meeting Jonah, she slides into the Daniels' household seamlessly, winning over each sibling with her imagination and gameness. But it's not long before Vivi's zest for life begins to falter. Soon her adventurousness becomes all-out danger-seeking. Through each high and low, Vivi and Jonah's love is put to the test . . . but what happens when love simply isn't enough?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up • Filled with raw, descriptive truths and told through the alternating voices of the protagonists, this story takes place in the idyllic, picturesque setting of Verona Cove, CA. Small enough for everyone to know one another yet large enough to handle a summer tourist season, this background locale is a perfect nesting spot for the poignant love story between Vivi Alexander and Jonah Daniels. The collision between the teens crests and ebbs in what seems like a far too small window of time. Instead, the story dares to allow the action to rise and fall in an organic way. Teeming with in-your-face realism, the work exposes readers to the emotional ups and downs of

Vivi, who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and Jonah, who is trying to hold himself, his siblings, and the family restaurant together as his mother falls apart after the death of her husband. Vivi's struggles with taking medication, and her honest discussions of her brain's chemical issues are evenly balanced with her portrayal as an artist who wants to leave her mark on the world. Jonah's quiet strength as he steps into the role his father's death left vacant and his willingness to share a piece of himself with Vivi make this a powerful book for reader engagement. The ending will have readers hoping for a sequel, though one is not needed. VERDICT An absolute tearjerker romance with a powerful message about weightier topics of grief and mental illness. — Sabrina Carnesi, Crittenden Middle School, Newport News, VA

"This is more than a love story. When We Collided carefully yet effortlessly puts mental illness in conversation with the beauty and struggle of adolescence. It is a book I wish could have written, but am so much better for having read." — Julie Murphy, #1 New York Times bestselling author of DUMPLIN' and SIDE EFFECTS MAY VARY "Searingly honest, gut-wrenchingly authentic, and deeply romantic, When We Collided is a gift of a novel. It tackles tough topics with nuance, and will make readers both laugh and cry, sometimes within the span of a page." — Jasmine Warga, author of MY HEART AND OTHER BLACK HOLES "A five-star must-read romance for older teens (and up) that will challenge readers toward a better understanding of a too-often marginalized and stigmatized segment of the population, When We Collided is an important book not only for this generation of teens, but those who've come before . . . and those who will come after." — USA Today "Filled with raw, descriptive truths . . . a powerful book for reader engagement . . . An absolute tearjerker romance with a powerful message about weightier topics of grief and mental illness." — starred review, School Library Journal "Nothing short of heartbreaking. These are definitely two teens worth rooting for in a tale that's several clicks above the usual frothy summer romance fare." — BCCB "Lord sucks readers into the fully realized world of two teenagers and their messy, honest families. As much about the fragility of the human experience as it is about mental illness, this offers a refreshing perspective on a spectrum of mental health disorders. This love story veers away from tragedy, instead firmly entrenching itself in hope and possibility." — Booklist "Vivi and Jonah's story will hit you deep in a book that shows what it means not only to be a person inflicted with mental illness, but to be the people that love them. In a word, fantastic!" — Andi of Andi's ABCs "Fans of Jandy Nelson and Rainbow Rowell will fall in love with this poetic story of two damaged kids." — Daria Plumb, 2015 President of the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN) and secondary English Language

Arts teacher" There is an honest portrayal of how life can be jagged, with rough corners and uneven edges. But if you take a closer look, there's a beauty to these misshapen moments, outlined with hope." ~ Blogger Ginger Phillips at GReadsBooks! "I can't shake Vivi, her mistakes and her growth, the way she changes, the way she loves, and I don't want to. She's a YA heroine who will matter so much to teens." ~ Angie Manfredi, Los Alamos County Library "Emery weaves an emotional tale of two people who are essentially flawed, but so very human, navigating a relationship. She truly has a feel for the seventeen-year-old within all of us girls." ~ Cori Smith, Joseph-Beth Booksellers "It's romance and excitement and nervousness and heartbreak and sadness. . . . The teens at my library will eat this up!" ~ Maggie Melson, Children's/Teen Librarian, St. Charles City-County Library District "What happens when an irrepressible spirit meets a burdened teen? Magic, that's what. Emery Lord knows how to craft a romance." ~ Michael Fleming, Librarian, Pacific Cascade Middle School "A fabulously entertaining story of friendship, healing, and love. Filled with laughter, heart, and a side of sass, this rock star debut will have you cheering for an encore!" ~ Elizabeth Eulberg, author of BETTER OFF FRIENDS, on OPEN ROAD SUMMER

I am a HUGE fan of Emery Lord. It started from the moment I read the first few pages of her debut novel, *Open Road Summer* and continued to deepen after I read her second novel, *The Start of Me and You*. I honestly didn't think it was possible that I could become an even bigger fan, but after reading *When We Collided*, my admiration and respect for her as a writer and person was solidified. Going in to *When We Collided*, I knew it would be a different read than her first two books. I knew that it tackled a difficult subject and portrayed a character living with a mental illness. But what I didn't know was how deeply the story of Vivi and Jonah would move me. It's a difficult story to read at points, but also an important one. I've never read anything that dives so deeply into the meaning of mental illness and how it affects not only the person living with it, but the people in their lives. Emery Lord's writing is evocative and all-encompassing. Her ability as story-teller is taken to a whole new level in this novel. What I loved most about this book was that it was equal parts Vivi's AND Jonah's story. I adored the dual point of view and truly believe that it further strengthened the narrative of the entire book. We don't just get one side of the story, we get two, and in this book in particular, I feel that hearing those two voices was vital to my reading experience. I got to know Vivi and Jonah so intimately through Lord's writing and am so blown away by how she was able to craft two extremely

distinct voices into a single story. The flow was seamless and the transition from one point of view to the other was effortless. Speaking of point of view, as much as I was invested in *Vivi*, her story, there was something about Jonah that just spoke to me. I have a feeling it's because we've both experienced the same tragedy in our lives, so I felt a kinship towards him. But, I just couldn't stop myself from yearning for Jonah to find a way through his OWN grief. The last chapter of this book is from Jonah's perspective and it absolutely SLAYED me. I was in tears. It was beautiful. *When We Collided* will forever stay with me as a reminder that no matter how messy life gets, there will always be people I love surrounding me and ready to hold me up. In her third book, Emery Lord created the kind of story that her fans know and love her for, but also a story that needs to be read. Her words are thoughtful, informative and passionate, and it all comes together in the most beautiful way.

I'm not sure what to rate this. I give it 3 to 4 stars. I sort of liked the story. There were a couple of times I almost didn't finish just because I was a little bored with it. I don't know if this is what the author was going for but Vivi seemed like a manic pixie dream girl and it was hard to get past that. By the end though it seemed that both Jonah and Vivi helped each other. I was happy with the ending. I also think it was realistic that Vivi didn't want to take her pills because I think there is still a stigma around mental health and people do resist wanting to admit they need medicinal help. By the end though she was more open to the idea which is what I hope this story could do for others. Don't let the 3 star rating deter you, I just don't think I'll reread it and even though I'm glad I finished the book there were several times I almost didn't. Rating: PG-13 (profanity, the characters have sex but it's not at all graphic)

This is exactly what I needed. I don't know, school is kicking my ass this semester. I feel like I haven't been able to sit down and read a book in months. And I probably won't read another one for another few weeks. This book was by no means perfect. The insta-love was real and sometimes the relationship angst got to be a bit much. But overall I really adored these characters and I thought they were very realistically portrayed. Vivi and her mom just moved to Vera Cove, a small town in California, when she meets Jonah. (This is where the insta-love comes in.) Jonah recently lost his father and is trying to take care of his siblings and mother, who is struggling with depression. Vivi Alexander is vivacious, high on life, and she has a bipolar disorder. She's got this artistic soul, she can be selfish, immature, and so

I can understand why some people don't like her or can't sympathize with her. But I do think Vivi is an amazing portrayal of a teenage girl living with bipolar disorder. Then we have Jonah Daniels. I adored him and his family. Jonah has five siblings and I loved how each of them had their own distinct personalities and their dynamic with each other. I also enjoyed how loud they were and their love for food. Lord managed to paint this vivid portrayal of mental illness and I liked how it was talked about so openly (because this needs to be talked about). We got to see two different sides of it. Someone living with it firsthand and someone living with it through a loved one. I also thought the ending was so perfect for the characters. (view spoiler) Filled with vivid characters and one of the best depictions of mental illness, this book can get frustrating at times, but it's honest and I recommend it.

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