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# dark blue

color me lonely

melody carlson



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Carlson, Melody.

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Summary: Two sophomore girls, best friends since kindergarten, grow apart when one wants new friends and decides the other is a popularity liability.

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Finding Alice (*WaterBrook*)

Looking for Cassandra Jane (*Tyndale*)

To Kimi Hamilton and Allie Nemeth,  
thanks for sharing your ideas with me.

*mc*

## one

JORDAN FERGUSON *USED* TO BE MY BEST FRIEND. NOW SHE MAKES ME sick. Just hearing her name called out in first period English or seeing her flitting down the hall with her lame new friends makes me want to hurl. Really!

And comments like, “Oh, Jordan, I totally love your hair today,” or, “Hey, Jordan, that outfit is really hot,” actually make me want to hit something. I mean *puh-leeze*, these are the exact same girls Jordan and I *used* to make fun of. Behind their backs anyway—it’s not like we were ignorant. At least I’m not. I can’t speak for Jordan—not anymore.

Not that I ever did speak for Jordan. No, she’s always been perfectly capable of doing that herself. The sorry truth is, whether I liked it or not, she often spoke for me too. I guess it all started way back in kindergarten. My parents had recently divorced and I thought their problems were all my fault. As a result I think I was feeling pretty insecure and probably scared too. I didn’t want to talk to anyone and made a point of hanging out on the sidelines and keeping my little mouth shut. But one day our kindergarten teacher Miss March asked, “Who wants to play with the puppet theater next?” And even though I was dying to put my hand inside of that plump pink Miss Piggy puppet, I couldn’t utter a single word. I

nearly fell over when this tiny blonde girl wearing a mint-green My Little Pony sweatshirt walked over and took me by the hand.

“Kara Hendricks and I want to do the puppets now,” she said in this great big voice that totally contradicted her size. Jordan was the smallest girl in the class back then. Even now she’s barely five feet tall in her socks. But how she actually knew, at the age of five, not only my first but also my last name was a complete mystery to me. So naturally I didn’t argue with her. I even managed to find my voice once I was safely behind the puppet theater curtain and my hand was tucked into the bright-green Kermit the Frog puppet. Naturally, Jordan wanted Miss Piggy for herself. And who was I to question the girl who helped me step outside of myself for a change? Not having Miss Piggy seemed a pretty small sacrifice. After that, Jordan did most of the talking for both of us, especially during that first year. Oh, I would talk to her, but only in this quiet mousy voice. Then she would speak to the teacher or a classmate or whoever until my wants and needs were perfectly clear. It’s like I was the hand puppet and she was the puppeteer. Still, her outgoing personality made life much easier for me.

Fortunately, I did get better at speaking, over time. But I’ve never been what you might call an assertive or even confident person. And I would never in a million years want to speak in public on purpose. Jordan, on the other hand, loved her speech class last year and even joined the debate team, and she was only a freshman! But I don’t get it. I mean why would anyone willingly put themselves into a position where they have to speak in front of an audience *and* argue about something? How whacked out is that?

Still, I admit that I admired her for it. I thought she was the bravest and coolest person I knew. And throughout our freshman year in high school, just last year, I was totally thankful that I had

melody carlson

Jordan Ferguson to share a locker, walk down the halls, eat lunch, and just basically hang with. She was like my security blanket. Well, that and a lot more.

I suppose that's why losing her like this is so freaking crappy. Not that I'll ever admit *that*. Not to her or anyone else in this moronic school. As it is, my life already sucks. I don't need anyone's stupid pity to add to my stinking pile of misery. Besides, I do a pretty good job of feeling sorry for myself.

"What's up with you and Jordan?" my teenybopper sister asked the other day. "How come she never comes 'round here anymore?"

Naturally, Bree *would* miss Jordan. She thinks Jordan's the coolest thing next to (gag me) Britney Spears. Just the same, I rolled my eyes at her and said, "Probably because you're such a total stink bomb. Poor Jordan just couldn't take your smell anymore."

Of course, this led to a rip-snorting argument about hygiene and fashion and a bunch of other things Bree and I don't quite agree on. Turned out to be a good distraction—Bree hasn't mentioned Jordan's absence since. Still, I'm sure she privately wonders. You'd think my mom might wonder too, but as usual she's so into her own world that she is totally clueless about mine. So what's new?

But I guess I sort of wish my mom would ask me about it. Now tell me that's not weird, since I usually don't want to talk (I mean *talk*) to my mom about anything besides lunch money or whose turn it is to clean the kitchen. I guess that just shows how completely desperate I am.

I sort of feel like I'm drowning here, and I just keep wishing that someone—anyone—would toss me a life preserver, or even a rope . . . maybe to hang myself with. Because I really need someone to talk to. The pathetic thing is, the only person I've ever poured my heart out to before, the only one who's ever listened or attempted to

give me answers, the only one who knew how to make me feel better, just doesn't give a rip.

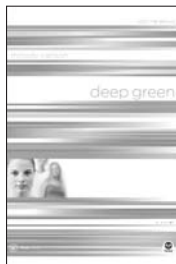
As furious as I am with Jordan, and as much as I can't stand the very sight of her, I still miss her friendship more than I imagined possible, and I think I'd do almost anything to get her back. As lame as it sounds, even to me, there's a great big gaping hole in my life right now. And I feel more alone than ever.

Not to mention scared.

# about the author

**M**ELODY **C**ARLSON has written dozens of books for all age groups, but she particularly enjoys writing for teens. Perhaps this is because her own teen years remain so vivid in her memory. After claiming to be an atheist at the ripe old age of twelve, she later surrendered her heart to Jesus and has been following him ever since. Her hope and prayer for all her readers is that each one would be touched by God in a special way through her stories. For more information, please visit Melody's website at [www.melodycarlson.com](http://www.melodycarlson.com).

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