

A Walk between Raindrops

Amalie Jahn

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In Amalie Jahn's heartfelt novel *A Walk between Raindrops*, estranged sisters attempt to mend their relationship while on a tour of American theme parks.

Elise and her younger, pretty, popular sister Wylla haven't spoken to each other in six months. Still, they undertake a stomach-swirling, marathon rollercoaster ride together; the winners of this endurance test are to be awarded a road trip to ten additional amusement parks and the chance to win a season pass through a scavenger hunt involving tokens.

Thus the sisters take to the road, with stops in Cedar Point and Dollywood. They finally begin to talk. They travel with Dustin and Chloe, two college students; high schoolers Seamus and Mikal (who is gay); and Travis, a weathered, divorced math teacher who's addicted to licorice. They form new alliances: Wylla sides with gorgeous, older Dustin, and Elise pairs up with geeky Seamus. But Dustin prefers Chloe, who is closer to his age, and Elise develops feelings for Seamus.

Much like the careening cars at the heart of the story, people's emotions crest dizzying summits and plummet to lows. Indeed, the fresh and fun theme park settings add levity to a story as it also touches upon serious topics, including mental illness. A recent event left Elise with PTSD, for which she is supposed to be taking medication, but doesn't. The slow reveal of this ordeal, and hints at the event that caused the rift between the sisters, propels the story forward. Further intrigue is added by the search for the tokens at each amusement park.

A Walk between Raindrops is a satisfying novel about sisters who overcome their strife, one rollercoaster ride at a time.

SUZANNE KAMATA (July / August 2023)

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