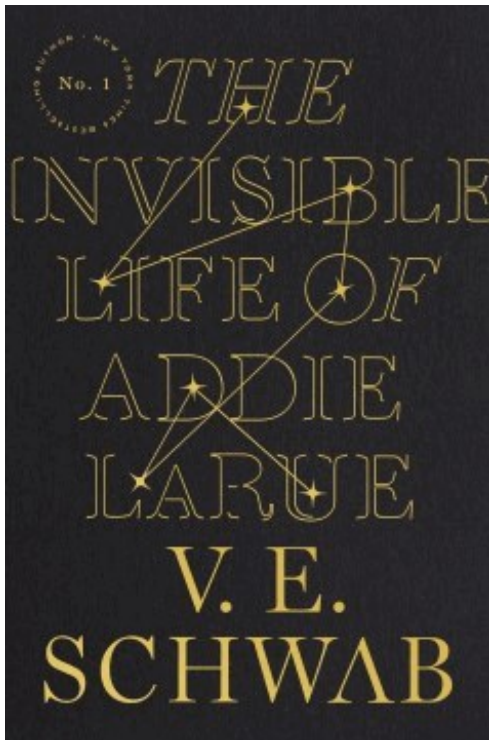


# THE INVISIBLE LIFE OF ADDIE LARUE



*Young Adult*

**By V.E. Schwab**

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## CONTENT WARNING

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### Book Summary:

A young woman surrenders her soul to live forever and lives her life being forgotten by those she meets.

### Summary of Concerns:

This book contains explicit sexual activities; alternate sexualities; violence; profanity; alcohol and drug use.

**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

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19	But it won't be any easier when it ends, and if she has to start over, she'd rather be a meet-cute at a bar than the unremembered aftermath of a one-night stand.
60	"You are so beautiful, and kind, and fun." "But?" she pressed, sensing the turn. "I'm gay."
80	<p>"Has a beast got free?" he shouts before he sees her, wrapped in the stolen coat, her too-large boots catching on the hay. She scrambles backward, right into the arms of the stable hand. His fingers close around her shoulders, heavy as shackles, and when she tries to twist free, his grip digs deep enough to bruise.</p> <p>"Caught her thieving," he says, the coarse bristles on his cheek scraping hers.</p> <p>"Let me go," she pleads as he pulls her tight.</p> <p>"This isn't a market stall," sneers the second, drawing a knife from his belt. "Do you know what we do with thieves?"</p> <p>"It was a mistake. Please. Let me go."</p> <p>The knife wags like a finger. "Not until you've paid."</p> <p>"I don't have any money."</p> <p>"That's all right," says the second man, drawing closer. "Thieves pay in flesh." She tries to tear free, but the grip on her arms is iron as the knife comes to rest against the laces of her dress, plucking them like strings. And when she twists again, she is no longer trying to get free, simply trying to reach the boning knife inside the pocket of her stolen coat. Twice her fingers brush the wooden hilt before she manages to catch it.</p> <p>She drives the blade down and back into the first man's thigh, feels it sink into the meat of his leg.</p>
96	<p>"Drink with me."</p> <p>Her blue eyes shine as she holds out a little tray, a pair of shots with something small and white dissolving on the bottom. Henry thinks of all the stories about accepting food and drink from the fae, even as he reaches for the glass. He drinks, and at first all he tastes is sweetness, the faint burn of tequila, but then the world begins to fuzz a little at the edges.</p>
100	<p>She smiles at him, and he smiles back and holds the door.</p> <p>Inside, she climbs four flights of narrow steps to a steel door at the top, reaches up, and feels along the dusty frame for the small silver key, discovered last fall, when she and a lover stumbled home, the two a tangle of limbs on the stairs. Sam's lips pressed beneath her jaw, paint-streaked fingers sliding beneath the waistband of her jeans.</p> <p>It was, for Sam, a rare impulsive moment.</p> <p>It was, for Addie, the second month of an affair.</p> <p>A passionate affair, to be sure, but only because time is a luxury she can't afford. Sure, she dreams of sleepy mornings over coffee, legs draped across a lap, inside jokes and easy laughter, but those comforts come with the knowing. There can be no slow build, no quiet lust, intimacy fostered over days, weeks, months. Not for them. So she longs for the mornings, but she settles for the nights, and if it cannot be love, well, then, at least it is not lonely.</p>
101	It is September, and they are in her unmade bed, their fingers tangled in the sheets and with each other as Addie's mouth traces the dark warmth between Sam's legs.

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	Addie's heart slams in her chest as the girl peels away from her group and casually wanders over.
102	She has to fight the urge to close the gap, to run her palm along the long slope of Sam's neck, to let it rest against the nape, where Addie knows it fits so well. They stand in silence, blowing out clouds of pale smoke, the other four laughing and shouting at their backs, until one of the guys—Eric? Aaron?—calls Sam over, and just like that, she is slipping away, back across the roof.
103	She finds a single beer floating amid the half-frozen melt and twists off the cap, sinking onto the least-damaged lawn chair.
109	<p>"Go to the docks if you plan to sell your wares," she scolds.</p> <p>And at first, Addie doesn't know what the woman means. Her pockets are empty. She's nothing to sell. But when she says as much, the woman gives her such a look, and says, "You've got a body, don't you?"</p> <p>Her face flushes as she understands.</p> <p>"I'm not a whore," she says, and the woman flashes a cold smirk.</p> <p>"Aren't we proud?" she says, as Addie rises, turns to go. "Well," the woman calls after in a crow-like caw, "that pride won't fill your belly."</p>
110	<p>Even when a man comes up to her, one hand already roving, as if testing fruit.</p> <p>"How much?" he asks in a gruff voice.</p> <p>And she has no idea what a body is worth, or if she is willing to sell it. When she does not answer, his hands grow rough, his grip grows firm.</p> <p>"Ten sols," she says, and the man lets out a bark of laughter.</p> <p>"What are you, a princess?" "No," she answers, "a virgin." There were nights, back home, when Addie dreamed of pleasure, when she conjured the stranger beside her in the dark, felt his lips against her breasts, imagined her hand was his as it slipped between her legs.</p> <p>"My love," the stranger said, pressing her down into the bed, black curls tumbling into gem-green eyes.</p> <p>"My love," she breathed as he entered her, her body parting around his solid strength. He pushed deeper, and she gasped, biting her hand to keep from sighing too loud. Her mother would say that a woman's pleasure was a mortal sin, but in those moments, Addie didn't care. In those moments, there was only the longing and the want and the stranger, whispering against her skin as the tension deepened, the heat building like a storm in the bowl of her hips, and then in her mind, Adeline would pull his body down on hers, drawing him deeper and deeper until the storm broke, and thunder rolled through her.</p> <p>But this is nothing like that.</p> <p>There is no poetry to this unknown man's grunts, no melody or harmony, save the steady noise of thrusting as he pushes himself against her. No rolling pleasure, only pressure, and pain, the tightness of one thing being forced inside another, and Addie looks up at the night sky so she won't have to look at his body moving, and she feels the darkness looking back.</p> <p>Then they are in the woods again, and his mouth is on hers, blood bubbling up on her lips as he whispers.</p> <p>"Done."</p> <p>The man finishes with a final thrust, and slumps against her, leaden, and this</p>

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	<p>cannot be it, this cannot be the life Addie traded everything for, this cannot be the future that erased her past. Panic grips her chest but this stranger doesn't seem to care, or even notice. He simply straightens up, and tosses a handful of coins onto the cobbles at her feet. He trundles off and Addie sinks to her knees to collect her reward, and then empties her stomach into the Seine.</p>
114	<p>"Pour me a drink," she says, holding out the bottle of wine, and the man pries out the cork and fills two glasses from the low shelf of the rented room. He hands her one, and she doesn't touch it as he throws his back in a single swallow, downs a second before abandoning the glass and reaching for her dress.</p> <p>"Where's the rush?" she says, guiding him back. "You've paid for the room. We have all night."</p> <p>She is careful not to push him away, careful to keep the pressure of her resistance coy. Some men, she's found, take pleasure in disregarding the wishes of a woman. Instead, Addie lifts her own glass to his hungry mouth, tips the rust-red contents between his lips, tries to pass the gesture off as seduction instead of force. He drinks deep, then knocks the glass away. Clumsy hands paw at her front, fighting with the laces and the stays.</p> <p>"I cannot wait to..." he slurs, but the drug in the wine is already taking hold, and soon he trails off, his tongue going heavy in his mouth.</p>
115	<p>Three tries, and two bottles of the precious medicine wasted before she realized she could not drug the drinks herself, could not be the hand that did the harm. But mix it in the bottle of wine, reset the cork, and let them pour their own glass, and the action is no longer hers.</p>
129	<p>Unfastening the buttons down its front. There is a strange intimacy to the undressing, and she enjoys it all the more for the fact that the man beneath her fingers is not real, and therefore cannot grope, or paw, or push.</p>
152	<p>This, she thinks, but she lifts her empty glass and says, "Another beer."</p>
153	<p>His eyes have gone glassy, and the way he says who almost sounds like how, less a question of how she's doing and more a question of how she's here, and she wants to ask him the same thing, but she has a good reason, and he's just a little drunk.</p>
180	<p>When they reach his lodging house, they do not pretend to say good-bye. He leads her up the stairs, fingers tangled now, steps tripping and breathless, and when they reach his rented room, they do not linger on the threshold.</p> <p>There is a faint catch in her chest at the idea of what comes next.</p> <p>Sex has only ever been a burden, a necessity of circumstance, some required currency, and she has, up until now, been willing to pay the price. Even now, she is prepared for him to push her down, to shove her skirts out of the way. Prepared for the longing to break, forced away by the unsubtle act.</p> <p>But he doesn't thrust himself upon her. There is an urgency, yes, but Remy holds it taut as rope between them. He reaches out a single, steady hand, and lifts the hat from her head, sets it gently on the bureau. His fingers slide up the nape of her neck, and through her hair as his mouth finds hers, the kisses shy, and searching.</p> <p>For the first time, she feels no reluctance, no dread, only a kind of nervous thrill, and the tension in the air is laced with breathless hunger. Her fingers fumble for</p>

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	<p>the laces of his trousers, but his own hands move slower, undoing the laces of her tunic, sliding the cloth over her head, unwrapping the muslin bound around her breasts.</p> <p>“So much easier than corsets,” he murmurs, kissing the skin of her collar, and for the first time since those nights in her childhood bed back in Villon, Addie feels the heat rising in her cheeks, across her skin, between her legs.</p> <p>He guides her back onto the pallet, kisses trailing down her throat, the curve of her breasts, before he frees himself, and climbs onto the bed, and onto her. She parts around him, breath hitching at the first thrust, and Remy pulls back, just enough to catch her eye, to make sure she’s okay, and when she nods, he drops his head to kiss her, and only then does he press on, press in, press deep.</p> <p>Her back arches as that pressure gives way to pleasure, a deep and rolling heat. Their bodies press and move together, and she wishes she could erase those other men, those other nights, their stale breath and awkward bulk, the dull thrusts that ended in a sudden, abrupt spasm, before they pulled out, pulled away. To them, wet was wet, and warm was warm, and she was nothing but a vessel for their pleasure.</p> <p>She cannot erase the memory of those other nights—so she decides to become a palimpsest, to let Remy write over the other lines.</p> <p>This is how it should have been.</p> <p>The name Remy whispers in her hair is not hers, but it doesn’t matter. In this moment, she can be Anna. She can be anyone.</p> <p>Remy’s breath quickens as his tempo rises, as he presses deeper, and Addie feels herself quicken, too, her body tightening around him, driven toward the edge by the rocking of his hips and the blond curls tumbling into her face. She coils tighter and tighter, and then she comes undone, and a few moments later, so does he.</p>
185	<p>Addie pulls Henry toward the makeshift bar. It’s simple, the tunnel wall divided into three behind a wide slab of pale stone that serves as a pouring surface. The options are vodka, bourbon, or tequila, and a bartender stands, waiting, before each.</p> <p>Addie orders for them. Two vodkas.</p> <p>...The vodka hits her stomach like a match, heat blossoming behind her ribs.</p> <p>...The bartender smiles, produces a third shot glass, and pours again. He presses his hands to his chest in the universal gesture for it’s on me.</p> <p>They drink, and there is the heat again, spreading from her chest to her limbs, and there is Henry’s hand in hers, moving into the crowd. Addie looks back, sees the bartender staring after them, and there is a strange feeling, rising like the last dregs of a dream, and she wants to say something, but the music is a wall, and the vodka smooths the edges of her thoughts until it slips away, and then they are folding into the crowd.</p>
188	<p>They stumble into his apartment, wet clothes clinging to their skin.</p> <p>They are a tangle of limbs in the hallway, unable to get close enough. She pulls the glasses from his face, tosses them onto a nearby chair, shrugs out of her coat, the leather sticking to her skin. And then they are kissing again. Desperate, hungry, wild, as her fingers run over his ribs, hook in the front of his jeans.</p> <p>“Are you sure?” he asks, and in answer she pulls his mouth to hers, guides his</p>

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	<p>hands to the buttons of her shirt as hers find his belt. He presses her back against the wall, and says her name, and it is lightning through her limbs, it is fire through her core, it is longing between her legs.</p> <p>And then they are on the bed, and for an instant, only an instant, she is somewhere else, somewhen else, the darkness folding itself around her. A name whispered against bare skin.</p> <p>But to him she was Adeline, only Adeline. His Adeline. My Adeline.</p> <p>Here, now, she is finally Addie.</p> <p>“Say it again,” she pleads.</p> <p>“Say what?” he murmurs.</p> <p>“My name.”</p> <p>Henry smiles.</p> <p>“Addie,” he whispers against her throat.</p> <p>“Addie.” The kisses trail over her collar.</p> <p>“Addie.” Her stomach.</p> <p>“Addie.” Her hips.</p> <p>His mouth finds the heat between her legs, and her fingers tangle in those black curls, her back arching up with pleasure. Time shudders, slides out of focus. He retraces his steps, kisses her again, and then she is on top of him, pressing him down into the bed.</p> <p>They do not fit together perfectly. He was not made for her the way Luc was—but this is better, because he is real, and kind, and human, and he remembers.</p> <p>When it is over, she collapses, breathless, into the sheets beside him, sweat and rain chilling on her skin. Henry folds around her, pulls her back into the circle of his warmth, and she can feel his heart slowing through his ribs, a metronome easing back into its measure.</p>
190	<p>“Adeline, Adeline,” he says, his voice laced with pleasure, and she is back in the bed, Remy’s voice saying Anna, Anna into her hair.</p> <p>It has been four years without a visit.</p>
211	<p>“Bea,” he whines. “Can’t we just—”</p> <p>“My party, my rules. When it was your birthday, we went to a sex club in Bushwick.”</p> <p>Robbie rolls his eyes. “It was an exhibitionist-themed music venue.”</p> <p>“It was a sex club,” Henry and Bea say at the same time.</p>
227	<p>And then she walked away, and now Henry is here at the bar and he’s drunk, but not nearly drunk enough.</p> <p>...Henry is not drunk enough.</p> <p>He goes into a liquor store and buys a bottle of vodka from a guy who looks at him like he’s already had enough, but also like he clearly needs it. Twists the cap off with his teeth as it begins to rain.</p> <p>...It hurts, of course it hurts, but the pain is dampened a little by the vodka, by the well of grief, by his ruined heart, by everything else.</p>
231	<p>And now he knows he’s had too much to drink.</p> <p>He was trying to reach the place where he wouldn’t feel, but he thinks he might have passed it, wandered somewhere worse. His head spins, the sensation long past pleasant. He finds a couple pills in his back pocket, slipped there by his sister</p>

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	Muriel on her last visit. Little pink umbrellas, she told him. He swallows them dry as the drizzle turns to a downpour.
243	<p>“Are you going to temple?” he asks now.</p> <p>“No,” says Muriel. “But there’s a show uptown tonight, a kinky burlesque hybrid, and I’m pretty sure there’s going to be some fire play. I’ll light a candle on someone.”</p>
247	Back in college, Robbie would get so high on drugs or dreams or big ideas that he’d have to burn all the energy out of his system, and then he’d crash.
252	He finishes the first beer, opens a second on the edge of the counter, and keeps going, moving from room to room, less a methodic procession than a lost wander. An hour later, the box is only half-full, but Henry’s losing steam.
253	Their glasses knock together, and Henry orders a second, and a third. He knows he is drinking too much too fast, piling liquor on top of the beers from home, the whisky he’d poured at work.
254	<p>“You look like you could use a bump.”</p> <p>He holds out a little glass jar, and Henry stares at the tiny column of powder inside.</p> <p>He was twelve the first time he got high.</p> <p>Someone handed him a joint behind the bleachers, and the smoke burned his lungs, and he almost threw up, but then everything went a little ... soft. Weed made space in his skull, eased the nervous terror in his heart. But he couldn’t control the places it took his head. Valium and Xanax were better, dulling everything at once, but he’s always stayed away from the harder stuff, out of fear—not the fear that something would go wrong.</p> <p>...Now Henry just wants to feel good.</p> <p>He taps the powder onto his thumb, has no idea if he’s doing it right, but he inhales, and it hits like a sudden, jolting cold, and then—the world opens. The details clear, the colors brighten, and somehow everything gets sharp and fuzzy at the same time.</p> <p>Henry must have said something, because the guy laughs. And then he reaches out, and wipes a fleck from Henry’s cheek, and the contact is like static shock, a spark of energy where skin meets skin.</p>
255	<p>He’s never been in a threesome, unless you count that one time in school when he and Robbie and one of their friends got incredibly drunk and he’s still not entirely sure how far things went.</p> <p>“Come with us,” she says, holding out her hand.</p> <p>And a dozen excuses spill through his mind and then out again as Henry follows them home.</p>
258	“Don’t get me wrong. You’re cute. But I’m still a lesbian.”
266	<p>Henry feels like he’s still holding his breath, still holding on to the high, his lungs aching but his heart happy.</p> <p>...He feels like he’s walking that narrow line between a good buzz and a night on the bathroom floor, and he doesn’t want anything to tip the balance.</p>
270	It’s a long-running sore point between them, the fact that Henry isn’t gay, that he’s attracted to a person first and their gender second.

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287	<p>Henry has been drinking too much, too fast, trying to wash away, and there are too many people in the Castle.</p> <p>...“Wait,” he says, but the music is loud enough he has to shout, has to pull Mark/ Max/ Malcolm’s ear against his mouth, which Mark/ Max/ Malcolm takes as a sign to keep kissing him.</p> <p>“Wait,” he shouts, pushing back. “Do you even want this?”</p> <p>...“Why wouldn’t i?” he asks, sinking to his knees. But Henry catches his elbow.</p> <p>“Stop. Just stop.” He pulls him up.</p>
312	<p>She shakes her head, and says aloud, “I never understood why I should believe in something I could not feel, or hear, or see.”</p> <p>Luc raises a brow. “I think,” he says, “they call that faith.”</p>
322	<p>“The couple over there.” She tilts her head in their direction. “They’re having a fight. Apparently the guy slept with his secretary. And his assistant. And his Pilates instructor. The woman knew about the first two, but she’s mad about the third, because they both take Pilates at the same studio.”</p>
396	<p>Their bodies press together, one shaped to fit the other perfectly.</p> <p>His shoulder, molded to her cheek.</p> <p>His hands, molded to her waist.</p> <p>His voice, molded to the hollow places in her as he says, “I want you.” And then, again, “I have always wanted you.”</p> <p>Luc looks down at her, those green eyes dark with pleasure, and Addie fights to hold her ground.</p> <p>“You want me as a prize,” she says. “You want me as a meal, or a glass of wine. Just another thing to be consumed.”</p> <p>He dips his head, presses his lips to her collarbone. “Is that so wrong?”</p> <p>She fights back a shiver as he kisses her throat. “Is it such a bad thing...” His mouth trails along her jaw. “... to be savored?” His breath brushes her ear. “To be relished?”</p> <p>His mouth hovers over hers, and his lips, too, are molded to her own.</p> <p>She will never be quite sure which happened first—if she kissed him, or he kissed her, who began the gesture, and who rose to meet it. She will only know that there was space between them, and it has vanished. She has thought of kissing Luc before, of course, when he was just a figment of her mind, and then, when he was more. But in all her conjurings, he’d taken her mouth as if it is a prize. After all, that is how he kissed her the night they met, when he sealed the deal with the blood on her lips. That is how she assumed he would always kiss.</p> <p>But now, he kisses her like someone tasting poison.</p> <p>Cautious, questing, almost afraid.</p> <p>And only when she answers, returns the kiss in kind, does he deepen his advance, his teeth skating along her bottom lip, the weight and heat of his body pressing against hers.</p> <p>He tastes like the air at night, heady with the weight of summer storms. He tastes like the faint traces of far-off woodsmoke, a fire dying in the dark. He tastes like the forest, and somehow, impossibly, like home.</p> <p>And then darkness reaches up around her, around them, and the Cicada Club vanishes; the low music and the crooner’s melody swallowed up by the pressing</p>



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	<p>void, by rushing wind, and racing hearts, and Addie is falling, forever and a single backward step—and then her feet find the smooth marble floor of a hotel room, and Luc is there, pressing her forward, and she is there, drawing him back against the nearest wall.</p> <p>His arms lift around her, forming a loose and open cage.</p> <p>She could break it, if she tried.</p> <p>She doesn't try.</p> <p>He kisses her again, and this time, he is not tasting poison. This time, there is no caution, no pulling back; the kiss is sudden, sharp, and deep, stealing air and thought and leaving only hunger, and for a moment, Addie can feel the yawning dark, feel it opening around her, even though the ground is still there.</p> <p>She has kissed a lot of people. But none of them will ever kiss like him. The difference doesn't lie in the technicalities. His mouth is no better shaped to the task. It is just in the way he uses it.</p> <p>It is the difference between tasting a peach out of season, and that first bite into sun-ripened fruit. The difference between seeing only in black-and-white, and a life in full-color film.</p> <p>That first time, it is a kind of fight, neither letting down their guard, each watching for the telltale glint of some hidden blade seeking flesh.</p> <p>When they finally collide, it is with all the force of bodies kept too long apart. It is a battle waged on bedsheets.</p> <p>And in the morning, the whole room shows the signs of their war.</p> <p>...“I will simply go where it is dark again.”</p> <p>Addie rises, goes to the window, and draws the curtains closed, plunging the room back into lightless black.</p> <p>“There,” she says, feeling her way back to him. “Now it is dark again.”</p> <p>Luc laughs, a soft, beautiful sound, and pulls her down into the bed.</p>
398	<p>It is only sex.</p> <p>At least, it starts that way.</p> <p>He is a thing to be gotten out of her system.</p> <p>She is a novelty to be enjoyed.</p> <p>...She will not feel anything but his lips on her skin, his hands tangled in hers, the weight of him against her. Small promises, but ones she does not keep. It is only sex. And then it is not.</p>
426	<p>It is almost two—that time between very late, and very early—and even Brooklyn has quieted to a murmur as she walks the two blocks to the Merchant bar. It is an hour until closing, the crowd thinned to a few determined drinkers.</p> <p>Addie takes a stool at the bar, and orders a shot of tequila. She's never been one for hard liquor, but she downs the drink in one, feels the warmth settle in her chest as she reaches into her pocket and finds the ring.</p>

Profanity	Count
Ass	5
Bitch	2
Fuck	10
Shit	12