

# KISSING KATE



*Young Adult*

**By Lauren Myracle**

ISBN:

## **Book Summary:**

A sixteen-year-old lesbian has a crush on her best friend.

## **Summary of Concerns:**

This book contains inexplicit sexual activities; alternate sexualities; alcohol use by minors; and mild/infrequent profanity.

**2** /5

**Teen Guidance**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
i	<p>“He got drunk at Terri Anderson’s party. Started dancing around in this hideous robe he found in her mom’s closet. And then he ended up in a corner with Alice Spradling. End of story.”</p> <p>“What—they were fooling around?”</p> <p>“Yep.”</p> <p>I stared at my jeans. The lightness I’d felt was gone. “Funny how that happens, huh? Get drunk, fool around . . . end of story.”</p> <p>...“We were drunk,” Kate finally said.</p>
10	<p>Not since two weeks ago in Rob’s gazebo, when Kate leaned in to kiss me and like an idiot I kissed her back.</p>
14	<p>Kate’s mom already hated the fact that we didn’t dress more like “ladies.” “You two have such darling figures,” she chided. “You need to accentuate them. Boys like to see a girl’s curves.”</p>
22	<p>What I’d been turning over in my head was the fact that just because the two of us kissed, it didn’t have to mean anything. Friends did that kind of stuff sometimes. Not to the extent that we did, maybe, but girls at school walked around with their arms slung over each other’s shoulders, and I’d seen guys on the football team slap each other on the butt more times than I wanted to count.</p>
23	<p>But that’s what I wanted to tell her, that one person touching another person was perfectly normal. It’s just that we’d been drinking that night at Rob’s—she’d been drinking, anyway—and so things went further than they should have.</p> <p>I thought of her hand on my skin, under my shirt. The surprise of it, my sharp intake of breath. My pulse quickened now in the truck, and I shoved the memory away.</p>
84	<p>Vanessa heaved a sigh. “Kiss me, Vance. Kiss me this instant.”</p> <p>Still giggling, Beth leaned in closer, her lips grazing Vanessa’s cheek.</p> <p>“Ew!” Vanessa cried. “Not really, you lesbo!”</p> <p>...Besides, I hated that word, lesbo. Last year, or even last month, I’d have gotten up on a soapbox if I’d heard Vanessa say that, telling her how wrong it was to make fun of being gay, blah, blah, blah.</p> <p>...But I didn’t think being gay was wrong. Did I? One of Jerry’s frequent customers was gay. Her name was Heather, and I knew she was gay because she told me and Jerry about the commitment ceremony she’d had with her partner last New Year’s Eve. Her partner’s name was Katrina. Heather acted like it was perfectly normal that she loved another woman, and I’d felt all proud of myself for treating it that way, too. And no, I didn’t think there was anything wrong with a woman loving another woman, or a man loving another man. Deep down, I knew I didn’t. But it was one thing for someone else to be gay.</p> <p>...If the kids I knew found out two girls were into each other, they’d treat them like pariahs. Not all the kids, but enough. And guys like Travis Wyrick would go nuts, tossing out insults and calling them “dykes.” Or making jokes about forming a sex triangle, if the girls were pretty.</p>
87	<p>“What?” I said.</p> <p>She traced the pattern of the linoleum with her toe. “What’s a lesbo?”</p> <p>...“Is it a bad word?”</p>

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	<p>“No. Well, sort of.”</p> <p>“Why? What does it mean?”</p> <p>“It’s short for lesbian. Do you know what a lesbian is?”</p> <p>She nodded, then shook her head.</p> <p>“A lesbian’s a woman who loves other women.”</p> <p>...“What do you mean, loves other women?”</p> <p>“What do you mean, what do I mean? If you’re a lesbian, then you love women instead of men. You’re attracted to them, you want to be with them. But you’re not a lesbian, Beth, so don’t worry about it.”</p> <p>“Is it the same as being gay?”</p> <p>...“So how do you know if you’re a lesbian?”</p> <p>“Jesus, Beth. How am I supposed to know? You wake up with a big, red L stamped on your forehead. You crop your hair and stop shaving your legs.”</p>
93	<p>And once she told me how she could hear her parents having sex from her bedroom, even with the door shut and the stereo on.</p>
94	<p>I’d laughed and said she should be glad her parents had sex, period.</p> <p>...But now Kate had Ben, who, to tell the truth, was pretty full of himself. Like that night at Rob’s house when he stood on top of the pool table and proclaimed that he was the ruler of the universe. Yeah, he was drunk, and yeah, he was kidding, but still, it takes a certain arrogance to say something like that in the first place. And the cigar. God. High school guys should not smoke cigars, just as high school guys should not attempt to grow facial hair.</p> <p>...That was the night Kate and Ben first hooked up, after the guys started smoking cigars and after Kate and I fled to the gazebo, laughing, to escape. We made fun of how cool they thought they were, and how Rob, the first time he inhaled, practically coughed up his entire lung.</p> <p>...“While smoking a cigar,” I added.</p> <p>By the end of the night, Kate and Ben were falling all over each other on the sofa while the others played quarters and I stood by myself at the door.</p>
128	<p>“He got drunk at Terri Anderson’s party. Started dancing around in this hideous robe he found in her mom’s closet.”</p> <p>...“And then he ended up in a corner with Alice Spradling. End of story.”</p> <p>“What—they were fooling around?”</p> <p>“Yep.”</p> <p>...“Funny how that happens, huh? Get drunk, fool around . . . end of story.”</p>
129	<p>“We were drunk,” Kate finally said.</p> <p>“You were. I wasn’t.”</p> <p>...I let out a sharp laugh. “So, what? I’m the big lesbian freak and you’re just sweet, innocent Kate who got drunk?”</p>
130	<p>“He said he knew this girl, Susie someone. That he saw her at Piedmont Park, that she and this other girl. . . . He called them rug munchers.”</p> <p>My eyebrows pulled together. Rug munchers? Then I got it, and my face burned.</p>
132	<p>“Hey,” she said, “remember when we talked about what it would be like to kiss another girl? What it would feel like?”</p> <p>“Yeah?”</p> <p>“Want to try? You know, just as an experiment?”</p>

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	<p>I kind of laughed. “Oh, like for the good of humankind? ‘Girl Kisses Girl and Saves the—” She lifted her head. Her lips grazed mine.</p> <p>“Huh,” I joked. “You taste like vodka.” I pressed my palm against my leg.</p> <p>“You taste like you.” She kissed me again, and my lips parted against hers. My heart whammed beneath my ribs.</p> <p>Kate moved so that she was lying on the floor. She slipped her hand beneath my shirt, touched the small of my back, and I lowered myself so that I was lying beside her, our bodies parallel. Her thighs, her hips, her breasts pressed against me. Her lips on mine. ...“Kate,” I said.</p> <p>She shot me a panicked glance, then made a point of looking at the floor, at her hands, anywhere but at me. She grabbed the flask and quickly unscrewed it so it would look like we’d just been out there drinking. “Get up. Hurry!”</p> <p>I fumbled with my bra, tugged down my shirt. By the time Rob stepped inside, Kate was on her feet, grinning and not paying attention to me at all.</p> <p>We never talked about it, not until tonight. Kate went back to the house with Ben and had three more beers before throwing herself all over him.</p> <p>...But no matter how much we denied it, we both knew that what happened was more than an experiment or a drunken mistake.</p>
143	I took another swig of beer, then lifted one of her shoes.
144	<p>“She’s mad at her parents,” Finn said. “She’s rebelling. That’s why she has the beer—she stole it from her dad.”</p> <p>“Well, you wear it well,” I said. “The nose ring, not the beer. Although you drink the beer well. Why are you rebelling?” I finished my beer, then shook my head, which was feeling muzzy. Finn handed me a second Rolling Rock, and I took a long swallow.</p>
159	Gay teenagers were two to six times more likely to attempt suicide than other teenagers, one study reported, and another said that up to thirty percent of all adolescent suicides were committed by gay teens.
176	Later, when he walked me to my door, he tried to kiss me. He leaned forward, very gentle, but I felt his breath on my lips and pulled away.
181	THAT NIGHT I DREAMED that Kate leaned over in the middle of history class and whispered that we should both take our shirts off, that it would be fun. I went along with it, but as soon as I pulled off my shirt, the entire class started laughing.
183	<p>I held myself still. “I think . . . I might be gay.”</p> <p>She laughed. “Because you didn’t want to kiss Finn? Poor guy. I don’t think he’s heard that one before.”</p>
184	<p>“Just because you’re into Kate . . . well, it doesn’t necessarily mean you’re gay. Although it’s okay if you are. But if that’s what’s worrying you . . .” She sighed. “God. It shouldn’t be so hard to talk about this stuff. All I’m saying is maybe you’re gay or maybe you’re not. Maybe you’re bi. Or maybe it’s totally a Kate thing. Maybe you’d want to be with her whether she was a girl or a boy.”</p> <p>...“There was this party. And Kate and I both got a little drunk . . . Well, she did. I didn’t. And . . . I don’t know. Things happened. And for the longest time, I tried to tell myself that it didn’t mean anything, but it did. It does. And I’m sick of shoving those feelings away.”</p>
187	Ariel had a cousin who worked there, a cousin who happened to be gay.

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193	“Guess who just happened to kiss me last night?” “No way!” I said. “Way! Although technically I kissed him, but he didn’t seem all that upset about it.”

Profanity	Count
Ass	4
Dyke	5
Fuck	2
Piss	2
Shit	9