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The Truth About Alice

by Jennifer MATHIEU

5 CDs. 5 hrs. Recorded Books. 2015. \$51.75. ISBN 9781490650968. Playaway, digital download.
COPY ISBN

Gr 7 Up—Everyone at Healy High and the surrounding town have heard the rumors about Alice Franklin. Not only did Alice sleep with two guys in the same night, she also caused one of those guys, Brandon Fitzsimmons, to die in a car accident. As Alice is shunned by even her closest friends and reports of an abortion surface, only Kurt, an outcast himself, reaches out to Alice in friendship. In alternating chapters told by high school students Elaine, Kelsie, Josh, and Kurt, listeners learn the true and not-so-true details of the events that have forever changed Alice's life. While rumors and slut-shaming are central to the plot, themes of friendship and sexuality are also explored. Mathieu does not shy away from depicting the lives and hidden motives of the characters in all their gritty, complicated detail. Narrators Ali Ahn, Michael Bakkensen, Graham Halstead and Elizabeth Morton convincingly portray the Healy High students, and Saskia Maarleveld finishes the story with a look into Alice's point of view.

VERDICT Fans of character-driven, realistic fiction will want to try this audiobook.

Reviewed by *Amanda Spino*, Ocean County Library, NJ , Jun 01, 2015

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/jennifer-mathieu/the-truth-about-alice/>

THE TRUTH ABOUT ALICE

BY JENNIFER MATHIEU • RELEASE DATE: JUNE 3, 2014

A quick if unoriginal read saved by a realistic ending.

Jealousy, rumors and lies can ruin a teen girl's life.

In the summer before junior year at Healy High School, Alice Franklin was one of the girls popular enough to be invited to Elaine O'Dea's party. That night, Alice supposedly slept with both high school quarterback Brandon Fitzsimmons and college guy Tommy Cray. Just after homecoming, Brandon dies in a car accident, allegedly while texting with Alice. Debut author Mathieu brings new life to a common mean girls' narrative through her multiple first-person narrators. Readers first hear Alice's story from Elaine, the queen bee of the junior class. Then Kelsie Sanders enters as Alice's best friend, who is willing to cast her aside to maintain her own tenuous place in the social hierarchy. Two boys also get to tell their sides of the story: Josh Waverly, Brandon's best friend, who has secrets of his own, and Kurt Morelli, nerd extraordinaire, who's been secretly obsessed with Alice for years. Due to the novel's short length, the rotating narrators and a few questionable word choices, some characters border on caricatures in places. When readers finally hear directly from Alice in the book's last chapter, they may wonder why the author took so long to introduce arguably the most interesting voice in the book.

A quick if unoriginal read saved by a realistic ending. (*Fiction*. 13-18)

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