

# Who I Am

M.L. Rice

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Discovering who you are is the hardest part of growing up.

Devin Kelly is an Air Force brat, band nerd, bookworm, and loner. After the untimely death of her father, she and her mother move to Los Angeles to start a new life. Devin is welcomed to her new school by an arrogant bully named Jason who promises to make the rest of her senior year miserable.

Things turn around, however, when a beautiful and intelligent young woman named Melanie Parker, who happens to be Jason's sister, comes to her rescue. As the relationship between Devin and Melanie grows, Devin finds herself becoming more and more drawn to her new friend's vivacious spirit. It's not until an unpleasant confrontation with Jason that Devin must admit to herself that her feelings for Melanie are far more than platonic.

#### Who I Am Details

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# From Reader Review Who I Am for online ebook

# Abby says

This book was a short but sweet read. It was just so cute and touching. It shows the reality of what it can be like to be gay and trying to find your self during that time. This book really got to me because I could relate to it. The confusion and fear of not only coming out to your self but to family and friends. But mostly, the relationship between the two girls. I suggest anyone who is in the process of finding who they are, read this.

## **Robert Gamboa says**

I can totally relate to this story! Thank you!

## Linh Nguyen says

Never get passed chapter 2.

### Amy says

Simply put, I loved this book. This debut young adult novel by M. L. Rice lovingly captures the emotionally charged process of falling in love for the first time, and the mental roller coaster ride that accompanies such an experience. The author also does an excellent job of expressing the oftentimes terrifying process of coming out to friends and family and dealing with both positive and negative reactions in the wake of that revelation.

I would (and have) recommend this book to all of my friends and family, to anyone who has ever felt like an outsider trying to find their place in a world supposedly ruled by "the cool people", and especially to anyone who was ever in the band.

# Funnygirlsclub says

This book is so hard to read. It's written in first person and the person is so irritating and weird. Like her thoughts are so entitled and I don't know! I wasted money buying this book: (i can't even finish it it's so meh. Sorry to the author

# Petfriendly says

In truth, I do not read much in the young adult section of bookstores. However, having teenage nieces, I find myself seeking out a good read to help them with any future "teenage" situations they might encounter. Who I Am was an amazing choice. It takes the trials and tribulations of a young girl having the feeling of her first love, facing adversity, and life choices to new heights. It was nice to take the experiences of Devin's life and see how any teenager, or adult for that matter, can take her lessons and apply them to their own lives. Whether it be coming out to a best friend, being that best friend, having your heart broken for the first time, or that bully we all faced that made us feel shame or embarrassment, M. L. Rice takes the reader into the heart and soul of Devin, her friends, and her journey. I can only hope that it will be a journey that helps many young adults for years to come. I cried, I laughed, and it left me with cold chills. Beautiful.

#### Natsu says

The story was nice. I liked Dev and Mel too. I loved how Esmy cared so much for both of them.

I just feel like I missed some parts of the story because it was all in Dev's POV. Oh well, the title's Who I Am, I should've expected the single POV thing but an Epilogue by Mel would've been nice. :D 3.5 stars.

## Richard says

Wow! I read this in two days. It is a book that is hard to put Dow...a YA novel with characters you care about. This coming out tale is highly recommended!

## Kageashi says

Beautiful book, written exquisitely. The story of a girl discovering her identity and trying to cope with balancing a friendship, her sexual identity, and her love. Add in that her best friend has a drug-abusive asshole twin brother who is dedicated to making sure that the protagonist has nothing to do with "corrupting" his sister and you've got the making of an oddly engaging and endearing story, despite summaries reading like trope abuse.

My only real complaints with this book were that the pacing in the latter sections of the book felt too abrupt, and that overall I would have liked to have seen more of the characters (meaning, more book). But most of the characters are well fleshed out - even if seeming to be only incidental characters - and the story was, for this reader, a pageturner that kept me up half the night.

Obligatory follow-up to that last line - there is no erotic content, though there are moments that feel almost explicitly erotic due to the craftsmanship of the author. For instance, the Matterhorn ride is described in such a way as to make it tantalizingly sensual, without any explicit material.

## Star says

There are few things worse as a kid than being a military brat. Devin's been moved around the country and

the world because of her father's Air Force career. She's never really had any friends that last longer than the next move. However, all that ends when her father passes away and she moves to Los Angeles with her mother to be closer to her mother's family. On her first day of school she meets Jason, who trashes her the second he sees her, and his sister Melanie, who is the exact opposite of Jason. Devin and Melanie become fast best friends, but Jason's threats don't stop. However, Melanie and Devin are not going to let anything get in the way of their friendship - which turns into so much more.

Ms. Rice has written a beautiful YA novel which deals with high-school pressures, bullies, coming out to friends and family, and the overwhelming feelings of falling in love for the first time. Devin is a funny and engaging character and you really feel her happiness, pain, sorrow, and love (and the thousand other emotions teenagers go through in the span of 10 minutes). Ms. Rice has an excellent way of showing the scary and thrilling experiences and feelings of coming out, as well as dealing with both the positive and negative reactions a person can receive upon doing so. A great book for teenagers (and adults alike)!

# Brenna says

LOVED IT!!! beautiful ending to a tragic love story.

#### **B.J.** says

It's really scary to thing there are people like Jason in this world; even to that degree. I thought the book was portrayed very well and realistic in a lot of areas for a fiction book.

#### Megzz says

2.5

This read like a predictable teen fanfiction. It suffers from a cruel lack of originality: from the characters' personality, to the way they met, the way their friendship blossoms and turns into love, and the repercussions of their coming out.

I don't particularly hate predictable stories, but the writing of Who I Am didn't help.

- Typical 1st person narrative problem: it was almost impossible to know what was going on in Melanie's mind. It's like we are missing out on half of the story.
- The transition between friendship and romantic relationship is extremely brutal. This story is really long, yet it fails to give the reader a good build-up (No chemistry, no intimate moments, no "looks", no "touches" led us to believe that what they shared was love) . As a result, when they finally get together, it's not as explosive as we'd like.
- The dialogues are rare, which prevents us from getting a real idea of what the girls are like when they're together.

- Moments are depicted very superficially and in a rush, as if the writer didn't have the patience to delve deeper into what could have been relevant scenes. There is a frustrating lack of emotional layer in the story, and mostly because of this. Essential parts of the story are left out or drowned in enumerations of other stuff, usually in very boring and long descriptions. We don't even get to read about their first time together. I'm not a pervert but to me that's an essential part of letting go, trusting and loving someone. The reader is left with something like "we discovered each other's body" instantly followed by "the next day I woke up". Same with a lot of other important moments in friendships and relationships.
- Not many interesting supporting characters...

Not the read of the year. BUT i did finish the book, so it was good enough to make me want to know the ending. Melanie has a very sweet and charming personality, and Dev is cute. That's something.

# D. Leigh says

This is an excellent first novel by M.L. Rice. The coming out story never grows old, and this author does a wonderful job with the very difficult task of writing it in first person. The story is filled with teen angst and innocence that makes you want to groan when they step into the predictable pitfalls and cheer for them as they work their way through the barriers to adulthood and a relationship. Marketed by Bold Strokes Books as a Young Adult title, this book is a great read for any age.

# **Ruby Ridge says**

Nice little story with a satisfying ending but it was kinda difficult to really feel anything for the two protagonists.