



The Prologue

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Ezekiel Quain has learned over the years that love and family are nothing to be depended on. After standing strong next to his mom through her cancer, she ran off, leaving Zeke, his dad and little sister to struggle with the leftover medical bills, and a bad taste in Zeke's mouth about counting on anybody. His relationship with his father is strained, and the only person he cares for is his little sister, Cindy. With looks, attitude, and words, Zeke keeps everyone at arm's length.

Evangeline Parker has it all: money, beauty, brains, and the perfect boyfriend, Tony. What everyone doesn't see is that she's trapped, and has been for two years. She lives every day in fear, hiding the fact that Tony isn't the perfect man everyone thinks that he is. She walks a tightrope, trying to reconcile the Tony of the past with the Tony of the present, and to never, ever upset him. Terrified of anyone finding out the truth, she doesn't get too close to anyone and has been struggling through the past two years alone.

When Zeke stumbles upon Tony and Evie one night and learns of her secret, their worlds begin to collide in a way neither of them expected. Before he can stop himself, Zeke finds himself stepping uninvited into Evie's life, and urges her to tell someone. Evie refuses, terrified of the repercussions from Tony. Not even sure why he cares, Zeke can only watch from a distance, until disaster strikes and Evie's secret comes to light, and they are both forced to take action.

***Due to language and mature situations, this book is recommended for readers 16+**

The Prologue Details

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I picked up ***The The Things We Can't Change Part One: The Prologue*** in the full knowledge that it is the first instalment of a larger story. I'd actually read the first chapter on a post on the author's website and was so intrigued I simply HAD to read the rest of the book. I can honestly say I WAS NOT disappointed. Despite being short and finishing with a massive cliff hanger I absolutely loved ***The Things We Can't Change Part One: The Prologue***.

Kassandra Kush has tackled the very difficult subject of an abusive relationship in a way that is both confronting and informative. To everyone around her, Evie Parker is 'perfect' - beautiful, popular, wealthy and her boyfriend is the equally beautiful, popular and wealthy Tony Stulls. They are THE couple in high school. As is often the case though, appearances are not everything and there is a bleak, dark side to their relationship. Tony is unbalanced, psychologically controlling and violent. Evie is terrified: terrified of what he will do to her, of what he will do to himself and of people finding out what she is experiencing. The simple answer is that she should leave, or she should tell someone, which seems so obvious. But the flashes of the Tony she fell in love with: sweet and loving, combined with the threats he makes to harm himself make that option an impossible choice for Evie.

Zeke Quain is the quintessential bad boy. But really he's not - his attitude and style are carefully designed to help him keep distance between himself and everyone around him so that he doesn't get hurt again. With a background that couldn't be more opposite to Evie's, Zeke has to work at the Country Club that Evie and Tony are members at to help support his family. His younger sister, Cindy, is his kryptonite. He will do anything for her and in fact does everything he can to ensure she can pursue her dream of dancing. Cindy is the one person that Zeke can't say no to. Zeke and Evie go to school together, but they mix in totally different crowds. Both know of each other, but their interactions are generally filled with derision and disdain.

That is until Zeke discovers Evie's secret. Despite his vow to not care, he takes it upon himself to talk to her about what is happening with Tony and to encourage her to speak up. The dynamic between Zeke and Evie is just fantastic. There is no 'insta-love', in fact, they often can't speak with each other without one of them walking away furious at the assumptions being made. There is an underlying attraction, not to mention Zeke's obsession with Evie's hair, but it seems to me to be more about them recognising things in each other that they share. For Evie, there's a sense of safety when she is with Zeke.

The Things We Can't Change Part One: The Prologue is very well written. The characters have depth and I was completely engaged from start to finish. Even the 'support cast' is so perfectly developed that I fell in love with Evie's dad, the self made success story, felt indifference towards her stepmother and felt that I really got to know each of Evie and Zeke's friends enough that they were meaningful characters in this story. The cliff hanger is massive - for a brief moment I wondered whether the version of the e-book I had wasn't complete and I actually said "Nooooooo" out loud when I realised it was, in fact, the end of Part One.

I cannot wait for Part Two. Apart from wanting to know what happened next from the final moments in the story, I want to see what happens with Evie and Zeke. It is absolutely not a given that they will be together. There are so many obstacles to this it almost seems impossible: and yet I'd really, really love to see a relationship between the two unfold.

Don't let the prospect of a cliff hanger put you off - you will seriously miss out on a wonderful story if you do.

Casey Bond says

Evie, Evie, Evie. Zeke, Zeke, Zeke. And Crazy Tony.....oh how I wish I could read on. But, I GUESS I can wait til 8/25... Honestly, this is a dark story of a rich girl who ends up in a physically and mentally abusive relationship. Said abuse is discovered by a classmate, who lives in a broken home on the wrong side of the tracks. The characters are vivid and the conversations are realistic . I love Zeke. He's a good guy in a difficult situation. I'm rooting for love and a happy ending for two broken souls.

Rose says

I am trembling though. That much I remember. Trembling with every breath I take, and I can hear the shaky exhales as they are forced out of my lungs. Every breath in and out is a struggle, and that's mostly what I'm thinking about. All I can focus on.

WOW.WOW.WOW.

The Things We Can't Change was a phenomenal read with exceptionally well-developed characters. I'm usually not a fan of books that revolve around abuse, as it is quite a heavy and daunting subject matter. However, I felt inexplicably drawn to this book, and I knew instantly that I had to give this book a go.

Both Evie and Zeke were extremely realistic characters who had their own flaws, insecurities and problems. I absolutely loved how the author didn't squeeze in this big unnecessary insta-love kind of relationship between them. She kept the story real, and I felt that it really helped accentuate the deeply intimate and meaningful aspect of the story.

BUT THAT ENDING!!

My heart just shattered. The likelihood of that outcome at the end is definitely not something anyone will be looking forward to. I'm so scared to read the next bookbut I need to know! I need to know what happens!!

Szinna says

Rendkívül érdekes, jól megfogott könyv volt, egy kapcsolaton belüli bántalmazásról, amíg a végére nem

értem. A szereplők realisztikusak, és élők, Zekéhez szinte nyomban lehet érzelmileg kapcsolódni. A baj az volt, hogy az író elfelejtette befejezni a könyvet. Nincs megoldás, nincs lezárás, még csak valami részleges sem, a történet szimplán félbeszakad. Reméljük a második részben jobban sikerül a befejezés, én alig várom.
D

Anime Mage says

What the hell did I just read? Like... What the hell was I thinking when I thought this book was even going to be vaguely entertaining? I mean... The book not even fun... it's really really boring.

I mean I actually feel kind of bad for reading this. In fact, I couldn't even get past the first third of the novel. That's how bad it was. I mean I have read romance novels before and some I've actually legitimately enjoyed. This was certainly not one of them. I mean, there is more than one way to make a good book... Provided that the book succeeds and what it's trying to do and is actually entertaining. It fails miserably at both.

So what is this mess of a novel about anyway? Basically this girl getting abused by this really mean guy and our main character has to go rescue her more more or less.

I'm not even kidding, that's the whole plot of the book more less. The thing right off the bat is that I didn't care about any of the characters. They're all incredibly bland and I have no reason to root for them. And worst of all, the main characters have no chemistry whatsoever. Like, I actually felt legitimately and unintentionally uncomfortable when I got like a couple pages into the novel. Like what was the point of this novel exactly? There's nothing fun or even vaguely engaging about it. I mean it's not even like it's so edgy it's endearing kind of way... It's just so uncomfortable and really just torture. Like why am I reading this at all?

The only thing I kind of liked about the book was the writing in that it was sort of easy to read... But that's the only good thing about the book I can think of. The only other thing I can possibly think of was that the book was free... So I can't say I am having any buyers remorse like I did with "one of us is lying". But still, this book was not very good.

I guess you could say that this book was just a really bad version of "too late". At least that book was so comically bad that it was endearing and really entertaining. And in that book, the main characters had tons of great chemistry together and their dynamic was actually really fun. And the tone of the story was so comically stupid that it never takes itself too seriously. While this book it almost takes itself so seriously that it gets mellow dramatic and boring at the same time. On top of that the characters are boring, and the pacing is ridiculous.

Final verdict:

I think that the reason that people keep saying that romance novels are trash is because of books like this. Now am I saying that all romance novels are bad? No! In fact, a number of my favorite books are romance novels. But I think that this particular book here is the reason why romance novels have such a shoddy reputation when it comes to literature. I give this book like 2.45/5.00 - A book that really has no reason to exist and just makes the reader feel uncomfortable I have a really strange feeling about themselves afterwards.

The only way I could see this book being even vaguely useful is as an ironic book suggestion. Find someone that you really hate, and lock them in a truck with only this book to read. Trust me, I don't think that they will be much of a problem after that. Results may vary LOL.

The only reason that this book is not getting a 1/5 stars is because it was free and because the writing was at least somewhat competent. But no do not read this book please. If into the book that you go only pain will you find.

Vivian says

Holy crap.. NOOOOOO!!

Sara Nelson says

I don't even know what to say....But thank you for letting me read and review this amazing piece of work!!!

This book was something else. It is hard (at least for me) to read these kinds of book, but only because our world we live in is crazy and I like to get away from it all threw reading....BUT I loved this story!!!! I know the cliff-hanger had me screaming for the next page!! LOL I can't wait for part 2. The characters had a very big impact on my heart and mind. I loved them all from poor Evie, to Zeke who doesn't want to be in any part of this mess, to Tony who is a vary bad boy!!! I know your sitting there thinking "How could you like a bad character?" Well all I can tell you is every character in this book fits so perfectly, and written with such heart it makes them amazing! I recommend this this to everyone!!

Jessy says

Unbelievably heart breaking and written so perfectly. Here's a book that will allow you into the mind of a girl getting abused repeatedly and all the reasons for staying. Although I can't agree with any of them, the author has pulled on your heart strings and you find yourself screaming at Evie trying to give her hope. To give her comfort and to just wrap your arms around her. How she has lived so long this way and been able to keep that secret is beyond me. You can "feel" the broken pieces of what she was. It tears my heart in two. You want to be mad at her and yell at her, but in the same emotion want to reach for her and help. That's where Zeke comes in. He stumbles upon it one night and that's when he knows even if he's being told to keep his nose out of what's not his business he can't seem to forget what he saw and he can longer hold people at an arms distance if he allows himself to care. What these two find is a collision of their lives about to happen and circumstances that will have to be escaped. But making these choices doesn't come easily when these two have spent their lives on separate sides of the crowd.

This story was written with a two point of views, from Evie and Zeke, so we get to see inside both of their thoughts which is fantastic to be a part of because we get to know each of them separately and we come to know all the reasons as to why they are the way they are.

If you enjoy reading contemporary romance novels then make sure you pick this one up and have tissues on hand! This is a story you don't want to miss out on! It's a story of learning to hope for something better, a story of new bonds that can save your life when you thought all was lost...it's a story of finding freedom to be free. But be warned the ending will leave you breathless and maybe a little upset! I know I was trying to

force the page to turn before I realized BAM book is done but you weren't ready for it to end!! Aghhhh need sequel YESTERDAY!! Pick this book up lovelies! I give it my thumbs up!

FreakChiq says

No, no, no, no, no!

I know this is only the first part of a much bigger story, and maybe I shouldn't be saying this, this early on (praising something too soon can sometimes be a bad omen), but *The Things We Can't Change* has a real potential to be something special; something that will pull and tug on my heart-strings and clog up my throat.

I love how brutally realistic the story and the characters are portrayed. There is no love or even lust at first sight. For now, there's only an attraction, and I can't wait to see it slowly develop into something more. The white knight in shining armor, who drops everything to save the girl, isn't as white and has his own battles to fight. And the damsel in distress maybe doesn't even want to be rescued.

Kassandra Kush's *The Things We Can't Change Part One: The Prologue* is real and raw, and I loved every part of it. So, while I'm here impatiently waiting for the next installment, I encourage you to give the first part a chance and read it. Maybe you'll fall in love with it just as much as I did.

Jasmin says

3.49

Allyson Gottlieb says

I am lucky enough to be able to get my hands on early copies of Kassandra's work, and let me tell you that this one DEFINITELY does not disappoint! It's told in alternating 1st person POVs (Zeke and Evie) and while sometimes it bothers me when authors head-jump like that, this one is wonderful! You really get to know each character intimately, like you're peeling open their skin and seeing into their souls. And ooh, both of them have some major demons to handle... Don't want to say too much because spoilers, but the subject matter is raw and honest and the writing is KILLER. It might be short but it definitely is not light and sweet... So don't say I didn't warn you, but definitely check this out when it hits Amazon in a couple weeks! You absolutely WILL NOT regret it!

Violet Musonda Winchester says

Wow...

I can't even... the feels alone...

Wow! Just wow!

I need a loooooonnnnnnggggggg moment. I just... you know when... have you ever...?
I...

Jennifer Treviño says

The Things We Can't Change

by Kassandra Kush

I have to give this book 5 stars!

In all Honesty ~ I began this book asking myself 'Why am I reading this again? I don't like reading about abuse & things that will bring me down'. Call me crazy, but when I pick up a book I prefer to travel to other worlds & realms full of magic & happy endings (for the most part anyway). Knowing this I prepared myself for the worst not sure how Kush would approach the abuse issues at hand.

I was shocked to be so drawn in to this story that I could not put it down. Not because I felt sympathy for any certain character no, no, no. Sure I understood the real life problems & issues at hand. This was one of the reasons I continued reading, because our kids (anyone we care about really) needs to have stories like this available to help them truly see what can happen in an abusive relationship as Evie is in. Not only do I appreciate the learning opportunity it provided, but I believe Kush did a terrific job bringing very real happenings to light without going too dark. She found that balance to get the point across without making me want to stop reading (winning a few shudders & tears along the way of course). BUT ... the best part is these characters! They brought out so many emotions in such a short time: I smiled, laughed, cringed, cried, loved, & I admit loathing a special someone. I wanted to know more about each of them; their lives, their pasts, their choices.

Now keep in mind this is a short story, a prologue. Do not let that fool you it absolutely packs a punch (in more ways than one)!

If I had to choose a favorite character it would definitely be Zeke! He won me over for many reasons! He's absolutely adorable in his macho tough as nails kinda way. => The ending though...URGH!! I kept swiping the page on my ereader hoping it was frozen. There had to be more! No way could I already be finished!?! I must know what happens next!!

*Immediately after reading this I had to tell my teen about it. I could not stop. I want her to read it. I feel like all of her friends should. We need to educate them about these things, so they can prevent themselves from being stuck in such a situation (or at least get them to speak up before it's too late).

BTW...After seeing the cover reveal my teen was in love. I'll let you know what she thinks after she reads it.
;•)

Maddie Wecker says

Why do authors write endings like this?!?!?!?!?!?

Janell Rhiannon says

...this really was a fun book to read...I read this eNovella in two days. Cassandra Kush did a great job snagging my attention with the opening scene. In *The Things We Can't Change*, we are introduced to Zeke and Evie. Ezekiel, nice Biblical name, is a tough, trying to stay on the straight and narrow, almost reformed graffiti artist. Evie is a country club prep, daughter of a doctor trying to strike a balance a between her sanity, safety and her abusive boyfriend. Both of these characters struggle with their inner demons, while trying to navigate high school and family life.

Short version: Evie is abused emotionally and then raped by her popular boyfriend. We are witness, as readers, to Evie's pain and confusion. (It's rather intense, but not inappropriate for upper teen readers.) Zeke discovers the truth, encourages Evie to be brave for her own self, but when she is unable to or unwilling to, Zeke doesn't understand. He thinks she should be able to just walk away from the abuser, like he did from graffiti. But in the end, it all comes crashing down around them both.

I really liked the character of Zeke. There was something about the way Kush caught the essence of a misunderstood young man." I loved how he looked after his little sister. I thought Zeke's layers as the protagonist were well written, and there was honesty about his character that came through the story. So much so, that I can image Zeke hanging out around any corner on a high school campus. Evie, although the "maiden in distress in need of rescue", was not as likable in my opinion, but her story was central to helping Zeke manifest bravery he didn't know he had. Kush did a bang up job presenting a story based on tough real life situations.

After I read this, I thought about who Evie and Zeke are in the real world...he is the bad boy, tatted, troubled, and afraid he is unlovable. Evie is the spoiled little rich girl, who should have had it all, and lives with the fact she doesn't believe she's lovable either. Classic. We all run around shielding ourselves from our fears, hiding truths we can't face, refuse to face. So, I found a little music video that reminded me of this story. I will definitely be watching for part two. Bring it on Miss Kush!

And then, Cassandra Kush just applied the brakes on her keyboard and left us HANGING! And I mean hanging, literally...so...don't expect any resolutions in book one. Curses!!! Part two is due out
