



# Because

*Jack A. Langedijk*

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## **Because** Jack A. Langedijk

Robert had reached the summit of many mountains. His adventures took him to unimaginable heights, yet his greatest achievements were not in conquering these majestic beauties, but in his ability to reach people in need. That is, until he's the one facing the toughest climb of his life.

Roberto Sanchez is living the dream; one could say the man had it all. He is blessed with a beautiful wife and daughter who complete him. A career that reaches at-risk kids that brings him true joy. Then a tragic accident leads Robert to a chasm of dark despair. Although his interventions have reached many, he found he is incapable of helping himself off the edge of a cliff, jeopardizing his career, his marriage, and himself.

'because' takes us on a journey of two Roberts as he struggles to find a way to once again believe.

"A deftly crafted novel and an absorbing read from beginning to end, "because" is a compelling and thoroughly entertaining novel that documents author Jack Langedijk's truly exceptional storytelling skills..."  
- Midwest Book Review - Small Press Bookwatch November 2015 Issue

"...Langedijk has lots to say about courage, compassion, redemption, and self-worth. Although those life lessons are more compelling than the actual drama unfolding around Roberto's post-Everest experience, they more than make the journey with him worthwhile.

Meditations on some of life's biggest questions as told through some harrowing experiences." — Kirkus Reviews Magazine - August 15, 2015 Issue

## **Because Details**

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Author : Jack A. Langedijk

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# From Reader Review Because for online ebook

## Carl says

I liked this book because I like inspirational stories. It was occasionally a little over the top, but isn't that a requirement of good fiction? If not a little over the top where's the pizzaz? Is just plain old ordinary every day life going to sell? Some worthwhile qualities of this book are: 1. There were some new instances of life-wisdom that I underlined as I read. 2. It used the messages in popular songs to help its characters cope with life and to eventually succeed. 3. It coalesces around the idea that no matter what one's age, or circumstances, or history, that as long as you are still alive, you are always becoming. As you become, whether you will improve or slide, whether you will be happier or sadder, the impact you have on others for good or evil, will always be up to you and the decisions you make and the roads you take.

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## Bibi says

Disclosure: I was offered this book free in exchange for an honest review.

Toronto resident, Jack Langedijk wrote because which captures in many ways the essence of the city. The protagonist is a fourth generation Argentinean, his daughter's boyfriend is from Vietnam, his wife's employers are from Hongkong, and then there is Amir from Guyana, Aaron Aobla from Uganda, a therapist who wears a headscarf, and three students - one black, one Korean, and one white. A true melting pot of characters living in this wonderful city. There is mention of the Scarborough Crisis Centre, Mont Sinai Hospital, references to the Scarborough Malvern shooting incident, and programs for at-risk students currently in place.

At 375 pages, the book can be summed up swiftly as the journey of a mountaineer (Roberto Sanchez) to find himself after he lost his legs as result of an avalanche on Mount Everest. The book also captured his work as a social worker helping at-risk persons. He was viewed as a "fixer", a "healer", a "mighty oak" yet he seemed unable to help himself grapple with his new reality.

The sub plots read like case files - an overweight student who is bullied, a young boy from an inner city neighbourhood who witnessed his brother being shot and killed, and a young girl who harms herself. Roberto is featured as a kind hearted soul with a supportive wife and daughter. A moment of revelation occurred as Roberto was asked to deliver a speech at a gathering of employees from the firm where his wife worked. This is not an uncommon practice for invited speakers to reference facing challenges and surmounting obstacles.

It was an "okay" book broken down into 49 short chapters which flipped through different points in time. Thankfully, each chapter began with headings such as *present day* or *15 weeks ago* or *4 weeks ago* etc. At times, the book delves into too much daily minutia and trite conversations but at its core is the importance of communication, acceptance of change, and the nobility of helping others in their struggles. As always, here are a few excerpts worth reproducing.

About mountain climbing:

*"He has done lots of interviews and found that no one has the same answer... He said some do it for the challenge, some to find themselves..... some do it for the adrenaline rush and some ...to get away from the*

world or their own lives.

*But I think I'm here because most of us exist in the world which is mostly human made - in a world of TVs and computers, we tend to forget that there are places on this planet which do not respond to the flick of a switch... that these mountains exist without us... and I guess I'm one of those that feel a need to sometimes exist with them." (page 87)*

On self-doubt:

*"You know , I've never asked myself why am I doing what I do? Why do I do these workshops? Why is it so important to me to care about these kids?...Even when they tell me they don't want to be saved? What sort of purpose in life is that - helping people who don't want your help?*

*Or is it all about me? Is that how I want to be seen? A saviour? Is that who I am? Is that how I want people to see me? Have I become so righteous I don't really know who I'm helping, I just need to save someone to make myself feel good? Is it really all about my own ego?" (page 133)*

And, on listening/communicating:

*"...Maybe I was brought up to think that if someone was telling you something, you better have a reply for them, and it's your job to fix it or change it. I didn't know that most people weren't coming to me for an answer. They weren't looking for any judgement; they didn't come to be fixed. They just wanted to let something out and have it heard." (page 175)*

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## **Dorky Girl says**

This was a heart breaking story of a man so close to falling. This is a glimpse into the struggling life of someone with a disability and the challenges they face. At times I found this book hard to read due to the fact that it's written so well that you are living it rather than reading it. This book proves just how strong a person can be after tragedy changes a life.

Full Review Here

>> <http://callievamp.blogspot.com/2015/1...>

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## **Carine Blokker says**

I just finished the book and i loved it! Its a book about people ....about cruelty of life sometimes..that whatever happens, you always have a choice ..The characters are becoming family ...you just have to love them all! I recommend this book to everyone to read...because....reading this book made me realise how lucky i am .....its just all about love, and thats the most important thing in life! Thanks Jack for writing such a beautiful book!

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## **Sandy Leffew ferrara says**

I had the pleasure of Beta reading this work. I highly recommend this story to everyone of every age and every background. It has something special that will make everyone just a little better for having read it.

Robert Sanchez is a man who has it all, while living all his dreams to the fullest, his professional life is one that reaches others and truly has impact, his wife is the love of his life and his support, his daughter completes him as they encourage each others to reach the stars, a tragic accident threatens it all.

My favorite thing about this story is how it shows impact.. the impact of words, the impact of mental exercise,the impact your words can have on others unknowingly. With Great character interaction and a thrilling journey, this story will leave you feeling enlightened and encouraged.

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### **Michael Head says**

Langedijk explores the depths of human suffering in a realistic, uplifting way. His characters deal with real and relatable issues that affect so many people today, especially the young. By showing the universality of depression and suicidal thoughts, readers are able to witness the characters' overcoming their hardships. They find ways to cope, and to heal, that are as inspiring as they are incredible. Through all this, the characters never step beyond the limits of believability, and they must manage their relationships the same way they manage their inner demons.

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### **LunaBel says**

I honestly could not finish this. The story did not captivate me enough...

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### **Pooja says**

**Some novels have their decided beauty in them, this is one of them.**

*And if these mountains had eyes, they would wake to find two strangers in their fences, standing in admiration as a breathing red pours its tinge upon earth's shore. These mountains, which have seen untold sunrises, long to thunder praise but stand reverent, silent so that man's weak praise should be given God's attention.*

I confess that Because was not an usual read for me. I had my own insecurities and uncertainty that if I can read it and I'm glad that I made a choice to read it. It was a mesmeric effect on me. I found myself reading it day and night. Fantastic plot and engaging narration keeps telling me to be rooted to this book.

It is not only a motivational novel but it also tells you to go beyond your limits without making one sentimental. Dialogues are apt and precise. There's no beating that. It touches you. It uplifts you. It moves you. I kept myself relating to the characters one time or other. It has a fair sense of spirituality attached to it. The Best part? Well, I can get a message out of it what I wanted and at the same time, the message you'll get could be completely different. I think this is what makes a book commendable.

The cover starts to make sense and everything falls in its place. Beautifully narrated story, unforgettable characters, their spirits and enthusiasm lifts this one up in the top lists of Best Non-Fiction novels. His writing style is gripping and intriguing. There is no hesitation in reading the future works by the author.

Many novels come in your life. Some you forget and some you can't forget. But every single one of them have this common property : They change you, somehow. You can't explain how and what, but they do. "Because" has the same outcome. A better and positive outcome. It has impressed me to the core.

I would recommend 'Because' highly.

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## **Archit Ojha says**

*Deeply Crafted!*

*" It's not the mountains we conquer, but ourselves. "*

I had been traveling for a long time and I couldn't find much time to read. But once I did, I was unstoppable. The book didn't let me put it down for a while.

And when I did finish reading it, all I felt was - *invincible*.

These invincibility notions can be created only by innovative books like it!

It is narrated in different timelines but it doesn't seem as a barrier to the plot rather it was the strongest and thoughtful theme that made it an excellent narrative.

In between these perfect shifts from past to present, the author has portrayed many engaging events that fueled my excitement all the while. His work is commendable.

It was a perfect blend of inventiveness, creativity and raw emotions. Something you rarely get to see. Another thing that I adored about it was how believable the characters were! I kept relating myself from one to another.

because is the book that truly demonstrates that the author has an exceptional talent for storytelling. I appreciated his writing style very much. Engaging and arresting.

In the end, I feel overwhelmed to have read a book of a life-time. I would suggest it to everyone who are searching for an inspirational and thought-provoking read.

This is the kind of book that demands your attention and asks you to contemplate about your thought process and way of living.

The cover is designed miraculously. If you are the person who judges a book by its cover, then in this one, you'll never go wrong.

I've always been a fan of books that give me the feeling that I'm reading something extraordinary.

This book functioned really well for me. And I had nothing in my mind but to enjoy it.

It was an experience beyond explanation.

Jack A. Langedijk I read you loud and clear.

It's needless to say that I am inclined to see more of the author's work.

**Verdict : You must not miss a powerful and moving story like this.**

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### **Jessica says**

I loved it! "BECAUSE" is an inspiring book I highly recommend!

Perhaps it was serendipity for me to receive an advance copy; I read it while considering a career and other personal changes in my life. Unexpectedly, "change" is a key element in this story. A part of me related to Robert (the main character) in an enormous way – at times where I couldn't put the book down. I needed to know what happened next; how was the situation resolved?! Occasionally, moments in the book had me pause and wonder to myself: "Yes, this is a book, but what if... / how would I react if that happened to a family member, a friend or me?" Your life can change in an instant (not always by choice), affecting your perspective, and physical/mental health. While reading this book, you'll find yourself going through the emotions along with Robert as he deals with how the drastic changes in his physical-self affects how he sees himself and his interactions with others. Eventually, leading up to his need to re-examine his life and how he now fits in it.

You're sure to relate with one or more of the diverse characters in this book. "Because" has you move from each characters' past, present and future; their troubled life's journey before meeting Robert, how they met Robert, and how he has a positive affect with their present (and perhaps future) direction in life. The relationships between the characters reminded me of that old adage: you meet people for a reason or for a season (there's a purpose for all interactions – to learn from others, to teach others or re-assess yourself.) The jumping back and forth through time as each character is introduced might be confusing for some; I thought the different flow added to their character development which helped me connect with some of their personality traits.

I felt "Because" was a spiritual story that didn't feel preachy or religious. I came to the realization after reading this book that its life's trials or changes (not always of your choice) that truly test you - especially when they seem never-ending. There is a reason for all events – it's just a challenge at times to determine what exactly the reason is.

"Because" surprisingly opened my eyes to creating change instead of waiting for change. Who would think that embarking on an inspiring journey of self-discovery could start from reading a random book? For that reason alone, I highly recommend this book!

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### **Julie Failla Earhart says**

I was invited by the author's press people to read/review Because. Sounded great. When it arrived in the mail, I was more than a little skeptical. If I had seen this on a bookshelf, I would have passed it by. The cover art is confusing, the title is boring and weird (that lowercase "b" really threw me off), and the back cover text

didn't pull me in.

Then, I started reading. The first 23 pages were bad. I had no idea what was happening. Thank God for my 50-page rule (I almost always give a book 50 pages before I say it's not for me). By the time I reached page 50, I realized that those first pages merely had a badly placed flashback.

And by the time, I reached page 50, I was hooked on Robert and his story. Robert, real name Roberto Sanchez, had a great life: He gave workshops to at-risk kids; he climbed mountains—and had climbed the most difficult ones, including Mt. Everest; he had a loving and supportive wife, and a beautiful daughter. He was “on the top of the world,” physically and psychologically.

Then, the avalanche happened. He was trapped beneath six stories of snow and ice. He was rescued, obviously, but lost both legs. How does a man go from being active and fit, to no longer being able to do the things he loved? It's hard that's for sure.

Robert's story weaves between past and present, not necessarily in that order. Langedijk does a great job in naming each chapter so readers can figure out what's happening. For the past, Langedijk also weaves in the stories of how the other three members of Robert's climbing party (not including the guides) came to be in that group. Troy, Nancy, and Phillip are fascinating, well-developed characters. I was especially taken with Troy, and I think other readers will find him one of their favorite characters also. The author also weaved in Robert's sessions with a counselor.

For the present story, Lanfedijk provides a linear story that culminates in heartbreak and happiness. Toward the end, the story became a little preachy and got a little old. But by the end, I was once again riveted with Robert's plight.

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## **Carolyn says**

### **Relentlessly instructive**

Should be inspiring but felt way too forced. And how did this guy ever become a mountain climber anyway? It was way too long and way too predictable. It seemed as though I have read a story like this so many times before.

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## **Linda says**

I read this book for free at the author's request.

The antithesis to this book's central theme would be, 'Age is the killer of dreams.' I know this because I am there. Roberto Sanchez, the protagonist, would work his mind and heart to death trying to make me believe otherwise. but he would not quote platitudes intended to bolster my weary body and soul. Still, he would never give up on me and my depressing thought that at my age there are no more mountains that I can climb.

Robert Sanchez had a passion for his wife and daughter, for the people he encountered through his work, and for mountain climbing. At age forty four, he took three of his most difficult clients up Mount Everest where their changes from from self destructive life styles to honest and caring human beings were clearly made manifest. An avalanche on the downward trip of Everest cost Roberto his legs. He spiralled into a depression where no one could reach him until he met the man with only one ear and with only one hand.

How Robert took the three clients into his heart and how he made a difference in their lives let the reader



know the kind of man Roberto was. At times the stories of the three clients became a bit long, even a little boring. I tried to find ways their stories could be shortened, but I failed to find even one word that could have been left out that would not cut the completeness of their stories. The same was true about his wife and daughter and about the mountains he climbed. The author's writing mechanics were excellent. His descriptions were vivid. I related to the relationship between Robert and wife Monique because it was so much like my relationship with my husband. I know his touch upon my skin, the familiar feeling of being in his arms, the knowing that I can trust this man in both ordinary and extraordinary events of this thing we call life. I could understand Monique's hysteria when Robert's lost legs took him to a place in his mind where he did not want to enter. Only one time has an inordinate anger separated the minds of my husband and me. Those few days of separateness made my world crazy and desperate. Robert's daughter, Jennifer, loved her father much like I loved mine. How the loss of his legs caused Robert to put her outside of their special cocoon was especially heart wrenching. I knew that feeling because my father was overcome by something completely out of his control that cut deeply between him and me. Robert's lost legs caused present and future life to appear null. My lost youth and middle years have voided yet another career change for me. And, thus, the story was told of how Robert lost any positive feelings about the things he cherished most. The one eared, one handed man appeared JUST IN TIME, but I will not tell his story. Robert, what would you do for me and the other Boomers who find ourselves too young for this but too old for that? Would you recite platitudes such as, 'You can do anything if you put your mind to it.' But Robert, what if there is no more 'if' in my arsenal? Worse still, what if there is no 'mind' to put to it?

I feel like I have left out a big chunk of something important in this book; however, other reviewers will latch on to it. I do not believe two people could read this book and get the same message. The author made a book that defies singularity of interpretation, and that is a good thing.

Thank you, Mr. Langedijk, for a GOOD READ!

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## **Christina says**

“Because” was not my usual choice of reading material. I don't generally read memoirs or anything much in the non-fiction genre, but I was given an advance copy and thought I'd give it a try. I was surprised to find myself unable to put this book down. I found “Because” to be compelling and moving. The author's writing style is very direct, and character driven.

The narrative moves easily and fluidly from past to present, allowing the author to tell many connected stories, while maintaining a cohesive narrative thread, each chapter building the momentum of the story and fleshing out characters, but never causing the story to lag.

I tend to be put off by anything remotely emotional, or inspirational but this book manages to be both without being mawkish or weepy. Dialogue is particularly good, really well written and engaging. The characters are moody and the main character is even downright unlikeable at times.

The author doesn't gloss over the main characters despair, but rather builds the story and to a believable and satisfying conclusion, with each story line reaching a believable transcendence over the characters struggles or limitations. Considering my own hesitation about the genre, I was very, very impressed and wouldn't hesitate to recommend this book to anyone looking for a good read. I look forward to more work by this author.

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## **Saradia Chatterjee says**

*Because* is an uplifting read. I simply can't express my feelings about this book in a nutshell. It causes multiple emotions to stir up in the mind and persistently tries to connect you with the thoughts that lie at the core of this greatly inspiring story. I guess I should start with the title. It immediately makes you think unlike some titles which are very self-explanatory. I was curious about it when I started reading the book but I arrived at some kind of an answer only after completing the read. It surely leaves plenty of room for thought and I will not reveal my conclusions here as that might hinder another person's venture to find the underlying meaning. However, I felt I had to mention the title as I believe it is another positive aspect of this impeccable novel. The story we have here is the story of a person who is robbed of his ability to do what he desires to do. It is the story of someone who wants to keep fighting and who does so with incredible strength and will power. As we read, we confront the different emotional conflicts faced by Roberto. Each time, he impresses us. He is not an infallible hero but he is a hero who takes on life's challenges very boldly, setting an example for others. This brave protagonist wins a place for himself in our hearts with his never-say-die spirit and passion for helping those that require it. Needless to say, he drives the course of this novel which, in my opinion, is a perfectly executed work.

Moving on to other things, the writing is captivating. Of course, it takes a brilliant writer to give shape to such a strong protagonist. Langedijk has done a commendable job not only with the portrayal of his protagonist, but also with the beautiful description of nature and its influence on human feelings. There are many people who cope with newer struggles everyday like Roberto in this novel. This is a book which is very close to reality and is not in the least far fetched. That being said, I'd like to finish off this review with one last comment--go ahead and read this book if you're being let down by seemingly never-ending frustrations; if not, read it anyway. This is one of those rare books that truly inspire. If you're still asking yourself why you should read this--because it will help you believe in yourself, yes, that's how I am going to reply to that question!

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