



The Tension of Opposites

By Kristina McBride

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"Tense! The constant push and pull of friendship, pain, love, and jealousy is beautifully drawn. A definite must read."—Jay Asher, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Thirteen Reasons Why*

"[A] well-paced story with . . . emotional punches that really connect."—*Publishers Weekly*

"Told without explicit detail, the headline drama about sexual predators will pull teens in."—*Booklist*

"There aren't many explorations of what happens after such a crime . . . and readers will . . . sympathize with both Tess and Noelle."—*BCCB*

Two years ago Noelle disappeared. Two long years of no leads, no word, no body.

Since the abduction, Tessa, her best friend, has lived in a state of suspended animation. She has some friends, but keeps them distant. Some interests, but she won't allow herself to become passionate about them. And guys? She can't get close—she knows what it is like to really lose someone she cared for.

And then, one day, the telephone rings. Noelle is alive.

And maybe, just maybe, Tess can start to live again, too.

A haunting psychological thriller taken straight from the headlines, *The Tension of Opposites* is a striking debut that explores the emotional aftermath a kidnapping can have on the victim, and on the people she left behind.

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The Tension of Opposites By Kristina McBride Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 6-10—Aspiring photographer Tessa McMullen's world was turned upside down two years ago when her best friend was abducted. Noelle has now escaped and been reunited with her family, but is much changed. She insists on being called Elle and is sullen, uncommunicative, and not at all interested in reestablishing the friendship. Tessa, meanwhile, put her life on hold during Noelle's absence and feels guilty about her growing attraction to fellow photographer Max. Eventually Tessa breaks through her friend's reserve, but Noelle/Elle continues to act in self-destructive ways. The first half of this novel is emotionally compelling and psychologically insightful, as readers get glimpses of both the nature of the accommodations Elle has had to endure in order to survive, and of the way in which Tessa is beginning to forge a more realistic view of the friend she formerly idealized. Unfortunately, the second half shifts into a kind of "Mean Girls" mode, as Elle's play for the big man on campus and resulting confrontation with his queen-bee girlfriend take center stage, and the ending is confusing. Ultimately, readers gain no real understanding of the effect of Elle's ordeal on who she is or may become. *Richard Luzer, Fair Haven Union High School, VT*

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From [Booklist](#)

"How do you talk to your best friend after she's spent two years with some greasy pedophile?" After Tessa's best friend, Elle, escapes her kidnapper and turns him in, Tessa feels overwhelmed as she tries to help Elle get back to high school and find her way in their small midwestern town. Elle's story is all over the news: can things ever return to normal? Why didn't Elle try to get away sooner? And how can Tessa spend time with her hot new boyfriend, Max, when she feels her duty is to protect Elle from her memories and from the cafeteria taunts ("you learned a lot about making a man happy"). Long and repetitive, this first novel is really the same situation over and over. But Tessa's first-person viewpoint and the rapid, immediate dialogue are right on, with Elle's family, in the schoolyard, and with Max. Told without explicit detail, the headline drama about sexual predators will pull teens, and so will Tessa's intense conflict between friend and boyfriend. Grades 9-12. --Hazel Rochman

About the Author

Kristina McBride, a former high-school English teacher and yearbook advisor, wrote *The Tension of Opposites* in response to the safe return of a child who was kidnapped while riding his bike to a friend's house. She lives in Ohio with her husband and two young children. This is her first novel. Visit her online at www.kristinamcbride.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Scott Peters:

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Edwin Ashford:

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