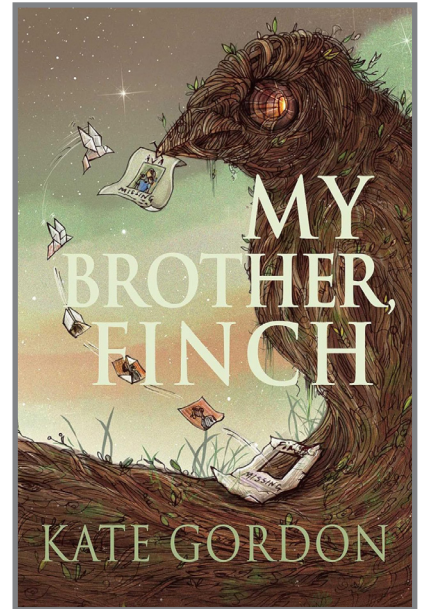


My Brother, Finch



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SCIS: 5492258

ISBN: 9780645869347

RECOMMENDED FOR: Upper Primary

SYNOPSIS

Finch and Wren were as close as a brother and sister can be. When he vanished at just nine years old, her world cracked in two. Another child went missing the same day. A pretty little girl who was far more interesting to the media than Finch was. To them, Finch became an afterthought—if he was thought about at all.

But not for Wren. Never for Wren.

Three years on, Finch is still with her, whispering in her ear, guiding her through life. As Wren begins high school and forms a new, bewildering friendship with a mysterious girl called Freddie, Finch is there, urging her on. To go bolder. To go braver. To grab life with two hands.

Then another girl disappears and Wren feels compelled to search for her. To her surprise, Freddie does, too. Did the girl run away? Or is the truth more awful? And how is she connected with what happened to Finch and Ava?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kate Gordon grew up in a very bookish house, with two librarian parents, in a small town by the sea in Tasmania. In 2009, she won a Varuna fellowship and hasn't stopped writing since. Her first book, *Three Things About Daisy Blue*, was published in 2010. She has since been published multiple times by everyone from Yellow Brick Books through to Random House Australia. Kate won the 2016 IBBY Ena Noel Award for *Writing Clementine*, and in 2018, was shortlisted in the Dorothy Hewett Awards for an Unpublished Manuscript. Her YA novel *Girl Running, Boy Falling* (2018) is a CBCA Notable. In 2021, *Aster's Good, Right Things* (published by Riveted Press) won the CBCA Book of the Year for Younger Readers, and in 2023, *Xavier in the Meantime* was shortlisted in the same category.

THEMES

- Loss and grief
- Missing people
- Sibling relationships
- Sibling rivalry/jealousy
- Dealing with tragedy
- Family
- Friendship

- Mental health
- Media bias and selective reporting
- Resilience

STUDY NOTES

- Before you start reading, examine the cover of the novel. What do you think the cover and the title suggest the book will be about?
- Why do you think a different font has been used for Wren’s inner dialogue, and for Finch’s dialogue?
- Why do you think Wren still talks to an imagined version of Finch? What can we learn from this about grief?
- Why do you think the media gave more attention to Ava than to Finch? How have you seen those attitudes displayed in real-life news media?
- Why do you think Wren feels like she needs to help Johanna? Find evidence in the text to support your answer.
- Freddie and Wren’s assignment attempts to determine whether poetry, photography or taxidermy is most effective for capturing moments in time. Which do you think is most effective and why?
- What do you think Wren meant when she said that Finch made her ‘disappear’?
- Wren says that she feels ‘lost’. Have you ever felt lost? What are some things people can do to feel less ‘lost’ in times of difficulty?
- Johanna tells Wren that she ‘wanted to be lost’. Do you think she will continue to feel this way after becoming friends with Freddie and Wren? Why/why not?
- Wren uses poetry to express her thoughts and feelings. Write a poem based on a memory or a feeling you’ve experienced.
- Finch uses nail art and fashion as a form of self-expression. Design nail art or an outfit based on something you feel passionate about (eg. political topic, hobby, belief, etc.).
- Wren is passionate about photography. Choose or take a photograph of something that is meaningful to you. Create a presentation about why the photograph is meaningful.
- The author writes vivid character descriptions that help readers feel connected to the characters. Write a description of yourself, in third person, or of someone you admire. Include hobbies, aspirations and personality traits.
- Finch’s disappearance was a pivotal moment in Wren’s life. Write a short story about a pivotal event—real or imagined—that could lead to two different endings. Write out both endings, making sure the causal events are clear.
 - How does the event impact your main character?