



## Stay

By Deb Caletti

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**Stay** By Deb Caletti

**Now in paperback, a dark, romantic novel of love and obsession from National Book Award finalist Deb Caletti.**

Clara's relationship with Christian is intense from the start, and like nothing she's ever experienced before. But what starts as devotion quickly becomes obsession, and it's almost too late before Clara realizes how far gone Christian is—and what he's willing to do to make her stay.

Now Clara has left the city—and Christian—behind. No one back home has any idea where she is, but she still struggles to shake off her fear. She knows Christian won't let her go that easily, and that no matter how far she runs, it may not be far enough....

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"My heart was pounding through several chapters... "Stay" is an emotional masterpiece. It ended up being even better than expected, and is a must read."

--Shanyn @ chickloveslit.com

"Caletti's prose is at its best. Perfect for fans of Sarah Dessen's books, this is a moving tale of a young woman learning how to love, to live, and to forgive."

--Booklist

"Ms. Caletti's writing was gorgeous. There were so many unique and beautiful observations... The way Ms. Caletti was able to push through the norm and dive for something beautiful underneath the current was incredible. "Stay" is gripping--one part beauty, one part obsession... it's absolutely a novel to check out."

--Amber @ Down the Rabbit Hole (<http://amberinblunderland.blogspot.com/>)

"The way [Caletti] describes things - the characters, settings, the small details - is simply breathtaking. The author has such a talent with words that everything becomes so vivid and alive in front of your eyes.

The plot is gripping! The tension builds up chapter after chapter. As the story progresses, we get to know more of Clara's history with Christian. The characterization is excellent! The author makes you really feel for Clara. I felt her pain, her happiness, her fear and confusion. I could feel her turmoil like it was mine.

One of the best YA contemporary novels I have read.

I read Stay in a day and it was worth it. I believe it's an important book for older and younger readers alike. Stay is dark, moving and hard-hitting."

--Misha @ books-love-affair.blogspot.com

"I LOVED it. "Stay" is masterfully written and so powerfully honest, it is just an absolutely brilliant read....

I wish I could go back in time and hand this book to my teenage self, it was the kind of book I needed and one I think all teenage girls should read.... The writing is beautiful and full of raw emotion.... The characters are exceptional. Clara is definitely one of the most realistic characters I have read in a while.... Overall, this book is amazing. I highly recommend "Stay" to all fans of contemporary fiction. Definitely a favourite read for 2011." --Nic at [irresistiblereads.blogspot.com](http://irresistiblereads.blogspot.com)

"The heavens must have opened and sung a beautiful song while Deb Caletti wrote Stay, because this book straight up gets it. Her style is similar to Dessen, as in you know the story is going to be honest and make you feel all sorts of emotions. I felt a genuine connection to Stay."

--April @ [goodbooksandgoodwine.com](http://goodbooksandgoodwine.com)

"This is the best book I have read. Never have I felt more a part of a story, never have I been so involved, so unsure of the outcome, so tentative as Clara moved ahead with her/my life. I wouldn't have Deb Caletti change even one word in this novel. It isn't entertaining. It's more than realistic. It's real."

--Heather @ buriedinbooks.blogspot.com

"Taking an honest look at the dangers of obsession and stalking, Caletti writes a beautiful story that somehow remains hopeful even when the plot takes a sinister twist. Through the story, all characters come to life and become understandable, if not likable. Recommend this book to every teen and parent. This is a danger often overlooked until it is too late because of its subtlety, and the guilt and shame involved."-- VOYA

#### About the Author

**Deb Caletti** is the award-winning author of *The Queen of Everything*; *Honey, Baby, Sweetheart*; and *The Nature of Jade*, among others. In addition to being a National Book Award finalist, Deb's work has gained other distinguished recognition, including the PNBA Best Book Award, the Washington State Book Award, and School Library Journal's Best Book award, as well as finalist citations for the California Young Reader Medal and the PEN USA Literary Award. She lives with her family in Seattle. You can visit her at [DebCaletti.com](http://DebCaletti.com) and become a fan on Facebook.

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Stay

## ***Chapter 1***

First off, I've never told this story to anyone. Not the entire thing anyway, and not entirely truthfully. I'm only telling it now for one reason, and that's because an untold story has a weight that can submerge you, sure as a sunken ship at the bottom of the ocean. I learned that. This kind of story, those kind of things kept secret—they have the power to keep you hidden forever, and most of all from yourself. The ghosts from that drowned ship, they keep haunting.

So here is the story. Sit back and make yourself comfortable and all that.

I met him at a basketball game.

Wait. You should also know that another friend of mine, Annie Willows, had asked me to go with her and her friends to El Corazon that night to hear some band and that I didn't go. If I had gone, all this might never have happened. The way two people can end up in the same place, find each other in a crowd, and change their lives and the lives of the people around them forever . . . It makes you believe in fate. And fate gives love some extra authority. Like it's been stamped with approval from above, if you believe in above. A godly green light. Some destined *significance*.

Anyway.

My school was playing his, and I was there with my friend Shakti, who was watching her boyfriend Luke, number sixteen, who was at that moment sitting on the bench and drumming his fingers on his knee like he did when he was nervous. Inside the gym there was that fast, high energy crackle of competition and screaming fans and the squeak of tennis shoes stopping and starting on shiny floors.

He was with another girl; that was one thing. I was aware of her only vaguely as she moved away from him. She maneuvered sideways through the crowd, purse over her shoulder, heading to the bathroom, maybe. His eyes followed her and then landed on me, and by the time she came back, it was over for her, though she didn't know it. That sounds terrible, and I still feel bad about it. But something had already been set in motion, and I wonder and wonder how things would have been if I'd have just let that moment pass, the one where our eyes met. If I had just taken Shakti's arm and moved off, letting the electrical jolt that passed between us fade off, letting the girl return to his side, letting fate head off in another direction entirely, where he would have kept his eyes fixed on the girl with the purse or on another girl entirely.

My father, Bobby Oates\*, said that love at first sight should send you running, if you know what's good for you. It's your dark pieces having instant recognition with their dark pieces, he says. You're an idiot if you think it means you've met your soul mate. So I was an idiot. He looked so *nice*. He *was* nice. After Dylan Ricks, I was looking for nice. Dylan Ricks once held my arm behind my back and then twisted so hard that I heard something pop.

"Thirsty!" I yelled to Shakti, and she nodded. I moved away from her, followed the line of his eyes until I was standing next to him. I wish you knew me, because you'd appreciate what this meant. I would never just go walking up to some guy. I would never ignore the fact that his girlfriend was right then in the bathroom putting on new lip gloss. Never. I was nice and my friends were nice, which meant we lacked the selfish, sadistic overconfidence of popularity. But I didn't care about that girl right then. It's awful, and I'm sorry, but it was true. I kind of even hated me for it, but it was like I *had* to do what I was going to do. I can't explain it. I wish I could. He was very tall and broad shouldered, white-blond hair swooped over his forehead, good-looking, oh, yeah, with those impossible, perfectly designed Scandinavian features. Still, it wasn't just his looks. It was some *pull*. The ball hit hard against the backboard, which shuddered and clattered. The ref's whistle shrieked and the crowd yelled its cheers and protests.

I held my hands up near my ears. "Loud," I said to him.

He leaned in close. His voice surprised me. He had this accent. It was lush and curled, with the kind of lilt and richness that made you instantly think of distant cities and faraway lands—the kind of city you'd see in a foreign film, with a snow-banked river winding through its center, stone bridges crossing to an ornate church. Ice castles and a royal family and coats lined with fur. The other guys in that gym—they watched ESPN and slunked in suburban living rooms and slammed the doors of their mothers' minivans. See—I had already made him into someone he would never be, and I didn't know it then, but he was already doing the same with me, too.

"I don't even know what I'm doing here," he said. "I actually hate sports."

I laughed. "How many people here are secretly wishing they were somewhere else?"

He looked around. Shook his head. "Just us."

I was wishing that, all right. I was wishing we were *both* somewhere else. A somewhere together. A warm heat was starting at my knees, working its way up. "I've got to . . ." I gestured toward Shakti.

"Right," he said.

I made my way back to Shakti, who was standing on her toes at the sidelines, trying to see Luke, who had been called in to the game and who was now dribbling the ball down the court in his shiny gold shorts. "He's

in,” she said. “Oh, please, God, let him not do what he did last time.”

But I was too distracted to actually watch and see if Luke would accidentally pass the ball to an opposing teammate as he had during the last game. My focus had shifted, my whole focus—one moment he wasn’t there and then he was, and my mind and body were buzzing with awareness and hope and uncertainty. You have ordinary moments and ordinary moments and more ordinary moments, and then, suddenly, there is something monumental right there. You have past and future colliding in the present, your own personal Big Bang, and nothing will ever be the same.

That was the point, there, then, when I should have shaken it off and gone on. I see it like an actual road in my mind, forking off. I should have kept my eyes on Luke with his sky-length legs and skinny chest; I should have cheered when he passed that ball just as he should have, to number twenty-four, who shot a clean basket. I should have stayed in that moment and moved on from *that* moment, when Shakti grabbed my arm and squeezed. Instead, I watched him as he headed through the crowd, and he looked back at me and our eyes met again before he disappeared.

It was already too late. Basically, two springs and two summers and the sea and the haunting had all already happened.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Sarah Fernandez:**

Book will be written, printed, or created for everything. You can learn everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. We all know that that book is important issue to bring us around the world. Alongside that you can your reading talent was fluently. A e-book Stay will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel far more confidence if you can know about almost everything. But some of you think this open or reading some sort of book make you bored. It is not necessarily make you fun. Why they are often thought like that? Have you trying to find best book or suitable book with you?

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As a pupil exactly feel bored in order to reading. If their teacher requested them to go to the library or make summary for some guide, they are complained. Just tiny students that has reading's soul or real their leisure activity. They just do what the teacher want, like asked to go to the library. They go to right now there but nothing reading significantly. Any students feel that reading through is not important, boring and also can't see colorful images on there. Yeah, it is being complicated. Book is very important for you. As we know that on this age, many ways to get whatever you want. Likewise word says, many ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore this Stay can make you feel more interested to read.

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