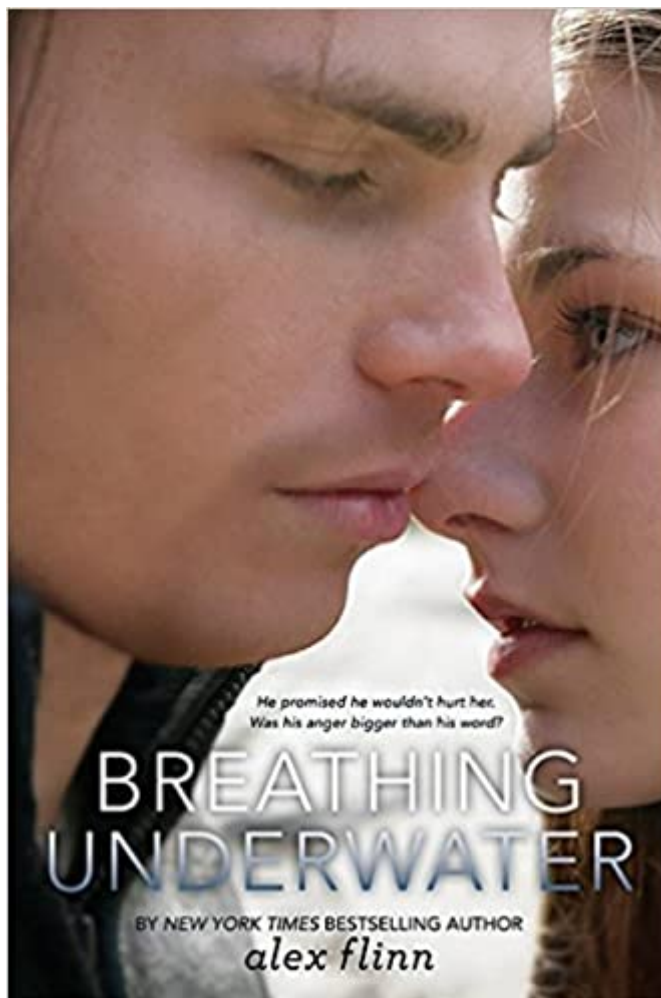


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# Breathing Underwater



## Synopsis

To his friends, popular and handsome sixteen-year-old Nick Andreas has led a charmed life. But the guys in Nick's anger management class know differently. So does his ex-girlfriend Caitlin. Now it looks like the only person who doesn't realize how far from perfect Nick's life has become is Nick himself.

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: HarperTeen; Revised edition (May 10, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0064472574

ISBN-13: 978-0064472579

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 200 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #149,438 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #89 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Physical & Emotional Abuse](#) #231 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Boys & Men](#) #384 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Dating & Sex](#)

## Customer Reviews

It was only a slap. Well, maybe more than one. And maybe Nick used his fist at the end when the anger got out of control. But his girlfriend Caitlin deserved it--hadn't she defied him by singing in the school talent show when he had forbidden her to display herself like that? Even though he'd told her that everybody would laugh at her because she couldn't sing and was a fat slob? Both were lies. Because Caitlin was so beautiful, the only person who understood him. Out of his desperate need for her came all the mean words and the hitting. But now Caitlin's family has procured a restraining order to keep Nick away, and the judge has sentenced him to Mario Ortega's Family Violence class, to sit around every week with six other angry guys who hit their girlfriends. And to write a journal explaining how he got into this mess. Other teen novels--most strikingly *Dreamland* by Sarah Dessen--have shown dating violence from the point of view of a young girl trapped in an abusive relationship, but in *Breathing Underwater*, first-time novelist Alex Flinn tackles the difficult task of making us understand, if not sympathize with, the motivation of a violent young man. The story, like Rob Thomas's stylistically similar *Rats Saw God*, proceeds in two different time frames: the journal

in which Nick relives the course of his tender but stormy love affair with Caitlin and the time after the restraining order, in which a desperate and friendless Nick struggles to understand and overcome his anger. This extraordinarily moving novel is highly relevant reading for all young men in our violence-prone society. (Ages 13 and older) --Patty Campbell --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In what PW called "a gripping tale," a 16-year-old, who is considered perfect by his classmates, suffers a turbulent home life with an abusive father, and he himself follows the pattern of violence. Ages 13-up. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This was a summer reading book for my son. I read it first and I actually liked it. It can be a little slow but it isn't an adult book so I expected that. The story was well written and interesting. I like how the boy learned through his exploration into his feelings.

In first read the book back in high school with my class and I love it to death reading in my 20s I feel much different I really enjoyed it and it can be a bit graphic. I think this is a great read it handles abuse and bullying well. There is some redemption as well.

I read this book because my team of English teachers are responsible for teaching a teen dating violence curriculum to our high school students. As part of a modified curriculum, we utilized a passage from this book to demonstrate the cycle of violence. I am one of those teachers who feels that I must read everything I present to my class prior to its presentation, and this was no different. I found that once I started reading it, I couldn't put it down. I was angry with Nick, but at the same time, I understood the things he went through. I was annoyed with Caitlin...why didn't she walk away? I applauded when she did, but at the same time, I felt Nick's pain. There are some graphic scenes in here (told through Nick's journal of memories), but the book is well written. I recommend it highly.

Alex Flinn takes you on a roller coaster in this coming of age tale of a boy with a lot of pent up frustration. In "Breathing Underwater", Nick Andreas is an average rich white kid living in Key Biscayne, except for one thing: he has violent tendencies. The story takes you all over the Keys, but it takes place prominently at Key Biscayne High School and the anger management class. The story starts off with Nick in court getting a restraining order put on him by his ex-girlfriend Caitlin. He is

sentenced to take a class on anger management and write his version of the story in a journal every day. Nick encounters many obstacles along the way. One of which is trying to get Caitlin back because he still loves her. Another is dealing with his best friend Tom deserting him. He also has to deal with the anger management classes including the teacher, his peers and himself. All of these things he must deal with while constantly living in fear and loathing of his abusive, uncaring, disapproving father. Along the way Nick's perspective is changed. Through the use of the journal to observe exactly how he is, and interacting and observing with his peers both from school and anger management classes, Nick is finally able to see where he has gone wrong and how he can make things right. This book is truly one to remember and I would strongly recommend it to anyone, but I would especially suggest it to young guys who feel overwhelmed by their lives, anyone with anger issues, and those who struggle to cope with everyday life. This book is not for the weak hearted as some very controversial subjects are addressed in the novel. I look forward to reading more books from this author and more books like "Breathing Underwater".

This is the one book that both high school boys and girls will read. Have challenged reluctant readers to read 15 pages--and if they wanted to stop, I would give them credit for a book. In EVERY case, students read the book to the end and then shared it with a friend. Her other books are more story-driven, but this one is both character and story driven.

Nick has been summoned to a courtroom...and Nick doesn't really grasp why he's there. Sure, he hit his girlfriend, but it was just one slap, one measly little slap and suddenly, his girlfriend, Caitlin, blows everything out of proportion by acquiring a restraining order against him. Why would she do that? After all, he said he was sorry. So why couldn't she let it go and move on like all the other times he's won her back? The answer is quite simple. Nick is not telling the whole story. Sixteen year old Nick thinks that everyone is overreacting. They don't know the whole story between him and Caitlin. According to him, what went on between them wasn't anyone's business, including that counselor and the room of freaks he's been told to sit with everyday of the week. But it is through these counseling sessions where he tries to become invisible, and the journal in which he's required to write, that Nick finally reveals himself. It's a slow journey for him, but I'm proud to say that he finally, FINALLY gets it. It's not often that an author tells a story like this from the male's perspective. I'm quite sure there are plenty of books like this, maybe even written better, however. This was my first and I could definitely relate to it. Not to say I felt sorry for the character; I just empathized with him. Everyone has their secrets and, sooner or later, the secrets you keep wound up exploding in

your face. Teenage love is a strange thing but, when it's all you want, it can be very scary. Nice, quick read; I did it in one sitting. If you're the squeamish type, or the type that gets mad when a book doesn't go the way you want it to, then this is not the book for you. If you're everyone else, give it a try.

book arrived as described

I cried when I read this. Not at the beginning, not when his father hit him, not when he lost Caitlin. I cried at the end, when the worst was over. Maybe because it was then that it really sunk in. This book may be fiction, but it is real. All of us have that insecurity inside of us. It makes us lash out. Even when it's just a put-down, even if it never comes to blows, even if it's not someone we know. Even if our fathers never raised a hand at us, everyone has thought they weren't good enough, at one time or the other. Violence will always worm its way into our lives, somehow. I've seen traces in my father. I've seen it in the socialites at school. I've seen it in myself. All of us need to defeat it.

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