

## **This Beautiful Life by Katie Marsh**

**5 stars**

**I defy anyone not to be moved by this book.**

**I read this book in two days whilst lying on a sunbed in Cyprus. I can honestly say that it made me laugh out loud and cry throughout. This is such an honest and real portrayal of a woman who has had the most horrendous year coping with bowel cancer and as the book starts she is in remission and hoping to re-start her life with her husband John and her 17 year old son Seb. At the party to celebrate, we are introduced to all the main people in Abi's life, her parents, her best friend, her brother; everyone is so happy for her and life is now about to begin again.**

**However once the party is over real life interferes. Relationships have changed. Her husband John has been so desperate to do anything he can to help Abi recover that his business has fallen apart. Her son, Seb, has a beautiful girlfriend but finds himself assailed with feelings for his neighbour's son Marc. Abi is infuriated at the way she is being so protected that her family no longer discuss problems with her for fear of hurting her after her terrible year.**

**The real joy of this book is that the writing comes from the heart. You are drawn into this family's problems and feel their pain. The writing is topical and throughout the book you find yourself thinking that you know exactly what she is saying. Abi does a playlist of songs dedicated to all her family which makes her story even more real.**

**I am so envious of an author who can write like this about such a difficult area as cancer with such honesty. You feel the raw pain but also it is so uplifting and in some cases funny. The characters are so real, although Abi's life is the main story, her son Seb's struggle with his sexuality is also brilliantly described.**

**I could carry on enthusing about this book for pages but rather than that I would just implore anyone who can to read this. I cannot remember actually finding tears in my eyes when reading a book for a long, long time and that is not because the ending is either happy or sad but just because the sheer brilliance of the writing made this happen. An incredible book.**

**Dexter**

**Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review**