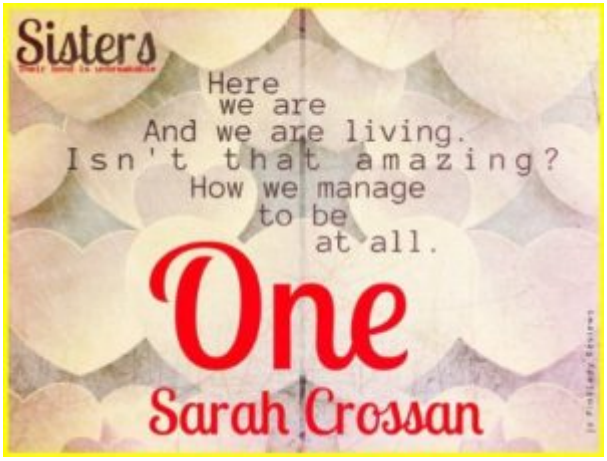
“One” – Book Review

One by Sarah Crossan is a YA book about two teenage girls dealing with a new school, a difficult family life, new friends, life as teenagers, and health and emotional issues related to being conjoined twins.

The summary on Goodreads:



Grace and Tippi. Tippi and Grace. Two sisters. Two hearts. Two dreams. Two lives. But one body.
Grace and Tippi are conjoined twins, joined at the waist, defying the odds of survival for sixteen years. They share everything, and they are everything to each other. They would never imagine being apart. For them, that would be the real tragedy.
But something is happening to them. Something they hoped would never happen. And Grace doesn’t want to admit it. Not even to Tippi.
How long can they hide from the truth—how long before they must face the most impossible choice of their lives?

The unique feature of this story is that it is written in free verse. I have a love for poetry and am particularly interested in exploring novels written in a poetic form because I am realising that my writing style suits it and I want to learn more about it. So I picked this book up as soon as I heard about it, and it did not disappoint.

Being YA, it is written for a younger reader than me, but I still found it poignant and interesting. The writing style flowed well and made for an easy read. I felt instantly swept up in the story because of the rhythm and sentence lengths, and this made for a great reading experience.

The plot was well paced and captivating, though I found that it sped up unnecessarily towards the end where I would have liked more time and detail. The characters were well developed and interesting, and I enjoyed how each character had their own story. The protagonists, Tippi and Grace, are great characters who I instantly liked, particularly Grace, who is the narrator.

This is a lovely read, with a great message. I think it is a book for everyone – do not be put off by it being a YA book, or that it is written in free verse. It is fantastic to see another book added to the list of inclusive literature. I do not have any experience with what being a conjoined twin is like, so I can not comment on whether this portrayal was done well, but for me, it helped me consider an experience outside my own. The author has clearly done research into the topic, and made an effort to write a good representation.

If anyone has any recommendations on books written in a poetic style, please let me know. If you are interested in another one, I have a book review about Grief is the Thing with Feathers by Max Porter, a poetic adult book about dealing with grief, which you can read here.