

Confess

by Colleen Hoover · Language: EN

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Overview

Confess is a contemporary romance novel by Colleen Hoover that intertwines the stories of Auburn Reed and Owen Gentry, two young people whose lives collide in a Dallas art studio. Auburn, a waitress with a painful past, is struggling to move on from a devastating loss and is determined to keep her life on a strict path. Owen, a talented artist who runs a studio where strangers confess their secrets anonymously, is hiding a secret of his own that could destroy everything Auburn has worked for. Their connection is immediate and intense, but the weight of their hidden truths threatens to tear them apart.

The novel is structured around Owen's art project, where he paints portraits based on the anonymous confessions he receives. Each chapter opens with one of these confessions, which serve as both thematic commentary and foreshadowing. As Auburn and Owen fall in love, they must confront the lies they have told each other and the pasts they have tried to escape. The story explores how secrets can bind people together or break them, and how love can be both a refuge and a risk. The narrative builds to a dramatic climax involving a custody battle, a shocking revelation about Owen's connection to Auburn's past, and a final act of sacrifice that redefines their future.

Confess matters because it is a compelling exploration of the redemptive power of truth and the complexity of human connection. Hoover's signature blend of emotional intensity, flawed characters, and unexpected twists keeps readers engaged while raising questions about forgiveness, honesty, and the choices we make in the name of love. The novel also incorporates actual anonymous confessions submitted by readers, adding a layer of authenticity and universality to the story.

Key Takeaways

- Secrets can protect people, but they can also destroy relationships when they are finally revealed.
- Love requires vulnerability and the courage to share your true self, even when it is painful.
- The past does not have to define your future; you can choose to move forward and create a new life.
- Sacrifice for someone you love can be both a gift and a burden, and it is important to communicate your intentions.

- Art can be a powerful medium for expressing emotions and connecting with others, as seen in Owen's confession paintings.
- Forgiveness is essential for healing, both for the person who was wronged and for the one who made mistakes.
- Trust is built slowly and can be shattered in an instant, but it can also be rebuilt with honesty and time.
- Sometimes the people we least expect can become the most important parts of our lives.

Chapter Summaries

Part One

Auburn Reed arrives in Dallas to start a new life after a traumatic past. She is determined to stay on a strict path, but a job posting at an art studio leads her to Owen Gentry, a charismatic artist. Auburn is immediately drawn to Owen, but she is wary of getting involved. Owen, who runs a studio where people confess their secrets anonymously, is intrigued by Auburn and feels an inexplicable connection to her. The first part establishes the central tension: both characters are hiding significant secrets, and their attraction is complicated by their pasts.

Part Two

Auburn and Owen begin spending more time together, and their relationship deepens. Owen reveals his art project: he paints portraits based on anonymous confessions. Auburn is moved by the project and agrees to help him. However, Auburn is still haunted by the loss of her first love, Adam, and she struggles to reconcile her feelings for Owen with her guilt. Owen, meanwhile, is hiding a secret about his connection to Auburn's past that he knows will hurt her. The tension builds as they grow closer, but the truth remains buried.

Part Three

The truth begins to emerge. Auburn discovers that Owen has been keeping a major secret: he is the son of the man who caused Adam's death, and he has been in contact with Adam's family. Auburn feels betrayed and ends their relationship. Owen tries to explain, but Auburn is devastated. The confession project takes on new meaning as Owen reveals his own confession: he has loved Auburn since before they met, and he has been trying to make amends for his father's actions. The emotional fallout forces both characters to confront their pain and decide what they truly want.

Part Four

Auburn faces a custody battle for her son, and Owen makes a selfless sacrifice to help her. He confesses to a crime he did not commit to ensure Auburn can keep her son. Auburn is torn between her anger and her gratitude, and she realizes that Owen's love for her is genuine. The climax involves a courtroom scene where Owen's sacrifice is revealed, and Auburn must choose

whether to forgive him and accept his love. The novel ends with a hopeful resolution as Auburn and Owen reunite, and Owen's confession project becomes a symbol of their shared journey toward honesty and healing.

Themes

- Secrets and lies
- Redemption and forgiveness
- Love and sacrifice
- Art as expression
- Moving on from the past

Notable Quotes

- "I think that's the problem with secrets. They build up inside you until they're too heavy to carry, and then they just spill out." — Owen reflects on the nature of secrets while discussing his confession project with Auburn.
- "You can't force someone to love you. You can only be the best version of yourself and hope they see it." — Auburn thinks about her relationship with Owen and the impossibility of controlling another person's feelings.
- "Sometimes the hardest part isn't letting go, but learning to start over." — Auburn reflects on her past and the challenge of moving forward after loss.
- "I don't want to be your secret. I want to be your everything." — Auburn tells Owen that she wants a real relationship, not one hidden by lies.
- "The truth is, I've been in love with you since the moment I saw you. I just didn't know how to tell you." — Owen confesses his feelings to Auburn after she discovers his secret.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Confess about?

Confess is a contemporary romance about Auburn Reed and Owen Gentry, who meet in an art studio where Owen paints portraits based on anonymous confessions. They fall in love, but both are hiding secrets that threaten their relationship. The story explores how secrets and lies can impact love, and it culminates in a dramatic sacrifice and a chance at redemption.

Is Confess worth reading?

If you enjoy emotionally intense romance novels with twists and flawed characters, yes. Colleen Hoover is known for her engaging writing and unexpected plot turns. Confess has a unique premise with the confession art project, and it delivers the emotional payoff Hoover fans expect.

Some readers find the plot melodramatic, but it is a compelling read for romance lovers.

How does Confess end?

Spoiler: After Auburn discovers Owen's secret connection to her past, they break up. Owen then makes a selfless sacrifice by confessing to a crime he didn't commit to help Auburn win custody of her son. Auburn realizes his love is genuine, forgives him, and they reunite. The novel ends with them together, and Owen's confession project continues, symbolizing their new beginning.

Who should read Confess?

Fans of contemporary romance and Colleen Hoover's other works will likely enjoy Confess. It is also a good pick for readers who like stories with emotional depth, secrets, and a touch of drama. If you prefer light, low-angst romances, this might not be for you, as it deals with heavy themes like loss, custody battles, and betrayal.

How long does it take to read Confess?

Confess is about 320 pages long. At an average reading speed of 250 words per minute, it takes roughly 6 to 7 hours to read. Most readers finish it in a few days if they read a couple of hours daily. It is a fast-paced read due to the engaging plot and short chapters.