

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR A SECOND-HAND HEART



TAMSYN MURRAY

WHEN LIFE UNRAVELS,  
ONLY LOVE CAN STITCH YOU BACK TOGETHER.

- ♥ In contrast to a Bucket List (the things you want to do before you die) Em and Jonny keep an Un-Bucket List - a list of ordinary things they want to do when they get well. Imagine you have spent all of your teenage years in hospital. What would be on your Un-Bucket List? In what ways has Jonny's ill health affected him?
- ♥ Discuss the presentation of Leo and Niamh's relationship prior to the accident. In what ways might sibling rivalry be intensified if you are a twin?
- ♥ Why do you think Jonny becomes so fixated on discovering the identity of his donor? What do you make of him adopting Leo's interests, such as playing the guitar and football?
- ♥ Look at Niamh's "crushing guilt" following the accident. Why do you think she feels this way, and is it at all justified?
- ♥ Niamh's dad gets the studs fixed on Leo's boots after the accident; why? How does grief manifest itself in the book?
- ♥ What are your thoughts on Jonny's decision to withhold his true reasons for contacting Niamh?

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- ♥ Niamh's counsellor tells her that very little of Jonny's actions were about her. Discuss.
- ♥ Em never tells Jonny that her health has deteriorated. Why do you think this might be?
- ♥ Look at Niamh's characterisation throughout the book. What combination of factors do you think contributes to her breakdown?
- ♥ It is surprisingly common for young transplant patients to stop taking their medication after leaving hospital, like Jonny. Why do you think this might be?
- ♥ What do you hope happens for Jonny and Niamh after the book's end?



Tamsyn Murray felt compelled to write Jonny and Niamh's story after reading an article about a teenage organ donor, and spent years researching for *Instructions for a Second Hand Heart*. Tamsyn is a firm believer in organ donation and says:

*'Organ donation has always been important to me - I joined the register when I was a teenager. Although it was hard to think about a scenario where my organs might be donated, I tried to imagine the difference I could make - up to seven people could benefit if the unthinkable happened. And now that I know a lot more about organ donation, I encourage everyone to talk to their families'*

To hear Tamsyn's thoughts on these questions head to [usborneyashelfies.tumblr.com](http://usborneyashelfies.tumblr.com)

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