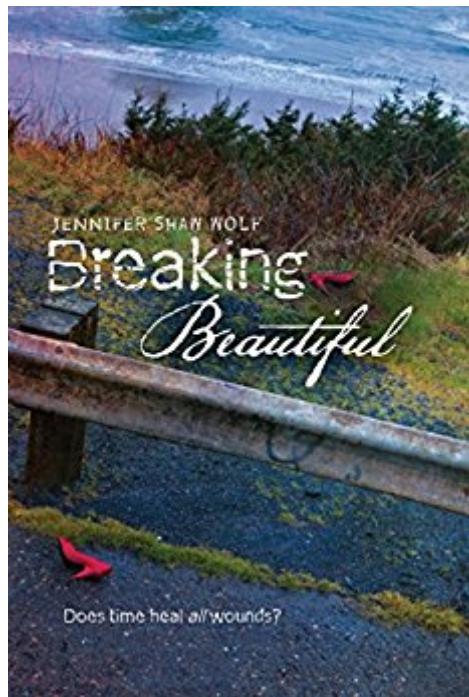


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# Breaking Beautiful



## **Synopsis**

Allie lost everything the night her boyfriend, Trip, died in a horrible car accident. Although she managed to jump out before he lost control of the car, Allie can't remember anything from that night-but she has a sinking feeling that it was no accident. As their small seaside town, mourns the loss of one of its brightest, Allie feels guilty that she can't help solve the mystery of the crash. But more importantly, she is secretly relieved to be free from the relationship that caused her more pain than the one night of the crash ever did. The abuse she suffered at Trip's hands is a secret she kept for so long, even from her twin brother, Andrew, and her best friend, Blake. Trip's family insists that foul play was behind their son's death, and the investigation turns on Allie and Blake, especially as their changing relationship raises eyebrows around town. Beginning to question everything about herself, her family, and Blake, Allie must reach deep down to remember what happened that night. But is it worth it, if finding out the truth could hurt the people who tried to save her?

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book really blew me away. It was a really moving premise. Is it okay to be relieved when your boyfriend dies? In any normal case you'd say, "No, of course not! That's horrifying!" But then what if he was abusive? What if it was the only way that she was ultimately able to escape him? Does that change things? From the first page, I was totally invested in Allie's story - and just as confused as she was as to what could have happened the night that her abusive boyfriend Trip died. It drove me crazy as I read it, trying to piece together little clues and such - but I loved it! At the start, Allie can't remember a single thing about the night that her boyfriend Trip's truck went off a cliff resulting in his death, and her mysteriously being discovered on the side of the road, instead of in the water with Trip and his truck. The fact that she remembers nothing scares her, in a way that I found totally believable. She worries that maybe she did something to him - how had she gotten out of the truck? Why had they been there in the first place? The characters were written very well. I appreciated the way that Allie remembers her relationship with Trip in pieces. Nothing can throw a wrench into a great flowing story like a sudden and long flashback scene stuck right in the middle of the action. Ms. Wolf has an amazing way of revealing the past through small lines of flashback - the way flashbacks actually do feel in real life. The flashbacks gradually grow longer and slowly begin to offer more background information into how their relationship really functioned and how trapped she truly felt. It made me feel like I was truly living through the memories once again with Allie. I can't remember there being a single dull moment in this book.

So far this year I've read two books about girls, car crashes, memory loss, and a night they would rather forget. This is definitely the better of the two. Not that the other was bad. It wasn't. It was great. I gave it four stars. But *Breaking Beautiful* falls into the category of books that remind me what literature could be and should be. It made me remember why I love to read and busted me out of a slump that was threatening my ever-growing TBR pile. I didn't want to read before I picked up *Breaking Beautiful*. I was tired of being disappointed or just feeling meh about a book. Now, I'm excited. I know that somewhere in that large stack of books is another story that I don't want to miss out on. I'll continue to read the blah of the book world if it means I might find another gem like *Breaking Beautiful*. We're told early on that Allie's boyfriend Trip was an abuser. Through pieces of her scattered memory we see the kind of pain he inflicted upon her and we see how each incident breaks her spirit--her sense of self-worth--a little bit more. To say that I was glad Trip was dead at the onset would be an understatement. I was thrilled. But just because the abuser is out of the picture does not mean that the affects of his abuse disappear. Allie still flinches when someone touches her and wears sweaters to cover the bruises. She still has trouble trusting, well, anyone.

Even her parents. Even her childhood best friend Blake, who, it's clear, would do just about anything for her. I absolutely adored Blake. I wanted so much for he and Allie to be together. Allie wants it too. At first, she's afraid of what people will think. That perhaps they'll think she moved on from Trip too quickly.

Breaking Beautiful is definitely a title that's true to this story. Jennifer Shaw Wolf took my heart for an emotional roller coaster ride with three different kinds of love: love of an abuser, love of a protector, and a love of hope. Wolf has written an intense story of how the effects of abuse still controls the abused person even after the abuser is dead. Wolf had me glued to the pages of this heart-ripping mystery of what happened the night that Trip Phillips dies. Wolf's is truly a talented author, and her writing will capture your heart, while also tearing it to pieces. It's been three weeks since Allie came home from the hospital. An accident left Allie with a head injury and no memory of the night she went to the Pacific Cliffs Cotillion dance with her boyfriend, Trip Phillips. The night that Trip died. Everyone wants Allie to remember that night, but Allie doesn't want to remember, and what she does remember, she must keep hidden like she's done for past three years. But someone knows about Allie's secret, and that someone has a secret of their own to hide. I fell in love with Allie's twin brother Andrew. Andrew has cerebral palsy, brought on by a lack of oxygen when Andrew and Allie were born. Jennifer Shaw Wolf wrote a beautiful character with Andrew that reminds us that cerebral palsy affects the body, not the mind and spirit of a person. Blake is another character I love. Blake is your bad boy/good boy, who's just gotten the short-stick in life because of what his mother did. Pacific Cliffs is one of those small towns where people live for gossip, and whatever sins your parents commit will be a life sentence for the children. Allie is Blake's hope, a hope that has been with them both since they first met each other when Allie was five and Blake was four.

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