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## LoveReading Reader reviews of **Try Not to Breathe** by Holly Seddon



**Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.**

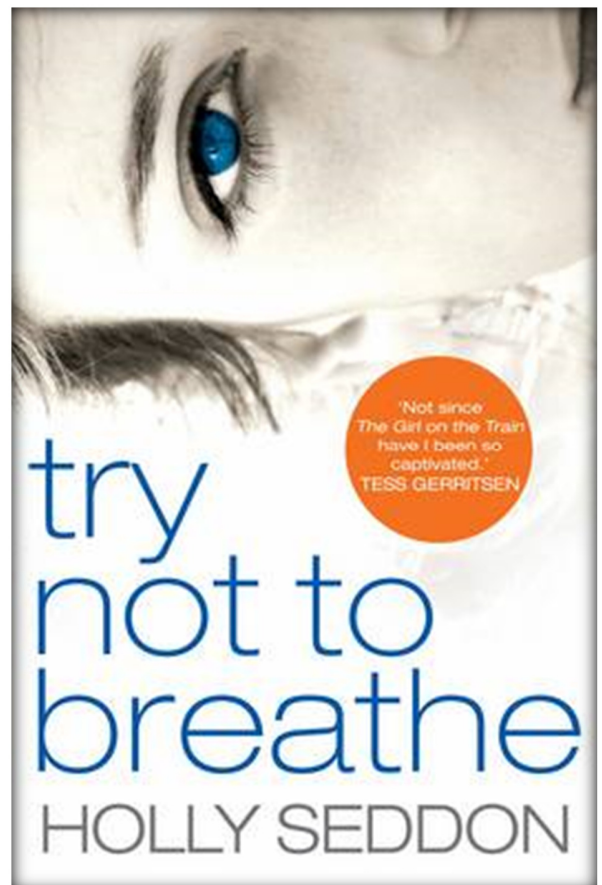
**Anne Rhodes**

***The pace is fast, the plot fires your thoughts – you ARE that person as you read about them – whether it is Amy, or Alex or those who knew her!***

*A story which holds from first word to last – chapter by chapter from the past to the present and back. What really did happen to Amy? Will Alex be able to solve the mystery, whilst at the same time trying to sort out her own life? The number of times you will hold your breath – will gasp out someone's name – it's a reasonable guess that you will do this at least once a chapter, sometimes more. Definitely an unputdownable book!*

*The pace is fast, the plot fires your thoughts – you ARE that person as you read about them – whether it is Amy, or Alex or those who knew her before the story starts – or those who have become involved as the story progresses.*

*Alex is doing for Amy what you would want someone to do for you, if you were the person in that bed....think about that as you race from page to page, unable to stop reading!*



**Angie Rhodes**

*It's 1995. Amy is fifteen, listening to Jarvis Cocker and drinking Hooch at the weekends with her friends, a happy teen, with a nice boyfriend and a loving family. Her friends and family think they know her, but Amy has a secret and this secret will land her in a coma, for years.*

*2010 - Amy is in hospital, where she has been since that night, in 1995, when her broken body was found, she had been beaten and left for dead, but Amy is stronger than that, she needs to tell those close to her what happened, and the one person who can help her is Alex, a reporter with a slight drinking problem. Amy and Alex are the same age, grew up in the same suburbs and she is going to be the friend that Amy needs, the one to talk and tell who did this to Amy all those years ago.*

*Only the more doors Alex opens, the closer to her is the danger that nearly killed Amy, she has to find them, before they find her. **'Try Not To Breathe', is a tense novel. One that flips between 1995 and 2010 with ease, one that you will be so engrossed in, you'll lose track of time, making you forget your coffee, until the final page. Excellent!***

**Alexandra Harper-Williams**

***What a fantastic first novel! An intelligently written insight into the human mind from many different perspectives. Highly recommended!***

*If like me, you can't get enough of an intelligent psychological thriller, search no further, this book is just the ticket!*

*Alex is falling deeper and deeper into a cycle of drinking and oblivion. She is close to losing everything when thirty-something Amy comes into her life. Amy, who is the same age as Alex and has grown up in the same area, has been the victim of a heinous crime committed 15 years ago which has left her in a coma. As Alex begins to become interested in this case and starts investigating the attack on Amy, she opens long-closed doors that reveal dark secrets from the past.*

*Holly Seddon's debut novel is a masterpiece of psychological observation and description. As a reader, you feel a wave of compassion for the characters and their stories. The story line and the characters really sparked my interest, and made me long to get to know more about them and about the crime that had been committed. With this book, Holly Seddon has certainly written herself into my personal top twenty list of authors.*

*But be warned: You will not want to put this book down, so be prepared for a lot of late night reading!*

### **Suzanne Marsh**

*I love reading suspense novels by new authors. **Holly Seddon has written a page turning suspense that kept me glued to every page.** I can most certainly see that Holly Seddon is going to be a rising star of crime novels in the future. 'Try Not To Breathe' is a must buy must read. The story is set in Tunbridge Wells, which is about 27 miles away from where I live.*

*Amy had a boyfriend, but Amy Stevenson had a secret that none of her friends knew about. In 1995 Fifteen year old Amy Stevenson disappeared on her way home from a Grammar School in Edenbridge Kent. Amy was found but barely alive and taken to Tunbridge Wells Royal Infirmary.*

*Alex Dale a journalist is writing a piece on Amy Stevenson's as she has suffered a high level of trauma leaving her unable to communicate with any one.*

*At the time of Amy Stevenson's attack no one was ever found. Now as Alex is investigating the attack, she open doors to same danger that left Amy in a coma.*

[www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com](http://www.ireadnovels.wordpress.com)

### **Teresa O'Halloran**

**Wow! This is the best psychological thriller I've read since 'The Girl On The Train' and this was better.**

*From the minute I picked up this book I couldn't put it down. In fact I resented having to put it down to sleep, read or eat - it is that good. I mean who needs sleep anyway.*

*I loved the main character of Alex, especially her flaws, and she was really flawed. She was such an interesting character that I would love there to be a series of books around her, and I would definitely want to read them.*

*The twists and turns in this debut novel kept me reading, and I guessed who the perpetrator was half way through only to be led astray by a scattering of red herrings, so that before Amy's attacker was revealed I hadn't a clue who it would turn out to be.*

*I can't wait for Holly Seddon's next book. I just hope she is beaver away at it right now because I'm really impatient to read it!*

**Michelle McKernan**

***A brilliant, riveting read that I couldn't put down. Cleverly written with twists I didn't see coming.***

*This is a great story that is beautifully written. Each character is well-rounded and believable and their interactions make this a page turner. It keeps you guessing all the way through with twists and turns that I really didn't expect. The author describes things in unique ways which is a refreshing change from many other modern books.*

*I definitely recommend this book and can't wait to read more by the same author.*

**Phyllippa Smithson**

***This is as gripping a story as they come. Highly recommended if you love a psychological suspense plot with a TOTAL difference.***

*Alex is a young journalist who is in trouble. Her alcoholism has such a dire hold on her that she has lost her young husband, career as a highly renowned journalist and friends. She lives to drink and that's her lot.*

*Then her life takes a turn when a 15 year old unsolved crime which left a 15 year old in a coma captures her attention and re-kindles the old Alex. The Alex who absorbed herself so fully in her journalism that she won awards and was highly sought after in the industry.*

*Who put Amy in the vegetative state that one specialist believes has left her with some, albeit limited, capacity to mentally function? Not quite dead, but not exactly living the life of other eager and ambitious teenagers of her age.*

*In order to get to the truth, Alex goes back to Amy's 15 year old self and with the help of her boy-friend Jake and her ex, she builds all that was missing from the original investigation and, at the same time, gives herself a chance to re-build.*

*Not bad for a debut and let's hope Holly Seddon is not a one #1 hit wonder cos based on 'Try Not to Breathe', I cannot wait to read more.*

**Judith Waring**

***I enjoyed reading this book but unfortunately didn't find it that gripping. I guessed fairly early on who the culprit was so that somewhat***

marred my reading as it was a process of just getting to the end to have it confirmed.

*The writer gave a good description of what (I assume!) an alcoholic's daily life is like with that need for your next drink and the subsequent consequences but I felt a lack of connection to any of the characters and found them somewhat 2D. I felt there could've been a deeper description of them to make me care about them all.*

*An enjoyable book but not one worthy of the cover sticker that it is 'gripping' like 'Gone Girl' was, no comparison at all for me.*

### **Sheila Dale**

***The characters in this book were well drawn and easy to relate to and the storyline was unusual. I found the book easy to read and a real page turner.***

*I found this book very easy to read and thought most of the characters were well drawn although I would have liked a little more depth to understand why they made the choices they did. The main character (Alex) was particularly interesting in the way she controlled her life but I never really understood why she had become an alcoholic in the first place.*

*The author had obviously done a lot of research on coma patients and I found it absolutely terrifying that Amy could be as good as dead but actually still functioning inside her head.*

*The storyline was good and unusual although I did feel it ran out of steam toward the end. A couple of characters who had barely been mentioned turned out to play a major part in the story and while I don't want too many clues to spoil the ending I thought a gradual build up to allow the reader to identify the culprit would have fitted better with the story.*

*All in all an excellent first novel and I look forward to more from this author.*

### **Edel Waugh**

***From the opening chapter of this book I could see that I was not going to be able to read just one or two chapters of this book then get to sleep, no this book is worth staying up to finish!*** *The story is about a girl called Amy who vanished years ago and then was found brutally injured. Amy has been in a coma ever since. The story is told from many sides, from*



*those that knew her then, from Amy herself in her hazy moments in this dream like state she is in, and from Alex, a journalist with her own problems who needs this story to keep her own sanity as well as get closure for this girl who now has no one. There is many red herrings in here, I was constantly jumping between three suspects so when I found out who did it I was so I glad I stayed up late to finish it!! If you liked 'Gone Girl' or 'The Girl On The Train' I think you will really like this.*

<http://edelwaugh.blogspot.ie/2015/12/try-not-to-breathe-by-holly-seddon.html?m=1>

### **Melanie Rose**

#### ***Captivating thriller - you won't want to put it down.***

*Alex Dale and Amy Stevenson don't appear to have much in common, even though they are roughly the same age. Alex is a thirty something washed-up reporter whose drinking also destroyed her marriage. Amy has spent the past 15 years in a "persistent vegetative state," still able to think but unable to communicate with the world around her after being assaulted at the age of 15 by an unknown man.*

*But these two women share one major thing in common. Each is trapped. And when Alex begins to research a medical story she hopes to sell to a local newspaper, she learns about Amy and wants to write about her plight - and, if possible, find the man who attacked her. Alex begins to ask questions and starts to visit Amy in the hospital to see what she can find out.*

*The narration shifts from one character to another, including Amy's thoughts, in short chapters and this keeps the story moving and keeps you wanting to find out the next piece of the story. It kept me captivated throughout and I would thoroughly recommend to anyone wanting a psychological thriller to read.*

### **Katherine Stewart**

#### ***Interesting premise, but didn't quite live up to the promise.***

*This is the story of Alex, a just-about functioning alcoholic journalist, who whilst researching a story about a coma ward discovers Amy, a patient who has been in the ward for many years following a vicious attack by an unknown perpetrator. The story is narrated by several characters, the main one being Alex who decides to investigate Amy's attack. Although the plot kept me*

*guessing, I found Alex to be a frustrating and unlikeable character. Amy's narration gave an interesting spin to the story; however the plot seemed rushed towards the end. Overall, it was an interesting, but not gripping read.*

### **Nicola Brennan**

***'Try Not To Breathe' is a poignant and engaging story that draws you in from the start.*** For those who are fans of thrillers, this is the book for you.

*'Try Not To Breathe' is a poignant and engaging story involving the victim of an attempted murder. Fast forward 15 years and Amy is lying in hospital in a coma. The perpetrator has never been identified. Here we are introduced to Alex Dale who is a journalist and alcoholic. She is at breaking point. While doing a story in her local hospital, she encounters Amy Stevenson whose name she recognises from her youth.*

*Amy had a secret all those years ago and Alex is determined to find out what that secret was and find justice for her. Although she has little control over her own life, her relentless pursuit of justice for Amy is both inspiring and hugely admirable. Her strength and willingness to help Amy gives us an air of hope that she may somehow turn a corner in her own life.*

***This book was phenomenal.*** For those who are fans of thrillers, this is the book for you. ***It is well researched, perfectly paced, has complex characters that draw you in, nice short chapters and flips back and forth between past and present with ease.*** Ultimately though, this is a story of friendship, justice, resolution and redemption.

*The final chapter was a masterpiece. I haven't read a closing that beautiful and memorable in a while and I did shed a tear. What an inspiring tale of friendship. It is a reminder to us all that friendship takes many forms. A fantastic debut novel from Holly Seddon, a name I won't be forgetting.*

[www.rustandstardustblog.com](http://www.rustandstardustblog.com)

### **Zara Kazi**

***A great psychological thriller that you just cannot put down.***

*I have never been fond of reading mysteries and thrillers but Holly Seddon's 'Try Not to Breathe' has changed my perspective on them. 'Try Not to Breathe' is about a 15 year old girl named Amy who went missing one day. She was found*

*shortly thereafter, her body severely beaten. However, no one could figure out what happened to her and who exactly had done it. The attack had left Amy in a vegetative state.*

*Fast forward 15 years and a journalist named Alex Dale comes across Amy at the hospital. Trying to get her life back together after losing everything because of her alcohol addiction was sparked by Amy's story. She begins to research her story to give Amy justice. Throughout the book, we follow Alex interviewing people close to Amy. Seddon has done a great job at keeping the story fast-paced with strong characters that allow the story to flow. Overall, 'Try Not to Breathe' has been a great read.*

### **Aoife Kelly**

***This book had a very interesting and promising premise, but it was slow to develop and I found myself not fully caring about any characters. No big surprises or twists***

*I love books that keep me guessing and trying to figure out the killer/attacker etc. However, I love not figuring it out and getting a nice surprise when all is revealed at the end. Unfortunately, I figured it out about two thirds into the book.*

*I did like that the author seemed to have done a lot of research on people that were in a vegetative state, and I found it interesting to learn about it. I found the personal lives of the characters more interesting than the main storyline.*

*Overall, the book was intriguing, but slow to develop and something I would bring on holidays for a bit of light reading.*