



# Zen and Xander Undone

*By Amy Kathleen Ryan*

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Zen and Xander are sisters—truly, madly, deeply sisters, and this is their last summer together.

Zen is the "good" girl with a black belt in karate and a newfound penchant for kicking heads. Xander is a wild scientific genius with a self-destructive streak a light-year long. They have three things in common: they're brown-eyed blondes, they've noticed the boy next door has turned into a hottie, and they miss their mom, who died almost a year ago.

These sisters are surviving just fine—except Zen keeps getting into fights that are harder and harder to finish, while Xander spirals into a vortex of late-night parties, scary men, and drugs. What's worse, Xander has scholarships to the most coveted universities in the country, but she's about to ruin everything. Should Zen keep trying to protect Xander, or finally let her go?

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## **Zen and Xander Undone** By Amy Kathleen Ryan Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 8 Up—Zen and Xander have always been opposites; flashy Xander is brilliant in school, while Zen is more laid back and focused on studying martial arts. When their mother dies, they grieve in different ways. Their father disappears into his misery, Xander gets involved with a crowd that deals in drugs and alcohol, and Zen finds herself resorting to violence as the first solution to dangerous situations. When she gets injured and can no longer teach karate until she has healed in both body and spirit, she struggles with her feelings of helplessness and her inability to get through her sister's ever more hazardous attitude. It only makes things worse when the girls uncover a secret about their mother that has them wondering if they ever really knew her. Zen's narration gives both her actions and her emotions a feeling of immediacy and closeness. Though the ending leaves some questions about Zen's future unanswered, both Xander and the girls' father go through dramatic changes, which Zen chronicles with keen insight. The themes of the negative influences of drugs and alcohol never overpower the story; instead, the focus remains tightly on two young women at a sensitive time in their lives.—*Alana Joli Abbott, James Blackstone Memorial Library, Branford, CT*

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### Review

"Zen's frank narration—full of longing and hard-won insight—draws readers in and won't let go."--*Kirkus Reviews, starred review*

"Vivid emotions and unexpected events keep the reader engaged as the characters grow and find a way back to themselves."--*Booklist*

### About the Author

Amy Kathleen Ryan earned an M.A. in English literature and graduated from the New School Creative Writing for Children Program. She now lives with her family in Colorado.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### Tony Hill:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yep, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or even read a book titled Zen and Xander Undone? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have additional opinion?

**Jessie Loudermilk:**

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**William Glover:**

In this era globalization it is important to someone to acquire information. The information will make someone to understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of references to get information example: internet, magazine, book, and soon. You will see that now, a lot of publisher that print many kinds of book. The actual book that recommended to you personally is Zen and Xander Undone this book consist a lot of the information from the condition of this world now. This book was represented how do the world has grown up. The language styles that writer require to explain it is easy to understand. Typically the writer made some exploration when he makes this book. Honestly, that is why this book ideal all of you.

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