

**Title:** *You Know I'm No Good*  
**Author:** Jessie Ann Foley  
**Genre:** Realistic Fiction

**Reviewer Name and Grade:** Oliver W., 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Date Reviewed:** October 10, 2021

Mia Dempsey is a “Troubled Teen.” When she was fourteen, she was raped by a senior in her high school named Scottie. After that, Scottie made Mia seem like the villain to his girlfriend, and Scottie’s girlfriend’s friends began taunting her. Mia began to go to random parties and hooked up with different boys. She also began using drugs and drinking, and would openly defy her parents by walking out the door of her house whenever she wanted to. One day, Mia punches her stepmom, and that becomes the breaking point for her parents, who ship her off to Red Oak Academy where “troubled” girls are helped. Mia’s mother was murdered by her boyfriend when Mia was three. At Red Oak, Mia is among other girls who have had troubled pasts, and she forms connections with many of the girls there, eventually starting to let her guard down and opening up to her therapist Vivian. Girls are let out of Red Creek once they reach “maturation,” something decided by each person’s therapist. Mia forms a close connection with her dormmate Vera. She also becomes close with Madison, who is constantly picking at every part of her body because she thinks that she’s ugly. When Madison falls while skating one day and the wig that she wears falls off, another girl named Freja starts laughing uncontrollably, and Mia and Vera decide together that they will attack Freja in the shower one day and use forbidden scissors to cut off her hair. Coach Leslie, who stands outside the locker room, sees this attack, getting Mia and Vera into huge trouble. Mia is called for a meeting with her parents, but in the meeting, she finds out that her parents are paying for her tuition at Red Creek with her mom’s life insurance policy, and she becomes furious and decides that she will run away. Together, Mia and Vera escape through the woods in the middle of a snowstorm to see how Red Creek has changed them.

***Did the plot keep you interested?***

The plot mostly kept me interested. The characters were skillfully developed and this, along with plenty of action, kept me interested throughout the book.

***Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?***

The pace of the book was pretty good. The author created complex, multi-layered characters but still kept the story going, so the pace didn’t feel too fast or too slow.

***What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?***

This book is appropriate for readers in grades 7 and up. There is occasional profanity throughout the book, and it can be a difficult book to read due to some of the topics discussed.

***What type of reader would you recommend this book to?***

I would recommend this book to everyone. This book was eye-opening in that it showed different perspectives and teaches you to have compassion for yourself and others, as you don’t always know what people have gone through.

***What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?***

I think it would be helpful for teens to know that this book contains descriptions of sexual assault, alcohol use, drug use, self-harm, and suicide. Many heavy topics were discussed.

I would rate this book **4 stars**: *I enjoyed this book and found it worthwhile reading.* All the characters are very well developed, even the side characters. Many people will be able to connect to the characters in this book and the character development of Mia was also quite impressive. The characters felt like real people, and readers will be able to take so much from them. The only reason why I didn’t rate this book 5 stars is because I would’ve liked to have a little more closure on what happened to the other girls besides Mia at the end. Other than that, I thought this was a well-written book with well-developed characters and a good storyline, and I would recommend it to everyone.