

***Take a Chance on Me*****By Elizabeth Eulberg**

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**BY ELIZABETH EULBERG**

## The Story

When a video of Evie confronting her cheating ex-boyfriend goes viral, what's a girl to do but flee to London for the summer? Evie loves everything about London—the double-decker buses, afternoon tea, history around every corner. Everything, that is, but having to stay with the person who's hurt her most of all—her father.

Desperate for a distraction from their contentious relationship, Evie spends her days wandering the historic streets where, as though fate is intervening, she keeps meeting a charming and beautiful British busker named Aiden.

Evie doesn't want to open herself up again, but Aiden is funny and kind, and he never treats Evie like she's too much. He may just be worth taking a chance on . . . if Evie can keep her past from getting in the way of her future.

## Reading Group Questions

1. Why does Evie leave home for London? Does running away help solve her problem? If not, what does eventually help her?
2. How important is the London setting to the story? Would this story make as much sense set elsewhere? Why or why not?
3. What do you think is Evie's secret strength?
4. Now that you've finished the book, what are some of the things you remember the most about it? Are there certain scenes or images that you think really worked to help you understand the story?
5. Evie and Aiden fall in love over the course of the story. Do you think they make a good match? How are they similar, and how are they different?

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BOOK  
GUIDE

## About the Author



**Elizabeth Eulberg** can be a lot, but, like, in a totally delightful way. She's the internationally bestselling author of dozens of books for young readers, including *The Lonely Hearts Club* and *Better Off Friends*. She plays several instruments, and although she doesn't busk, she can rock out a decent rendition of "Wonderwall." While she was born in Wisconsin, then lived in New York, Elizabeth now calls London home. When she's not writing, you can find Elizabeth taking really long walks, in which she'll turn down any mews she sees, as well as selflessly sample all of the British baked goods. It would be rude not to.

## Author Q&A

### What gave you the idea to write *Take a Chance on Me*?

A few years ago, during a writing retreat in England—near where Evie's grandparents live—all I knew is that I really wanted to get back to writing YA rom-coms. Most of my books begin with a basic idea and then asking myself a lot of questions. This started with wanting to set a book in London, as it's my favorite city in the world, and having music somehow involved . . . maybe one of the main characters is a musician . . . what about a busker! A boy playing a guitar? Swoon! So I started to think about why a girl would spend the summer in London, maybe her dad is British . . . but why doesn't he live in the US, do they have a good relationship? Maybe she fled because something bad happened to her . . . so Evie's story slowly took shape: Girl gets her heart broken and goes to London where she has issues with her father . . . then she meets a mysterious busker hiding his own heartbreak.

### Evie makes a new group of friends while in London. Of all the supporting characters, who was your favorite to write and why?

Poppy was the most surprising. I had the exact same first impression that Evie had (imagine that!): Poppy was just another one of her dad's cookie cutter girlfriends. I sort of made her a caricature. But as Evie (and I) got to know her, Poppy surprised us both. I will admit, there is a lot of banter that I enjoy in this book, but one of my favorite bits is at the end when I get Poppy and Fiona together, because they play so well off each other as they are both so different. And like Evie, I'd also be quick to defend Fiona and Dev—even to the detriment of liquid beverages.

### Living in London must have made researching the book a lot of fun! But did you see a new side of London while writing? Did anything in your research surprise you?

Oddly enough, I wrote a few drafts of this book before moving to London. I did write/research some during a visit and made the greatest sacrifice for my art by having high tea at the Ritz. When I went back to working on the book after living here, I did make a few changes—the biggest was I didn't realize the school year in London is so different in the US. Originally, I had Evie meeting Aiden during the day and then had to adjust all of their meetings and add that he and his friends were still in school. It ended up working in my favor as it made him less accessible to her—cue the yearning!

### Would you say that you're similar to Evie? What parts of yourself do you see in Evie, and how are you different?

When I start describing Evie to people—she's loud, goes on tangents, and can be a *lot*—there's this bit of a knowing smirk. Because, okay, yes, I am all of those things, but I like to think I'm equally delightful! I also will step in if I see anybody being bullied. I'm going to be very vulnerable here and admit that I am not as confident as Evie about my body image, it's something that I still struggle with—and took very care to be considerate of when I wrote. I am working on it and writing this book has been helpful in that regard. Speaking of, there is currently mac and cheese being heated in my oven, so we also have the love of food.