



### Hold Still

by Nina LaCour

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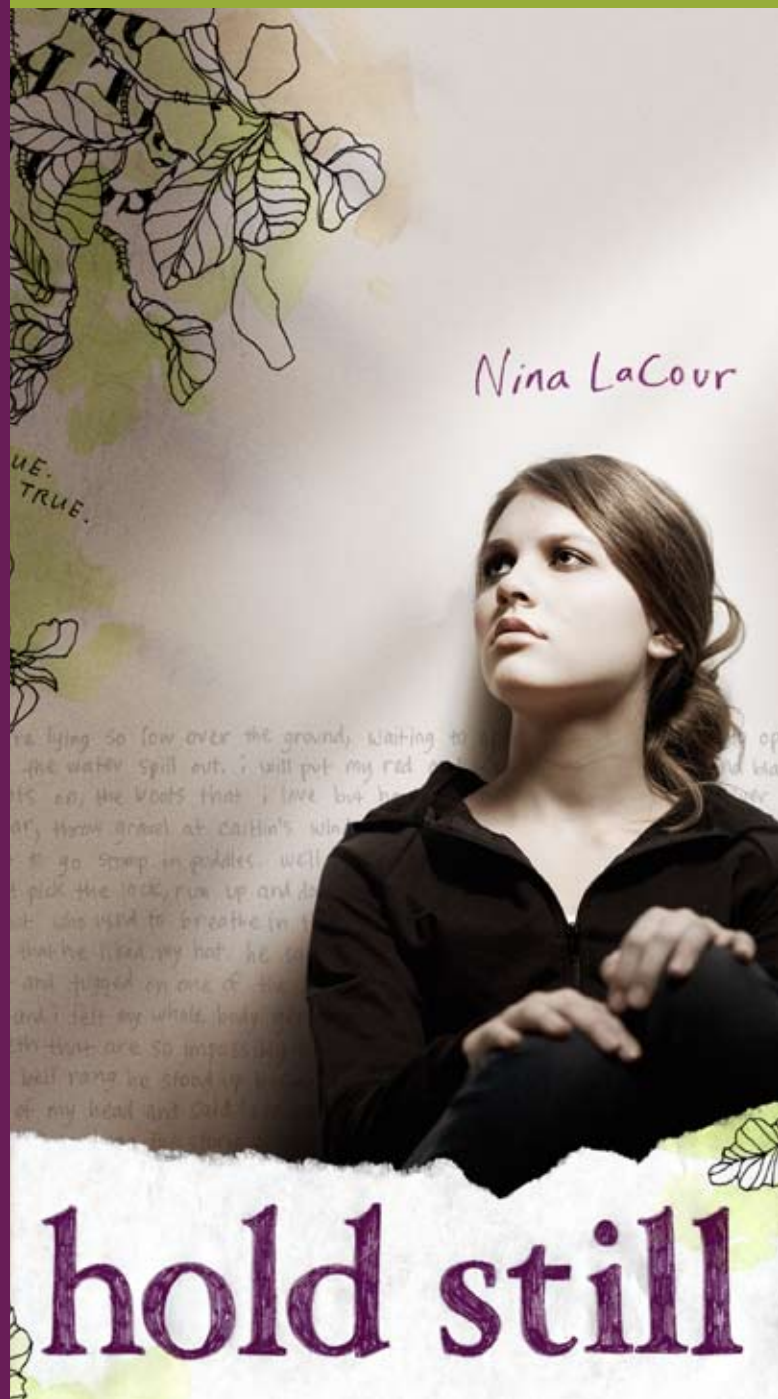
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## DISCUSSION GUIDE



## ABOUT THE BOOK



*Dear Caitlin,*

*There are so many things that  
I want so badly to tell you but  
I just can't.*

Devastating, hopeful, hopeless, playful . . . in words and illustrations, Ingrid left behind a painful farewell in her journal for Caitlin. Now Caitlin is left alone, by loss and by choice, struggling to find renewed hope in

the wake of her best friend's suicide. With the help of family and newfound friends, Caitlin will encounter first love, broaden her horizons, and start to realize that true friendship didn't die with Ingrid. And the journal which once seemed only to chronicle Ingrid's descent into depression, becomes the tool by which Caitlin once again reaches out to all those who loved Ingrid—and Caitlin herself.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Nina LaCour** is a high school English teacher and former bookseller. Her stories and interviews have appeared in various journals and magazines, including *580 Split* and *Juxtapoz*. Her first screenplay, *If It Isn't Perfect*, was made into a short film. A San Francisco Bay Area native, Nina lives in Oakland, California. This is her first novel.

Visit her online at [www.ninalacour.com](http://www.ninalacour.com).

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- In the immediate aftermath of Ingrid's suicide, how does Caitlin deal with her grief? In what ways do her methods of dealing with grief change as the year progresses? Are her coping mechanisms healthy?
- Describe the relationship between Caitlin and her parents. How do they help Caitlin in healing? Could they have been more helpful?
- Why do you think Ingrid left behind her journal for Caitlin?
- How does Ingrid's journal change Caitlin's perspective on Ingrid? On their friendship?
- How did you feel about the character of Ms. Delani? Do you feel she handled her own grief appropriately?
- Discuss the role of photography in the book. What do the characters' ideas about beauty and art who about themselves?
- How do Ingrid's journal pages and sketches enhance the story? Do you keep a journal or sketchbook? Why?
- Discuss the new relationships Caitlin forms throughout this book. Do these friendships form because of or in spite of what happened with Ingrid?
- What is the significance of the treehouse for Caitlin?
- What were some of the signs that Ingrid was depressed? Was there anything Caitlin could have done to help Ingrid?
- Why do you think the title of the book is *Hold Still*? What does it mean for Caitlin?

