



# Literary Speaking

**Invisible** By Carla Buckley

*Reviewed by Tonya Olson, Yankton Community Library*

At first glance, Kate & Amelia Baron live a charmed life. Kate is a successful, ivy-league educated lawyer at a large law firm in New York, who is moving up the corporate ladder under the watchful eye of her helpful boss, Jeremy. Similarly, 15-year-old Amelia is a straight A student at a prestigious private school in Brooklyn, loved by her teachers and best friend Sylvia. Their family may consist of just Kate and Amelia, but

they love each other and are very close.

However, things are rarely what they seem. One day, out of the blue, Kate is called and informed that Amelia has been caught plagiarizing her English paper and has been suspended. When Kate arrives at the school to pick up Amelia, fire trucks and police cars are littered around the school's grounds. She finally tracks down the school's principal and he tells her that Amelia has jumped from the roof of the building. "Impulsive suicide," they say.

Kate's world falls apart. Her daughter was her best friend and her only "person" in the world, having a strained relationship with her parents and losing track of friends throughout the years with the pressure of a high-powered law career and raising a single daughter. Kate can't believe that Amelia would do something so drastic, and all without Kate seeing a single warning sign. Then, Kate receives an anonymous text that says "Amelia didn't jump."

Spurred on by the anonymous message, Kate starts to question everything that has happened since the day Amelia died. With the help of a friendly NYPD detective, Kate begins to "reconstruct" Amelia and doesn't like what she finds.

The amount of secrets Amelia was keeping in the last weeks of her life will make your head spin. At the core of the lies and secrets is the fact that she was "tapped" by the uber-cool secret society, The Magpies. Otherwise known as "Maggies," members of this group are expected to participate in some serious hazing and mean girl activity abounds. Kate is horrified as she peels back the secrets and discovers how little she knew about the last weeks of her daughter's life. However, Kate has secrets of her own, and she is reminded of that as she starts to receive harassing, anonymous texts, just as Amelia had.

This intriguing book is told from several perspectives: Kate, Amelia, Amelia's Facebook statuses, and an anonymous gossip blog focusing on Amelia's school, Grace Hall. In her debut novel, Kimberly McCreight expertly weaves together the secrets that nearly every character in the book is hiding. She manages to create a novel reminiscent of both *Gone Girl's* thrilling twists and *Gossip Girls'* drama. As you immerse yourself in this "keep-you-coming-back" novel, it's hard not to be reminded of the social pressures that are faced, especially in adolescence, the lengths we go to in order to circumvent them, and the lies we tell ourselves and others in order to keep our most painful secrets hidden.

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