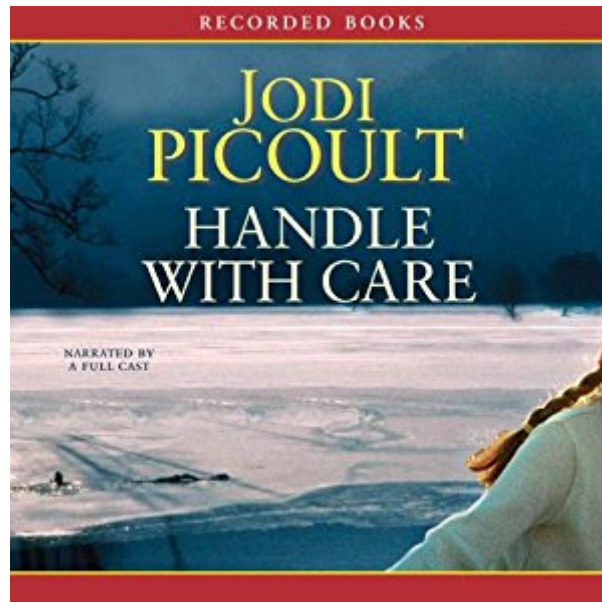


The book was found

# Handle With Care



## Synopsis

When Willow is born with severe osteogenesis imperfecta, her parents are devastatedâ€”she will suffer hundreds of broken bones as she grows, a lifetime of pain. In this provocative story from the #1 New York Times bestselling author, Jodi Picoult writes with unassuming brillianceâ€”(Stephen King). Every expectant parent will tell you that they don't want a perfect baby, just a healthy one. Charlotte and Sean O'Keefe would have asked for a healthy baby, too, if they'd been given the choice. Instead, their lives are made up of sleepless nights, mounting bills, the pitying stares of luckier parents, and maybe worst of all, the what-ifs. What if their child had been born healthy? But it's all worth it because Willow is, funny as it seems, perfect. She's smart as a whip, on her way to being as pretty as her mother, kind, brave, and for a five-year-old an unexpectedly deep source of wisdom. Willow is Willow, in sickness and in health. Everything changes, though, after a series of events forces Charlotte and her husband to confront the most serious what-ifs of all. What if Charlotte had known earlier of Willow's illness? What if things could have been different? What if their beloved Willow had never been born? To do Willow justice, Charlotte must ask herself these questions and one more. What constitutes a valuable life? Emotionally riveting and profoundly moving, *Handle with Care* is an unforgettable novel about the fragility of life and the lengths we will go to protect it. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I have enjoyed Jodi Picoult's books since the very early days in the 90s, and I have to say that

although they were getting better and better, she definitely plateaued around Nineteen Minutes and has now begun the downward spiral. I should add that I am also a high school English teacher, so I deal with a fair amount of books in my spare time. This book was written so similarly to *My Sister's Keeper* that I had a pretty good feeling on what the ending was going to be near the beginning of the book, and I was right. Warning: mild spoiler to follow. Like her book last year, *Change of Heart*, this book just seems to follow a formula she's gotten too comfortable with in her last few novels: a child with a medical issue, parents with personal issues, and an angsty lawyer with a long backstory. Probably the worst part of this book and Picoult's recent novels is her tendency to dive into these awful comparisons. She describes characters with breath that smells of coffee and regret, and cookies that are baked with a special ingredient: the ingredient of remorse. The characters are constantly looking at or holding on to something physical, then realizing what they are really looking at/holding is a feeling: sympathy, love, grief, etc. Give me a break. I could handle these once every few chapters, but there is literally one of these every few pages. Is someone ghostwriting this stuff in? As a mother, I found the character of Charlotte to be completely unbelievable. Throughout the novel, she recognizes the fact that filing a wrongful birth lawsuit may destroy her daughter's image of her and of herself, but all she cares about is money, even when they never previously struggled with money.

Part of me wants to rate this novel lower, but the other part was really entertained for MOST of the book. So I'm averaging my warring sides and giving this novel 3 stars. The issue of whether or not parents should be made aware of disabilities discovered while their child is in utero, so that a decision about whether or not to terminate the pregnancy can be made, is very poignant to today's science and ethics debates. The added hook of bringing in an attorney for the disabled girl's parents who was adopted helped to clarify some of the gray edges that were all over the place in this story. The other sideline tale of Amelia, sister to Willow (the disabled child at the crux of the controversy within this story), really pulled at my heartstrings. I feel this girl, more than anyone else, felt the turmoil that resulted from having a disabled family member and a family falling apart around her. Those are the things I liked about the story. Here's what irked me: 1. The resolution of Amelia's story came too easily. I think it sold her short. 2. I actually started a tally sheet about halfway through the novel to track how many times the phrase "catch-22" was used. Can we say overkill? 3. The diary-entry style of writing, from the characters points of view to Willow, made it really easy to pick out the ending. 4. As some others have pointed out in their reviews, this story was nearly IDENTICAL to "*My Sister's Keeper*" and the conclusion only confirmed what I'd been thinking for

most of the story. It really felt like a cop out and Jodi Picoult is a better writer than that. Like I said at the beginning, I was entertained for the majority of this story.

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