



Scholastic 2001

REVIEWS:

- **Raymond Huber, Dunedin. Magpies Magazine March 2002**

In the junior novel *Whispers*, the five young girls get together for a game of truth, dare or promise. Each reveals more than they should about times they have cheated, stolen or lied. When one of the group breaks the trust-circle, the consequences almost destroy the friendships. There is a satisfying resolution in which everyone reaps what they have sown. This short, pacy novel manages to examine important relationship issues without hammering home the message. Roxborough skillfully balances the five characters, allowing each to share centre stage in a realistic school setting (she is a teacher). I think that girls of 9-12 years will identify strongly with the problems that inevitably arise in the rough and tumble of school friendships.

- **Well Read June 2002**

Promises, promises, promises. Friends keep promises and friends keep secrets. And when they promise to keep secrets it's binding! So each believes - at the time... Five friends, at a sleepover designed to begin plans for the school dance, run out of gossip and other things to talk about when they have finished their planning, so they embark on a game of Truth, Dare or Promise. Each is to tell her most secret secret and the others promise never, never to divulge it.

There's some embarrassment and lots of hesitations but soon they're under way dredging up the most dreadful thing they have done, or they want to do, or they feel. Then they go to sleep.

All is well - for a while. Preparations for the dance go ahead then gradually, one by one, little incidents occur, comments are made about one or another and the terrible truth dawns: somebody has been 'telling'. All five become victims - and there's certainly more than one perpetrator. However, after many recriminations there's a somewhat shaky beginning of a return to trust by five wiser, and sadder girls. A non-demanding read for (females) upper primary and older readers. The author was asked for a 'girls'" book after her successful *Runaway* for boys.