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You May Already Be A Winner



Synopsis

For fans of Ali Benjamin's *The Thing About Jellyfish* and Katherine Applegate's *Crenshaw* comes the humorous and heart aching story of one girl's struggle to keep hope alive for her and her younger sister in Sunny Pines Trailer Park. Twelve-year-old Olivia Hales has a foolproof plan for winning a million dollars so that she and her little sister, Berkeley, can leave behind Sunny Pines Trailer Park. But first she has to:
• Fix the swamp cooler and make dinner and put Berkeley to bed because her mom is too busy to do all that
• Write another letter to her dad even though he hasn't written back yet
• Teach Berk the important stuff, like how to make chalk drawings, because they can't afford day care and Olivia has to stay home from school to watch her
• Petition her oddball neighbors for a circus spectacular, because there needs to be something to look forward to at dumb-bum Sunny Pines
• Become a super-secret spy to impress her new friend Bart
• Enter a minimum of fourteen sweepstakes a day. Who knows? She may already be a winner! Olivia has thought of everything . . . except herself. Who will take care of her when she needs it? Luckily, somewhere deep down between her small intestine and stomach is a tiny voice reminding her that sometimes people can surprise you •and sometimes your family is right next door. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

What a spectacular story of struggles and love within a family. I loved the way the author used imagination intertwined with the "reality" of the story--I believe this is a real contender for the Newberry Award! It is a winner already for me! :)

Ann Dee's writing is exquisite. The voice is amazing and the story is gripping. You will love the book and the unique characters whatever your age.

#Wrong number 1 So at first I thought this book would be easy and fun. A kids' read. Just what I need right now. #Wrong number 2 Then I thought it would be a three star read. #Wrong number 3 I thought it would be pretty forgettable. And that it would probably have typical tropes. Well, guess again. So let's get down to the facts. As you might have surmised, it's a pretty emotionally loaded book. It took me through a rollercoaster of #feels, and although it took a while for it to really get serious, by the end it didn't just make me angry at (some) adults and their horrible decisions, it also made me almost cry. It's definitely a 4 star read, and I loved it. What is the book about? We start by meeting Olivia, who is a 13 year old girl living in a trailer park. It's just the three of them - her, her little sister and their mom. Olivia is every bit as responsible as her parents aren't, so she misses school because there's no one to watch over her little sister. She is actually very cute about it, giving her sister creative lessons she finds on the internet. It's not that her mom is irresponsible, but she's stressed because Olivia's dad left, overworked because she has to care for two children alone and she is just not handling it. Olivia ends up having to make all the hard decisions for her mother, and take on way too much responsibility, basically bringing up her little sister and believing everything is actually her fault. We see the journey of Olivia's family straight into crash and ruin, and we see Olivia break up because it's too heavy for her. It all makes you feel so angry, that it's so unfair, and you can't help thinking there ARE so many children who don't have lunch money, who have to lie for their parents, who have to try to enter as many lotteries that they can so they could maybe survive

(hence the name "You May Already Be A Winner"). And the end is just so touching. It's not a bad ending at all, although it seems like there's no way it could end well. I liked this book. I loved seeing such a responsible, loving, kind teen who would do so much for her family. And no heroics - do so much by just doing all the nasty little things most of us don't have to do, like cook, clean, miss school because you're a 13 year old adult raising someone else's child, trying to protect your family from the authorities finding out and not ever exposing your feelings because you're protecting someone else's. Also: no insta-love. Just loneliness vs friendship and playing with the cards you're dealt. I have to admit though, I'll have an emotional hangover after this book. It was a ride. If you like reading about teens in tough situations, about growing and maturing, but without the typical self-pitying voice and deep dramatism, this is what you want to read. It's a really down-to-earth story about growth and, well, life. I recommend it to any of my friends who like reading YA and middle grade contemporary. P. S. Just look at that lovely cover.

I only write reviews when I react strongly to a book. I fell in love with 12-year-old Olivia and her ever-trustful little sister, Berkeley, and the rest of the residents of Sunny Pines Trailer Park. Olivia is the best unreliable narrator I've met in a long time. Or maybe she just knows the secret of putting one foot in front of the other when her father disappears, and her mother seems to be living in her own reality. For a book with a rather grim setting and premise, I smiled as much as I worried for Olivia and Berk. Their story is a definite winner!

Sometimes you read a book that leaves your mind as soon as you close it, and sometimes you read a book that you can't stop thinking about long after you've finished it. *You May Already Be A Winner* is a story that touches on some very difficult topics and has one of those characters that you just can't forget. Olivia is 12 and lives in a trailer park. That may not sound very memorable but Olivia is practically raising her little sister Berkley, she does everything around the house, and is even trying not to stay behind because lack of school. Olivia is so unbelievably strong. She should be having fun growing up, not having so many responsibilities! I HATE IT, I HATE IT, I HATE IT! There are so many issues going on at home, but she persists, and most of the time prevails. Bart is one of her escapes, when he's around she can forget about everything and just be a young girl, she can help him spy on her neighbor, and talk about impossible things. I LOVE OLIVIA SO MUCH! I root for her, laugh with her, cry for her. I feel like there is so much truth to this story and I think that's what grabs at me the most! This story absolutely charmed me. It had the perfect combination of characters that were so very different but always there for each other. Olivia and Berkley are two of the most

precious characters I have ever read about. This isn't the light hearted book I thought I was going to read, it was so so much more!

This book was so emotional and so very beautiful. I was expecting lighthearted and cute. What I got was anything but. I just cannot stop thinking about the characters and especially sweet Olivia. She was in a hard position for a child and was such a champion for her sister. My heart breaks for many of the decisions placed upon her and how quickly she had to grow up. Thank you to Netgalley and the publisher for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Having been an educator in high poverty schools, for over 26 years, I already knew Olivia. This book hit a home run by shining a light on issues our society is facing but not too many people know about. Olivia's story was all too real and oh so sad. Hopefully YOU MAY ALREADY BE A WINNER will hit some nerves and start the ball rolling to help our working class and their families.

I loved how real and sweet and sad and happy this book was. The main character, Olivia, is a gem. I want to be her friend. If you liked Counting by 7s or Wonder, I'll bet you will really enjoy this book.

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