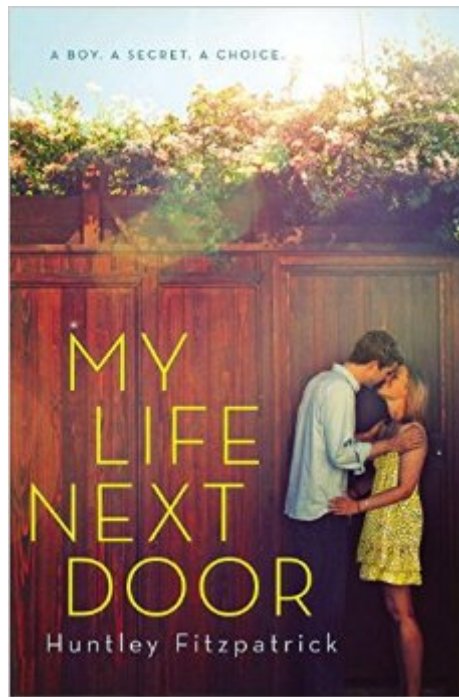


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My Life Next Door



Synopsis

A gorgeous debut about family, friendship, first romance, and how to be true to one person you love without betraying another. The Garretts are everything the Reeds are not. Loud, numerous, messy, affectionate. And every day from her balcony perch, seventeen-year-old Samantha Reed wishes she was one of them . . . until one summer evening, Jase Garrett climbs her terrace and changes everything. As the two fall fiercely in love, Jase's family makes Samantha one of their own. Then in an instant, the bottom drops out of her world and she is suddenly faced with an impossible decision. Which perfect family will save her? Or is it time she saved herself? A dreamy summer read, full of characters who stay with you long after the story is over. "A summer romance with depth." â "The Boston Sunday Globe" Fitzpatrick's excellent first novel movingly captures the intensity of first love." â "Publishers Weekly, starred review" An almost perfect summer romance." â "Kirkus Reviews" On par with authors such as Sarah Dessen and Deb Caletti." â "SLJ

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Once I started it, I couldn't read it fast enough and yet I didn't want it to end. This is a beautifully written story about family and friendship, first love, and learning how to be true to yourself. Huntley Fitzpatrick writes about life with all it's quirkiness, even covering tough topics like politics and addiction with such honesty and humor that had me laughing so hard I cried. Samantha Reed lives a life of relative privilege with her single mother and older sister that includes private school, weekly dinners at the local country club and a summer job where she gets to spend time with her long time BFF, Nan and her twin brother, Tim. Life isn't always what it seems and Samantha's is no different.

Her Mom's a Senator and a contradiction of sorts. On one hand, she's rarely around but when she is, she takes "involved" to a whole new level, going as far as checking to see if Samantha's hair is properly conditioned and making sure she's in bed by a certain time each night. (She's seventeen, not seven for crying out loud!) Then there's the issue with the vacuum cleaner and making sure the lines in the carpet are just right. OCD, much? Samantha takes refuge each night on the balcony off her room where she's able to watch the Garretts, the family who lives next door. They're the ones with the 25 kids who obviously never learned what birth control was for or how to properly care for a pool, a yard or a house but managed to snag their own reality T.V. show on TLC. Oh, wait...wrong family. The Garretts really only have 8 kids and yeah, they have all those other things I mentioned, save for the reality T.V. show but that's the way they're treated by a lot of people in town. People feel the need to comment on their lives, how many kids they have, etc., etc.

Review posted on The Eater of Books! blogMy Life Next Door by Huntley FitzpatrickPublisher: Dial Books for Young ReadersPublication Date: June 14, 2012Rating: 5 starsSource: Won a giveawaySummary (from Goodreads):A gorgeous debut about family, friendship, first romance, and how to be true to one person you love without betraying another"One thing my mother never knew, and would disapprove of most of all, was that I watched the Garretts. All the time."The Garretts are everything the Reeds are not. Loud, numerous, messy, affectionate. And every day from her balcony perch, seventeen-year-old Samantha Reed wishes she was one of them . . . until one summer evening, Jase Garrett climbs her terrace and changes everything. As the two fall fiercely in love, Jase's family makes Samantha one of their own. Then in an instant, the bottom drops out of her world and she is suddenly faced with an impossible decision. Which perfect family will save her? Or is it time she saved herself?A dreamy summer read, full of characters who stay with you long after the story is over.What I Liked:I am not going to lie: I LOVED this book! This book continues my contemporary reading streak, and makes me never want to read anything else! I finished it, and then a couple of hours later, I picked it up and again and re-read some parts of it. This morning, when I woke up, I stayed in my bed and thought about this book. It's such a compelling read! And here I am gushing like an obsessed person :)Samantha. She is such a wonderful and likable heroine. She is not ditzy and stupid, nor is she fierce and wild. I like how she thinks in most situations.

From the rooftop of Samantha Reed's house, the Garrett's seem completely unlike her own privileged family. So, when she gets the chance to step into a world she's only looked in on from the

outside, she takes it. Soon enough, she finds herself falling in love with each of them, Jase most of all. Yet, her mother's race to be reelected as Senator keeps tensions high at home, and Samantha's struggling to find balance between the life her mother expects and the life Samantha experiences next door with the Garrett's. But when an unforgivable act occurs, she has to decide: should she tell the truth, or keep a terrible secret? MY LIFE NEXT DOOR is a surprising debut. It begins with a sweet romance that builds and grows with each page. Fitzpatrick takes care to flesh out each character, making it all the easier to enjoy them. Samantha's fascination with the Garrett family is infectious, especially once she becomes a part of their lives. While budding young love is large part of the story, familial relationships and friendships become equally important once they are tested as the line between what's right and what's wrong grows more painstakingly obvious after tragedy strikes. A heartfelt and endearing story, MY LIFE NEXT DOOR is sure to be a hit.

HIGHLIGHTS: The relationship between Samantha and Jase was surprisingly enjoyable, despite the quickness. Interactions with the Garrett's were my favorite part of this book. Side characters were very nicely written (especially Tim, Clay, the Garrett's), because each had their own personalities with flaws and strengths. Even Grace (Samantha's very strict and slightly scary mother) proved to be more complex than I imagined.

LOWLIGHTS: The conflict the summary hints at took place very late, around 3/4 into the story.

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