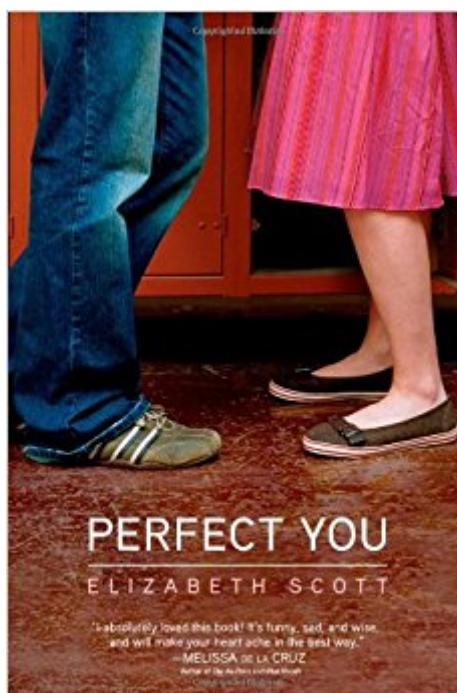


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Perfect You



Synopsis

Kate Brown's life has gone downhill fast. Her father has quit his job to sell vitamins at the mall, and Kate is forced to work with him. Her best friend has become popular, and now she acts like Kate's invisible. And then there's Will. Gorgeous, unattainable Will, whom Kate acts like she can't stand even though she can't stop thinking about him. When Will starts acting interested, Kate hates herself for wanting him when she's sure she's just his latest conquest. Kate figures that the only way things will ever stop hurting so much is if she keeps to herself and stops caring about anyone or anything. What she doesn't realize is that while life may not always be perfect, good things can happen -- but only if she lets them....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

ELIZABETH SCOTT grew up in a town so small it didn't even have a post office, though it did boast an impressive cattle population. She's sold hardware and panty hose and had a memorable three-day stint in the dot-com industry, where she learned that she really didn't want a career burning CDs. She lives just outside Washington, D.C., with her husband, and firmly believes you can never own too many books.

Part of me wanted to give this book a three and the other part wanted to rate it a five, so I've split the difference and am willing to call it a four overall. Now let me explain. I love Elizabeth Scott's writing. This being the first novel of hers I picked up, I was enchanted by the realism of her narration

and dialogue. The characters are believable and Ms. Scott seems to have a real knack connecting with the inner turmoil of today's youth. That being said, I oftentimes found it difficult to connect with the level of hostility emanating from the main character, Kate. Certainly teens are full of turmoil, there's no arguing that, but Kate seems to take things to a level that far outweighs her obvious intellect and ability to rationalize. So I was torn. I loved the banter and sharp reposte between Will and Kate, though it often bordered on ridiculous. Kate's family was honest, albeit a little wonky, and well written. I could actually see these people in real life, walking around at the mall. Kate herself was funny, smart and sharp, but there was that niggling overbearing side that kept pulling me out. It was as if she were "over written" in order to compensate for something, though I'm not certain what that something is since the story was fleshed out and believable on its own. When it came to Anna, Kate's former best friend now too cool to hang, I found myself wanting to shake Kate and smack her around a bit. For someone so smart and perceptive in nearly every scene, she sure became a dummy when it came to Anna. Now, we all know a little bit about longing and I understand what it's like to be that age and see yourself being left behind while others "excel", but come on. Really? Pining like a forlorn lover over someone who wouldn't pee on you if you were on fire? It was exasperating, especially toward the end when it was so clear Kate was being manipulated by Anna. Yes, yes, yes, again, I get it. Isn't that what being a teen is all about, wanting what you can't have and being totally obsessed about it? But still, after a point I was merely shrugging and silently wondering why it all needed to be taken so far. Now back to the pros. The writing itself is sublime and well structured. Elizabeth Scott created a story that is true and honest and compelling, save the items noted above. Her dialogue is bright and refreshing, her descriptions are spot on and the narrative is honest. The family dynamics are intriguing and keep one wanting to flip the pages to see what sad wackiness will unfold next. Will, as a love interest, has an actual personality and is engaging and amusing, but not too over the top. I found myself looking forward to the scenes where I expected he would pop back up and was never disappointed. But what I appreciated most was that it wasn't all tied up in a nice little bow. Kate, actually everyone, lost something in the end. Yes, there were some gains too, certainly. But they lost quite a bit and I was pleased to see a story where not everything worked out. It ended as it should have, realistically, and what a refreshing change that was. At the end of the day it was a good book. Not a great one, but certainly better than average.

I read this book in a day, and in the beginning (the first 2 chapters or so) I thought that it might be a pretty good book. Then I realized that the main character (Kate) is more self-centered, pessimistic,

and meaner than some antagonists in other books. I was not able to relate to her. The characters that were her 'enemies' (I'm using that word lightly in the situation) were more likable than her. The only reason I kept on reading was that I was hoping that she would come to her senses and figure out what a jerk she was being. Eventually that happened...but it could have happened in the middle of the book and we (the readers) could have had a lot more fun reading about whatever fun she had for around 150 pages as opposed to 2 pages. Don't buy this book. If you really want to read it, read it at the library or something. It's not worth the money.

The great thing about this story is that it had a little of everything. There were tears, heartache, laughs, confusion, just everything you'll remember about your teenage years and how high our emotions would run with the good, the bad, and the ugly! Kate hates her life. Her dad experienced a "sign" at work which resulted in him quitting his job to sell vitamins at the mall. Her brother Todd, a college graduate, is a moocher and thinks he can learn acting by sitting in front of the TV all day. Her mom is walking around with her brave face on despite problems paying the bills, and is ultimately forced to call her mother for help. Kate's grandmother is not the bake-cookies type and she and her family are constantly finding ways to get out of spending time with her. Will, a beautiful boy at school is constantly annoying her and she can't decide if she wants the attention or not (even though she secretly likes it), and the worst thing is her best friend Anna now walks around school thinking Kate is invisible since she dropped 70 pounds, turned blond and is hanging out with the popular crowd. This could have been just any cheesy YA novel about teenage love and heartache, touching on such issues like divorce and friendships that go wrong, but Elizabeth Scott reels you in with great characters, like Kate with her sharp wit and tongue, and Will, who turns out to be the opposite of what the high school grapevines say about him. Cheesy novels don't have you feeling terrible whenever Anna would look through Kate as if she wasn't there. And cheesy novels don't make you smile when you watch Kate and Will's friendship grow. They also don't make you laugh when reading about the awkward moments, like how it took Will the whole day to finally ask Kate out, or when her dad is walking around in a bee costume and Kate is trying not to hurt his feelings. As author Melissa de la Cruz says, " [it] will make your heart ache in the best way".

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