



The Perfect Elizabeth: A Tale of Two Sisters

Libby Schmais

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This modern-day Sense and Sensibility is a witty story about two sisters: Liza, a would-be poet who spends miserable days as a legal secretary; and Bette a graduate student writing her dissertation on Toast in the English Novel. Bette has taken to eating only what the characters she is writing about would eat: boiled eggs on toast, minemeat, nice cups of tea...Liza's a bit concerned. She's also worried about the status of her relationship with her actor boyfriend, Gregor. They're not living together, and that's a problem.

Then there's the issue of Liza's career, or lack thereof. Can dog-walking be considered a vocation? Liza's beginning to think so. Mercifully, Bette is merely a local phone call away.

Throughout this hilarious novel, the sisters deal with unemployment, infidelity, interfering parents, Hollywood, lemmings, a pregnancy, and a wedding. *The Perfect Elizabeth* is as indulgent and cathartic as a pint of Haagen-Dazs.

The Perfect Elizabeth: A Tale of Two Sisters Details

Date : Published November 5th 2001 by St. Martin's Press (first published July 1st 2000)

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Author : Libby Schmais

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From Reader Review The Perfect Elizabeth: A Tale of Two Sisters for online ebook

Paula says

This was recommended by my wonderful friend. Read it a while back, but I know I liked it!

Nia Forrester says

The modern Sense and Sensibility. Loved it.

Kimberly says

It's been a while since I read it, but I remember it being a perfect read for a weekend at the beach when you need a laugh.

Michelle Nunes says

Very quirky and fun. if you have a sister you will enjoy it.

Lain says

A more thoughtful chick lit book than most... but not nearly as entertaining as it could have been. Schmais is a talented writer, but there was a distance between her characters and the reader -- a distance that kept me from investing more emotion in them.

Jeanine says

Delightful fun read. Full of food and literary references. Cozy.

Mary Pessaran says

A nice surprise. At first, the writing threw me off, because the author gave us dialogue and action without much internal thought process or description of emotion and reactions. In that way, it was simpler than most books I've read, but I grew to like the unique structure of the writing.

It was also a surprise because it didn't follow a formula. When Eliza had boyfriend issues including his commitment phobia, it's easy to assume he'll be painted as the loser soon-to-be-ex boyfriend, so we shouldn't get attached. Surely, there will be a better new boyfriend around the corner. But I never stopped liking Gregor even though he was an actor and at time self-centered, so it allowed the plot to be open ended. Would they stay together? Guess I had to read to the end to find out.

A fun read.

Reagan says

I ADORED this book the first time I read it, but it didn't hold up as well the 2nd time around. I'm finding that with a lot of books I initially fell in love with. Perhaps certain themes are more relevant and poignant at particular times in your life.

Linda Lusby says

An ok read, slightly entertaining but pretty predictable. Bought it really because of its title. Will now pass on to Elizabeth!

Allybal says

Liza & Bette's lovable sisterhood in The Perfect Elizabeth is a fun, easy read much likened to the folly in Jane Austen's Sense & Sensibility. I found this book in perfect condition on the shelf at a thrift store among a plethora of tattered, dusty volumes. My adoration of Miss. Austen solely influenced this purchase, which ended up being a complete joy. Took it too and from class for a day or two to read in between passing and found myself completely taken with these two girls and their highly chick-lit influenced situations(Boyfriend drama, questionable friends, moving away and coming-of-age.)

Overall, light and thoroughly enjoyable read, perfect for a summer day at the beach or an afternoon in the garden under the shade of a tree.

Susan says

Made it to page 48 before I decided that my time was worth more.

Mary Lou says

Just okay - it took awhile to connect with the characters.

Maria Johnson Darby says

An entertaining, easy read. Perfect for this time of year.

Margaret says

The Perfect Elizabeth is a "chick lit" novel that just didn't work for me. Liza is an aspiring poet who has a miserable day job as a legal secretary, while her sister Bette is a literature student who teaches at a university while working on her dissertation; their names are both diminutives of Elizabeth, so that Liza, the narrator, feels as though they're "the broken parts of one perfect Elizabeth".

Liza and Bette go through various trials and tribulations to do with their jobs and their love lives, described in a style which is meant to be light and witty but which I found merely shallow (and the dialogue was terrible - all of the characters sounded alike). All of the sisters' issues (most of which they created themselves) are easily wrapped up by the end, and I closed the book feeling that I'd made no emotional connection to the characters or their problems.

Yuliya says

This book was surprisingly excellent (surprisingly because I randomly picked it up from the library in the 5 minutes I had before Mary got fussy). I loved Eliza's character. Bette was very recognizable to me - I know at least one person who was studying food in 19th century English literature. Though a fast and enjoyable read, this book definitely has substance.
