



The People We Hate at the Wedding

Grant Ginder

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A bitingly funny, hugely entertaining novel in which a fractured family from the Chicago suburbs must gather in London for their eldest daughter's marriage to an upper-crust Englishman, proving that the harder we strain against the ties that bind, the tighter they hold us close.

Paul and Alice's half-sister Eloise is getting married! In London! There will be fancy hotels, dinners at "it" restaurants and a reception at a country estate complete with tea lights and embroidered cloth napkins. They couldn't hate it more.

The People We Hate at the Wedding is the story of a family. Donna, the clan's mother, is now a widow living in the Chicago suburbs with a penchant for the occasional joint and more than one glass of wine with her best girlfriend while watching *House Hunters International*. Alice is in her thirties, single, smart, beautiful, stuck in a dead-end job where she is mired in a rather predictable, though enjoyable affair with her married boss. She might just like her klonopin prescription a bit too much. Her brother Paul lives in Philadelphia with his older, handsomer, tenured track Penn professor boyfriend who's recently been saying things like "monogamy is an oppressive heteronormative construct," while eyeing his lacrosse bro undergrads. Paul works for a famous "immersive" psychologist – sadistically forcing people to confront their own fears day in and day out. He hates it. And then there's Eloise. Perfect, gorgeous, cultured Eloise. The product of Donna's first marriage to the dashing European playboy of the Western World Henrique, Eloise has spent her school years at the best private boarding schools, her winter holidays in St. John and a post-college life cushioned by a fat, endless trust fund. You can't even, with her, can you?

As this dysfunctional clan gathers together, and Eloise's walk down the aisle approaches, Grant Ginder brings to vivid, hilarious life the power of family, the possibilities of friendship, and the complicated ways we hate the ones we love the most in this bitingly funny, slyly witty and surprisingly tender novel.

The People We Hate at the Wedding Details

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From Reader Review The People We Hate at the Wedding for online ebook

Anne Wehner says

Great title. "Meh" read.

Danielle says

I hated everyone at this wedding.

I had high expectations for the book since it was on so many summer must-read lists but the characters were thoroughly unlikeable and their stories were barely fleshed out. I kept expecting something to happen to tie everything together and I guess it did in the end but it was still unsatisfying.

Julie says

Who were The People I Hated in this Book? Every. Single. One of them. I kept waiting for something to happen to push forward this story about a slew of irredeemable characters, but it was just more of the same right up until the (unsatisfying) conclusion. Too depressing for a beach read and too light for a serious read, this book pretty much has an intriguing title and not much else.

debra says

"Love may disappoint, but that doesn't absolve us from loving."

This is a story about a dysfunctional family that was entertaing-ish with humor- some of which was "of the over the top "variety. Turns out- that for the most part- the people these people hated were each other.

The ending,IMO, was ridiculous. Ridiculous because there was the equivalent of an Exorcist 360 degree head spin for one of the main characters. In a nanosecond this character completely changed almost all of who she was, thus allowing a neat wrap-up and the above quoted lesson to be delivered.

The book kept me listening and mostly engaged. I didn't learn anything, but I didn't lose any IQ points (I know-*debatable*) either.

Cindy Burnett says

Grant Ginder's The People We Hate at the Wedding is an entertaining read. At times it was more graphic than I wanted it to be, but generally the book held my attention and kept me engrossed in the story. His characters are not the most likeable, however several of them do become more appealing as the book

progresses. I had thought the book was going to be funny because it had been likened to *Where'd You go, Bernadette* (which is hilarious), but I mainly found it sad. None of the characters (except Eloise and Ollie usually) have their lives together and continually make bad choices. Towards the end of the book, they begin to come around which I felt improved the story. I am not sure I am the target audience for this novel. Ginder tells the story through alternating viewpoints which was an effective strategy for this novel. Thanks to Flatiron Books for the chance to read this ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Cmorrison says

" if a mans character is to be abused, say what you will, there's nobody like a relative to do the business"...there couldn't be a better quote to describe this delightful and fun read. I received an early copy of this book, and found that I couldn't put it down! The characters are flawed, yet hilarious , and this author draws us into an engrossing world where people are actually allowed to voice what they truly feel about their family. I cannot wait to read his next book!

Jessica says

This book has been super-hyped this summer, but it hasn't received a lot of glowing reviews from readers and I think that's mostly because the characters aren't particularly sympathetic people. They're kind of awful, honestly. But, still, I was willing to give it a shot because I don't mind stories about awful people. Especially when they're billed as funny. *Seinfeld* never gets old and I'm practically the only person I know who loves *Difficult People*.

The problem here, in my opinion, was that there's nothing really all that funny about this book. And, unlike *Seinfeld*, Grant Ginder makes an attempt to offer these awful people some sort of redemption, but it comes almost too late for me to care. So, honestly, this book never really rose above average for me.

It's essentially about two siblings, Paul and Alice, who are bitterly preparing for wedding of Eloise, the offspring of their mother's first marriage to a wealthy Frenchman. They both have jobs they kind of hate and they are both in unfulfilling relationships, though neither one is willing to admit either of these facts. Paul is dreading the wedding because it's been nearly three years since he has spoken to his mother, following the his father's death. Alice, meanwhile, has a deep resentment of the economic disparity between herself and her half-sister. Eloise does things like look at a picture of Alice's senior prom gown, decide it looks cheap and that Alice deserves better, so sends a fancier dress and doesn't understand why Alice sends it back.

And so, yeah, for the most part, these are kind of miserable people who aren't dealing with the many layers of psychological denial and resentment that they've built up. And it's not just our main cast, either. Literally everyone in this book, from the two siblings to Paul's snobby academic boyfriend to the married boss that Alice is sleeping with, is cold, callous, and self-absorbed. It's perhaps an exaggerated psychological realism, to be fair, because people really do engage in this kind of cognitive dissonance every day. Ginder makes it obvious where these psychological shortcomings are rooted. He just maybe ratchets up the dissonance to level 11 and doesn't ever let up.....until the very, very end.

Seinfeld famously had a "no hugging, no learning" rule that allowed its characters to behave like assholes

without being expected to atone for it. While the characters were often embarrassed or forced to never whipped that behavior back around into something tender that allowed you to forgive the characters...and that's what worked about it. You knew they were jerks and even if it occasionally makes you uncomfortable, you know what to expect and the absurdity was often the funniest part.

I think the main reason why this book didn't work for me was that the characters started out at such a terrible level and then made a last-second play for tender without quite enough build-up. Their changes of heart didn't feel organic or authentic to me; it felt a little more like a sudden 180 and the resulting emotional whiplash left me feeling unsatisfied with this one.

Cayla says

The best thing about this book is the cover.

Amy says

All of my reviews can be found on www.novelgossip.com

If you like snarky humor and watching a train wreck of a family unravel at the seams then I've got another great book to add to your summer reading list! First of all, the title/cover combination is pure gold, this is a great book to pick up this summer. It's light, but has a bite due to its sardonic nature. This is a modern, cynical look at the dynamics of a highly dysfunctional family that could not be more entertaining.

It's told via alternating points of view, primarily through the eyes of Paul, Alice and Donna though you do hear from just about every character at some point. Every single one of them is deeply flawed and not very likable, but watching their relationships was utterly fascinating. These people do not hold anything back, they are brutally honest and at times it's painfully awkward, but again absolutely entertaining as a reader.

This has some racy, risqué scenes but it's also infused with the type of humor that speaks to my soul. The writing is acerbic, intelligent and scarily insightful and is always filled with snark. It's really witty and engaging, I read it pretty quick and can't tell you how many times I vacillitated between giggling and being horrified. The way this family behaves is appalling! I think the book succeeded at what The Nest tried (and failed) to do.

If I had one (minor) issue it would be that there was very little time at the wedding and I'm a sucker for drama at a wedding! At the end of the day though, this book isn't really about a wedding, it's about a really messed up family, so I'm not mad.

Dianne says

The People We Hate at the Wedding – Grant Grinder

I generally like books about dysfunctional families. They tend to make me appreciate my own dysfunctional family even more. But this book was so out of left field that I very nearly decided to give up on it, but kept plodding through it just to see how it would end.

The premise was somewhat confusing once you started reading this – yes it did deal with exactly what the synopsis claims, but the ‘why’ of it all was so stupid that I wanted to scream.

Most of this book seemed to dwell on Paul and Mark’s relationship and sexual antics. The sex part was somewhat explicit but not over the top for this sort of book. However, this made for short shrift in dealing with the other members of this family. Oh, Alice got her own part and boy was she a bit whacko, but nothing compared to her brother! And the mother, Donna, well we don’t get much on her at all.

Then there is the not so beloved step-sister Eloise (and this is where I don’t see how this could come together to make a story, even a fictional one) who is hated by her younger brother and sister. She is hated because her father left her well-off? Because she wasn’t there for her step-sister’s emergency? Well so what of it? He wasn’t their father so how could they have such horrid reactions? She had her own problems (such as they were) when her sister had her emergency. Just plain jealousy is what it all turned into.

These are three of the most unlikeable characters I have met and I think had I ever met someone like this in real life I would run not walk away from them as fast as I could run. I have never felt less for character’s as I felt with this bunch...ALL of them. Even during the worst the world threw at this crew, I felt nothing for them. They were shallow, flat, unlikeable drug addicted, drunks, and attention prostitutes.

There is some closure, but not enough.

ARC supplied by publisher/author

Claire says

Everyone in this book is an asshole.

Julie says

People we Hate at the Wedding by Grant Ginder is a 2017 Flatiron publication.

This book enjoyed some heavy promotion and exposure a few months back. I think I might have discovered it via the book section of the NYT, but then I noticed it was popping up on various library lists etc. So I decided to try it.

This book is supposed to be funny, exposing family dysfunction, but also proving that some bonds, no matter how much we may wish to distance ourselves from them, simply cannot be broken.

I do believe the author did an admirable enough job getting that point across, however, it was just a wee bit too outlandish for me.

Eloise, the privileged daughter of Donna and Henrique, is getting married. She invites her half-siblings, Alice and Paul, the product of Donna's second marriage, to an ordinary, average guy, who has since passed away.

Alice and Paul are resentful of Eloise, and Paul and his mother are not speaking, so the wedding, which is to take place in London, is just the right setting for a madcap convergence of pent-up emotions, bursting at the seams, to finally burst open.

Sadly, none of the characters, nor the dialogue, was all that funny. In fact, it was often so overboard, it just seemed sad. The balloon holding in all that tension was popped in a big rush at the end, making the conclusion a little too pat, and not all that satisfying.

I give the author an A for effort, but it just didn't quite make the grade anywhere else.

2 stars

Carrie says

This had the potential to be a good book. But it quickly crossed the line from amusingly snarky to unpleasantly hostile. The author writes as if he hates women, and all the characters are unlikable. The most offensive, crude words are used whenever possible.

It's disappointing because the story line seems like it could have been really interesting. If only it were written by someone else.

Obsidian says

This is a terrible book. Don't read it. DNF at 38 percent. Back to the library you go. I swear you can have books with terrible characters doing awful things. But you can't have terrible characters, writing, and a ridiculous plot. At this point the half sister could be eating kids on the side, and she wouldn't suck as much as the mother (Donna), son (Paul) and (Alice) daughter in this book.

Ellen says

At the heart of this book is a very dysfunctional family with absolutely selfish and unappealing characters. Not the light and fun read at all that the book's description implies. Paul and Alice fly to London to attend their half sister's wedding. Alice is having an affair with a married man, Paul's partner is getting tired of him, and Eloise has everything going for her. Not recommended.
