



Next Year I'll Be Perfect

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Sarah always thought her life was on track, that is until her 29th birthday party. The discovery of a list her younger self put together outlining what she wanted to achieve by the age of 30 turns Sarah's world upside down. Suddenly her seemingly happy life and career look lackluster and Sarah sets off on a journey to transform her life. On her quest to achieve perfection one month at a time – a happy marriage, partnership in a law firm and being able to fit in a size six purple suede miniskirt – Sarah learns to challenge society's ideals of achievement. Filled with harsh reality, humor, and romance, Next Year I'll Be Perfect explores what true happiness and success is all about.

Next Year I'll Be Perfect Details

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From Reader Review Next Year I'll Be Perfect for online ebook

Nash Norden says

I received a copy of Next Year I'll Be Perfect by Laura Kilmartin as part of a blog tour.

Next Year I'll Be Perfect began with Sarah's 29th birthday. Livvie, her friend gave her a list of goals on her birthday. It was a list of things Sarah wished to achieve before she turned 30 which she made on her 25th birthday resulting from too much drinks. Now Sarah had only one year before she turned 30 to accomplish her goals.

The book was written in Sarah's voice and I really like her voice and character. I love following Sarah's journey to achieve things she wrote on her list before she turned 30 and the transformation she goes throughout the story. It was realistic. Kinda like something that anyone of us could have experienced. Next Year I'll Be Perfect was a light, easy read with a great flow and a touch of humor. It started out a bit slow in my opinion. But the more I read it, the more I wanted to learn about Sarah and whatever will happen to her. Definitely a page turner!

Kathleen says

Sarah Bennett has just turned twenty-nine when her best friend Livvie gives her a letter from the past that will send Sarah on a twelve month journey to transform everything in her life before her thirtieth birthday. The letter that Livvie gave Sarah was one that Sarah had written four years earlier on her twenty-fifth birthday. The letter contained a naive and optimistic list of goals that she wanted to accomplish by her thirtieth birthday. Looking at the list, Sarah realizes that she has only accomplished 2 of the original 8 goals, so she decides to realistically modify the list, and over the next twelve months change everything in her life, because she realizes that she isn't who she wants to be. As Sarah embarks on her year long journey of transformation, she is about to find out what true happiness and success are all about, and that over time goals don't always stay the same, and that her vision of a perfect life may not be so easy to accomplish.

In her debut novel, author Laura Kilmartin weaves an entertaining tale of one woman's year long journey of transforming her life into one that she perceives as perfection. Written in the first person narrative and set in Portland, Maine, the reader follows Sarah's journey on a month by month basis, with various encounters that come her way as she tries to complete each goal on her list. Everyone can relate to Sarah's vision, ideals and list of goals that she wanted to accomplish. I think everyone at one time or another has visions of what they want their life to be like, and has goals that they want to accomplish. Sarah's journey is filled with laughter, tears, heartache and crazy situations that culminates in her coming to the realization that life has a funny way of changing a person's vision of the perfect life, of what really matters most in life, and what true happiness is really all about.

With a cast of characters who are realistic and believable; engaging dialogue and quirky interactions; and a storyline that is easy to relate to, Next Year I'll be Perfect is a wonderful portrayal of a young woman learning to find her way in life while challenging society's ideals and expectations.

Disclaimer: I received a copy of the book from the author / publisher in exchange for my honest review and participation in a virtual book tour event hosted by Chick Lit Plus Blog Tours.

Josie Ann says

The novel begins with Sarah Bennet, the main character, celebrating her 29th birthday. When her guests depart, her best friend, Livvie, gives her a list containing a number of goals written by Sarah when she was 25. These goals are something Sarah thought she'd have accomplished by 30, but realizes she's far from having the life she thought she would. Despite the objections from her support system, Livvie and the Thornton men, Sarah sets her sights on the life she wishes she had. During this journey, Sarah experiences good times, heartache, and realization. I enjoyed this novel, and I had no idea how it would end. It wasn't exactly the ending I was hoping for, but it was still an enjoyable read!

Samantha March says

Laura Kilmartin is on tour now with CLP Blog Tours and *Next Year I'll be Perfect*. This novel is a breath of fresh, realistic, and sometimes harsh air. Sarah is feeling good about her life – until her 29th birthday and the discovery of the list. The list is something Sarah wrote at 25, outlining all the goals and expectations she expected herself to achieve by thirty. Now that the deadline is 365 days away and counting, Sarah is feeling the pressure to check things off her list – including buying a home and becoming partner at a firm. But will Sarah realize that goals can shift over the years, or will trying to check off items be Sarah's only key to happiness?

I had such a fabulous time reading *Next Year I'll be Perfect*. As a list-maker myself, I understood Sarah's drive to be able to cross those items off her list. And she really wanted to be happier, and she thought by completing the list she would be. Her journey throughout the year was at times hilarious, at times sad, but always very realistic. There are stop-and-go romances, a best friend that will always dish it to her straight, and the story flowed with ease. This was also quite the page-turner, as I was curious up until the end to see how Sarah's journey would come to a close. One for your to-read list!

Candace says

Laura Kilmartin's, *Next Year I'll Be Perfect*, is a hilarious, fast-paced novel that fits nicely into the Chick Lit genre. At the age of 29 Sarah is a lawyer with a small, tight-knit group of friends. Livvie is her partner in crime while Sarah's 'brothers' David and Eddie are her go-to boys whom she leans on for advice, venting, and encouragement. Sarah lives in an apartment above the diner she is partner in and while she does not have a significant other, life is good.

This all changes on the night of Sarah's fun and carefree 29th birthday party. Sarah's happiness is drastically altered when Livvie presents to her a list Sarah made when she turned 25. Included in the list were goals that she hoped to have accomplished by the age of 30. Reading the list, Sarah realizes that not much had changed in the 5 years that had passed (except for getting rid of her cheating boyfriend.) Looking over the list, Sarah decides she has 1 year to accomplish the goals she made for herself. What happens next is a funny story following the sarcastic and sometimes bad-tempered Sarah as she tries to accomplish her goals. To make her

list more easily attainable, Sarah decides that she will probably not be able to reach her goal of sleeping with George Clooney, so she reluctantly marks it off her list.

I absolutely loved the back story that Kilmartin created for Sarah. Sarah's father is best friends with his partner on the police force, Jeremy. Unfortunately, one evening Sarah's mother and Jeremy's wife are killed in a car accident. The two men, not knowing what else to do, decide to raise their children in a pieced together family. Jeremy's sons, David and Eddie, are like the brother's Sarah never had.

From my own personal experience I can say that 30 definitely sneaks up on you. Yesterday it seemed like I was 21, today 30. When I turned 29 I immediately began to grieve for my twenties, even with a year left. I didn't think about the 365 awesome days I had left being twenty-something. Instead, I felt the clock and calendar ticking towards the horrible June day when I would officially be OLD. I feel that Sarah felt this way as well and handled her last year in her twenties much the same. Instead of focusing on making 29 a GREAT year, she was intent on having the perfect life by the age of 30. As long as she was checking off items on her list, she was on track. However, by the time Sarah reached age 30, she realized the goals on her list didn't make her successful or happy.

Laura KilMartin's novel, *Next Year I'll Be Perfect*, is a funny and warm read that I recommend to all Chick Lit lovers. Easily read in an evening or two, you will find a constant smile on your face as you take in KilMartin's witty dialogue, heartwarming characters, and the hilarious situations Sarah finds herself in. Enjoy!

*Booktrope has provided me with a complimentary copy of the book, *Next Year I'll Be Perfect*, for the purpose of review.*

Lauren says

Pretty run of the mill chick lit. Easy metro reading.

Sandy Samuel says

Loved it!

This was a fun, light, fast read. I thought one character's reaction towards the end was a little extreme, but I really enjoyed the whole book.

Marissa says

I really enjoyed reading this Chick-Lit Romantic Comedy Novel: *Next Year I'll Be Perfect*. I think the story, in ways, seemed realistic. The concept of making a list, things to do before a certain age, seems like a real life situation, and how Sarah goes about it, just seemed believable. I think just that feeling, of rereading that list, when you're close to that age that you said you would have all your goals completed by, can be a scary feeling, because then you realize, crap, I really have not done anything I wanted that I was determined to do, a few

years back, but in this story, I think in the beginning of Sarah's year-long adventure, she realizes that some of the goals are not so realistic, can seem harder by actually trying to complete them, or she completes that goal another way than she originally planned. This novel has that type of feeling, and it was really great following Sarah's journey of possibly being a partner in a law firm, getting into a relationship, and there's more....

I think that Morgan, the guy that Sarah "might" end up with seems like a good one, and at first when they met, they did not get along, and Sarah was somehow convinced that Morgan was out to get her job or something, but misunderstandings are said and settled later on, and they actually go on a date, and it's interesting to see how their friendship/relationship proceeds. There's also other situations, other than relationships that pop up in Sarah's life, and you just gotta wait to read them, as there are just funny moments here and there.

Lastly, I think the writing was pretty good, and there was a flow, that kept me reading, chapter and chapter, so that was nice, as I was just so interested to see what Sarah would do, in terms of keeping/changing her goals, and I think the ending was just right :)

My Rating: 4.4/5

PG-13 Rated

Loretta T. Burns says

Real life not just made up.

Enjoyed the story and characters. The bases of the story was very reality based and moved along well. Laughter and tears easily fell when reading as you could easily identify with the choices that people make in their life. Enjoyed.

Debbie says

From the opening pages I knew I was going to love this book. The book starts off on the end of Sarah's 29th birthday. Her friend Livvie gives her a list as a joke that she made when she was 25 and had drank too much. It's a list of goals that Sarah wished to accomplish by the time she was 30. Now that she is already 29, Sarah starts to feel the pressure immediately. She decides to take the necessary action in order to complete her list of goals in the next 12 months. Through laughter, tears, mishaps and crazy situations, Sarah sets out to conquer her list one by one.

Most women, including myself can relate to Sarah and her journey towards what she perceives as perfection. After all when we realize we are about to turn 30, we decide everything needs to be just right. This novel was a wonderful portrayal of a 20 something and the fun, along with the heartache she encounters along the way.

Sunny (Kindles & Wine Book Blog) says

Review and author interview posted on Kindles & Wine

Sarah Bennett doesn't write a bucket list, but a list of what her life should look like by the time she turns thirty. Four years earlier when she wrote this list, it all seemed very reasonable. So when her best friend Olivia DiMarco (Livvie) reminds her of it on her 29th birthday, she is disappointed to find how little she has accomplished to get there. Written in Sarah's voice, Laura Kilmartin lets us experience the tailspin this list creates for Sarah in a great coming-into-your-own story.

The concept in this book is very relatable. I have set many goals for myself (and yes, they go beyond the silly list items of getting groceries, cleaning toilets, yada yada ?). The goals Sarah created four years before are those we all strive to achieve in a lifetime. She has a relationship goal, a career goal, a goal about certain things she wants to experience, etc. Unfortunately for Sarah, she has a long way to go to meet these goals in one year.

I loved Laura Kilmartin's pacing of the book and how it took me month by month through Sarah's journey. It doesn't take long for Sarah to realize that certain items on her list need to be tweaked a bit so she can start slowly but surely crossing things off. She prioritizes, then reprioritizes (sound familiar to anyone—it sure does to me), but to no avail. Her friends and family support her as she tries to accomplish these goals, and it is these interactions I found most endearing about this book.

Sarah was partially raised by her father's best friend, Jeremy, and was like a sister to his two boys, Eddie and David. They have a wonderful relationship, the kind where they can show up at any moment, even if it is mealtime, and join whatever they interrupted without feeling like an interruption at all. Jeremy's family gives her such strength. They are her go-to group when she is struggling and I enjoyed what they brought to the story, especially as I wondered many times if the relationship goal on Sarah's list could be checked off with David!

Livvie's contributions to the book were also very important. She is a true friend to Sarah. Their interactions are heartfelt at times and laugh out loud funny at others. Livvie is the sounding board for Sarah and gives her many reality checks month by month as she works on her list. Everyone needs a Livvie to spice up their life; she gets Sarah to do a drive-thru dating experience, which was one of my favorite scenes! Because she knows how important it is to her friend to accomplish these goals, Livvie helps her in so many ways, sometimes even going with the tough love approach to get Sarah to evaluate her true goals in life.

The other important characters in the book are Frank and Morgan. Frank, the sole owner of the law firm where Sarah works, is a complete jerk. Even so, Frank and Sarah have a way of working well together. Morgan is the annoying intern that is always trying to one-up Sarah. He has a lot going for him in life except that Sarah hates his guts. I loved how each of the relationships Sarah has with these characters changes somehow during the story.

As you can tell, I enjoyed many aspects of this book, but the one issue that kept nagging at me was how much this list took over Sarah's life. Granted, she only has a year to accomplish all these huge goals, but she lets it change her. There are a few moments that I had a hard time even liking her character at all. Everyone could see right through her! She is too naïve and perhaps too stubborn to look beyond the list to determine what she really wants out of life. Thanks to the strong characters in the story, she returns to a likeable person. Livvie in particular helps provide some clarity for Sarah that leads to a wonderful resolution to this refreshing story about one's goals in life.

Favorite Excerpts

It was a pale shade of lilac, tapered just right to make my waist look smaller and my chest look bigger. Very admirable traits in a sweater.

“No, you and David can’t be compared to Donny and Marie. You’re much more like Greg and Marcia Brady. Not related by blood, but you know there was some action happening in that attic bedroom when the rest of the family was out practicing for the potato sack race.” ~ Eddie

“I’m not a fan of the list, you dope. I’m a fan of Sarah Bennett. I’m just trying to decipher which parts of this list belong to her and which parts belong to the life she thinks she should have.” ~ Livvie

Bottom Line

As a list maker and a person that likes to work toward goals, I could really relate to this book. I enjoy characters that go through a transformation in a story, and even though that includes some unlikeable moments for Sarah, she does transform beautifully in *Next Year I'll Be Perfect*.

Rating: B

Review copy courtesy of the publisher in exchange for an honest review

Allison Mitchell says

good book about how sometimes we just need to let life take its course. light but entertaining read.

Gale Martin says

Nevermind becoming perfect. Laura Kilmartin's "Next Year I'll Be Perfect" is perfect in every way, from stem to stern. It's the story of one talented young professional woman with a sympathetic past who embarks on a journey of self-exploration and self-actualization between her 29th and 30th birthdays after she finds a years' old bucket list. Kilmartin's own hometown of Portland, Maine makes a scenic and refreshingly different backdrop for this coming of thirty-something tale. Her viewpoint character Sarah Bennett, who's a little bit blue collar and a little bit white collar, is surrounded by a colorful cast of characters—adopted “siblings,” philandering ex’es, starchy bosses, and true blue friends. Even the small-town diner Sarah co-owns with her late father’s best friend becomes a principal character by the end of the book, a place you wish you had in your hometown. Kilmartin is a masterful writer as well as storyteller. Her novel takes some unexpected turns—just when you think Kilmartin is going to zig, she zags, and she does all this with literary ease and grace, as if she was born to write fiction. I just hope there’s going to be a sequel (are you listening, Ms. Kilmartin?) or maybe a picturesque TV series featuring Portland’s favorite lady lawyer Sarah Bennett.

Melissa says

<http://www.chicklitcentral.com/2012/1...>

Meredith Schorr says

Sarah Bennet is eating leftover cake from her 29th birthday party when her best friend Livvie delivers the list

Sarah wrote at the age of 25 of all of the things she wanted to accomplish by the time she turned the big 30, including sleeping with George Clooney, getting married, buying a house and fitting into a size 6 suede mini skirt. *Next Year I'll Be Perfect* is the heartwarming story of Sarah's journey towards crossing the items off of her list and in the process learning a lot about what truly makes her happy.

There were many reasons that I liked this book:

Characters - I tend to enjoy character driven novels and this definitely fit the bill. Sarah Bennet was so utterly likeable - a bit neurotic and humanly insecure, with a love of Little House on the Prairie and Buffy the Vampire Slayer and I loved her earnest determination to cross items off of her list no matter what. I just wanted to hug her so many times. I also wanted to shake her at one point when she took some horrible advice and in the process completely embarrassed herself! All of the secondary characters were well fleshed out and distinctive and I enjoyed Sarah's interaction with them.

Family - Sarah's relationship with her family was incredibly touching, so much so that I choked up towards the end during a particularly heart tugging scene with her Uncle Jeremy. I also got a kick out of her relationship with her boss, Frank.

Romance - I liked that I really wasn't certain who, if anyone, Sarah would end up with and I wasn't even sure who I wanted her to end up with because her options were almost all good. I say almost because one of them was a douchebag...

Humor - I chuckled out loud many times.

The Ending - This book was nicely wrapped up for those who don't like to be left hanging but at the same time, things came a bit full circle with what seemed like a hint of a possible sequel.

In sum, *Next Year I'll Be Perfect* was a fun chick lit book that I thoroughly enjoyed and recommend.
