



Family and Other Catastrophes

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A delightfully quirky debut about family bonds and the chaos that ensues when nature and lack of nurture collide.

Emily Glass knows she's neurotic. But she's got it under control. Sort of. She dons compression socks when she flies (because, you know, deep vein thrombosis) and responds to people routinely overestimating her age with more Lifespin classes and less gluten. Thankfully, she also has David, the wonderful man she'll soon call husband—assuming they can survive wedding week with her wildly dysfunctional family.

Emily's therapist mother, Marla, who's been diagnosing her children since they were in diapers, sees their homecoming as the perfect opportunity for long-overdue family therapy sessions. Less enthused are Emily and her two siblings: ardently feminist older sister Lauren, who doesn't think the wedding party should have defined gender roles, and recently divorced brother Jason, whose overzealous return to singlehood is only tempered by his puzzling friendship with David's Renaissance Faire—enthusiast brother.

As the week comes to a tumultuous head, Emily wants nothing more than to get married and get as far away from her crazy relatives as possible. But that's easier said than done when Marla's meddling breathes new life into old secrets. After all, the ties that bind family together may bend, but they aren't so easily broken.

Laugh-out-loud funny and endearingly raw, *Family and Other Catastrophes* is as entertaining as your favorite sitcom and introduces Alexandra Borowitz as an outstanding new voice in humorous fiction.

Family and Other Catastrophes Details

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From Reader Review Family and Other Catastrophes for online ebook

J. April says

If your family is truly dysfunctional - and not in the same way that a person is "depressed" because their favorite show was pulled from Netflix - you might consider skipping this read.

Plain and simple, I couldn't finish this. It made me too angry. I do admire the author's talent for satire. She set out to create hyperbolic characters, and she succeeded. The first several pages with each character was entertaining, seeing such horrifically one-dimensional perspectives and laughing/cringing at the kernel of reality they all held. But by page 150 (of less than 300) it was just too much of the same, with no chance of redemption in sight for any of the characters. I'm sure my perspective might be different had I actually finished the book. But again, I made it halfway through, and at that point there had been zero hint of any kind of character arc, no suggestion that any of these characters had the potential for change.

It was exhausting and infuriating, and for that I give the author credit. I felt as physically uncomfortable as I'm sure Emily, the main character, surely did herself. But for me personally, it simply wasn't an enjoyable read.

Holly says

* i received this for free in return for an honest review*

okay, so lets get started this book overall was a good novel.

The glass family are dysfunctional to the next level! i thought my family was bad but certainly not as bad as this. but this book was entertaining at times i laughed and found this book funny which is not common for me!

i liked this book alot!

4/5 stars

Rachel Brown says

This book started off with a bang and then became insufferable. I really enjoyed the first third of it the book, laughing aloud at several parts. But then the language and topics of conversation got so crass that it made it hard to read. Also, there was a ton of build up and character development throughout the majority of the book, which all amounted to nothing - there was very little resolution for any of the characters (least of all the family unit referred to in the title) and for those characters that did experience change, it came about so quickly at the very end of the book that it didn't seem believable.

Elisa says

This book is laugh out loud funny. I can't even remember a time when another book has literally had me

giggling to myself late at night. The characters are quirky and well-described. The things that the character Emily says and does hit too close to home for me.

Jen says

Family & Other Catastrophes is the quirky tale of Emily Glass and her dysfunctional family. Emily and her fiancé travel to her hometown for their wedding and hijinks ensues. Emily is neurotic but her family brings it to a whole other level! Her mother is a therapist who feels the need to diagnose everyone, yet in reality could use a therapist herself. The week leading up to the wedding is filled with chaos and drama, and all Emily wants to do is get married and get out of there! Filled with quirky characters, this was at times laugh out loud funny. I had an intense disliking of so many characters, it was hard for me to get into it. Thank you @harlequinbooks for this advance reader in exchange for my honest review.

Jenny (Reading Envy) says

This is a quick read about a couple and their families in the week before their wedding. In real life I would have zero tolerance for the behaviors they are putting up with, but they're stuck together so they have to find a way.

If you're getting married this summer, I think you should read this, but maybe afterwards. :)

3.5 stars rounded up.

This book came out April 10, and thanks to the publisher for providing early access to the title via Edelweiss.

Jane says

3 and 1/2 stars for this humorous Jewish family book which I loved.

Thanks to Susan C. for giving me this book.

All I can say is what a neurotic Jewish family this is and it's fun to be part of it.

First there's Emily, the bride, whose wedding is in a week. She's the most neurotic one of all about everything. Lauren, her sister, totally opposite in every way but has her issues too; mom, Marlene, who's a psychotherapist, always analyzing them, even in public; brother Jason, divorced and sex on his brain. Then there's Steven, the father of them all, who seems sort of normal compared to his family.

The groom is David, who tends to handle Emily's neuroses very well and very patient and kind. His brother Nathan is so strange, it's funny, with his dressing weirdly, and his Renaissance way of talking and his stepsister Maddison, who is only 18 and has her own little quirks. His step-mom seems normal enough and so does his father Nick.

Right before the wedding, something unexpected happens which didn't surprise me in the least.

Susan says

The best part of this book was making me realize how tame the drama related to my wedding was (in comparison). Of course this book was fiction and most of the characters were caricatures of caricatures. Would that be stereotypes of caricatures or caricatures of stereotypes? Otherwise the cliche of characters and situations was a bit too much for me to stomach. The bride's sister being an over the top feminist and PC diversity crazy person and her brother and brother-in-law to be both being disgusting horny perverts were too much and lost any humor they were providing. If nothing else, this book is a good reason for eloping, changing your name, and moving somewhere without telling your family.

A copy of this book was provided by NetGalley and Harlequin MIRA in exchange for an honest review.

Conny says

I was a First Read Winner of this book and I really enjoyed it. Talk about a dysfunctional family, with lots of drama and issues, yet very funny at the same time. It does have some adult language and sexual situations, so if you are easily offended about that this book might not be for you. I could easily see this being made into a movie, since it had such fun dialog between the siblings. Very entertaining read.

Amy says

If you think your family is slightly insane and highly dysfunctional then you probably haven't met the Glass family. They are all SO messed up, reading this was like watching a train wreck, but I could not get enough of this bizarre family with dynamics and kooky behavior that simultaneously made me snort with laughter and shake my head in disgust.

Emily heads home the week before her wedding and this book is divided into sections, one for each day leading up to her wedding. Right from the start, you know you're in for a good time, Emily may as well be the definition of neurotic and the rest of her family is just as unique and quirky. Her sister, Lauren was obnoxious, she takes the term social justice warrior to a whole new level, she's contrary just for the sake of it and the stuff that came out of her mouth was horrifyingly hilarious. My other favorite character, (I use favorite loosely here, these people are no one I would actually want to meet, but they were amazingly entertaining) was Nathan, David's brother. He was just such a weirdo, he spoke like some bizarre throwback to medieval times and had the social graces of a bull. I'm giggling again just thinking about his flirting.

This was laugh out loud funny with some heartfelt, endearing moments thrown in for good measure. Fun is the best way to describe my experience reading this little gem and the characters totally made the book for me, they're insane and quirky and just what I needed to read over Easter weekend as I spent time with my own extended family! ?

Family and Other Catastrophes in three words: Hilarious, Risqué and Eccentric.

Susan Crowe says

I won this book in a giveaway through Goodreads.

This book was hilarious! Emily Glass and her fiance David fly home to spend the week leading up to their wedding with family. And what a kooky family they both have. My favorite is Nathan and my least favorite is Lauren who is extremely annoying. I highly recommend for a ROFL experience. I will absolutely be on the lookout for future books by this author.

Taleen Alexander says

Family and Other Catastrophes is so laugh-out-loud funny that your significant other isn't going to get any sleep if you read it at night.

If you've ever cried over a haircut, you'll like this book.

If you've ever been given dubious compliments, you'll like this book.

If you've ever had anxieties that even you thought were weird, you'll like this book.

If you've ever thought your family is the craziest around--read this book. The Glasses will change your mind.

Family and Other Catastrophes is fresh, and all the characters' actions and banter with each other is unexpected and new. I've never read characters like this before! Who else is putting a PUA and an ardent feminist in the same book, and making them siblings, no less? The book is told from multiple POVs, and each character is completely unique, even the large cast of secondary characters (including the two little children!). I bet Borowitz even has full backstories for the relatives who are mentioned but never appear in the book.

The first half of the book is more about introducing the characters (their issues and desires), and having them collide with each other as the wedding party arrives in suburban New York. The plot thickens in the second half of the book as Emily makes a shocking discovery, and her fiance David gets hit with two gut punches, all of which threaten to ruin the wedding. I enjoyed the first half of the book because the characters are so strong, but I couldn't put down the second half of the book, waiting to see how it all came together. No spoilers, but I loved the ending and thought it fit perfectly.

Looking forward to reading more by Alexandra Borowitz!

Jessica says

This book was hilarious, it honestly felt like watching a comedic TV show but in book form. There's the PUA older brother, the radical feminist sister who's raising her (white) son with a "healthy fear of whiteness" and of course, Marla, the psychologist mother who routinely gaslights and diagnoses her children. Emily is a flawed main character, but that makes her easy to relate to (especially if you deal with physical insecurities and anxiety.) My only complaint is that with so many characters, there are scenes of dialogue where I have to re-read to make sure I know who is saying what. But each of the character is so funny that it really didn't

bother me. I laughed out loud many times.

Tammy says

I tend to read a lot of fiction with heavy subjects and I found Family and Other Catastrophes to be a breath of fresh air! I thought my family was messed up...until I met the Glass family! Talk about dysfunction junction! I easily related to Emily's body image issues. The over the top arguments in the Glass family had me laughing throughout the book. I loved that I finished the book with a smile on my face!

Cara says

Where'd You Go Bernadette? has always been the gold standard for me in terms of comic novels, but this book is even funnier. Like Bernadette, Family and Other Catastrophes has quirky characters and laugh-out-loud lines and scenes, but this book takes a very ordinary situation – a wedding week – and mines it for every funny payoff possible. My only complaint? I wanted more. This is the rare book that you'll be sorry to come to the end of. I highly recommend it to anyone who wants a good laugh – there are so many of them here.
