



Making Pretty

Corey Ann Haydu

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Montana and her sister, Arizona, are named after the mountainous states their mother left them for. But Montana is a New York City girl through and through, and as the city heats up, she's stepping into the most intense summer of her life.

With Arizona wrapped up in her college world and their father distracted by yet another divorce, Montana's been immersing herself in an intoxicating new friendship with a girl from her acting class. Karissa is bold, imperfectly beautiful, and unafraid of being vulnerable. She's everything Montana would like to become. But the friendship with Karissa is driving a wedge between Montana and her sister, and the more of her own secrets Karissa reveals, the more Montana has to wonder if Karissa's someone she can really trust.

In the midst of her uncertainty, Montana finds a heady distraction in Bernardo. He's serious and spontaneous, and he looks at Montana in the way she wants to be seen. For the first time, Montana understands how you can become both lost and found in somebody else. But when that love becomes everything, where does it leave the rest of her imperfect life?

Making Pretty Details

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From Reader Review Making Pretty for online ebook

Estelle says

Very few books make me feel speechless. This was a heartbreakingly suspenseful story and it really stands on its own in this book category. I literally can't think of one comparable book. I'll have a full review but some words I wrote down while reading: discarded, impulsive, and validation.

Another great piece of work from this author with so many crossover opportunities. 4.5 stars.

-- adapted full review originally posted on

...in reading a book like Corey Ann Haydu's *Making Pretty* I am absolutely aghast about Montana's father behavior when it came to the looks of his daughters. Part of me thinks he thinks he's doing "the right thing" and helping his daughters "accept themselves" but as a plastic surgeon who is constantly taking on new female projects and totally transforming them... we know the truth. It's not as it seems.

Basically we have Montana — about to embark on another summer in New York City. Her best friend (Roxanne) and her sister (Arizona) are back from college. She's been honored with the friendship of the older, sophisticated Karissa. The boy (Bernardo) she's been checking out at the park is looking at her back. But nothing is totally clicking except for the last thing. She can't relate to Roxanne and Arizona the same way since she went to college. Karissa is not what she seemed — or even close. But Bernardo — he is someone she can have for herself. He is someone who is on her side. Alongside him, Montana goes on this journey to reinvent herself but also get down to the naked truth of what she means to people. Her dad has married again and again; all the while, Montana has basically been discarded by these women. I don't think it was any fault of these ex-wives, I don't, but I also can't imagine how Montana feels watching each of these people walk out of her life without turning back and wondering about her.

As much as this book is about beauty — how it is perceived and thrust upon us — Haydu unshockingly (because she always asks the tough questions) explores the complexity of sister relationships, the all-consuming impulsiveness that comes along with first love, and the desire to take control but feeling powerless to actually obtain it. Like in *Life By Committee*, the author has spun another suspenseful contemporary — where will all of this messy behavior lead these characters? There was no way I could have predicted what would happen.

What exactly do you do when the authority figure in your life makes poor choice after poor choice? That your dad of all people — someone who is supposed to love you unconditionally — thinks he can make you look "better" and thinks he is helpful for offering to help in that area? What do you do when your older sister — one of your best friends — deviates from what she believed in? It's no wonder that Montana is feeling out of sorts and doesn't know what she belongs. There is very little that has been stable in her life, and it becomes her own (heavy) responsibility to come to terms with her father and his "well-meaning" abuse and dissect the various meanings of love she's coming in contact with.

There's a ton of discussion-worthy layers in *Making Pretty* and Haydu's writes both succinctly and honestly, making Montana one of the freshest female voices I've read in awhile. She's also put a reader like me in quite a pickle — how can I have a favorite book of hers when all of them are so wonderful and address so many relevant and pertinent issues we are so careful to hide? Her books may be categorized as young adult but I hope that's taken as more of a suggestion than a universal rule by thirsty readers searching for

unputdownable and thoughtful fiction because her work deserves a wider audience.

Michelle Wrona says

This review can also be found on A Thousand Lives Lived, check it out for more!

Corey Ann Haydu is one of those authors whose books I really want to enjoy. They seem like the perfect kind of books that'll impress me: contemporary romances that have some darker concept within them. In this case, as well as her previous, *Life by Committee*, there was so much potential for me to enjoy them. Everything seemed perfect, at first. But as I look back onto these novels, they were dull and not as deep as I wish them to be. I have 2 more of her novels to read and they're both on my TBR list, though I'm now hesitant, as the second time surely wasn't the charm.

Making Pretty was a pretty book, but I feel more **meh and bored** with it than others have. I surely won't even dream of giving this a perfect star rating, but whatever. It deals with all of the cutesy stuff—sisterhood, first love, rebellion of being a teenager, all of those things that are supposed to matter or happen in life. You'll find that the characters have had a horrible life with endless amounts of 'stepmothers' and weird stuff going on with their family, and they're—Arizona and Montana—are those characters whose side you'd like to stay on.

"I noticed he was reading the same book as me. The Great Gatsby. I figured his school was probably doing a unit on it too. Then it was the Stephen King novel I was chilling out with. Then Catcher in the Rye. Then The Hunger Games. Then Valley of the Dolls. After Valley of the Dolls we started nodding at each other. Then waving."

That's kind of **weird but cute at the same time**. Anyways, let's just get to the summary because you don't even have a clue what this book is about if this is the first time you've seen it or heard of it. *Making Pretty* features Montana and Arizona, two sisters who were named after the states that their mother left them for. They now live with their plastic surgeon father who gets married and divorces women lots of times. Now Montana has enough of her boring, strange life and she falls in love with a guy named Bernardo, who respects her pink hair and wickedness.

I guess that the title does make sense for what the book was actually about. I liked Montana's attitude towards her father's job and everything and how she doesn't want to get sucked into the obsession of **redoing yourself**. She had self-confidence, even when she was depressed and felt like the relationship with her college-based older sister was dissipating. She was a little annoying here and there and I couldn't agree with every single decision she made, but she wasn't frustrating as some protagonists/characters are (cough, Arizona, cough). Haydu doesn't create the best bunch of characters in the end.

So if you actually read the official synopsis found on the jacket cover of the novel, you'll probably predict that a lot of the book is focused on secrets, lies and the sisters' fading relationship. **It's not.** I found that the romance was the biggest part as well as Montana finding out who she is. Yes, it's one of those cheesy stories.

I wasn't too fond of it in the end, either.

The author's writing seems to drag a lot. It's overly exaggerated at some points and I just want to bang my head against a desk to keep me awake. While reading, I found myself fading in and out of the fictional world of New York City, and while I adored the setting, something was missing from the depth of the story.

"I take note in my head: Bernardo is a boy who doesn't depend on smiles. Bernardo is boy who swears and loves in Spanish."

Making Pretty will go horribly for some and fantastic for others. It all depends on what you really enjoy in a romantic relationship. You'll most definitely find Montana and Bernardo's to be cute and everything, but it's not as realistic as I hoped. **I guess it all features a girl turning pretty in her own way—an 'eh' way.**

Brianna Shrum says

One of those books that I kept trying to put down to GET THINGS DONE, and kept picking right back up again. I loved the main character and found her extremely relatable. It's sometimes an uncomfortable read, only because the characters feel SO so real, and the topics are a little tough if you've ever struggled with body image issues, but I mean that in a positive way. The author doesn't shy away from the tough stuff, and it's just refreshingly real. Like I said, I adored this book and want to shove it into everyone's hands. *shoves*

Anna Reads says

Intense and crazy. Excellent writing and characters. A few things I'd like to have seen fleshed out a bit more at the end, but story really drove me nuts and sucked me in -- in an uncomfortable but good way!

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: Unforgettable and breathtaking, *Making Pretty* explored raw, complex emotions while creating a unprecedented set of characters that destroyed me completely.

Opening Sentence: June 2nd: A List of Things to Be Grateful For.

The Review:

Montana's life isn't going too great. Her father is a plastic surgeon, obsessed with creating the most flawless possible women, including his two daughters. Her mother left them: her, her sister, her father. They haven't

seen her in awhile, and all the contact between them is within a birthday card once a year. Since then her father has been through a long series of divorces and girlfriends. He sucks them in, fixes them up to his ideal with plastic surgery, then spits them out. Since Montana's sister and best friend left for college she's been all alone except for the beautiful 23 year old actress that she's met, someone who seems to understand her, someone who has a tragic backstory and whom Montana thinks could be her replacement best friend. Except she's more than that. If Montana's father has his way, this new friend will be his new girlfriend, possibly stepmother.

Montana was a complex character, one that I really enjoyed exploring. She constantly suffered with feeling not good enough, faking a smile and trying as hard as possible to fit in. This insecurity made her a relatable character but also hit super hard. It dated back to her thirteenth birthday when her father gave her a gift certificate for free plastic surgery when she turned eighteen, a promise that he would fix whatever was still wrong with her then. She was also suffering because her sister left for college and took her best friend with her, Roxanne. They are experiencing new things without her, and she felt entirely left out, and it didn't help that her sister came back with a new boob job, which makes her feel betrayed. Her emotions were constantly so strong, so raw, that at certain points I had to put down the book and separate myself from her head. She was one of those characters that was hovering on the edge of depression but wasn't quite there yet.

Her romance with Bernardo was also a highlight of the book, especially toward the end. Her whole life she had watched these women of her fathers come and go like the seasons, and all she knows is that she wants the kind of love that lasts. She doesn't know what kind of love that is, however, having never been in love. She barely knows who her true family is, at some points. My emotions toward their relationship shifted as the book went on. It started out light and cute, a crush, but then bloomed into something consuming and large. The passion was so great that it was hard for Montana to get a grasp on reality when she was with him, she got so caught up in the flurry of emotions. One thing I did enjoy about their romance was that, unlike her father and his wives, Montana and Bernardo supported each other the way they were, instead of looking for flaws to fix.

There are quite a few other problems that play a part in this riveting, complex book by Haydu, much like her other book I reviewed (*Life by Committee*). One of those was the constant pull towards both of the girls rooted in her life – Karissa, her friend and her father's new girl, and her sister Arizona. She feels a certain loyalty to Arizona after all of these years being the only stable parts of their family. But she also feels a bond with Karissa and all the things they shared together before her father's relationship with the young girl screwed it all up. At points the two are fighting over her, and she can't find middle ground. Stick with one, betray the other. It was hard to watch her moral dilemma. Another problem was how she treated the stepmoms. Arizona and Montana have always played little games and played fun at their father's romances. For example, they have on game where they bet on how long a relationship will last, and the closest at the end of the relationship gets a little prize. It's the only way to ground themselves and make sure they remain unhurt and don't get too attached — if hope grew, it would only shatter them when things fell apart. But does this make them bad people, the way they poke fun at other's lives?

I have to say that this book was completely riveting. It totally immersed me in Montana's lives and emotions, as well as the emotions of the other characters, which were just as strong. That was one thing that Haydu did incredibly. She created a world in which even the side characters had many different facets and played different parts in building the main character's world. This book destroyed me at points. I am not a book crier, I don't cry very easily, but I swear that I almost did reading this novel. Unforgettable and breathtaking, *Making Pretty* explored raw, complex emotions while creating a unprecedented set of characters that destroyed me completely. I would totally recommend this book to lovers of *The Fault in Our Stars* and other sad contemporaries — this is not a fluffy book.

Notable Scene:

“I’d never done any of this before,” Tess said. “Movie night and making dinner and worrying about you getting home by curfew and cleaning the blades of the ceiling fan and saying I love you to someone every night before bed. That was all new to me.”

“Yeah. See, it wasn’t really new to us,” I said.

“That’s the worst fucking thing I’ve ever heard,” Tess said. “This should make you feel something.” She pointed to her pile of moving boxes, the truck outside, the burly man heaving the boxes from our apartment to the truck.

“I mean, we’ll miss you for sure,” I said, but I knew it wasn’t convincing enough. I couldn’t muster up tears or even a crack in my voice or a big sigh or anything.

“Today I feel bad for me,” she said, “But in, like, six months I’m only going to feel bad for you.”

FTC Advisory: Katherine Tegan Books/HarperTeen provided me with a copy of *Making Pretty*. No goody bags, sponsorships, “material connections,” or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Abbie says

I don't know if it's because of my crappy mood or if it's because I just couldn't relate to the book; but I freaking hated this book. It was immature and bland. I was bored the entire time I read it. Sorry but I just didn't like it.

Dahlia says

This might be my favorite Haydu book yet, which feels weird to say because I really, really loved the other two, and it's hard to compare. *OCD Love Story* was the book so intense and well crafted I *had* to repeatedly put it down, *Life by Committee* was the book so compelling I *couldn't* put it down, and *Making Pretty* was the book I didn't *want* to put down; it was just too engrossing watching Montana's growth, being in her head, seeing all the ways she reflected some of my own weirdest and most uncomfortable thoughts and also adjusting to a rapidly changing life and all these weird situations and falling in love and, just, everything. I love all the NYC-ness in this book, and that the father who could've so easily been a relatively stock villain was given these layers and sympathetic qualities, and that no one was revealed to be the same at the end of the book as they'd been at the beginning. If I were a more arrogant, self-centered person, I'd say Corey Haydu was probably put on Earth to write books for me.

Oh look, I *am* that arrogant and self-centered. *preorders everything else Corey Haydu will ever write, ever.

Tabitha (Bows & Bullets Reviews) says

Jen says

2 stars

Having heard many positive things about Corey Ann Haydu's previous contemporary novels, I was quite excited to pick up her latest YA, *Making Pretty*. The premise itself is intriguing: Montana is a teen girl living in NYC – however, she struggles to live life happily because of her father, a plastic surgeon who remarries and dates so often that there is no sense of consistency in her life. Montana's bond with her sister, Arizona, also starts falling apart. I was sure I was in for a story about self-discovery with strong family elements. I got a bits and scraps of those qualities, but I was also surprised with some other aspects of the story that I didn't enjoy at all.

First off, Montana is an extremely difficult character to like. I thought it was just going to be temporary and that we would see some character growth by the end. However, Montana doesn't progress much at all. She's extremely naive and complains so much about her life. Yes, her father isn't the best father out there, but she makes it difficult to sympathize for her. Montana is also a very hypocritical character. She complains about one thing, but does exactly that. For example, she complains about her dad marrying someone he met just a few days ago, but then she finds a boy and falls instantly in love with him. An extremely drastic declaration of love even happens later in the story for Montana, and I completely rolled my eyes. I saw her as a very confused teenager who is desperately looking for the answers on How to Live Life. By the end of the story, I was still having a hard time connecting with Montana.

Another quality in this story that isn't the most favorable is how seemingly all of the characters drink heavily. I mean, these characters are in their prime time – late teens to early twenties – so it's understandable that there is going to be some underage drinking, but these girls drink so much. No wonder they're all so confused and impulsive. There's drinking in every chapter. How am I supposed to trust Montana's point of view when she's drunk out of her mind half the time?

I'm not even quite sure what redeeming qualities there are for this book let alone how I stuck through the end. Perhaps Haydu's writing is decent. I'm honestly quite disappointed with *Making Pretty* though, with its less-than-endearing main character and static character growth. I'm willing to give Haydu's books another try though, but I'll have to lower my expectations a bit.

[Check out this review and more at Books and Other Happy Ever Afters](#)

Alexa says

FIRST THOUGHTS: Haydu knows her way around a character, particularly in portraying them as real and flawed. Being in Montana's head, living her story... It was intense. I got sucked in right away, and had to see it through as quickly as possible. While I do wish a few things had been addressed more, the way this book is written makes it feel like we're just capturing a tiny portion of a long, long life that Montana is living, so I can sort of understand how it ends that way.

Sarah says

2.5 stars

(Source: I received a digital copy of this book for free on a read-to-review basis. Thanks to HarperCollins and Edelweiss.)

“I don’t remember how I got here, but I remember enough of the night to know Dad has a new girlfriend and Arizona has a new boy and Roxanne has a new life and I only really have Karissa to keep me sane and happy.”

This story started out okay, but I lost interest.

Montana seemed to be a girl who felt quite lost. She’d been let down by her mother when she left them, let down by her sister who went away to college, didn’t speak to her for a month, and seemed to come back looking and acting like a totally different person, and let down by her best friend also.

“I hate that the word sister has this shifting, changeable definition that doesn’t mean two people who share a room and a brain and a speech pattern and a body type anymore.”

The storyline in this book seemed to be about Montana, and her sister, family and friends. I found Karissa (the new best friend) to be quite an odd girl, and I really was surprised by what she was getting up to behind Montana’s back. Montana seemed to be clinging to the idea of a new best friend, as something to hold onto, when everything else in her life was changing, which made Karissa’s then shocking revelation all the more upsetting for her.

“You and me against everything that has sucked in our lives. Two sad girls together. Can we toast to two sad girls?”

Montana’s sister Arizona seemed to have changed too, and it seemed very strange the way she had changed quite so drastically, when previously Montana had believed they so similar they were almost the same person.

“I got my boobs done in April. I didn’t want to tell you over the phone because I thought it would sound like I got porn-star boobs or something, but I wanted you to see it’s like a teeny-tiny upgrade.”

Montana’s father was quite possibly the strangest of all though. Who gives their 13-year-old daughter a gift certificate for plastic surgery? I mean really? Talk about making your daughter feel like there’s something wrong with her?! And the wives? He seemed to have been married and divorced 4 times since Montana’s mother left, and was then moving on to another girl!

“He actually said Tess’s name?” I say. It’s not the point, but he never says the wives’ names after they’re gone. Like if we don’t speak of them they never existed.

The ending to this was okay, although I didn't really feel like much had been resolved, and I also felt like Montana was still clinging to someone just for the sake of feeling loved. It seemed like she was still behaving exactly the same way as she had at the start of the book, and maybe even doing exactly what her father was doing, and possibly making a huge mistake too. I almost feel like I needed an epilogue to find out if things would really work out for her or not.

5 out of 10

Lauren ? (YABookers) says

I received a free copy via Edelweiss for review purposes.

When Montana meets Karissa, she begins to feel comfortable in herself. She feels like her own person, especially as she grows apart from her sister Arizona. But as Karissa's secrets are revealed, Montana is not sure she knew her at all. In the midst of this, Montana meets Bernardo and she feels completely comfortable with him.

It took me a long time to finish this book and there were quiet a few occasions I wanted to DNF. Montana was not an easy character to like - in fact, none of them were. Booze and smoking is so casually thrown in there like it's a thing all teenagers do, and should do, to be seen as 'cool'.

I was interested in the narratives about plastic surgery and dysfunctional families, and Corey Ann Haydu has a way with words, but that's where my enjoyment ended. I didn't feel connected with the characters at all and the pace was mind-numbingly slow and I ended up skimming most of it. And not to mention insta-love. Bernardo was not interesting in the slightest and felt like a 2D character.

Overall, not a book I would personally recommend.

Aditi says

“The truth is, everyone is going to hurt you. You just got to find the ones worth suffering for.”

----Bob Marley

Corey Ann Haydu, an American author, pens her new novel, *Making Pretty* which is based on the fragile as well as promising lines of friendships, family values, sisterly bond and relationship, in short, it's more about finding the respect and love despite of the challenges in one's life.

Synopsis:

Montana and her sister, Arizona, are named after the mountainous states their mother left them for. But Montana is a New York City girl through and through, and as the city heats up, she's stepping into the most intense summer of her life.

With Arizona wrapped up in her college world and their father distracted by yet another divorce, Montana's been immersing herself in an intoxicating new friendship with a girl from her acting class. Karissa is bold, imperfectly beautiful, and unafraid of being vulnerable. She's everything Montana would like to become. But the friendship with Karissa is driving a wedge between Montana and her sister, and the more of her own secrets Karissa reveals, the more Montana has to wonder if Karissa's someone she can really trust.

In the midst of her uncertainty, Montana finds a heady distraction in Bernardo. He's serious and spontaneous, and he looks at Montana in the way she wants to be seen. For the first time, Montana understands how you can become both lost and found in somebody else. But when that love becomes everything, where does it leave the rest of her imperfect life?

Montana and Arizona are two sisters who belong from a dysfunctional family background, well thanks to their plastic surgeon father who can't stop himself from getting married and divorcing after a few years. He has a series of girlfriends and have had four wives. Their father wants to fix every flaws of the women in this world, from his girls to his wives and girlfriends, but Montana never accepted the world of plastic surgery with her heart, her beliefs lied in the ugly truth behind plastic surgery.

Due to her father's habit of getting married and getting divorced, Montana finds herself being friends with a don't-care-attitude girl named, Karissa. Their bond of friendship lies in the imperfection of their worlds.

Her life becomes colorful and bright when she meets the next-door-neighbor-kind-of-boy named, Bernardo and Montana does everything that a normal teenager would do to make themselves look desirable in the eyes of an opposite sex.

The author's writing is incredible, I mean the plot develops at a snail pace, but it has so much to offer, so many flaws turning into one big problem and then saving the characters from that mess. I mean whole situation that the author put up through Montana's life was pretty messed, filled with never-ending flaws and sadness. There were so many issues-mature ones thrown at Montana's life only to make us see how she surfaces through them.

Montana cannot be compared to a typical teen, since she goes through a lot of drama that her life has to offer, father's problems, plastic surgery, his sister, her friend, Karissa with her emo secrets and drama, Bernardo, the man she is trying hard to impress. The last aspect I loved the most, I mean it's true we only let others see us in a way we want them to see, and we do that often when we are in love. Montana's life was constantly dictated by the negative and irrational choices that made her look cool in the eyes of her friends, whereas her narrative voiced just the opposite of what she did.

The characters are all kept closer to reality and their authenticity was very evident from their demeanor and especially the way they acted in a messed up situation- vulnerable and impulsive. The relationship between Bernardo and Montana was not very promising, I mean they fell very fast and moved very fast in the pace of their relationship. They acted more like lusty teenagers, who can't get enough of each other.

Overall, it's an enlightening book especially given the theme of the story and it is quite emotional too. If you have a nose for unusual plot and compelling storyline, then do read this book.

Verdict: *If you're are a huge realistic YA fan lover, then definitely grab a copy f this book.*

Courtesy: *Thanks to the author's publicist for giving me an opportunity to read and review this book.*

Naoms says

2.5

Originally Posted at Confessions of an Opinionated Book Geek

The synopsis of this book doesn't give a clear summary of what this book is about. Like, at all. **MAKING PRETTY** is about one of the most messed up families I have ever encountered. Which is a feat considering there is no drugs or obvious abuse. Montana wasn't raped and isn't hiding in closets from her father, but still calling this family dysfunctional is putting it lightly.

Montana and Arizona are two years apart in age, but have done everything together. Except, for College. Being two years younger Montana just can't go off to university like her older sister. She's left behind in New York with her useless father. Their father loves them and he provides for them, but he is one of the worst dads I've ever read, because he's a horrible parent. He's the kind of guy who brings work home, literally. As a plastic surgeon he spends his time making people "more beautiful" and he doesn't stop at the office. He looks at every woman around him and sees flaws he can fix. Even on his own daughters. For their 13 birthdays, their dad gave them gift certificates for plastic surgery! Way to tell your child that they are not good enough or beautiful.

The other horrible thing about their dad is that he can never be alone. Never. Which has lead to dozens of girlfriends and 4 ex-wives. Think about that. Montana is 17 and her father has already been divorced 4 times. The selfishness of a parent who brings that many people for his impressionable daughters to lose is beyond my comprehension. It's disgusting and rage inducing.

Rage inducing is a good description for my relationship with **MAKING PRETTY**. I hated so many characters. Hated all the things they said and all the things Montana didn't say to them. Especially, after her dad tells her that he's in love again and that it's different this time! The moment we meet the new girlfriend, someone that Montana knows intimately, the book spirals into an uncomfortable coming of age family drama that kept me on a roller coaster of anger and pity.

Corey Ann Haydu is a talented author. Her style is smart and rhythmic and pulls you into every detail of the story. I was pulled in. I felt for these characters as if they were real. As if Montana was my friend telling me the story. The author pulled emotions out of me like a puppet master.

The problem is that I believe that I hate this book. Not in the way that I hate offensive or condescending books. It's not bad. The characters are developed and the story clear. There is the small problem that Montana does not sound 17. She sounds 15. She doesn't have the voice of someone who has the pressure of SAT's and the big choices ahead of her. 17 year olds have to decide on colleges and begin the path of who they want to be and what they want to do. Nothing about Montana tells me she has that kind of stress. I say

15, because by then you've been through a year of high school which is a life of its own. You've had some life experience and some struggles, but the hard choices are still ahead of you. Montana was an immature 17 which worked for the dysfunction of the book.

I hate this book because it pulled emotions out of me and then left me hanging. The ending is no ending at all. One of those pretentious books where the ending is all open ended and nothing is resolved and nothing is concluded.

It's not that I need things wrapped up in a pretty bow (though that would be nice). No, it's that Montana doesn't get to grow. I don't have any idea what will happen to her on the other side of the last chapter. I have no idea how she will deal with the choices she's made. I have no idea if her and the boy she falls in love with, will stay together for awhile or if they will break up. Then there's the fact that no one changes. In the beginning of the book, Montana thinks "I should tell him this. I should say that. I should voice my opinions for once in my life." At the end of the book, Montana thinks "I should tell him this. I should say that. I should voice my opinions for once in my life."

That is what I found most frustrating. This is a girl who received such bad parenting she literally doesn't know what it means to be in a family. She doesn't know what it means to love. Her parents have screwed her up and she never gets a chance to express herself! When there are small moments of arguments it's never completed.

I guess that's supposed to mimic real life, but really it's b.s. Why did I read a book where people make the same choices. Then, Montana and Arizona begin a journey at the end of the book which is just a cheap ending for me, because I have no idea where it's leading them or how it will help them. I don't think it will help them. I think it will break them and the author gave me no clues that their world will have any kind of satisfying or happy conclusion. In fact, their journey probably will make a better story than the one I got.

I can't quite figure out what the message behind this book is. Here is a girl who doesn't have a real family life. Who has been left behind and abandoned more times than she can count. Understandably, she latches on to people like her boyfriend or Karissa the young woman she idolizes. But, she never learns what it means to be in a family besides the glimpses she sees of other families. Beyond her sister, she never grabs on to a healthy relationship. In all honesty, I think Montana is going to get knocked up a few times, divorced a few times and still search for a place to belong, because the author gave me no concrete evidence that it will end any other way.

A very weak ending. Disappointing, because I sincerely believe you should read her other book *Life by Committee*.

Kaitlin says

*I received this book in exchange for an honest review.

The fact that I'm DNFing this book irritates me, but it's also a huge relief. I read 20 percent of it and wasn't liking much of anything. Plus, I was irritated, so it's a good thing I'm moving on from this one. However, I'm DNFing because things that I generally LOVE in books rubbed me the wrong way in *Making Pretty*. I prefer unlikeable characters to likable ones in many cases, yet I was very annoyed by Montana's attitude. She

seemed like a brat. I wasn't very interested in the story itself or any of the other characters enough to make me want to put up with her, either. That just made it even tougher to connect to her character. Also, the situation with Karissa bugged me way more than I want to admit. (view spoiler) It sealed my decision in walking away from this book.

Overall, I didn't like the 20 percent of *Making Pretty* that I read. Even though it had elements that I usually love, this book proved that there's always an exception to reading tastes. Not everything works for you, even when you really, really want it to.
