



Chance Harbor

Holly Robinson

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From the acclaimed author of *Beach Plum Island* and *The Wishing Hill*... "No one does it better than Holly Robinson."—Susan Straight, National Book Award Finalist and Author of *Between Heaven and Here*

Catherine and Zoe are sisters, but even their mother, Eve, admits her daughters are nothing alike. Catherine is calm and responsible. Zoe is passionate and rebellious. Nobody is surprised when Zoe gets pregnant, drops out of college, and spirals into drug addiction.

One night Catherine gets a call from Zoe's terrified daughter, Willow, saying her mother has abandoned her in a bus station and disappeared. Eve blames herself, while Catherine, unable to have children, is delighted to raise Willow as her own.

Now, five years later, Eve is grieving her husband's death and making reluctant plans to sell the family's beloved summer home on Prince Edward Island. But a series of unexpected revelations will upend the family and rock three generations of women.

CONVERSATION GUIDE INCLUDED

Chance Harbor Details

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Author : Holly Robinson

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From Reader Review Chance Harbor for online ebook

Charlotte Lynn says

Who says sisters have to be best friends? Zoe and Catherine are definitely not best friends, they are not even friends. Yet, they have a relationship. Catherine and her husband are the legal guardians of Zoe's daughter. The dynamics in this family is unique. Catherine was closest to her father. Zoe was her mother's favorite. Within this family, with every member of this family, there are secrets. Deep secrets, scary secrets, and very personal secrets. I love how Holly Robinson did not just lay it all out there. She let each character develop at their own pace and reveal their lives in their own ways. Some of the developing was done with the assistance of others; some was done on their own. But all of it made each character unique, relatable, and someone I grew to care for.

I was immediate pulled into this story. I loved the settings of Canada and Prince Edward Island. The fact that it was small town and everyone knew everyone else made it perfect. I could picture the wallpaper in the house, how the yard looked, and what the view was from the backyard. The feel of the sand in my toes, even the cold water splashing around my ankles made this story so real. As I read the words, the scenes played in my mind like a movie. This does not always happen, but when it does you know you have a winner of a story.

This is my second Holly Robinson book. She has now become an author I look forward to more from and would never hesitate to recommend. Check out Chance Harbor.

Susan Peterson says

Chance Harbor is an honest, gritty portrayal of a family as they come to terms with deception, dishonesty, hurt, and anger. It is the story primarily of two sisters, Catherine and Zoe, and their mother Eve. Five years earlier, Zoe abandoned her 10-year-old daughter, Willow, at a Boston bus station, and from that point on Catherine and her husband Russell become Willow's legal guardian, effectively her parents in both their eyes and Willow's. Eve has recently lost her own husband, and is making plans to sell their family home in Chance Harbor, which opens up memories and wounds from long ago. The characters in this book are believable and multi-layered. Catherine has always been the good sister, responsible and loving; Zoe is rebellious and daring, an addict who can no longer keep her own child safe. Willow herself is a confused 15-year-old, who loves both Catherine and Zoe, and wants more than anything to know where she belongs, especially after a rift in Catherine's marriage calls even that relationship into question. Chance Harbor is about mothers and fathers, the ones who brought us into the world vs. the ones who raised us; it's about marriages, and how what we see from the outside in no way represents what really goes on behind closed doors. This book will take you on an emotional roller coaster, as secrets are revealed, as hurts are healed, as families fall apart and come back together. It is a heartfelt journey, equally combative and poignant, a truly incredible story.

Viviane Crystal says

Catherine and Zoe, two sisters who look like each other but couldn't be more different, are now separated.

Zoe, the rebel in the family who did drugs, dropped out of school and more, ran away, leaving her daughter Willow with Catherine and Russell. The latter seemed like the proverbially successful, married couple but are now separate as well, Russell having sired a father by his high school student Noel. Catherine is having a hard time coping with it all, especially in light of the fact that her father has recently passed away and her mother, Eve, has decided to sell the family summer home, Chance Harbor, on Prince Edward Island. Sounds like a course in Family Dysfunction 101. The difference herein is how does each character deal with the gradual revelations that initially stun all of them and what kind of new relationships develop as the family life evolves?

Numerous descriptions of beautiful Chance Harbor will engage every reader, a place where it's safe to relax and let nature heal, if possible, what needs to be let go and what needs to be grabbed and dealt with. It's the perfect combination of seashore and rugged living! Near to Catherine's home are wooded and mountainous areas where hiking and fresh air also serve to relax and fully engage with the present moment! The environment clearly parallels the family's turbulent transformation that is patiently and poignantly described. As the story evolves, strong feelings are verbalized and secrets are revealed, especially with the undoing of Catherine and Russell's marriage, the reappearance of Zoe who is now clean, repentant and willing to try to undo the damage she left behind years ago. New romances will emerge, one's that respect the past and serve to accept a different kind of future. Willow is a young woman who has her own moments of wisdom and mistakes, and she is able to demonstrate how one opens up to see something other than stereotypical patterns which enables Catherine and even her grandmother Eve to realize the past need not be repeated.

Chance Harbor is a lovely novel with some very complex interactions that seem rather edgy but which are transformed at just the right moment to scenes that keep the reader fully engaged. The reader finds that he or she wants to know how the relationships of mother-daughter, father-daughter, sisters, and lovers will grow or terminate. Very carefully crafted story about love that endures the worst that life can throw, stays solid where it should and leaves behind the dross! Highly recommended contemporary fiction!

Laurie Carlson says

This is a full, rich book that is sure to satisfy women's fiction lovers a hundred times over! I more than loved this book, and you know how much I LOVE women's fiction! I was in my glory! This book is extremely character driven, which I love, too. Every character is unique and great in their own way, and you know with a character driven book there are going to be a lot of ups and downs with all the characters. Yes, that did happen in this book. The characters had very active and full lives, and the best part is I could relate to where this story took place so well because I was there once, a long time ago. Prince Edward Island is off the eastern shores of Nova Scotia, Canada, and is one of the most beautiful islands I have ever seen. Why, you wonder? Aside from the fishing, it is farmed, and that is the beauty of it. The land is so expansive you can see this from the car alone, along with the many different crops that are grown, making it look like a patchwork quilt. The pure beauty is really indescribable. The reason this book got its title is there are a lot of Harbors on this island (it's surrounded by water, of course), they name the Harbors. For this book, the author named it 'Chance Harbor', and that so goes along with this book! Anyway, if you are ever in the area of Nova Scotia, Canada, make it a point to visit Prince Edward Island!

Being a character driven book, there is a lot of discussion between the four characters. Eve, if you want to even consider her a mother, is mother to good daughter, Catherine, and bad daughter, Zoe, then a grandchild comes along later in this story, Willow. The problem? They don't all act their ages. Problems arise, different people have to take control of the different issues that pop up in their lives, and the secrets, oh, the secrets that come out! The issues that occur when Eve decides she wants to sell the vacation home on Prince Edward Island! Not pretty, and the secrets, oh, the secrets.

So now I've found a new author I want to read MORE from! Her writing grabs you from the very start, and you just don't want to put this book down at all. This author really has a hold on you! If you like women's fiction, then you need to read this book!

This book is one that would be an excellent Book Club pick! It's even easier to be a Book Club choice because there is a Conversation Guide in the back to help you along.

I want to thank Penguin/New American Library for providing a print copy of this book for me to enjoy reviewing in exchange for a review of my own opinion.

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

Eve, Catherine, Zoe, and Willow. Grandmother, mother, daughters, and granddaughter all caught up in family secrets.

All four women had a lot going on over the years that made today difficult for each one of them.

Join in the suspense as well as the family saga that will pull at your heart strings and make you want to be with the characters.

CHANCE HARBOR takes us through the years with Eve, Catherine, Zoe, and Willow. Willow was my favorite. She is sweet but wise. Zoe made me crazy. Eve and Catherine were characters that held the story together as secrets unraveled and brought the characters closer, made them more understanding, or simply helped them find themselves.

Ms. Robinson has crafted a beautiful story with unforgettable characters and descriptions of Prince Edward Island that have you right there sharing the experiences and pain as well as the little bit of the characters' happiness.

All four women had wonderful stories to tell and secrets to reveal. Secrets both good and bad. I couldn't decide whose secret I liked the most. :)

I truly enjoyed CHANCE HARBOR, and any women's fiction fan which includes me will fall in love with this book and its characters. The setting as well as the warmth and the vividness of the characters pull you in and keep you turning the pages.

This was my first book by this author even though this isn't her first book.

Ms. Robinson has a way with words that has you not wanting the characters' stories or the book to end.

Absolutely recommend this book. Read it and ENJOY. 5/5

This book was given to me free of charge and without compensation by the publisher in return for an honest review.

Amy says

I was excited to get an advance copy of Chance Harbor and had high expectations after reading The Wishing Hill and Beach Plum Island. This book exceeded my expectations. Kudos to Holly Robinson once again.

Robinson has a way of plucking me out of my midwestern life and plunking me down in Massachusetts, and in this novel, on Prince Edward Island as well. These are places I've never been but at Robinson's skilled hands these settings are vivid and personal to me. This story, like Robinson's other novels, takes a family secret (or two, or three) and winds realistic and likable characters into knots over them, and each other. Unravelling these secrets at the same time the story goes deeper and moves forward is Robinson's true gift to her readers.

Yvonne says

Complicated, but beautiful...just like life!

I loved the characters and the setting. Prince Edward Island holds a special place in my heart, so I enjoyed that much of the book was set there. The family dynamics were complicated, just like real life, but they worked through them in their own way. I enjoy reading about strong women and women who strive to know themselves and go after what they want. Great book...I highly recommend it!

Edith Maxwell says

I just finished reading Holly Robinson's Chance Harbor, and I have to say -- read it! Such a beautiful and multi-layered story of a complicated family and the women who hold it together, sometimes just barely but ultimately with success. There are mysteries, too. And now I need to visit Prince Edward Island, too. A fabulous read.

Charlotte Padgett says

I really enjoyed this book But was disappointed that all the other relationships didn't "finish"/

Dorine says

Contemporary women's fiction at its best, author Holly Robinson excels at emotional storytelling that teaches lessons in forgiveness. When one event after another unravels this family, you'll root for their success as well as dread what may happen next, all the while hoping the book will never end. Recommended Read!

Widow Eve MacLeish is cleaning out her summer home on Prince Edward Island in order to sell it, when she meets Darcy MacDougall with his sexy Scottish brogue and his dog Bear. Does she dare develop a

friendship while in her state of mind of loving and hating her deceased husband at the same time? A sophomore in high school, Eve's granddaughter Willow's artistic soul discovers photography as an outlet. Little does she know that her new passion may save her from the insanity that is her life.

Willow's legal guardian, Catherine, and her husband Russell, stepped in when Willow's mother disappeared. Catherine has never forgiven her drug addict sister for abandoning Willow five years ago at the bus station. Meanwhile, Eve has never stopped hoping to find her daughter everyone suspects is dead.

When Russell announces that he may lose his job once he becomes a father, Catherine's world begins to crumble along with Willow's. Catherine isn't the mother of Russell's soon-to-be-born baby – the result of his affair with a student at Willow's high school. As Catherine and Willow's lives are spiraling out of control, Eve's past begins to reveal itself. If the family can survive Russell's indiscretion, how will they handle the rollercoaster of events to follow?

There is infidelity in this story, but no one is getting away with a simple slap on their wrist for it either. Their indiscretions tear their lives apart with a fair amount of fallout. I mention this for romance readers who dislike this plot device in their books. Normally, its inclusion in romantic stories sets me off on a tangent as well, but this time I feel it is very well portrayed and dealt with in a way that satisfied my agitation with the subject. Its presence within, as well as the happy-for-now ending for this book, suits women's fiction with romance elements perfectly.

In many ways, CHANCE HARBOR is like a train wreck in slow motion, written so beautifully that you can't help looking, even though you know there will be painful moments. I fell in love with these characters and their stories as they weave back and forth between their present and past.

I often dislike a book with multiple points of view that intertwine from present to past because I lose track of who I'm reading about and get confused. This wasn't the case with this book that sunk its claws into me and wouldn't let go. So addictive! The family drama sucked me right in. I love books that start off strong like this one and capture my interest so much that I hate being an adult who can't just read all day and ignore my other responsibilities.

The emotion in CHANCE HARBOR is often poignant and the characters made me cry with them. Shocker after shocker kept me flipping the pages, often wondering if the next revelation will break them, or cement them together as a solid indestructible force. I was enamored with several of the characters, but I was especially charmed by the wise-cracking teenager, Willow, who seemed more resilient and perceptive than the adults.

I highly recommend CHANCE HARBOR to lovers of romantic fiction and family sagas. There are many more characters in this story who intrigued me and were an intricate part of the plot. I was so entertained by this family and their friends that I hated for their story to end. Superb storytelling that provokes the reader to laughter and tears, CHANCE HARBOR is a book you'll remember with a yearning for more.

Review by Dorine, courtesy of Romance Junkies and The Zest Quest. Print ARC provided by the publisher.

Ann says

This is a wonderful book that explores family dynamics. We have two sisters that are complete opposites, a mother who thinks she will be alone for the rest of her life and a granddaughter who clings to her aunt when her mother abandons her in a bus station. So realistic, set in Canada this story is a surprise from Start to finish. I would never have predicted the twists in the family but it's brilliant.

Marilee says

I really enjoyed this story and would like to see a second one continuing the lives of these characters.

Pam Wiebe says

This is the first book I've read by Holly Robinson, but I will definitely be looking for others by this author. This story of the dynamics between siblings and parents was complex with many unexpected twists.

The book is set in Massachusetts and Prince Edward Island and even mentioned New Brunswick. :)

Initially I wasn't sure I was going to enjoy the book; the prologue left me struggling to figure out the connections to the characters in chapter one, but before long I was hooked. I had a very hard time to put this book down. I normally only have 30 minutes each day at bedtime to read; however found myself picking up *Chance Harbor* every time I had a minute to sneak in a few paragraphs...I even finished it tonight while making dinner. I hated to see it come to an end and would love to see a sequel.

Andrea says

I was lucky enough to get a advance review copy of this book in exchange for an honest opinion. I LOVED IT!

First, it is my favorite book cover of 2015. Next, it has exactly what I love in a book- it gets your attention by page 2 and then you can't stop. I finished it at midnight last night.

I love that the title is "Chance Harbor" as the book is about second chances for nearly every character in the book. The symmetry of each character having a new chance is brilliantly written.

Bravo Holly Robinson!

Sonja Yoerg says

If you're lucky, life will hand you a second chance. And if you're smart, and nimble enough to get out of your own way, you'll take it. In *Chance Harbor*, Holly Robinson shows us just how difficult it can be to move beyond entrenched behaviors and attitudes, to see the world afresh and gamble of the golden hope of tomorrow. It might even be impossible.

The characters here have edges, and secrets galore. The mom plays favorites (as did the dad, now deceased). One sister is straight and good, with a cad for a husband. The other, a hot mess, abandoned her daughter with the good sister, and is presumed dead. But none of these folks follow the tropes. Over the course of the story, they evoke our sympathy, as well as our frustration and disappointment. Even the cad. Just a teensy bit.

And that is what makes *Chance Harbor* ring so true. Robinson's skillful storytelling, smooth pacing and vivid characters combine to show us that no matter our secrets, misgivings and mistakes, compassion is the most precious human virtue. An engrossing story, with plenty of meat on the bones for hungry book clubs.
