



## The Summer of Second Chances

*Maddie Please*

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## **The Summer of Second Chances** Maddie Please

**'The Summer of Second Chances is the perfect feelgood summer read.' Chrissie Manby, author of What I Did On My Holidays**

**Lottie is about to discover that even when you think you've lost everything, hope and romance can be just around the corner . . .**

It takes time to build your life. To get into a long-term (OK, a bit boring) relationship. To find a job (you don't completely hate). Lottie might not be thrilled with the life she's put together, but it's the one she's got.

So when in the course of one terrible evening, it all comes crashing down around her, Lottie has a choice: give herself over to grief at being broke, single and completely lacking in prospects.

Or, brick by brick, build herself a new life. And this time, with a little help from friends, a crumbling cottage in Devon and a handsome stranger, maybe she can make it the one she always wanted.

***The Summer of Second Chances* is an irresistibly funny read about never giving up, whatever the world throws at you. Perfect for fans of Jenny Colgan, Jane Costello and Christie Barlow.**

## **The Summer of Second Chances Details**

Date : Published July 17th 2017 by Avon

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Author : Maddie Please

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## From Reader Review The Summer of Second Chances for online ebook

### Kaisha (The Writing Garnet) says

All reviews can be found on my blog at <https://thewritinggarnet.wordpress.com>

If you're in desperate need of a pick me up, or feel as though your brain has been working overtime and requires an urgent book shaped antidote - then this book is for you.

Lottie has lost everything; her money, her home, her relationship, but most importantly - she has lost her peace of mind. With an uncertain future ahead of her, Lottie needs to make a decision; wallow in self-pity from the discomfort of her car as a new home, OR make the most out of a bad situation and follow the only path that she can see. The only way is up...

What a fab little book! Don't be fooled by the colourful cover as there is A LOT more to this storyline than meets the eye. Despite the fact that the storyline contains several deep themes, the author has ensured that those moments are laced with some rather unforgettable one-liners.

At the start of the book we see Lottie's world crumble, but, by the end of the book it's as though she is a completely different person. To see a character flourish so much in such a short space of time (for us), was quite similar to watching your child learn something new for the first time. I got a bit emosh ;).

Just like Lottie, we have all been put into a situation where we have no idea how to get ourselves out of; 'The Summer of Second Chances' reminded me of that fact in a way that made me go 'oh hang on a minute, I am quite proud of myself'. When we go through difficult times we don't see our strengths working hard. We bluff. We shrug it off. It's not until AFTER the event when we're able to sit and gather our thoughts, and we are able to appreciate what we can do if we have no other option.

For me, this storyline was the perfect reminder of how NOT to give up, as well as advising me that eye-candy was the perfect distraction from any troubles. Obviously I'm not going to disagree with that, are you? Lottie's new neighbour, Bryn, was such a hoot. He came across as such the opposite to Lottie in terms of mannerisms and traits, that when they were in a conversation, it was like a dog trying to have a chat with a cat. Yet weirdly enough, it worked. Well I think it worked anyway, I may have been too busy laughing!

'The Summer of Second Chances', for me, really is a sunshine after the rain type of novel. The storyline contains so much hope - some might mistake it for the gold at the end of a rainbow. I mean, there was nothing black and white about this storyline, at all. Every chapter was full of colour, humour and positivity; I loved it.

I adored this book, I'm not going to lie. I started this book in a bad mood and I finished it with a huge grin on my face. 'The Summer of Second Chances' is a diamond in the rough, but it's a gem of a book that I won't be forgetting anytime soon.

Thanks Avon.

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## **Terri Wilson says**

Deep, heavy books are not for summer. Summer books need to be light and fun and transport me away from the heat and humidity. This book is a fun read that just makes ya feel good. I like books written in the first person point of view when the characters are honest and I can relate to them. I like the main character and I connected with her and her struggles almost immediately. The author did a good job of not sharing every part of the story in the first chapter. I don't want to give any spoilers so I have to be careful with what I say, but I liked how the author developed one of the storylines over time. It made me read faster because I had to know what happened. I need to note that this book is written from an English point of view, so some of the phrases and spellings may be different than American English. However, I did not feel like that took away from the story.

\*\*I received a copy of this book from NetGalley\*\*

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## **K.E. Coles says**

This is a fun, upbeat story with a warm heart. The main character, Lottie, is immensely likeable and I found myself rooting for her from the start. The writing is smooth and very witty, with some beautiful description. I thought the character of Susan was particularly vivid. At times this is laugh out loud funny, at others moving. It's not only an amusing read though. It's also heartwarming, uplifting and rather lovely.

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## **Carrie says**

Lottie had a pretty stable life with her long time partner not needing for anything and feeling comfortable until one fateful night when her world was torn apart. Broke, single and completely lost after that night Lottie has to rely on the kindness of a friend for a place to stay in a crumbling cottage in Devon in exchange for fixing the place up.

After setting into the mess of a cottage Lottie finds her days filled with cleaning and scrubbing while she takes a look back on just where things went wrong in her life. With the help of a handsome neighbor things start sorting themselves out with the cottage but will she ever figure out how to learn to live and love again?

The Summer of Second Chances by Maddie Please is one of those lovely little reads that makes you think about life. Lottie does a lot of self evaluating and figuring things out in the book flashing back to how she ended up where she did. She was an easy to like character as you felt her moving on and growing with every turn of the page.

The one thing I would have liked to have seen more of in this book was a bit more interaction between Lottie and Bryn. I think the author did a good job not rushing Lottie into a new man which was nice and giving her time to grow on her own but I also wouldn't have minded the romance blooming a bit more before the ending came.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress....>

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### **Carla Johnson-Hicks says**

In *The Summer of Second Chances* we meet Charlotte (Lottie) a woman in her early thirties who was quite content. She had lived with Ian for eight years, had a large, beautiful home she had decorated, worked part time as a receptionist for a doctor so she wouldn't be bored, and spent the rest of the time with her friends or entertaining. It all fell apart one New Year's Eve when she found out he was having an affair and when he stormed out drunk, had an accident where he was killed. Finding out the business was bankrupt, that he had gambled away all their money and that he left the house to his mother, she was now destitute, homeless and not sure what to do next. When her friend Jess offers her Holly Cottage as a place to live while she redecorates it, she has no other choice. She heads off to Devon and her second chance.

This was a nice feel good read which was well written. The characters of Lottie and Bryn were both very easy to like. They were fun, emotional and interesting to get to know. The secondary characters also added much to the story, especially Ian's mother. It was a very quick read, I did it in one sitting which surprised me. The funny moments in this story had me laughing out loud, but the sad moments brought you back down to earth. The growth of Lottie's new relationship was slow and believable. I really enjoyed this story and I will look for more books from this author. Check this one out for a summer read or to sit by the fire in the winter, you won't regret it. The publisher generously provided me with a copy of this book via Netgalley.

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### **Agi says**

Wow, what a gorgeous, cute little story "The Summer of Second Chances" was! I truly didn't know what to expect from this book but it really wow-ed me, with the light - hearted writing style, interesting plot and lovable characters, and the last few sentences at the end were just brilliant and a perfect end to this book. OK, I admit, there was one thing that bothered me, namely for me it looked as if this book was written by two different authors - why, I hear you ask? Well, you know, so the story and narration flew steadily and then suddenly, like the impossible to see icebergs, the narration was starting to turn incredibly hilarious, the events ridiculously funny and I was finding myself laughing out loud at Lottie's antics, and it lasted for a few pages and then the story telling was back again to this normal, steady one. It happened a few times and while it didn't make me confused or something, oh no, I enjoyed those moments incredibly, it just made me think. But that's me. My problems. Don't pay any attention and just read this book because it's great. And it has a stunning cover - so summery!

The story introduces us to Lottie, who's been through some dramatic moments in her life recently - she's homeless, money - less, jobless, single - and is now looking for a fresh start. It seems that she can find it in a little cottage belonging to one of her friends - in return for redecorating it, Lottie can live there next, and she jumps at the chance. After living a comfortable life, with no financial troubles and a partner on her side, it was a change for Lottie, wasn't it? But maybe it was this what Lottie needed right now? Well, this and a new neighbour, Bryn?

I have seen many accident prone characters in my life but Lottie overdone them all! Guys, it was incredible, really, those situations and troubles she was getting herself in - this story abounded in many awkward, embarrassing situations. I loved Lottie, she was such a positive personality, even though she had to cope with

so many awful things in her life. She was this kind of character that grows on you and you keeps everything crossed for her. And I loved to see Lottie changing, spreading her wings despite all new troubles and worries and turning into almost a different person. She was honest and told us about things how they really were, and I really didn't have any problems to connect with her and to understand her.

And of course, let's not forget Lottie's new neighbour, Bryn. Not broody nor moody, like many other characters yet incredibly interesting and colourful and hmmm, I wouldn't say no to such a neighbour and his jacuzzi.

It wouldn't be a rom - com without the "rom" part, of course, and I loved this aspect of this story! Sure, there were the necessary ups and downs, the road to happiness was bumpy and not too straightforward but it never felt too cheesy or forced, if anything it was fresh, funny, adorable and honest. It was not too rushed, which was also great, because moving into a new man too quickly would make it too unbelievable, and it also gave the heroine time to come to terms a little with the new situation.

Altogether, "The Summer of Second Chances" was a lovely and easy read that made me feel relaxed and I finished it grinning from ear to ear. There were characters that you quickly start to root for and relate to, and it was a light take on new beginnings and - yes! - second chances. It also makes you think about life, about figuring out what it is you really want, but not in a too serious way, nono, no worries. However, there is also so much to this story than meets the eye, there is depth, it touches upon some sensitive issues but it's perfectly mixed with light - heartedness and really some best one - liners and situations in history. So if you are in need of cheering up, picking yourself up and seeing how not to give up, try this book - I can only highly recommend it to you!

Copy provided by the publisher in return for an honest review.

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### **Hannah Symonds says**

I loved this nice short easy read. It is such a fun and uplifting read that is pure escapism from everyday life. There are lots of witty one liners that made me giggle and I liked the fact when everything gets too much Lottie reaches for the wine. This is a definite author I would happily read again.

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### **Grace J Reviewerlady says**

This is a really enjoyable, light hearted, perfect-for-summer read. Enough going on to keep you interested and focused but not overly complicated as to demand too much attention!

The novel begins with Charlotte - or Lottie - finding herself homeless and manless.. Reasons why are revealed as the story progresses, but in the meantime she needs somewhere to live. Enter her friend Jess who needs someone to completely redecorate her rented-out cottage which the last tenants have left in a dreadful state. Happy to just have a roof over her head, Lottie happily agrees to do the work .. and so the tale gets going.

Secrets, misunderstandings and surprises abound in this book but throughout it all there is humour. Really funny events and witty one-liners make this a fabulously entertaining read.

Maddie Please really does know how to please her readers and keep them interested. If you're searching for some escapism, then look no further - this is a fun, uplifting rom-com which will leave you with a giggle in your heart.

I received an arc via NetGalley in exchange for my honest and unbiased review.

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### **Carol Beasley says**

This was a nice feel good read which was well written with warm characters and an interesting plot. There were lots of laugh out loud moments and some very touching moments. I found myself liking the main character a lot and enjoyed reading her story.

I received this book from Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Karen Mace says**

I found this book to be one of those that was so easy to get into that you lose yourself completely for a few hours and it leaves you feeling warm and fuzzy once you've finished!

Lottie, the main character, is so easy to empathise with. She's found herself alone, homeless and puzzled as to where her life is going. Losing her partner has been a major shock, and the fall out from his untimely death was one she hadn't been expected. So when she is offered a friends' rundown cottage in the country to crash at and renovate, she is left with little option but to grab it! But once she gets painting she loses herself and finds that time therapeutic and gives her the time needed to get her life back on track.

Of course, it does help when your next door neighbour is a rather quiet, secretive and dishy bloke! He's the brother in law of her best friend, but that is as much as he wants people to know! But he always seems to find a way of seeing Lottie when she's not looking her best - wearing a tin of paint is one way to introduce yourself to your neighbour!

Their relationship does evolve quite quickly but I like the way they are with each other - it's fun and flirty but they don't let each other know everything about each other straight away. They both seem quite reluctant to share every detail of their lives and with their pasts becoming clear you can understand why. But their connection they seem to have is really heartwarming!

The setting is idyllic and I loved the characters introduced throughout - Lotties' sister, her best friend, and her partners' mother - all show different aspects to the stories running throughout and they aren't all light and fluffy, and I think Lottie copes quite admirably with whatever is thrown at her - this is one of those books that shows exactly why you should never give up even when all seems bleak!

Read it in one sitting as I just enjoyed being in 'Lottie world' and I highly recommend this to anyone looking for inspiration, warmth and escapism

Thankyou to the publishers and NetGalley for the arc in return for a fair and honest review

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### **Katherine Hetzel says**

I took a couple of chapters to get into this if I'm honest - it's not usually the sort of thing I read! But, once I did get into it, I romped through it and finished within 24 hours.

Laugh out loud writing and some very well written sex scenes in this tender story from a debut writer. Enjoyed it immensely. Maddie's definitely one to look out for in the future.

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### **Grass monster says**

The Blurb :

Lottie is about to discover that even when you think you've lost everything, hope and romance can be just around the corner . . .

It takes time to build your life. To get into a long-term (OK, a bit boring) relationship. To find a job (you don't completely hate). Lottie might not be thrilled with the life she's put together, but it's the one she's got. So when in the course of one terrible evening, it all comes crashing down around her, Lottie has a choice: give herself over to grief at being broke, single and completely lacking in prospects. Or, brick by brick, build herself a new life. And this time, with a little help from friends, a crumbling cottage in Devon and a handsome stranger, maybe she can make it the one she always wanted.

My Thoughts :

Firstly I love love love the cover of this book. Its so colourful and pretty and it stands out so would make anyone want to pick it up and have a read.

We meet Lottie who is newly single, homeless and has no money. After her friend Jess, suggests she needs some time out, lottie goes to stay at her friends cottage in Devon. The deal is Lottie has to clean up the cottage, redecorate and make the cottage feel like a home again after being left in an awful mess by the last tennants. Lottie jumps at the chance to get away from everything and have some time out.

Throughout the book we learn more about Lottie and her past and how she got to where she is today.

A story wouldnt be complete without adding in a hunky male neighbour by the name of Bryn, we slowly get to see a developing relationship between the couple. And I wont give too much away so you have to read it to find out what happens.

This was a lovely, happy, fun read by Maddie Please and I like the way there was a lot of empathy in the story. It is easily relatable to someone going through heartbreak and finding it hard to love yourself. Its most definitely one to look out for and I hope there will be a follow up as there is so much more to this story.

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### **Jessica says**

The summer of second chances is a lovely read one I enjoyed from start to finish.

The book has an absolutely stunning cover, I just think the colours are perfect.

We meet Lottie, a character that's recently been through tragic circumstances and is now looking a fresh start. When her friend offers her a chance to live in her cottage for a while whilst she gets herself together in exchange for her doing redecorating work in the cottage, Lottie jumps at the chance.

We see Lottie develop a lovely relationship with her hunky neighbour Bryn, as a reader you're willing it to go further into a romantic relationship as they both suit each other so well and it would be lovely for Lottie to have that perfect relationship she dreams off and be treated properly.

I was gutted at how quickly the book ended as I just wanted to read more and see their relationship progress, however I'm hoping there will be a follow up book and we can find out more.

Overall I found this book so easy to read and made me feel happy when I read it, I just loved it.

I see great potential for Maddie Please and can't wait to read more from her in the future.

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### **Christina Banach says**

Looking for a book to whisk you away from the angst of 21st-century living? Look no further than *The Summer of Second Chances*. Warm, upbeat and fun with an endearing main character, this story of reinvention is so wittily-written you'll probably find yourself chuckling throughout. Cleverly-crafted, this is an enjoyably easy read which also has some agreeably hidden depths. A delightful debut. Highly recommended.

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### **Emma Crowley says**

*The Summer of Second Chances* is the debut novel from Maddie Please. It has a cute and colourful cover and is a typical chicklit story that won't set the world on fire but is a pleasant enough read. The chapter headings are all various flowers and the meaning of each given underneath, the first chapter being the snowdrop and its meaning of hope which makes sense as it is the first sign of Spring, after the long and dark months of winter, that bright and happy days are around the corner and that is what Lottie wishes for with all heart and soul. Initially I liked the thoughts behind having the names of flowers and their meanings as headings but after a few chapters I even forgot they were there and got straight into the chapter. I had been trying to find a connection between the chapter content and the meaning of each flower but to be honest they were tenuous at best so that made me question the necessity of their inclusion?

The book started off promising enough as our main female character Lottie is facing a major life upheaval. Her sanctuary of security and certainty is gone and she now faces the unknown. Now she will have to do a lot of growing up pretty fast and become the independent person she didn't realise she had needed to be for her own personal benefit and growth. 'I lost my partner, my home, a lot of my friends and my peace of mind - not necessarily in that order- and yet only a few days had passed'. The unthinkable has happened to Lottie. The man she loved, trusted and believed she knew so well has gone and in doing so has left her world in tatters. Partly because her rock has gone but also because of the lies and secrets and debt he left behind.

Lottie's cushy lifestyle is no more and she has to embark on a new adventure and as the title suggest a summer of second chances and new opportunities awaits. One questions whether Ian and Lottie were ever meant to be together for the long term given the fact that Lottie had refused his proposals of marriage several times over the years. Did she know at the back of her mind that all would turn out so different from the reality she believed she had been existing in? She had put her trust and faith in Ian and it all come crashing down. She was the one who had to deal with the repercussions of everything and in doing so over the course of the book she became a different woman as she attempted to journey through the hurt, bitterness and anger hopefully to emerge a far stronger person on the other side.

Left homeless and virtually penniless Lottie grabs the opportunity presented to her by her friend Jess. She has a cottage in Devon recently vacated by tenants and is in need of some redecorating before Jess decides to put it on the market or not. As Lottie spend hours redecorating the house she shared with Ian, in order to pass her days, she is the perfect person to step in and help Jess out. 'Now I had to take this chance and focus on the future because I certainly couldn't change the past'. At the same time she has somewhere to run to, to lick her wounds and attempt to heal. She wants no one to know where she is and she wants it kept that way for as long as possible.

I've read heaps of books where women have been let down, are now hurting and bewildered as to the next step in their lives and Lottie was no different. From the moment she arrives at Holly Cottage, aged 34, broke and with no immediate prospects, and sees the state of the cottage Lottie knows she has a challenge ahead of her and it is one she is most certainly up for. Her encounter with neighbour Bryn living in Ivy Cottage next door is the typical introduction I've read countless times before. The two get off on the wrong foot and instantly Lottie has conjured up this bad image of Bryn. Misconceptions and misunderstandings abound and they remain for the majority of the novel, yet at the same time a spark is ignited between the pair and as Bryn is the brother of Jess' husband Greg, Lottie knows she has to thread very carefully. It was fairly obvious the eventual outcome of the story and normally if I guess fairly on I sit back and enjoy everything that unfolds in the lead up to the big moment but at times in this story my attention wandered. Just as I feel the plot at times did within this book, it felt overly long and if it had been slightly shorter with a few chapters cut out, not much would have been missed out and I feel the story would have been tighter and not as aimless as it did become for several chapters.

The reasons behind the situation Lottie faces aren't all clearly explained straight away. Instead, frustratingly so, in the middle of most chapters, we would wander from present day and Lottie's adventures doing up the house, back to the past and to the time leading up to Ian's death and the immediate aftermath. The reasons were never fully explained, hints and teasers were dropped and I could guess what had happened. I understand it was Lottie's mind thinking back to what she had been through while working on a task in the present but honestly it felt all wrong and very disjointed for this to occur midway through a chapter. I think it would have been far better if the author had split chapters into present and modern day if she wanted to recap what had happened to Lottie in the months leading up to Ian's death and the immediate period following it. Leaping back and forth unexpectedly was very annoying and it didn't really help the flow of the story as I found myself on edge that in a minute I would be back in a different time frame and having to acquaint myself with a different time and place. Normally this wouldn't usually bother me but as I have said distinct separate chapters would have been more beneficial overall.

The story in the present day the more it progressed did become more enjoyable if a little bit inevitable as to the eventual outcome. The inclusion of Jenny, Lottie's sister, was a breath of fresh air. She was the polar opposite to Lottie and in a completely different place in her life compared to her sister. She was a woman on a mission to find a man and her eyes were open at every opportunity to seek what she was searching for. Having left three husbands behind in her wake and a handsome American - Trent pining for her she was here

to show Lottie a good time and as Jenny felt the silence and the isolation of the cottage was too much for her she wanted Lottie to get out and get dating and get some excitement in her life. I think the hot tub scene provided more than enough excitement than Lottie could cope with and it did have me laughing out loud. Also the scene with the water and the ceiling was hilarious and a clever way of moving the story forward, having characters come together and a few more strands of the story weaving themselves nearer to completion.

Lottie was a woman who, after being through a trauma, wants to feel good about herself but the reader can see her confidence has been knocked and a new life of positive action won't be easy to come by. The fallout of Ian's death and the estrangement from his mother Susan has bashed her confidence and she arrives at the cottage stuck in a rut, one in which she sees no way of emerging from. It was enjoyable to read of her journey to find a path that will lead to happiness but at times it just felt as if I had read this storyline umpteen times before and there was nothing new here that made this book stand out from all the rest. Undoubtedly the author has plenty of potential and there were glimpses of greatness here but they came too little for me to fully throw myself in and adore every page of this book. It was a pleasant read but not the most memorable story, the reel me in factor and have me hooked until the last page just wasn't there so what could have been amazing was just OK. I'd be interested to see how people would view the author's second book A Year of New Adventures in comparison to this one but I think I will be reading other people's opinions before deciding to read it or not.

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