



My Not So Perfect Life

Sophie Kinsella

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Part love story, part workplace dramedy, part witty critique of the false judgments we make in a social-media-obsessed world, this is New York Times bestselling author Sophie Kinsella's most timely and sharply observed novel yet.

Everywhere Katie Brenner looks, someone else is living the life she longs for, particularly her boss, Demeter Farlowe. Demeter is brilliant and creative, lives with her perfect family in a posh townhouse, and wears the coolest clothes. Katie's life, meanwhile, is a daily struggle—from her dismal rental to her oddball flatmates to the tense office politics she's trying to negotiate. The final, demeaning straw comes when Demeter makes Katie dye her roots in the office. No wonder Katie takes refuge in not-quite-true Instagram posts, especially as she's desperate to make her dad proud.

Then, just as she's finding her feet—not to mention a possible new romance—the worst happens. Demeter fires Katie. Shattered but determined to stay positive, Katie retreats to her family's farm in Somerset to help them set up a vacation business. London has never seemed so far away—until Demeter unexpectedly turns up as a guest. Secrets are spilled and relationships rejiggered, and as the stakes for Katie's future get higher, she must question her own assumptions about what makes for a truly meaningful life.

Sophie Kinsella is celebrated for her vibrant, relatable characters and her great storytelling gifts. Now she returns with all of the wit, warmth, and wisdom that are the hallmarks of her bestsellers to spin this fresh, modern story about presenting the perfect life when the reality is far from the image.

My Not So Perfect Life Details

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From Reader Review My Not So Perfect Life for online ebook

Margitte says

Just like the alphabet, bitch, *I* come before *U*. Yep, Demeter Farlowe (the goddess of the harvest, but also Mrs. Wilton in her other life), a proper Godzilla II, heads a team of pretty, but nasty nails on parade in the advertising world; a goopy pudding of gals, fluffed up by high heels, the secret Wednesday Bacchus devotion, and Ya Ya-sisterhood to die for.

Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game, can be regarded as the general mantra for the miniskirt brigade coming with the high-prized hype and pretentiousness. Welcome to Cooper Clemmow branding company.

When something goes wrong in your life, just yell 'plot twist' and move on. Katie Brenner, a wanne-be Londoner is forced back to the farm, out in the British sticks, when her low-paid, struggling, position as a research associate in the prestigious advertising company becomes redundant. What feels like the end of her London-ness (which gives her a spring in her step, it's so intangible, so buzzy), is actually the beginning of a new challenge, when she helps her father and stepmother to put glamorous into glamping on their farm, with proper wi-fi, 400-count must-haves on the yurt beds, and a new yoga discovery, called Vedari, for the upper- and middleclasses who's stomach sensitivity grows with their income.

Out with the serum in the curls, the unfamiliar straight, tortured hair, the most important steps at a front door, away from the biscuit people, the naked-man coat stand, the amazing giant plastic flowers, and in with a little bit of amorous huffing and puffing in the cow dung on her way to find a *considerate* man, number one, but, number two and three, a man of *quality* who *values* her. *Fun* becomes such a last-year's kind of vintage rhetoric in the end, oh so like Alex Astalis, for instance. But wait, that's only in the hunt for the perfect partner. On the farm *fun* is the buzz word for chia seed, organic ginger, and special seaweed-groupies with a Gwyneth Paltrow-lifestyle craze.

It's the brochure for Ansters Farm that got the moss on the rolling stones to scatter in totally new directions for the Somerset girl.

This is a satire in the rom com literary genre with a touch of Hollywood fluff in the ending. However, it comes with a little more substance, meat to the bones, and I loved that. I'm somewhat subjective and biased too in my rating. My daughter took a sabbatical from her 18-hour days in the advertising world to tour the world. She is the Katie Brenner in our own story.

Cozy and quaint. A cutesy kind of fun read. Really enjoyable and good. A few good laughs came with the experience. Yes, and you will find me in Katie's helicopter dad, but without his crazy schemes. :-))

Esil says

The last few books I read were dark, one of them was particularly dark. GR friend Larry suggested that perhaps I needed a "palate cleanser", and, yup, that's what I needed and I found it in Sophie Kinsella's *My Not So Perfect Life*. I used to read Kinsella's Shopaholic books, but then I got tired of the formula and the rom com literary genre generally. But it sure felt nice to revisit Kinsella when looking for something lighter. Katie is a young woman from the British countryside who tries to make it in the London advertising world. But life sucks in London -- she has difficult flat mates, no money, and what seems like an impossible boss.

True to the genre, things unravel, things start turning around, and then things work out. While somewhat predictable, Kinsella is good at the genre. Katie is a great character -- a bit naive, but mostly smart, strong and sporting a solid moral compass. Kinsella mocks pretence and privilege, but still manages to make the people involved more human than mere caricatures. There's a decent underlying message about how people feel compelled to make their lives look better than they are -- especially on social media -- and how that makes it harder for people to deal with the real ups and downs of their lives. There's some humour, there's some romance... Yup, all the right ingredients for a good palate cleanser -- or perhaps a really good bowl of chicken soup is a better analogy. So my 4 star rating reflects that this is a good contribution to the genre and that it really came at the right time for me. Thank you to Netgalley and the publisher for an opportunity to read an advance copy.

Lola says

It's no wonder Sophie Kinsella's books are so widely acclaimed. She speaks of real contemporary issues in ways—usually with humour—that make the reader want to listen to what she says.

She doesn't try to brainwash you. She's not saying life is perfect, she's saying it's going to shit on you a good hundred times, and then maybe if you keep your head high... you might just be fine... probably.

Kinsella's heroines all have the same voice. I do wonder if I'm the only one who's picked up on that. That doesn't mean they're unoriginal. Kinsella's women are witty and smart in surprising ways, but they're all a little lost in life and charmingly innocent.

They're also true working women who have ups and downs and with whom an important part of you will be able to connect. Katie is no exception. She's a twenty-six-year-old trying to make it in this hard world.

Sadly, she realizes the guy she's falling for will never go out with her. And she gets fired. And her roommates are the worst. And she's short on money and can afford close to nothing at all.

But does she pity her own situation? Is she crying in a corner? I mean, there's no time for that. If she isn't back at her folks' house soon, she won't have a place to stay.

Katie is so great. I don't say this often enough about the heroines I read about. I say they're courageous, strong, heartfelt and determined... but I often forget to think to say the obvious. Katie is the sister you never had and Demeter is Meryl Streep wearing Prada on drugs. I loved the hell out of their interactions. How their relationship evolved fascinated me.

I bet you're curious about the romance. There ALWAYS is romance in Sophie Kinsella's books. But although Katie thinks about men—as she is currently single and a person with so much love to give—she wants to focus on her professional career first and I fully respect that. Don't pressure her, coz she's got a lot going on! Just be patient...

PS. The term "Chick Lit" should really die. It's disgusting and offensive to women who should not be referred to as "chicks." We're not animals. And also, I'd quite love for men to read this book, I know my grandpa would have loved to, so really, it's not just for women. Sorry to end the review on such a negative note, but this I had to say too. Katie would have as well...

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Wilma says

Kostelijk...heerlijke feelgood roman zoals alleen Sophie Kinsella ze kan schrijven! De genante, hilarische situaties waarin Cat/Kathy zich manouvreert...zo herkenbaar...De band met haar, in haar ogen, excentrieke vader en last but not least haar liefde voor haar baas die uiteindelijk beantwoordt wordt! Ik heb genoten!!

Jennifer says

Working in the behavioral health field, I see how people present themselves while in the waiting room and then I see the real deal once in my office. The difference can be as extreme as night and day. Lesson? Everything ain't always as it seems.

It's just as easy to pass flattering judgments on people as it is to pass those of the more disgruntled sort. People who seem like they have the best life ever rarely do behind closed doors. Let's face it, no one has a perfect anything. My Not So Perfect Life is a prime example of this train of thought. It was light, funny, heartfelt, unfair, revengeful, a little bit mysterious, redemptive, and real. This book was a joy to read (via audio) and I would highly recommend it if you're a fan of chick-lit. Kinsella groupie or not, check it out!

My favorite quote:

"I think I've finally worked out how to feel good about life. Every time you see someone's bright-and-shiny, remember: They have their own crappy truths too. Of course they do. And every time you see your own crappy truth and feel despair and think, Is this my life, remember: It's not. Everyone's got a bright-and-shiny, even if it's hard to find sometimes."

Heather 'Bookables' says

Oh Sophie Kinsella DOES NOT DISAPPOINT!
I HIGHLY RECOMMEND listening to this book! The audiobook & narrator were fantastic!

I loved how this was slightly different from other Kinsella books. It focused more on our main character, Katie & her coming to terms with her career and how people perceive her.

FULL VIDEO REVIEW COMING SOON!

Cait • A Page with a View says

That was absolutely adorable and is totally my new favorite Sophie Kinsella book! It still has the whole London scene, upbeat tone, and endearing characters, but the romance isn't the main focus and the main character is by far the most down-to-earth one yet.

Katie grew up on a rural dairy farm but is trying to carve out a successful life in London. She's changed her

name, accent, and appearance for London, and her Instagram feed makes her life look way more glamorous than it really is. When Katie gets fired, she goes home for a short time to help her dad start a glamping business, which leads to all sorts of funny and heartwarming situations. Katie's horrible former boss who is basically a Gwyneth Paltrow minion comes to stay aaaand Katie starts to see a different side to her. Ok this book actually is a bunch of smaller plots tied together because I just explained basically nothing... there's lots of plots and revenge and romance, too.

There were so many scenes that made me laugh out loud, yet the overall tone is much more subdued and sensible than previous books. The strong, likable characters were definitely the best part. And the little bit of romance is super adorable, but the main relationship is actually the friendship Katie develops with her misunderstood boss. It was just really refreshing to see two women supporting each other like that, so I definitely recommend this for a lighthearted, feel-good read!!

Irena says

So..... I am in a serious debate now.

I can't decide if this is my new all-time favorite book by Sophie Kinsella or if Twenties Girl is still my number one...

Ohh, this is so hard, it shouldn't be this hard!!

Anyway, this book is perfect!

The end was a bit... cheezy but not too cheezy, but still cheezy enough to spice everything up with flavour of love...

Okay, now I'm really rambling!

I won't bother you anymore, but just before I write my proper review I'll just tell you that **YOU NEED THIS BOOK IN YOUR LIFE!**

While reading:

I'm so happy I'm reading this right now!!!

Katerina says

It's Monday morning.

You wake up early, determined to get to work on time.

You leave behind your crappy apartment and your crazy roommates.

You run to catch the bus, but your high heels are killing you, so you miss the bus *and* you're forced to reach the metro station on foot, while the bypassing cars keep splashing you and your only trench coat with mud.

Your feet are sore and your hair resembles a bird nest when you finally get in the train. It is so crowded, though, that you end up accidentally eating the breakfast of the incredulous woman next to you. In the end you get to work, and commence your boring tasks while you day-dream that one day they'll recognize your talent and promote you.

And then *she* arrives. Demeter. Your boss. The woman who inspires you with her brilliant ideas, her glossy hair and designer clothes, the woman who can't even remember your name. But-wait, she asks you to join her in her office! *This is it*, you think and your chest is ready to explode. *This is your chance*. And so, you enter her office, nervous but overly excited, preparing your *thank you* speech, until the moment... she asks you to dye her hair.

This is more or less Katie's life, presented by Sophie Kinsella in a **hilarious and refreshing manner**. Ambitious and devoted to her dreams, Katie left her family farm and her heavy accent in Somerset in order to pursue her career in branding and promotion in her favorite city, London, but her life is not as glamorous as it appears on Instagram. And just when she thinks things will get better workwise, and she meets a funny and gorgeous guy who makes her toes curl, she gets fired. Disappointed she returns to Somerset and helps her father and stepmother organize and promote their farm as a glamping retreat. Amidst naming cows and greeting loud families, lo and behold! Demeter arrives. It's Katie's opportunity to exact revenge on the witch, but something bothers her. Maybe Demeter is not the cold-hearted, cruel and ignorant demon everyone thinks she is. Maybe she has problems of her own. And maybe, her perfect life is not so perfect after all.

My Not So Perfect Life is a **delightful, adorable, uplifting read**, a great company when you hate the world and/or your life and/or your face and you're on the verge of drowning in self-pity. Or when you look for a boost to make you forget your crappy day. Or simply when you need something **fun**.

There is a rare **authenticity** in the prose of Sophie Kinsella, a deep connection to your reality that makes you see yourself in Katie. She is such a relatable and wonderful character, you can feel, truly feel her inner battles, the way she is torn between two lives, and two sides of herself. **The cool, classy London girl or the farmer's daughter**. Kat or Katie. The girl with the perfect life and the girl with the not-so-perfect life. And you realize that the latter, the not-so-perfect part, is the one that fills you with **contentment**, a genuine euphoria you want to touch, cuddle, put in a box and preserve forever. Your face hurts from smiling, and your heart flutters like a bird every time Alex appears (the aforementioned funny and gorgeous guy whom - of course - I pictured as Henry Cavill because apparently my mind is not capable of conjuring another man's face)

The tension, the attraction and the connection between Alex and Katie is tangible, and makes you giddy-borderline-ridiculous. The romantic element, though, is not this book's main focus. Throughout the story, the myth of the so-called perfect life is demolished, and an unexpected **friendship** blossoms between two women who are not so different after all. Demeter has her flaws, but there is so much more to her character, and the way Katie starts warming up to her, and understands that the real thing, the imperfect thing, is the most worthy is the whole book's essence.

“Every time you see someone's bright-and-shiny, remember: They have their own crappy truths too. Of course they do. And every time you see your own crappy truth and feel despair and think, 'Is this my life?', remember: It's not. Everyone's got a bright-and-shiny, even if it's hard to find sometimes.”

A tale of love and friendship, My Not So Perfect Life is chick-lit at its finest!

My special thanks to my wonderful friend Aj and her inspiring review that motivated me to start this book!

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

I read some Sophie Kinsella books back in the day and liked them so I thought I would get this one and give it a try. I was worried because the summary didn't sound like my cup of tea, but Lord, I'm glad I got it all because of Sophie Kinsella. I freaking loved it!

Katie lives in London and she works at a job where she is trying to get noticed by her boss Demeter. Katie is hoping she will see her potential and give her a real job. Poor ole Katie is working check to check and living with some mates in a flat.

Katie also has a crush on her other boss, Alex. She thinks something is going on with him and Demeter though. She has this hate relationship with Demeter because she acts like she's better than anyone else. She has the perfect life, the husband, the kids, the job, the house, the everything. But, as we all know things aren't always what they seem.

Katie ends up losing her job and she moves out to the farm where her dad and stepmom live. She gets all of these things set up for them to run a B&B and for people to have a farm experience. She does a great job and they start making money.

Then . . . Demeter and her family show up. Katie is about to freak because she didn't tell her dad that she lost her job, but ole Demeter doesn't recognize Katie because she has gone back to her natural self.

Oh, what fun it was to read about Katie taking out all kinds of revenge on Demeter having her do some crazy stuff on the farm.

Then some other stuff happens and Katie is found out and some other stuff happens and then Alex gets involved and then all hell breaks loose and it's just so good y'all ! I laughed and cried my way through this book. I just love it so much. Yay me! =)

MY BLOG: [Melissa Martin's Reading List](#)

Jessica ✿ ⇒ Silverbow ⇒ ✿ Rabid Reads-no-more says

THIS BOOK. Gah, this book. <3 <3 <3

RTC.

Emily May says

Kinsella is my go-to for fun, feel-good reads that demand very little of me. After all these years, since the very first shopaholic book, I know exactly what I'm going to get from her and I'm totally good with that.

Unfortunately, though, a huge chunk of My Not So Perfect Life bored the pants off me.

The author's books may be shallow and silly, but I have also always found them charming, funny and charismatic. I couldn't help liking Becky Bloomwood. I especially liked Audrey and her family from 2015's Finding Audrey. But I felt zero spark from Katie Brenner. Or this book's love interest. Or the story.

Others have noted the similarities between this and *The Devil Wears Prada*, and that is especially true of the book's opening. I would say it is practically identical. Katie Brenner is starting her new job at a trendy marketing/branding agency in London. It all seems very glamorous, but her reality is running errands and filling out spreadsheets for her boss - Demeter - who also happens to be selfish and insensitive. Demeter has the dream life, it seems, and everyone hates her.

Then things take a turn for the worse when Katie is fired and must return to her family in the English countryside and settle into her new job - helping out with their glamping business. Until Demeter shows up with her family for a holiday and Katie is forced to confront the fact that she might have misjudged her all along.

Everything I've written here is just a rehash of the blurb, and yet **it is almost the entire plot of the book**. There's virtually nothing that happens that you can't get from the description. The story is revealed almost in its entirety by the blurb, and everything else is predictable. Plus, this book could easily shed a hundred pages and have lost nothing.

Even if you disregard for a second my disconnect from Katie and her overlong and dull story, even if you forget the uninteresting love interest, much is built up around the whole "finding out Demeter is not actually all she first seems" angle, but this was unsatisfying to me, too. Her rudeness is explained away through misunderstandings, and while some revelations about her draw sympathy, am I really supposed to feel sorry for her because - oh my gosh - she has a few home troubles and a mortgage? I actually cringed when she complained about the beautiful stone steps outside her house and **how hard it is to get a pram up them**. Boo freaking hoo.

It wasn't so awful that I want to give it one star; it was just wholly unremarkable. I can feel myself already forgetting Katie Brenner and, no joke, I have honestly already forgotten the guy's name. It was too long, not fun enough, and the outcomes not satisfying enough.

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Meredith says

***My Not So Perfect Life* is such a fun escape!**

There's something about Sophie Kinsella's books that not only draw me in, but also make me laugh and smile. Her characters are usually flawed but likable, and the main character in this book, Katie Brenner, follows suit.

Katie “Cat” Brenner is living her dream life. It’s not perfect, but she is willing to overlook her hour and half painful commute to work, her crazy boss, her tiny room in a shared flat, and her lack of a social life because she gets to live in London. She is envious of her friends and her boss, who use social media to portray that they live the perfect lives. Katie uses Instagram to make it seem as she is living a much more glamorous life than she is living. She believes so much in what others portray, that she doesn’t realize that what’s posted online isn’t reality.

Things start to look up for Katie: She is invited to socialize with some her coworkers, her crazy boss allows her to attend an important meeting, and she catches the eye of one of the partners in the firm. But just as quickly as things come together, they fall apart—Katie is fired. Unable to secure another position in London, she is forced to move home and help her family with their glamping business. She now must remove her London veneer and come to terms with who she is and what she really wants out of life.

What makes *My Not So Perfect Life* different from Kinsella's other books is that the plot is not solely focused on romance—it’s more about a girl struggling to find her identity in a world that is obsessed with the images people portray online. There’s a little bit of mystery, some romance, and revenge on a seemingly horrible boss. This is an enjoyable read, and I highly recommend for a bit of fun!

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Aj the Ravenous Reader says

“No one’s life has to be perfect.”

My not so Perfect Life has been one of my most surprisingly good reads this year and also one of the most hilarious books I’ve read ever (The Panini and “Vedari” incidents had me wiping tears of laughter. I swear.) and if a book could make me laugh this much, I believe it deserves five stars. I’m logical that way. ^^

Katie, a Somerset farm girl who wants to make it big in London struggles with everything in the big city but doesn’t give up because living in London and earning a job that has something to do with branding have always been her lifelong dream. I mean her pathetic Instagram posts are heartbreaking but her positive attitude is so admirable, I can’t help but root for her well-being and success.

“It’s not that I lie. I was in those places, even if I couldn’t afford a hot chocolate. It’s just I don’t dwell on the not-so-great stuff in my life...And the point is, it’s something to aspire to, something to hope for. One day my life will match my Instagram posts. One day.”

Everything about the plot is so catchy and the workplace setting is very relatable. Everytime **Demeter**, Katie’s seemingly “scatterbrain, thoughtless, unfeeling” of a boss enters the picture, I’m just too entertained, especially so when **Alex**, also Katie’s boss enters the plot and things get more and more heated, hilarious and complicated.

I don’t really want to give too much of the plot away. It’s just something you have to read and completely enjoy for yourself. I breezed through the book and enjoyed every moment of it. There wasn’t a single dull moment while the romance is just too adorable and too sweet. The ending is too cute and I love Katie’s epiphanies about her life or just life in general.

“I think I’ve finally worked out how to feel good about life. Everytime you see someone’s bright-and-

shiny, remember they have their own crappy truths too”

Chelsea Humphrey says

3.5 STARS

Do you have a go to author for particular moods? Kinsella has been on my list of auto approved authors for dependable reads; she is the mashed potato of books in the sense that her stories always bring me comfort and a smile to my face. They aren't anything ground breaking; typically these are your run of the mill chick lit that is predictable, but that is exactly why I pick them up, for their reliability. This particular read was a little bit different than her previous books; while she is heavily known for her Shopaholic series and other fluffy chick lit, this book was a little more serious and less ditzy. Sure, it still had all the makings of a light, palate cleansing read, but this one didn't have as much self deprecating humor and cheesy one liners that are found in her other reads.

You pretty much know everything regarding the plot from the summary (barring a couple of minor surprises along the way), but I think what surprised me deeply was how much more realistic and developed her characters were in this book. I liked picking up a new Kinsella with no ties to another series and I applaud her for taking a leap and trying something a bit out of her comfort zone. I'm pleased that she kept to a traditional, cutesy cover that draws the eye in. So, while this is nothing that hasn't been done before, it was an enjoyable read that captured my attention, although I did feel the page count could be trimmed down by around 50-75 pages and still not lose any of the important factors. If you are looking for a relaxing, easy read, this is a great book to pick up. If you are new to Kinsella's work and are looking for something a bit more funny and saccharine, you may want to start with her Shopaholic books or another standalone, possibly *Can You Keep a Secret?* or *The Undomestic Goddess*.

***Many thanks to the publisher for providing my review copy via NetGalley; it was a pleasure to provide an honest review.**
