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Something Real



Synopsis

Seventeen-year-old Bonnie Baker has grown up on TV—she and her twelve siblings are the stars of one-time hit reality show Baker's Dozen. Since the show's cancellation, Bonnie has tried to live a normal life, under the radar and out of the spotlight. But it's about to fall apart . . . because Baker's Dozen is going back on the air. Bonnie's mom and the show's producers won't let her quit and soon the life that she has so carefully built for herself, with real friends (and maybe even a real boyfriend), is in danger of being destroyed by the show. Bonnie needs to do something drastic if her life is ever going to be her own—even if it means being more exposed than ever before. Heather Demetrios' *Something Real* is the winner of the Susan P. Bloom PEN New England Discovery Award.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Ugh— you guys there were times when I wanted to throw this book across the room. Let's be real, I absolutely loved this book, it's AMAZING, but I absolutely hated the main character's mother. Thankfully, my hatred for her desperate attempt at fame was totally overshadowed by my admiration for Chloe and my love for one Patrick Sheldon. When we first meet Chloe she's in the midst of her senior year of high school and finally feeling like things are falling into place after the

cancellation of the reality show that brought her family fame and notoreity. Sheâ™s managed to stay under the radar and made a few close friends who have no idea about her infamous past. For the first time in her life sheâ™s feeling cautiously optimistic but still struggles with trying to keep her famous upbringing a secret. Unfortunately, all that changes in an instant when her mother announces that the cameras are coming back for a second round. Throughout this whole novel, I wanted to reach through the pages and shake Chloeâ™s mom. The woman had literally NO redeeming qualities and what she makes her children endure was beyond redemption. She never once considers the mental health or happiness of her children, and continues to push them further and further in the world of reality television. No privacy, no genuine quality-time together and certainly no lives outside of the confines of their 24/7 broadcast home. Chloe starts off as a victim of circumstance but as the book goes on she finds strength from the loving and supportive relationship she has with her brother and the people she is closest to at school. It was so heartwarming to see how they rally around her to give her the strength she needs.

As a private person, I canâ™t imagine what it would feel like to have your entire life on display for the entire country to see. Thatâ™s the idea that *Something Real* takes and it absolutely runs with it. Bonnie/Chloe (who Iâ™ll be calling Chloe here on out), is one of the Bakerâ™s Dozen. One of thirteen kids, many adopted, most of Chloeâ™s life aired on a reality TV network. Itâ™s left with here a whole handful of issues, and sheâ™s just beginning to recover when she learns that her mother and her step-father have decided to sign on for Bakerâ™s Dozen: Fresh Batch, and Chloeâ™s not sure how to cope. Itâ™s hard to read *Something Real* and not feel for Chloe. Iâ™ve never really watched reality TV shows like the one Chloeâ™s family is on, and I definitely never will after reading *Something Real*. Itâ™s particularly frustrating to watch Chloe and her two siblings who are closest in age to her because as teenagers, theyâ™re totally old enough to know whatâ™s going onâ€”and to hate itâ€”but theyâ™re still minors with little choice in the matter. Parents in YA books are discussed a lot, but I just have to throw it out there that I donâ™t know if Iâ™ve ever hated parents in a YA book as much as I despised the parents in *Something Real*. They were so perfectly written, however. *Something Real* doesnâ™t spend a whole lot of time focusing on the parent-child interaction (well, at least not as much as the sibling interaction), but the glimpses of Chloeâ™s mom are really intriguing. Who would be so desperate to WANT to parade their children on national TV? Are they looking for fame? Money? That sort of mentality was explored quite a bit in *Something Real*, and while I sort of hated reading about it just from a personal standpoint, I canâ™t deny it was well done.

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