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Synopsis

In this contemporary retelling of The Great Gatsby, by comedian Sara Benincasa, a teenage girl becomes entangled in the romance and drama of a Hamptons social circle and is implicated in a scandal that shakes the summer community. When Naomi Rye arrives in the Hamptons to spend the summer with her socialite mother, she fully expects to be miserable mingling with the sons and daughters of her mother's mega-rich friends. Yet Naomi finds herself unexpectedly drawn to her mysterious and beautiful next-door neighbor, Jacinta, a Hamptons "It" girl who throws wild, lavish parties that are the talk of the town. But Jacinta is hiding something big, and events unfold with tragic consequences.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had high hopes for this novel. THE GREAT GATSBY is not my favorite book by any means, but I do enjoy it and the various film interpretations that have been released. I was fascinated by this book from the time I first heard of it and finally decided to purchase it after reading the sample and falling in love. The sample was misleading. I've always believed that one should never be wholly positive or negative when it comes to a review of a piece of writing. Here's something positive to start out with: the book is a true, close homage to the source. Benincasa did a great job of following the Gatsby figure's story in this tale - I never doubted what Jay did for Daisy in the original). The idea to set the story in the Hamptons and use rich teenagers is pretty fantastic as well. The setting was portrayed very nicely. As for what I did not like: 1) too much product placement (did Marc Jacobs fund

this novel?) 2) too many pop culture references that absolutely will not age well - the author references CLUELESS, which is from 1995. It's from before most of the characters in this novel were born. Furthermore, while GOSSIP GIRL just ended in 2012 and was clearly an influence for Benincasa, it remains to be seen whether or not it will survive as a reference point for teenagers in years to come.

In this updated version of "The Great Gatsby," seventeen-year-old Naomi Rye is the "outsider" to the summer teen culture in the East Hamptons. I use quotations because she has, in fact, a trust fund, and her mom's embarrassing meddling in her life consist of things like making her take a private jet there with a couple of family friends, appearing at charity events with ultra rich people, and forcing her to wear \$400 Marc Jacobs dresses to parties because (if you can imagine) she wants Naomi to make a good impression. So Naomi's problems are definitely something to which the average middle class reader can relate. When the book opens, Naomi is spending the summer with her mom (her dad's a basketball couch who lives in Chicago), and she isn't real thrilled about it. However, when she receives an invitation to a party that the girl next door (who is renting the house apparently for the summer) invites her to, she is surprised to discover that a) her hostess, Jacinta, is a famous teen fashion blogger, b) a cute guy named Jeff Byron takes an interest in her, and c) that she doesn't feel as much of an outsider as she has in the past. Jacinta, who appears to be an orphan, quickly charms Naomi's acquaintances, especially the beautiful and aptly named Delilah Fairweather. This does not thrill Delilah's boyfriend, Teddy Barrington, since the two girls become inseparable, and eventually, he sets out to uncover the truth about the mysterious new girl. Tragedy ensues and life lessons are learned by the narrator. Confession: I disliked the narrator, though I liked her hometown friend, Skags, who's beginning a romance of her own with one of popular girls she and Naomi have always mocked.

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