



It Happens in the Hamptons

Holly Peterson

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In the Hamptons, the everyday people are as complicated and fascinating as the millionaires...

When Katie Doyle moves across the country to the Hamptons, she is hoping for summer employment, new friends for her young son, and a chance to explore a new love affair with a dazzling investor. What she finds is a strange cocktail of classes, where society's one-percenters vacation alongside local, hard-working people who've lived in the Hamptons for generations. Though she's looking forward to their move, Katie is wary about mingling with her boyfriends' East Coast elite circles. She soon discovers Southampton isn't all that it seems to be on the surface—and neither are the people who live there.

As George takes Katie on a whirlwind tour of country clubs, haute couture, and lavish events, she is amazed to witness sudden whims become dire needs, extra-marital affairs blossoming right and left, and people purchase friends and loyalties like a pair of shoes. Even the middle-class townspeople maintain a determined façade while maneuvering like sharks among the wealthy summer invaders.

The more Katie becomes immersed, the more she learns the secrets of both the upstairs and downstairs, the upper crust and middle of the road. The combustion between the classes becomes explosive as the summer tears on. Betrayals, a sexual predator, and a missing person lost in murky waves drive the reader on a racing Learjet ride through impossible twists and turns until landing at the shocking conclusion. When she meets Luke, a local surfer and middle school teacher, he makes her question what it is she really wants as she understands the life she's begun for herself is built on shifting Hamptons' dunes.

It Happens in the Hamptons Details

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From Reader Review It Happens in the Hamptons for online ebook

Jessica says

It Happens in the Hamptons is the perfect summer read. It was also the perfect palate cleanser for me (I read mainly thrillers and horror). I wasn't entirely sure what to expect going into it, but I loved the cover and it was something I don't typically read. "In the Hamptons, the everyday people are as complicated and fascinating as the millionaires.."

We follow Katie in her quest for something new. She leaves for the Hamptons, a cross country trip for her and her young son, in search of a new job, a new life, and her budding relationship with a wealthy investor, George Porter. After being in the Hamptons, she soon discovers there's a mix of classes - the incredibly wealthy "one-percenters" who use this spot for their vacation homes, and then the hardworking locals that have been there for generations. Being in a completely new environment of country clubs, couture, lavish parties, and beautiful homes, Katie quickly discovers the secret lives of the Southamptoners. Even the elite have secrets. She witnesses affairs, the purchasing of friendships and relationships, impulsiveness on extreme levels, and behavior that she isn't accustomed to.

Throw in class drama and clashing, betrayals of all kinds, a sexual predator on the loose, and a missing person, you have the perfect mixture for a summer of drama and accusations. I definitely wasn't expecting the ending! Such a twist and so out of nowhere. I loved it! It's always fun when a book can keep you guessing.

The characters were extremely well-developed and unique. So many personalities and they were all relatable and human. The author did a great job in describing the people and showing their wealth (clothing, cars, homes, etc). You were painted a vivid picture as to how life was for the different classes in this city. Katie was a great character and you become attached to her. How is she adjusting? What is she learning?

I give this book a solid 4/5 stars! If you need a good beach and quick read, then I highly recommend this one for your summer TBR!

Thanks to William Morrow for the copy in exchange for my honest review.

DJ Sakata says

Favorite Quotes:

As the moonlight bore down on the abandoned town, the conversation between the Tide Runners instructors bounced between topics big and small: the height of the waves heading in (measured by buoys far out at sea that could predict)... and, most animatedly, who would be paying the thirty-dollar June fee for the Porn Hub password they all shared.

She'd had a fitful night; the worry fairies kept sprinkling their persuasive spell on her.

Julia, who sensed she wouldn't get her way, suddenly decided to save her arguing capital for another fight. It was easier to let the kids and husband believe they were in charge so she could squash their demands like

insects when it really counted.

The gloomy, preteen boy posse at her side were mortified to be anywhere near this woman, let alone in her care. They all wore surf trunks, flip-flops, and towels wrapped around their necks. Margaux Carroll's son, Tyler, age nine, was a few years older than the other kids, and looked like he was weighing the pros and cons of matricide.

My Review:

I thoroughly enjoyed this engaging, intriguing, and cleverly amusing story. Holly Peterson has deft word skills and a wicked sense of humor - which are at the top of my list of favorite traits. The plot was well-paced and artfully crafted and the characters were delightfully complex, uniquely quirky, colorfully described, and lushly detailed. A wealthy and highly skilled sexual predator was on the loose and plying his wiles on young girls and women of all socio-economic groups across the country. I established and discarded several of my own theories and while I had figured out the perpetrator, I certainly did not foresee the entangling plot twists coming. The interesting storyline was smartly written, witty, irresistibly intriguing, and held my rapt attention throughout.

Debbie says

I really enjoyed this book. I like to read a good gossipy book every now and then and this was sure a good one. I'm going to need to check out more of this authors books.

Andrea says

I like lowbrow, chick-lit beach reads, so I enjoyed the storyline: old money vs. new money vs. townies, love triangles, and some summertime smut scenes. But good lord, the grammar and sentence structure made my eyes bleed! I'm not sure there was a correctly placed modifier anywhere. Who the hell edited this? A goldfish?

Carrie says

It's not often I don't finish a book, but this one wasn't for me. Fifty pages in and I still couldn't connect with any of the characters. Nothing really happened either. Plus I find it hard to believe every wealthy person in the Hamptons is that ridiculous. Awkward sentence structure and head-hopping finally made me close the book for good. It's a fun premise so maybe others will feel differently.

Elle's Book Blog says

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Genre: Women's Fiction

I really wanted to love this book as it promises everything that women want in a beach read. But, it just didn't deliver for me. Why? it had no substance. The plot seemed almost pointless as it didn't come together until the very end (like after 300 pages). To me, it felt like there were just a bunch of people whining about either being rich or not being rich, or about them trying to make something of themselves without it being resolved. It was just an all around weird book that COULD have been better had the author stuck to one plot point and written the story around that. You can read more about that in my spoiler below...

(view spoiler)

Anyway, you can probably tell that this book was not my cup of tea, and that's fine. Some people will love with as it could be considered an easy beach read, but others will be left wanting more when they are finished. Unfortunately, nothing about this book was interesting to me. On to the next one...

Brandice says

This was a light summer read (*emphasis on light*) but not likable for me. The plot was for the most part, very predictable early on. I can appreciate the general story but wasn't impressed with the execution. The book was also *overloaded* with materialistic references like "the \$161,000 Tesla" and "the silver Land Rover Discovery SE." We get it - it's the Hamptons: certain social, fashion, and wealth levels are expected but ahh, it was definitely overkill. Although the synopsis was enticing to me, I would've been just fine skipping this one as I felt it disappointed.

Lisa Carlson says

Emmy award winning producer, contributing editor for Newsweek, author Holly Peterson is wonderfully articulate, intelligent in a radio interview. However, It Happens in the Hamptons is not worth the time even for something light to read. I was thoroughly disappointed in the writing given her background. I stopped at page 85 after reading how a sixteen year old was bragging about her sexual escapades. I am incredibly liberal but none of the characters had much of a redeeming value for me. More to the point I'd never want to step foot in the Hamptons if these are the people who live there.

Heather Mills says

I don't usually read books like this ("Beach reads", "Chick lit", what have you) so if reading these types of books is your usual thing, maybe you'd like this book - and then my review wouldn't be relevant to you. If you don't usually dip your toe into that tawdry pool, don't - I repeat DON'T - start with this book. The grammar and sentence structure was often so poor that I was actually confused and RE-READING sentences to figure out who was doing what.

The characters are beyond gross and comically stereotyped; the dialogue was laughably terrible; and any attempts at "social satire" are so clumsy that I was actually cringing.

Nothing about this book was "hot" or "steamy" unless you considered it a steaming pile of you-know-what.

I feel stupid for having even attempted to read this book. And whoever edited it should be sent back to grade school English class.

Is this the kind of junk that is popular these days? If so, many existential questions I have about the state of the world today are now answered...

Becky says

Katie Doyle didn't plan to take up George Porter on his offer of the family cabin in the Hamptons, but the promise of more time together was too much to resist. Plus, it's the Hamptons.

With her son in tow, the two set off cross country to stay in the famed vacation spot of the East Coast rich and famous. But while the Hamptons may be paradise to some, Katie soon finds that there are dirty secrets hiding out in the glittery upper crust destination. Something becomes all that more apparent when she meets Luke, a teacher and surfer who is definitely not part of the privileged 1%. And her relationship with George, well it seems that might be on the rocks already.

Peterson sets the scene quite well, giving readers all the down and dirty details of the setting and the people that populate it. So much so that the reader does feel as though they're right there alongside Katie, witnessing the antics of her fellow vacationers and the locals alike. It does make for quite an amusing read.

But, I didn't love *It Happens in the Hamptons* as much as I thought I would. A summery, beachy read was definitely what I was craving this week, and Holly Peterson's latest does deliver in that regard. But while I enjoyed Katie's story, I found it hard to get fully immersed in the book as a whole.

Part of the reason for this is a little pet peeve of mine: the tendency to change POV randomly within a given chapter. Some people might not even notice it, and I'll admit it sounds quite silly considering I don't mind multiple points of view in general - when they're set off from one another. But I find that when it happens as it does in this book, it kind of keeps me from feeling as though I'm truly getting to know the characters I'm meant to follow in the story. In this case, Katie and Luke. The effect of this style choice, for me, is that I'm pulled out of the story with each unexpected change back and forth.

Asheley says

This is the very best kind of beach/warm weather reading.

Katie moved to the Hamptons on a whim to try out a new life and a possible relationship with George Potter, a guy she met at a lengthy conference back home. He lives in Manhattan during the week and comes out to see her when he can, which isn't as often as she thought it would be, if she is being honest. *Which is fine, really.* Katie never planned to become ultra-attached to a man, and anyway it gives her a chance to get to know the area. She can check out the beaches, windsurf a little bit, and meet some of the people that live nearby. Speaking of the people, they are *very* interesting.

Katie notices that there is a huge divide in the people in the area: there are the ultra-rich: the ones that always dress in khaki and bright colors, and pack their kids' summers full of activities so they can spend all day doing Pilates or yoga classes and lunching with their friends. She notices that these kids are rushed from

activity to activity by the house staff and that the parents *never* miss these exercise classes. What gives? And the cars that they drive and homes they live in? Wow. Then there are the locals, like that guy Luke: the ones that dress in jeans and tees, the ones that are laid back. The ones that seem more like the people back home. The ones that are hosting and working all of these activities that these rich people are attending. The landscapers. The cafe workers. When Katie met George, he seemed more like one of the locals; now that she can see him in his own environment, he really seems to fit in more with the khaki-wearing group. It's a little disappointing, actually.

So this book? This is exactly what I like in a summer read. There is the beach and there is some summer drama. But not too much! All of the characters in this story are connected in some way. Some are more obviously connected, and we find that out within the first few chapters. But there are some connections that don't come out until later in the book and **WHAT!** I really didn't see these things coming. It's so great. I just loved every word.

I loved Katie. Her sense of wonder at the Atlantic Ocean made me so happy because I feel the same way, having lived close to it my entire life. It feels good to see someone from far off come and love on something that I love. It's interesting to see her perspective on the Hamptons, though. This is a place that I've never been - I've only read about. I loved reading her thoughts on the locals vs. the vacationers. I love how she enmeshed herself into both worlds right away. Katie is a teacher so in order to afford this life in this expensive place, she began freelance private-tutoring lessons for children during the vacationers during the summer. She couldn't believe what people paid for those lessons versus what people paid for lessons where she came from, but that was indicative of life in that area versus other areas of the country. Katie didn't necessarily love it and didn't necessarily want to become part of it, but she accepted it and that was that.

She planned to take her time on her relationship with George, and her patience allowed her listen to the intuition and opinion of her child, which I loved. She also paid attention to how other people on the island reacted to George, which was important, I thought. Aside from being one of the things I loved about Katie as a character, this is also part of how all of the characters connected.

I have to tell you, I'm here for these local characters. They were my favorite characters in the book, especially Luke. They are a group of friends that grew up in one of the Hampton towns and worked there year-round. Early in the story, some of the rich vacationers target their very popular beach camp business because they don't like the way it looks. I mean, like, the way it actually looks, to their eyes, sitting on the sand. This is one of the best parts of the book because this is where we get to know the best characters in the story (the rich and the local). And I love Luke's entire story.

Here is where I'll be honest and say that: in the beginning of the book, with all of the descriptions of clothes and cars and homes, I painted a picture of these rich characters in my mind. I felt like it was a pretty good one, too. And throughout the story, it held up. But towards the end, I realized that there was more to a few of these characters, and I LOVE THAT. I love that I had a few of them wrong. **When I started this book, I never ever could have called how this book would have ended.** Loved! So much fun.

This is a book that I'll certainly read again, particularly during the warm weather. It'll probably be one I throw in my beach bag or my pool bag. I just loved it. It felt adventurous *to me*, but this is because I've never been to the Hamptons and can only live this life through stories like these. I loved the sense of the salty air and the beach that it invoked - I just love the beach that much and think others will like that part of the story too. But it's these quirky, nutty characters that did it all for me. Selfishly, I wish I knew more about what happened after the end of the book because I really love the way it all ended. I love that it is a standalone, but if the author decided to write more, I would be all over it like white on rice. I'm just saying.

*I received this book for free from William Morrow in exchange for an honest review. This did not affect my opinion of the book, my rating, or the content of my review.

You can see my review in its entirety here at my blog Into the Hall of Books. I rated this book 4.5 stars out of 5, but rounded up on Goodreads.

jendlo says

Anyone who summers or resides in the Hamptons will lap up this frothy tale. The names of people, places and things are altered (i.e., the Golden Pear is the Silver Apple), but the descriptions are spot on.

As the author said, "The desire to speak the truth is present even when I'm writing fiction. Scenes are not exaggerated..."

...and are entertaining AF, in addressing class conflict and social identity (but don't think too hard; it's not a cerebral book, but rather a guilty pleasure).

I highly recommend this beach read to anyone who is familiar with, or has a profound interest in, what goes on in this enclave from MDW through LDW.

Heather says

Maybe this book would have been better if I had actually read it on the beach. It was totally formulaic, and I like chick lit! It lacked depth, skipped build up to the then totally incredible (as in truly not credible) plot climax, and ended with more sap than a Lifetime movie. There was a lot of snark about rich WASPs, which I suppose is fine, but it lacked depth. How many times can we be reminded that WASPs like gin and Triscuits?

Meh.

Catherine at The Gilmore Guide to Books says

In truth, this is not even 1 star. It's a 1/2 at best. Every single trope and stereotype from chick-lit fiction is used and none of them well. This book is an insult to chick-lit because it's reductive, trashy and poorly written. Honestly, when "big, bulbous butt" is used to describe a teenager an older guy is trying to hook up with, you know things are bad.

There's 384 pages of my life I'll never get back. If you're looking for fun, but intelligent, fresh, beachy reading, look elsewhere.

Leah says

Ugh, now that it's over, the more I think about it, the less I like this one. I went in expecting a fun upstairs/downstairs-esque beach read about the ~normal folk~ mingling with the uber elite 1%-ers. What I got was a novel based on underage sex (wealthy men can apparently get away with anything!), paternity 'shocks,' namedropping like you wouldn't believe, and an odd fixation on describing how thick and strong the women's thighs are - it got to the point where I started picturing the cast of *American Gladiators* as these characters. So bizarre.
