



Pretenders

By Lisi Harrison

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Three girls, two guys, five secret journals.

The five most popular students at Noble High have secrets to hide; secrets they wrote down in their journals. Now one of their own exposes the private entries...

I am leaking these because I'm tired and I know you are too. The success bar is too high and pretending has become the only way to reach it. Instagrams are filtered, Facebook profiles are embellished, photos are shopped, reality TV is scripted, body parts get upgraded like software, and even professional athletes are cheating. The things we believe in aren't real.

We are pretenders.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 7-10-A motley crew of high-school freshmen have one thing in common—they are all pretending to be people they're not. Sheridan Spencer is a lonely drama queen who boosts her confidence by channeling celebrities. Andrew Duffy's dreams of making the basketball varsity team are shattered when his parents reveal their financial troubles. Lily Bader-Huffman wants to break free of her overbearing parents and get a social life. Vanessa Riley is an extreme overachiever whose parents are on the verge of divorce. And Jagger is the mysterious, emancipated loner with a big secret. As in a Garry Marshall film, their lives intersect. Vanessa crushes on Lily's gay best friend. Lily likes Duffy, but he seems to be getting cozy with Sheridan. Sheridan's best friend is ditching her for Jagger. Their first-person narratives are told through journal entries as credit for an English class. It is hinted at early on that the journals (supposedly under lock and key) will eventually get revealed to the whole school, just not in this first book. The novel ends on a cliff-hanger. Fans of Harrison's "Clique" books (Little, Brown) will love this book with its melodrama and chaste scandal. A fast-paced read with surprisingly compelling characters, *Pretenders* is a good recommendation for middle schoolers looking to read up, but who are not quite ready for, "Gossip Girl" (Little, Brown).-Kimberly Garnick Giarratano, Rockaway Township Public Library, NJ ©(c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From [Booklist](#)

Fans of Harrison's *The Clique* novels will not be disappointed by this series starter, which exposes the scandalous "truth" behind five high-school freshmen chosen to receive a special excellence award. The conceit is simple: this book is a compilation of these students' journals, written as an English project that was to remain ungraded and unread, but was stolen and distributed to everyone as proof that "the things we believe in aren't real." What follows is a soapy drama that exposes the tumultuous, insecure core of many outwardly successful teens who lose themselves trying to be perfect, keep everyone happy, and have it all. While some subplots are less believable, readers should find at least one character to identify with, making it even more cringe worthy when they self-destruct. Though they represent types, Harrison's treatment of the five resists simple dismissal, and their voices remain individual through their journaling styles. And which of the five students is the one who published the journals? Readers will be on the hook to figure it out in a sequel. Grades 9-12. --Krista Hutley

About the Author

Lisi Harrison is the author of *The Clique*, *Alphas* and *Monster High* series. She was the Senior Director of Production Development at MTV and Head Writer for MTV Production. Lisi is currently pretending to write her next novel.

Lisi lives in Laguna Beach, California.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ashley Parra:

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Lisa Gregory:

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