

# The Boy Next Door

*Meg Cabot*

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**The Boy Next Door** Meg Cabot

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## **The Boy Next Door Details**

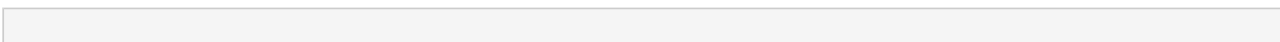
Date : Published July 29th 2003 by HarperCollins Publishers (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780060588700

Author : Meg Cabot

Format : ebook 384 pages

Genre : Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Romance, Fiction, Contemporary



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## From Reader Review The Boy Next Door for online ebook

### Heather says

Ok, I'm not gonna lie...I didn't even finish this book, but that's because it was so absolutely boring that I couldn't even force myself to continue. Which is sad because the last book I read by this author was really good. This entire book is made up of email conversations between people so I felt no connection to the characters. Plus it was just like random conversation and I couldn't really follow much of a storyline....I'm not usually one to not finish a book, but reading 50 pages of this was too grueling!!!

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### Simone Elkeles says

When I'm asked what my favorite book is, this always comes into my head because I was just so entertained. I don't know how Meg Cabot did an all-email book and make it so amazing. She is definitely a talented author!

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### Eve Dangerfield says

I friggin' love Meg Cabot. LOVE I SAY.

Not only did The Princess Diaries teach me more about adolescence (and New York) than my mum I would argue this book kicked off my obsession with romance novels. I found it on my cousin's bookshelf when I was 14 and have been 'borrowing' it for the last decade. I can't count how many times I've read it but each time I do I laugh and swoon and grin. That sounds like a cliché but it isn't, not to me anyway. With the exception of the not-detailed-enough-for-my-pervy-taste sex scenes The Boy Next Door is PERFECT. Mel is a gorgeous heroine; kind, sharp and modern, Nad- her best mate- is fecking hilarious, John is a swoon-worthy liberal hero and his relationship with his brother and sister in law is incredible. Evil guy Max Friedlander is terribly hilariously awful and Dolly? Dolly is excellence personified. A decade on The Boy Next Door is as funny and relevant as it was when I first read it. A beautiful expression of modern love, female friendship, body positivity and a gloriously noticeable lack of slut shaming. Despite what might be some legit misgivings this all-email romance novel works. It works like HELL because no one does first person narrative like Meg Cabot (see The Princess Diaries). Whenever I'm sad this book turns my mood around and it is a gift. Okay, I'm gonna stop now before I have a love attack but seriously, I adore this book so much

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### Alienor ✕ French Frowner ✕ says

#### Cabot's hilarious humor in a book filled with *emails*?

I'm not a big fan of chick-lit, but what can I say? Meg Cabot always knows how to make me laugh out loud and move me ♥

**To : jerrylives@freemail.com**  
**From : Mel Fuller**  
**Subject : How about this one?**

**I know**

**Princess Leia, *Return of the Jedi***

**Mel**

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**Katrina Passick Lumsden says**

I wasn't sure I was going to be able to finish this one because, while there were some things I genuinely liked about the email format in which it was written, the format overall left me wanting. The story picked up, however, and I found myself not minding the email format so much. After a little while, I found myself engrossed, wanting desperately to find out who attacked the neighbor and whether or not Mel and John would get together (OK, so admittedly I knew this was an inevitability since it's a romance novel, but it's still nice reading about those moments). I even found myself liking the main character, even though I had very little in common with her.

Mel was cool. Yes, she had that stereotypical chick vibe thing going on (obsessed with clothes and makeup, bemoaned not having found a man yet despite only being 27, etc.), but she was fiery, outspoken, funny, and stood up for herself. All of these previously respected personality traits, however, flew out the window when it was made clear that the character possessing them was **completely bat shit crazy**. Mel went absolutely nuts. I understand the guy lied to her, I understand she was still feeling the burn of the last time she'd been deceived, but *come on*. Even her best friend, finally reaching the point of wanting to strangle Mel, tells her to knock it off or she will succeed in completely chasing off an amazingly good guy who's perfect for her. I'm not saying women should tolerate lying, but sometimes there are extenuating circumstances and the falsehood (and its teller) must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and handled accordingly. Mel wants absolutely nothing to do with rational thought, however, because she's been *jilted*. This was when it stopped being funny for me. Up until that point, I'd found it hilarious...after that point, I just wanted to scream. As relieved as I was that people were calling Mel on her lunacy, I was also greatly disappointed that, when she told them off for trying to *help her*, they just shrugged their shoulders and moved on. I'm sorry, if I were trying to help a friend who was losing it, overreacting, and coming dangerously close to destroying what could perhaps be her single chance at happiness and she **told me off**...I would not take that too lightly. Being a supportive friend and minding my own business are personal credos of mine, but enabling "crazy bitch" behavior is definitely not my style.

On top of that, there was entirely too much conniving and nosy behavior going on in this book for me to truly enjoy it. It did, in part, add to the humor a bit, but overall it left me a little uneasy. No one really talked to each other in this book and I really respect people who know how to communicate, at least partially, with one another. So it's hard to be sympathetic toward characters with whom I hold little-to-no sympathy. That disconnect made this a hollow read for me.

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## **Candy Boisvert says**

Title: Boy next door

Author: Meggin Cabot

Copyright date: 2002

Publisher: HarperCollins publishers

How many pages: 374 pgs

How long it took me to read: 10 days

Category: Fiction

I learned about this book from: borrowing it from the library in the beginning of the year but not getting to read it.

This book was purchased at: G books

This book is: amusing

Other books by these authors: Princess Diaries series, Pop idol, big boned, jinx, queen of babble in the big city, size 12 is not fat, and size 14 is not fat either

Favorite characters: Melissa, Nadine, John and Tim

When and Where the story takes place: New York

Plot in a nutshell: Melissa Fuller, a gossip columnist, ends up in the middle of a mystery when her next door neighbor ends up found in her nightgown, knocked out on the floor.

Main characters: Mel, John and Max Friedlander

What I liked best: It was all written in emails.

What I liked least: It was all written in emails. It was like a love/hate relationship with the email concept.

Overall rating: Pretty original concept. This is the first book I've ever read in all emails, so it was like going through my inbox. It was a really good thing to read while answering phones at work. :P

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## **Rachel Brand says**

As someone who doesn't keep up with the world of pop culture, the constant references to films and celebrities in this book put me off it a bit.

Cabot's need to make her adult characters have sex within a few weeks of meeting each other also bugged me. Why? Is it not possible to have a relationship in today's society without sleeping with everyone you date?

I used to really enjoy the format of letters and emails in novels, but I've realised that this stops authors from showing their full literary potential, and makes the novel incredibly easy to read. I prefer something which I have to concentrate on.

Overall, it was a pretty easy, fluffy read, but not the sort of thing I'd be desperate to read again. I kept my second-hand copy on my bookshelf for a couple of years and read it about twice, before passing it on to a charity shop.

My advice - borrow it from a library or buy a second hand copy, just in case you have the same opinion as me.

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## **Rose says**

So, this was my first Meg Cabot. Maybe not the best place to start, considering there are more popular books of hers I could have started with but I guess it wasn't a too bad introduction to her work.

*The Boy Next Door* started out pretty awesome, there was hilarity left and right and I just loved it. After I was halfway through, though, the book began to drag quite a bit and I was annoyed with most of the characters. The magic of the cute romance faded for me as well because even if it was cute, when it came to the romance, the e-mail format of this book failed for me because it was too much telling-not-showing and I thus felt pretty detached from the characters at some point.

Nevertheless, this was a fun brain candy read, which even if it started to disappoint me after the awesome beginning, was still an okay read that took my mind off of things.

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## **Alaina Meserole says**

I was so freaking hesitant to try another series by Meg Cabot.. but I did it guys.

*The Boy Next Door* was a cute and pretty predictable story. I didn't really care about the characters too much. Mostly because they seem so freaking forgettable. The entire book was written in like an email form - which I have nothing against, it was just so different from what I'm used to.

At first this book seemed like it would be a little amazing to read. Maybe some laughs here and there.. but then it went downhill so fast. I felt like after the half way point I was just skimming (or I wanted to at that point) through the pages because it seemed so freaking slow! The characters were annoying for more than half of the book as well - which is why I mentioned earlier that they were forgettable to me.

Mel and John, the forgettable characters, were boring. I didn't care about their "romance" at all. It just seemed meh to me. They were just so disappointing to read. Mel was completely crazy. I didn't like her one bit. Especially when she was pushing people away and yelling at them when all they wanted to do was help her. I have nothing to say about John.. I'm just surprised that I remember he was in it - even after finishing the book.

Overall, it was meh. Not a great opener to this series. Again, it had some funny parts in the first half of the book but then you will get easily annoyed with everything that's happening in this book.

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## **Jennifer says**

Ok - just to warn you - This entire book is in e-mail format. Yup. 379 pages of e-mails. Truth be told - I really liked it!

So we have Mel Fuller who writes the page 10 celebrity gossip column for the NY Journal. She is late to work (for about the 50th time) because she found her neighbor lady laying face down with her dog barking

like mad. She really likes her neighbor Mrs. Friedlander and feels bad for her 2 cats and dog (a great dane named Paco - who has a Great Dane in NY City?!?!) so Mel takes care of the animals while Mrs. Friedlander lays in a coma. Walking the dog every morning before work causes Mel to be late ALOT and finally her friend's Nadine and Dolly help her track down Mrs. Friedlander's only living relative - her nephew Max Friedlander.

Max Friedlander is a self centered egotistical pig. He is a photographer and models - in fact he has a nude self portrait of himself hanging at a museum - and he just took off to Florida with the model Vivica to hang out in the surf and sun. No way is he coming back to NY City to take care of his old witch Aunt's animals. So he comes up with a plan. His friend John Trent owes him a huge favor from when they went to Las Vegas together and John drank a LOT and tried to marry a red-headed show girl. Max stopped John from marrying her and took him home to sober up. So John owes him a favor and Max decides to call it in.

So John agrees to pretend to be Max and to look after the 2 cats and the dog. Shouldn't be a big deal. Yeah - he has to lie to the neighbor about who he is - but so what? This is NY. He will probably just pick up the keys from the neighbor and that will be that. UH HU. Except of course that is NOT just that. The neighbor is Mel and she is a sweet little Red-head (Be still his heart) and she is super nice and she seems to like him too.

I really enjoyed this! I am sure the e-mail format would put some people off - but I thought Meg Cabot did a great job with it and I really didn't want the book to end. I thought some of the characters were over the top - but in a delightful way. I didn't find myself rolling my eyes at anyone but Vivica. And I think we are supposed to roll our eyes at her a little bit so it's all good.

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## **Laura says**

This book has earned its place as my new most embarrassing book to read in public to date. I made a special point to fold the pages of this book over, hiding the cheesy cover which seemed to scream the announcement "Yes I read mindless, fluffy chicklit!" I guess I wouldn't have been so embarrassed to be reading this book if it had not been for the general low quality of the entire concept. The Boy Next Door is a romantic story Mel, young gossip columnist for a New York newspaper, who ends up falling in love with John, a crime reporter and all around cool guy from a wealthy family...only get this, due to totally pointless and silly circumstances, John is forced to conceal his real identity from Mel, resulting in a web of lies. Oh yeah and did I mention that the entire novel is told through emails to and from the main characters and their friends? Yup. Are you starting to understand my embarrassment in reading this book?

So there's several problems with this book, most of which can be summed up by the statement that another reader scrawled on the title page of the copy I read from the public library: "This book is stupid." Meg Cabot has written many young adult novels, some of which I've enjoyed in the same fluffy, don't make me think kind of way that I had hoped to enjoy this one. Only, The Boy Next Door is not a YA novel. It's sort of awkwardly in the middle. The characters are in their mid to late twenties and appear to have grown up careers, apartments, etc. They are supposed to be adults...albeit young ones. The real problem with The Boy Next Door (aside from the obvious fact that it is written in the whole email format!) is that the characters behave like teenagers. It makes little sense why grown ups, with real problems, real jobs, and real life experience, would act so silly. Even teenagers would have more sense than the characters in this book! The main problem of the book (the mistaken identity thing) isn't the least bit plausible because any grown man like John would have cleared up the whole silly thing immediately. Almost all of the problems in this book stem from that. The characters feel very one dimensional and are either extremely stupid or extremely



immature, neither of which works out to an enjoyable novel. At the same time, I did read this cover to cover, perhaps because it was the only book in my bag while I was riding the train last week or perhaps because, even though I felt insulted as a reader by this book, I ended up getting a tiny bit sucked into the inane story...just to see where it went.

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## **Sophie says**

I almost didn't read this book.

First of all, I am not a big fan of adult Meg Cabot books, minus a few exceptions. Her teen books are my guilty pleasure, but her characters are exactly the same in both. What's acceptable for a teenager is different than what's acceptable for someone in their 30s, and it becomes annoying. Plus her sex scenes are really awkward.

Secondly, I don't like books written in letter format. Diary format is fine, but letters and emails are just hard for me to get into. I gave this one a chance, though, because last time I felt hesitant about a letter book and read it anyway (*Feeling Sorry for Celia*) I ended up liking it a lot.

Unfortunately, this wasn't the case here. It wasn't a TERRIBLE read, but it didn't grip my attention like *Feeling Sorry for Celia* did. There were also a few things that annoyed me about *The Boy Next Door*:

1. Meg Cabot has a habit of doing this thing where she'll mention a few people, say something about someone, then say "This person, I mean." When people are talking, that's understandable. I know that sometimes when I'm talking I have to clarify what I mean after. Even in letter or diary format that's fine, because maybe the character doesn't want to cross it out or rewrite it. But an email? You can press the delete button and clarify without anyone being any wiser.
2. I was surprised at the fact that her main character didn't get fired. By the end of the book, she had at least 47 tardies in a single year, mostly because she had to walk her neighbor's dog 4 times a day. Somehow walking a dog was more important than going to work, even though I'm sure she could have found someone to walk it! Later on, she (view spoiler) The story ended up being completely ridiculous, and not in a fun way, but more of an eye rolling way.
3. I didn't feel like I got to know any of the characters that well. I certainly didn't care about what happened to them. I also saw the twist at the end from a mile away.

Rating: 2/5

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## **Jess says**

8%, and I can't take the email format. I love dialogue, character interaction, the author interjecting snarky observations about what's happening. Email is... so cold. But this is just me, and so far the writing is funny and colourful.

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## **victoria\_tonks says**

I had a blast reading it. I will write a longer review later.

### **MTA: 4.5 stars rounded up to 5**

I have just finished re-reading it and it was just as much fun as the first time around. This book is written as an ongoing exchange of emails ('epistolary novel' sounds just too 18th century ?), and even though I am not usually a fan of this format, it worked for me here. The author managed to keep the voices distinct and different (Vivica, hee).

I might as well say it here - if you are looking for real depth, rich subtext or complex characters, this book is not for you. But if just need some light fluff to cheer you up, it is a very good choice. I loved the main characters, the whole gossipy office 'family', Nadine and Tony, the Trent family (Mim!). I don't remember giggling so much over a book for quite a while (the Aaron guy especially kept cracking me up). There was also a little exciting 'whodunnit' thrown in the mix, and the romance was totally swoon-worthy. Let's face it - what girl would not love a guy (and such a guy, too - and I don't mean (view spoiler)) to fall for her this hard? The only think I found jarring was (view spoiler) and I am deducting half a star for it.

All in all, this book is loads of fun, and it goes straight to my *comfort read* shelf.

MTA: Still loving this.

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## **Chelsea (chelseadolling reads) says**

This was so much fun. I mean, I saw the ending coming from a mile away and it was mega cheesy, but still, SO FUN. I can't believe I waited so long to start this series. Meg Cabot is my queen

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## **Leslie says**

I've read this book a few times but it's been years this time around. Some things didn't age well but it was still such a fun read.

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## **Sara says**

What I particularly enjoyed about this book is the originality of the writing style. The book is written in a modern epistolary fashion, it develops through the emails the various characters exchange. The story is witty, there is a little bit of a mystery to solve, which I always enjoy, and the book overall is light and refreshing.

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## **Connie says**

Well it is almost 1 o'clock and I just finished this book. I couldn't put it down. I really enjoyed it! I gave it 5 stars, the definition for 5 stars is "it was amazing" and I probably wouldn't say that because I don't think you can say that chic lit is "amazing". If I had to give it a score out of 10 I would give it a 9 1/2 only a couple things bothered me, first there is swearing not much though but that always bothers me it really isn't necessary and the other thing is really stupid but the main character (Mel) calls her mom and dad mommy and daddy, I don't know, something about an adult doing that just is weird to me, so every time in the book she did it I cringed. But despite those 2 things it was just a really fun easy read which I am all about there is enough crap in this crazy world I would rather read a feel good love story. I loved it also because it is was so different from other books. It is written all in e-mails, which you think might not carry the story very well but it did. I keep thinking ok one more e-mail and I'm going to bed. But I really couldn't put it down. Thank you Sarah for the suggestion! I can't wait to read the next book in this series.

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## **Lulufrances says**

**Reread and this time my rating is 4 stars, previous rating: 5 stars**

You just cannot go wrong with Meg Cabot (at least all the ones I've read so far)!

I gobble up her chiclits like cookie-dough ice cream -> fun fact, I actually did this simultaneously in this case lol.

Not much to review with this really, so yeah - if you need easy to read escapism, here you go.

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## **Nasty Lady MJ says**

To see review of whole series with gifs click [here](#).

In a lot of ways this is the best one in the series. The reason why, the relationship is the most developed and I love the Trents. Though, the Hertzogs are just as amusing but a lot more dysfunctional-and that's saying something since Daddy Trent is in jail.

I think the style that this book is written in-emails, notes, phone messages, etc. really works well for it. I don't know if it-or its sequels-would work well in any other style. I often wonder if I would've like her vampire series better if it had been written in this style, because there is really something perfectly done that most authors never can get right but Meg Cabot does.

Yes, there are the typical Cabot tropes that are used throughout the book. And yes, there are a lot of shaking your head this is totally unrealistic moments but I don't care. There is just so much charm in this book that it makes you smile throughout reading it.

The supporting characters aren't that bad either and they do seem to have their own lives-well, some of them. Some like Dolly Vargas are definitely one note characters, but their one note-ness isn't bad at all. I didn't even mind the ditzzy model character, Vivica, and her weirdo obsession with driftwood sculptures.

If you like cute light reads that will perk up your mood, you should pick this one up. It's not the most serious book by any means, but I wouldn't want it to be serious.

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