



# The Year My Sister Got Lucky

*Aimee Friedman*

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## **The Year My Sister Got Lucky** Aimee Friedman

In this hilarious, heartrending novel, New York Times bestselling author Aimee Friedman reminds us of the importance of sisters. . . and of not wearing stilettos in the mud.

When Katie and Michaela Wilder are uprooted from NYC and planted in rural Fir Lake, Katie is horrified by their new surroundings: the too-friendly neighbors, the local uniform of sandals paired with socks, the very idea of milking a cow. But while Katie suffers through shopping withdrawal, Michaela transforms into a small-town social firefly, flirting with the hot quarterback and soaking up nature with her new hick-town friends. As in, people who think camping is \*fun\*. Does Katie even know her sister anymore? And after Michaela hides a jaw-dropping secret from her, does Katie even want to?

## **The Year My Sister Got Lucky Details**

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## From Reader Review *The Year My Sister Got Lucky* for online ebook

### Nicole says

I like the depth each character showed. The author did a good job with her idea, and she demonstrated a of knowledge in the things she wrote about (i.e. ballet, New York, etc.) There were no stereotypical characters, country kids are as snobby and cliquey as anyone unlike the popular cliché, and she delved deep into the sweet relationship of siblings, and how sometimes (okay most of the time) this relationship goes awry. I liked the hobby that "grounded" our heroine. Instead of just being some outsider or loner, with the outgoing older sister, who's too shy to make friends, she a dancer who comes off as the snobby younger sibling. It made her human (by the way, I probably only liked the dance addition because I dance every other weekday and cheer two days a week). This is a good book, I really enjoyed it, and I recommend this to anyone interested. Although, warning to guys: this is a girl's book. There are no "fuzzy lines" in this book, it is 100% girls. Somehow, I just don't get the vibe guys would like the sappy sister gone estranged sister, people in tights, girls' problems stuff. But a good book nonetheless!

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### Chelsey George says

This book was a disappointment, but then again when I started reading it I wasn't expecting something all that great. I think this is definitely a read for younger preteens. I feel like they would find it a lot more interesting and deep than I did. If I read it when I bought it (which was a LONG time ago) maybe I would have liked it..... Welllllll.... actually probably not :|

*The Year My Sister Got Lucky* tells the story of two city girl sisters, Michaela and Katie, who move from New York City to a small town when their mom gets a new job. Katie has difficulty accepting the change and longs for her old life. On the other hand, Michaela fits in beautifully with the popular kids, gets a handsome quarterback boyfriend, and becomes Homecoming Queen. These changes in their lives cause a rift to form between the two sisters and that's pretty much it.

This book had a promising start with the description of Katie and Michaela's life in the city and how they were serious dancers studying ballet. I love New York so whenever I read about it I will usually get completely enraptured. I love to imagine what it would be like to live there and this book portrayed a really good picture of life in the city.

HOWEVER, once I really got to know the characters I realized something... *I did not like* either one of these girls! Katie was a naive and selfish 14 year-old, and 17 year-old Michaela came off as an ungrateful bitch. Sounds harsh, but it's true! The first time this smacked me in the face was when this little exchange happened:

**'''Katie,' she says. 'You're my other half. My sister. The closest person in the world to me.'**  
**'Same here,' I say softening as I smile through my tears [...]**  
**'And you'll *always* be my sister,' Michaela goes on. 'But... you're not my friend.'''**

Ummmmm.... What!?!? Why would you say something like that? Not only does she contradict herself with first saying that Katie her other half and that they're so close, but she also contradicts what we have seen of

her character so far. Sure, we are seeing things through Katie's naive and biased eyes, but up until then we had NO reason to think that Michaela didn't value their friendship as much as Katie did. Once they move Michaela completely shuns Katie and cuts her out of her life. Very mean indeed. Michaela also becomes *unbelievably* annoying. She calls people "babe" (gag) and becomes a stupid girl (view spoiler) There is also an air of "poor little rich girl" surrounding Michaela, although their family is not wealthy. Sure, she is put under enormous amounts of pressure from her mother to become a professional ballerina, BUT she admitted that she loves dancing, she is privileged enough to be trained at a prestigious ballet school and she's got a true shot at Juilliard. (view spoiler)

Katie's naivety also got on my nerves because it really didn't take a genius to figure out what was going on. First of all the shock that she had when seeing her sister interact with other people made me want to smack her in the face. \*GASP\* Your sister know how to talk to *guys*?!!? Really? Your sister is putting on jeans and makeup and hangs out with friends? What is so shocking about all of this? This aspect of Katie's character goes hand in hand with her complete inability to talk to people and how rude she is. Exhibit A: a cute boy named Sullivan talks to her and helps her up when she trips. What does Katie do? She doesn't say anything and just WALKS AWAY. Exhibit B: Soon-to-be-friend Autumn is the only nice person to her on her first day of school and asks her if she wants to walk to class together. She says no and WALKS AWAY. Needless to say it's not hard to see why Katie isn't adjusting to her new home.

Two other little notes: 1. The parents. I didn't understand why Michaela felt she needed to keep EVERYTHING from her parents, namely the fact that she had a boyfriend. Yeah, her mom is controlling, but I never got the impression she'd be opposed to her daughters having a love life. As long as they weren't distracted too much from dancing. 2. (view spoiler)

The last thing I want to complain about in this book was the feeling that the strings were not completely tied tight enough for my taste. It's not an open ending or anything like that, but all the little things that were running throughout the novel get solved in the most anti-climactic way possible. Here is a list of all these unsatisfying solutions.

(view spoiler)

PHEW. So after ALL of that you may be wondering why I didn't just give this book one star and be done with it. The truth is there were a couple things I did like about this book. First, it was extremely readable and it didn't take me long to finish it. Secondly I did enjoy the character of Emmaline. Emmaline is a young yoga instructor who has travelled a lot and becomes a sort of confidant for Katie. I wish her character was a little more developed and interacted with Katie a little more, but I did really like her. She was the most relatable character in the book for me, even though we don't really find out all that much about her, and when we do get a little snippet of her history it's in the last 10 pages...

Finally I already mentioned that I loved the parts of the book that were set in New York. Just the image of ballerinas studying and performing in New York City, living in an apartment in the East Village, ordering Chinese food, and hurrying to catch the subway appealed to my daydream of living as a young woman in the Big Apple. Loved it!

So to end this incredibly long review, I wouldn't really recommend this book to anyone over the age of 13. Even so I wouldn't really recommend this to anyone. If you do want to read it, there are some great reviews, but the only thing I can say is that it's a quick read so thankfully it won't take you long to get it over with.

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### **Amalia Acorda-fey says**

I love this book. I only read it about a week ago, but the story just sinks in and it is comparable to to what many girls our age are probably feeling. I might be a little biased because i love girlie stories, and 'chick flicks' but this book was very good. I've read most of Sarah Dessen's books, and this is written with the same flow and insight into teenage girl's life.

We all know the story about the incapable city girl, who, when she moves into the country, does not fit in at all and still keeps all the city glamour in everything she does. That is what Katie Wilder has to deal with, because after her mother gets a job at the local school, the family moves from New York, to a small town in Canadian wilderness. Katie and her sister Michaela have always been very close, but as they try and settle into their new school and life, they begin to drift apart...

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### **Anna says**

This is such a sweet and incredibly well developed story. This is the first time I've read anything by Aimee Friedman and all I can say is, "WOW!" I felt like she took such care to create the characters, to make them interesting, and to make the story real. The story is told through the eyes of Katie, a high school freshman whose family moves from NYC to a small town in upstate New York. Katie's always lived in the shadow of her older sister Michaela and the way each sister responds to the move is very different. Katie is not happy to be leaving NYC but Michaela adjusts really well to the move and a rift starts to grow between the sisters. Katie is resentful and feels left behind but Michaela seems quite liberated.

I enjoyed reading the story through Katie's eyes because I'm the older sister and I often fail to understand my younger sister (who is also three years younger than me, just like the characters). I thought that Friedman made these characters so real and believable. They seemed like very normal, balanced teens and no one was over-the-top. I really have to give her credit for writing a story where no one came off seeming like a caricature because I think it would have been really easy to create very black/white one-dimensional stereotypes and she totally did not do that. The problems that the girls face are also very relevant -- college, fitting in, boys, identity, personal relations. There's something so sweet and charming (and addicting!) about the writing. I really hated to put this book down because I felt like I was there (in Fir Lake, NY) and felt like I knew the characters. The parents and the other supporting characters, such as Emmaline, Autumn, and Jasper, were also very interesting. Definitely a novel I would recommend to anyone who loves reading YA chick-lit.

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### **Sarah says**

This is a really good book and it's definely one of my favs!!!!

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## **Sara says**

Same problems as Sea Change, but almost worse, because the main character is to total brat and self-centered in the most obnoxious way possible.

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## **Karen Rowley says**

Book 15

Katie had to move from New York-where she has lived her whole life-to a place way out in the middle of nowhere. Her sister starts getting new friends and becomes popular. Katie gets one new friend named Autumn. She meets Autumn's huge dog that scares her to death. Katie at her old school was like a professional Ballet dancer, and her Autumn is obsessed with Ballet also. Katie gets to visit her old friends for a little while in New York. Katie and her sister get in a huge fight and don't talk to each other for a little while. Then Katie realizes that her friends in New York were jerks and she liked the small town way better. Katie's sister tells Katie that she really doesn't want to dance anymore because it's too much pressure. After that huge fight the sisters tell each other that they aren't going to keep secrets anymore.

Five examples of figurative language are simile: "but then flits away, like a pigeon." Metaphor: "I haven't quite hit the friend jackpot in fir lake." and Alliterations: "There's something scary in asking this." "Monday morning" and "Aren't you a sight for sore eyes?"

This book did swear a little bit here and there but it wasn't too bad. Towards the end of the book it was a little inappropriate and probably didn't need to be in there. But other than that it was a really good book. I loved how she was always messing up and she felt like her sister was perfect. It just explains a lot of sister relationships. But I also really love how she finds real friends in the small town not just the snobby ones from New York.

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## **Jessica says**

I would have liked this book more if I was a 15 year old girl but I'm 4 years older than that so it was okay. A typical day for the Wilder sisters is sometimes sleeping in the same bed, going to dance class at a huge professional dance school everyday after school, where Michaela is on a strict schedule because she's going to Juilliard. While at dance class one day, Katie is found daydreaming while she's supposed to be dancing. After Katie finds out that their family is moving to Fir Lake, which everyone knew about but her, she gets angry. The girls say goodbye to their friends, etc. On the drive north, no one knows where they're going except Michaela who has a map. Michaela and Katie play classic road games along the way and Katie still hates that she's moving. When they arrive in Fir Lake there are about 2,100 people and their dad points out that they make their own cheese. The reason they are moving is because their mom got a new job as a professor at the local college and their dad is a writer. Michaela is super excited. Katie learns they will be living on Honeycomb Drive and Katie isn't happy. They can't find the road so they get directions for Bob Hawthorne. When the family arrives at the house, it is a typical farm looking house but not what Katie expected. She hates that there are a million bugs around and she calls that house The Monstrosity. A woman in her mid 20s comes out on her porch. Katie is surprised that the house has more than 2 bedrooms so she and Michaela don't have to share. That night it is storming so Katie goes to Michaela's room sobbing. Michaela gets them hot chocolate and they talk and look at old photos at dance in Katie's room. The next morning, Katie finds Michaela dancing to The Pussycat Dolls which is odd for her. The first day the girls go to town, Katie dresses in her normal NYC clothes. While they are stepping out the door, their dad is fixing

the roof. While leaving for town the girls see a deer for the first and only time. The woman next store tells them to be quiet and that it's more scared of them than they are of it. Emmaline introduces herself and the girls head to town. In town, Katie notices that everyone is smiling with apple-cheeked and glowing, wearing t-shirts with cuffed jeans and sandals over socks, and the street is clean. Michaela needs scotch tape so they stop at Hemming's Goods. Mr. and Mrs. Hemmings greet them with delight since their mom told them all about her teens. The girls notice that the store has everything including a tall will built boy who is looking at underwaer. His name is Anders Swensen and he was nice when he was younger but once he was named the star quarterback, he's too handsome for his own good according to the Hemming's. After leaving, the girls talk about how handsome Anders is, and Michaela has a good feeling about the upcoming year. The night before school starts, Michaela takes Katie outside and they look at the stars. They are amazed because they never saw stars in NYC. At school, Katie is lost at first. A girl in her homeroom who she calls Flannel is in the class. Her real name is Autumn and another girl named Rebecca, who she calls Heidi, looks her up and down when she comes into the class. A preppy boy, who's name is Sullivan walks Katie to social studies. When lunch rolls around, Michaela tells Katie she is having a great time. A blond girl (Heather), and twins (Lucy and Faith) sit down at their table and they adore Michaela. Michaela has a yearbook meeting at 3 o'clock so they can't walk home together which makes Katie mad. When Katie gets home, Emmaline is by her house and she invites Katie in. She shows Katie her BUddha statue and she suggest coming to her yoga class. Katie responds by saying Michaela is good at everything so it'd be perfect for her. Emmaline says she's lived in Japan, Thailand, San Francisco and now in New York. That night, while Michaela and Katie are star gazing, they see Emmaline crying. On a weekend, Michaela, her friends and Katie go swimming and Katie is self conscious about her body. She also admires Anders. A few days later, Katie learns that their mom is going to install a barre and mirror in the attic which is Katie's place to chill out. Again Katie finds out this information last. Katie is going to go to Mabel Thorpe's School of Dance and when she gets there, it's nothing like her old studio. They start by running when in her old school they stretched first. Autumn comes late and she is obsessed with ballet. After the class, Katie doesn't know if she'll stay in the class, but Autumn convinces her to for her (Autumn's dad is a professor too). When Katie gets home there is a Do NOT Disturb sign on Michaela's door. Katie asks to go stargazing but Michaela bails. The next day Sullivan asks Katie to Homecoming but she declines. In PE she can't do a push up and she hates Coach Shreve. At lunch, Katie sees Michaela sitting at the Senior Popular Table. Katie has lox on her bagel and Autumn thinks it's weird. Autumn invites Katie to the Camping Club's camp out on Mount Elephant (Michaela and Katie discussed going there some time). Katie arrives at Autumn's house and is greeted by her dog which she hates. He dad is at college even though it is a Saturday and her brother is in his room. There isn't any mention of a mother. Katie tells Autumn how little her apartment was compared to her house now. They eat bagels that Autumn got from the store she suggest. Jasper (Autumn's brother) stole some so Autumn runs up to his room and starts a physical fight. Since Michaela and Katie never had physical fights she yells at them to stop. Katie learns that Autumn and Jasper milk cows at a farm near by. Autumn's room shows that she's obsessed with ballet like she said, and she's really smart. She has a picture of her mom who died while giving birth to her. They tell each other positive features about the other. Katie tells Autumn about Sullivan almost asking her out to Homecoming. Autumn says to take a risk and ask him out, and that Anders is interest in Michaela. When Katie goes home, her parents are going to Hemmings and Michaela is about to go out with friends. She goes into Michaela's room and asks her if she's dating Anders. She says yes and Katie is mad that Michaela didn't tell her. Katie says that everyone adores Michaela and that they used to be best friends. Michaela has a mini panic attack when Anders arrives but she calms down. While Michaela is on her date, Katie looks at Michaela's laptop for secrets but she wimps out. At 11:30 pm, Katie is think about the date when Michaela comes home. Anders opens the door for her and they kiss. Katie is worried that he is going to break his sister's heart. Michaela and Anders go in the backyard and stargaze even though Michaela told Katie it was too cold. Katie runs to her room and puts herself down in the mirror. Michaela comes into Katie's room and tells her Anders asked her to Homecoming. On Sunday, Katie sees Emmaline's light on so she goes over and they talk about what they are thinking when they can't sleep. Katie says boys keep her

awake and tells Emmaline about Anders. We find out Emmaline's boyfriend died in the war and she changes the topic to K. Before Katie leaves, she suggest that Katie goes to her yoga class again. Katie leaves for school so she is there a 7:20. She's at the tennis courts (Sullivan plays tennis) and she's daydreaming about him and then he surprises her. The start of their conversation is awkward and Katie makes a bad joke. Eventually they decide to go to the dance together. Anders gives Michaela a ride to school and people gawk when she arrives but Katie turns away. Lucy, Heather and Michaela are on the Homecoming ballot. Jasper comes over at lunch and Autumn and Katie tell him about Katie's date. Katie pesters Autumn to go to the dance and asks her if she'd go to yoga. Autumn says she's weird but she agrees to go. Michaela goes on her date with Anders and gets home at 5 am when her curfew was midnight with Anders. In the morning, Katie smells cigarette smoke on Michaela's coat. After homeroom, Katie gives Sullivan her phone number and Katie voted Heather for Homecoming Queen. Autumn and Katie go to yoga class and Coach Shreve is there. Katie is exhausted after the class and coach flirts with Emmaline. On Friday October 16, there is the Homecoming parade, pep rally and football game, which Katie and Sullivan attend together. Katie freezes her butt off and she doesn't understand football at all. Their team wins, Katie sees Michaela smoking, and Katie gets a peck on the cheek from Sullivan. At the dance, Katie feels awkward but Autumn and Jasper surprise her by attending. Katie learns that Michaela got fake IDs with Heather and she looks really beautiful. Katie and Sullivan dance because he looks at her boobs. They almost kiss but Katie doesn't want to so she doesn't. The band lead singer announces the Miranda Warner is Queen but then says Michaela Wilder. Katie runs to the bathroom and cries. She cleans herself up and returns. Michaela comes over and says she's sleeping over at Heather's, which may be a lie, and she says goodbye to Autumn and Jasper. At home, Katie thinks about what Michaela was planning on doing and Jasper while dancing with Sullivan. Halloween night, Katie is with Autumn and Jasper and Michaela is at Heather's. Michaela gets home at 4 am. The next morning, their mom has something to tell them but then Katie says 'Anders Swensen'. Michaela knocks over her coffee and their mom says their old dance teacher called and they are invited to The Nutcracker Thanksgiving weekend. Michaela is not happy and says they should have a more traditional Thanksgiving like people in Fir Lake. Katie and Michaela race to Michaela's room and it feels like old times. They look at bus tickets and chat about Anders. Michaela goes to practice ballet and Katie looks at her chat messages. Katie finds out that Anders and Michaela had sex and Heather sent an email that said 'congratulations on no longer being a virgin.' Katie is freaking out not only because her sister had sex but also that she didn't tell her. Katie lies and says that she bought the tickets and then she goes in her room after telling Michaela that she wants to be alone. Katie starts to enjoy yoga more than ballet and Katie and Sullivan officially broke up. Katie asks coach after yoga about how he feels about Emmaline but he doesn't give an 'I love her to death' response. Autumn invites Katie to her annual family hike. Michaela is jealous of the hike. Almost to the top, Katie is behind and Jasper tags along with her. He then says her princess act is getting old. Katie screams at him that it's who she is and abandons him. Katie is surprised that she has to pee in the woods. While walking back to the mini campsite, Katie tells Autumn about Michaela. Autumn says that it was disrespectful to invade her privacy. They have an argument and they walk down early. School is awkward now not having Autumn to talk to. A week before the NYC trip, Mom decides to start packing but Michaela is going to Heather's for yearbook. Katie blurts out that she's going to Anders' and explains what she's been doing. Michaela and Katie have an argument and Katie calls her a bitch. Dad comes in the room with Heather who was waiting in the car. Michaela goes to Heather's crying. The girls don't speak to each other on the way to NYC. Svetlana (their dance teacher) greets them and updates them on their former dance mates. She pulls out a cigarette and Michaela asks for one. They then get in an argument about her being healthy because she's a dancer. Their old friends greet them at a restaurant and they make fun of 'hicktown.' When Michaela gives Katie a sad smile, they know home doesn't feel quite as good as it used to. At the theater, Katie sits down next to Michaela and Svetlana and they look like they just fought. In the middle of the show, Svetlana leaves and Katie looks over and Michaela is crying. Michaela tells her she isn't going to audition at Juilliard and she's not going to dance anymore either. She explains that she wants to go to college to study history, literature and philosophy. She says that she felt that she didn't want to dance before Fir



Lake. She loved dancing but when high school arrived it became too much pressure to get better and that she had to answer to what her mom and Svetlana wanted her to be. Katie now realizes that she doesn't want to be treated like Michaela. Michaela says she felt normal in Fir lake and she was going to tell Katie before they left but they got into their fight. Michaela says she's going to miss ballet but Katie assures her that she can do it for fun. Katie also confesses that she was jealous of her new friends, winning Homecoming Queen, and others. Michaela explains that she was more open to the idea of moving and Katie didn't want to meet new people. When Katie gets back home, she finds Autumn milking cows and they make small talk but then they apologize to each other. Katie is going to continue yoga but not dance and Autumn is going to continue dance but not yoga. Autumn asks about Michaela and Katie gives her the rundown of what her sisters future is. Autumn asks about Jasper and he is sledding with a girl. They go back to Autumn's house and eat bagels that Katie brought back from NYC. Jasper makes fun of Katie by calling her a princess again but she likes that he calls her Katya (her real name). Jasper comes out while Katie is leaving and apologizes about what he said on the mountain and says he, Katie, and Michaela should go ice skating. Katie then fantasizes about hissing him. Emmaline is taking out her trash and she invites Katie in. She gives her a mini gold Buddha that she got from San Francisco. They discuss Coach S and Emmaline explains that she was in San Fran and she saw a guy. She broke up/ended things with him and she isn't in the mood to start dating again. Anders is sitting on Katie's front porch and her parents meet him. After Michaela and Anders leave, her mom calls her Katie for the first time. Michaela gets home on time and asks to go stargazing. She hasn't told their mom about her plans yet but she plans on applying to Fenimore Cooper, Vassar, University of Vermont. They discuss Anders and Michaela says sex was weird and scary at first but then better. 'Friends come and go but sisters forever.'

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## **Nancy says**

Katya—preferably Katie—Wilder, is a City Girl living in New York, an aspiring ballerina, and sister of the all perfect Michaela Wilder. Nearing bed one night, Michaela reveals to Katie that they're moving to Fir Lake, the countryside, where camping and milking cows are like, required. Of course Katie's not thrilled. And she thought Michaela would feel the same way, only it turns out she doesn't. Soon, Michaela is ditching Katie for her new friends, gets crowned Homecoming Queen and she's turned into someone completely different. All Katie wants is her old sister back—as well as her old life.

I had such a hard time liking Michaela. She's a very important character in the book, but the author hasn't developed her into a real person yet. I can't see myself forgiving her for being so harsh and avoidant of Katie. I don't expect characters to be nice all the time, because there are always the antagonists, but I don't see where Michaela has changed her ways. She doesn't offer an apology to Katie for the way she's been treating her, and Katie just immediately sucks it up and puts it all in the past. Or maybe it's just me. I wouldn't forgive my best friend that fast after all she's put me through.

As well, I think there might have been too many loose ends that needs to be tied up. Like with Sullivan. There are too many characters that pop in and out without a story, and that kind of bugs me, because in a story, even the most minor characters play a role. And get part of their story told.

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## **Aimee says**

This book will be out in paperback June 1st!

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## **Rachael says**

Katya Wilder, better known as Katie, is tired of being the last one in her family to know everything. So when she finally finds out that she has to move from New York City to some little town near Canada called Fir Lake, it's natural that she freaks out. After all, she has to leave behind the only place she's ever called home, the prestigious Anna Pavlova dancing school, and all her dancing friends.

Katie refuses to accept the new town that she lives in and all the people who live there. Her sister Michaela, by contrast, seems to fit right in. She's accepted at the popular table, and with all her new friends, it seems as if she doesn't have time for Katie anymore. But what hurts Katie most of all is that her sister used to be so close to her, and now Michaela doesn't tell her anything.

It's this hurt that influences Katie to grow apart from her sister. But some good things do result from this: Katie finds a friend in Autumn, a girl who likes both camping and dancing. Katie also finds out that the dancing school in Fir Lake is nothing in comparison with Anna Pavlova's, and that she likes yoga. The story follows Katie as she struggles to make her way through her first year in high school, along with her boy, friendship, and sisterly problems.

The Year My Sister Got Lucky was an incredibly well-written book about sisterhood. Even though I do not have the same sisterly bond with my sister as Katie has with Michaela, it was very easy to understand where Katie was coming from. All she really wanted when moving to the new town was for things to be normal and for her sister to be the same. But her sister didn't have the same idea, and because Michaela kept this secret from Katie, things started to get difficult between them. Katie's struggles are very realistic, and many times, I felt like I was inside her head and because we are so similar. Everything made sense in this book, and I like that because I didn't have to figure everything out for myself.

I highly recommend The Year My Sister Got Lucky to all girls. In my opinion, it is Aimee Friedman's best novel yet. I look forward to more novels of this depth and style from her.

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## **Bookworm1858 says**

Summary: Katie and Michaela are ballerinas, sisters, and best friends whose relationship undergoes significant changes when their family moves from NYC to small town Fir Lake.

I had some problems with this book as in I didn't really like Katie, the main character and narrator of the book. I don't know if this is because I also moved in high school and am an older sister more like Michaela or if I wouldn't have liked her anyway.

I did enjoy the description of ballet but I found Katie's attitude so off-putting. She hates that she's moved and she finds herself so much better than the Fir Lake natives. She doesn't even attempt to make new friends or even to be friendly to people. She was also very mean to her sister (not that my sister and I are always so nice to each other but I don't think we've ever been that bad.) My sister also read this book though and she

didn't like it much either.

One thing I did like is that it left me thinking about my relationship with my sister and I think it might do the same for other girls. I find that we weren't really friends but are working to build more of a relationship beyond the fact that we have the same parents. In my opinion, she is being too much of a stereotypical teenager now as in bratty, complaining, never satisfied. But she can also be very sweet at times.

In general I also felt that the plot was underdeveloped. The sister relationship was the focus but plots with Katie giving up ballet in favor of yoga and her crush on a new friend's brother (I love that storyline but always feel like it would never work in real life) felt rather rushed to me. I guess it's already a bit on the long side (370 pages) but I never think that should stop an author from bringing everything to a satisfying conclusion.

Overall: 3/5 for a rather unsympathetic main character and underdevelopment of subplots.

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## **Lorien Rhys ~ Live for tomorrow says**

After reading *Two Summers*, I needed to read more books by Aimee Friedman because man, her writing style is PERFECT for contemporary novels! But while not everything was picture perfect in this novel, you still can confirm and say that this book has it all. Two sisters and their family having to move out of the city and into the countryside, new school, older sister strays away from younger sister, aaand a romance that didn't get too deep for the main character. So let's get this review underway!

### **Katya**

Yes, I will use her actual name instead of Katie because that name sounds like a generic and besides, don't we all agree that Katya actually *sounds* better and unique rather than Katie. That aside. . . Katya was seriously an annoying character in the beginning. But who can really blame her? Her family kept this secret from her (moving to the countryside) and she's the last to know. While I do understand that side of it, what I don't understand is why she would complain about moving to the country (she really does make it sound like country is a curse word). I mean, if we were moving to the country *countryside* I'd be excited to move into a cute little town. That's probably just me. \*shrugs\* Sure, she's also leaving her friends from her prestigious ballet class (mother is Russian so she wanted to put both her kids in ballet class) but. . . I guess I thought Katya would have a better attitude than what is shown early in the book. Her attitude changes just a little bit while living in Fir Lake so that's a good part.

### **Michaela**

In the beginning of the book, I absolutely adored Michaela and she almost reminded me of another character. . . But then as you read towards the end of the book, she increasingly ignores Katya which makes me feel very disappointed in the older sister. Alright, so yes, I can understand the fact that they're in a new town and so Michaela wants to try new things but ignoring your sister while doing that in the process? No, no no no no! But then you feel really sympathetic to her close to the end soooo, still not sure what to think of this character as a whole.

### **Autumn Hawthorne aka Flannel**

Can I just say how much I loved her character and snarkiness (is that even a word)? Yes, yes I will because I can. She's not all gruffy and she's just your sweet country girl. She doesn't have a Southern accent and I'm so thankful to the author that she didn't write Autumn like that. I'll also just say how awesome Autumn's name

is, alright? You hardly see characters with names like that and it's all so refreshing and cute! Autumn is just amazing in every shape and form and the relationship that she and her older brother have? IT'S SO FUNNY!  
?

### **Jasper**

\*sighs dreamily\* Jasper, Jasper the Nerd. You'd expect him to be a total jerk (he kind of is in the beginning) but nope! Not this little muffin! He's such a gentleman and is super super super super super super super SWEET to our Katya! But argh! The book ended at the point where we don't know if those two will actually be together! >.< Back to Jasper though, he's truly and utterly charming and is so hilarious!

### **The Story Overall**

I ENJOYED THIS STORY SO MUCH!!!!!! The fact that it's set in the countryside with a small town made me wonder I didn't read this book so much sooner! Miss Aimee Friedman describes the whole story as if you're actually standing at the edge and staring at Mount Elephant. So if you love contemporary novels which are set in the countryside, this is going to be perfect for you!

Yes, there are a few themes I did not care for, nor did I see the point in mentioning them, but of course we'll always come across these topics as we read any book.

### **Final Thoughts**

I still can't believe I finished this one because it feels like the story could go on FOREVER!!!! I actually almost expected there to be a second book because of that ending! We don't know if Jasper and Katya ever get together, we don't know if the Wilder family is going to stay in Fir Lake, we don't know if Michaela will stay mental for life, we don't know if Autumn and Katya will stay friends, aaaand we don't know if Mr. Wilder (the father) will actually publish his novel. So I have one final last word to say: PLEASE WRITE A SECOND BOOK MISS FRIEDMAN BECAUSE I CAN SEE THIS AS A SERIES!!!! \*crosses fingers\* Please, oh please.

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### **Erin (work) says**

This was a very pragmatic reading decision: find more YA that is tween appropriate. This fits.

Sister dynamic, move from NY to country, older sister beautiful and gifted dancer, younger sister is protagonist and more lost, jealousy and unhappiness, a little romance for the younger, real romance for the older, some friendship dynamics, some mom-stuff. So, YA and yet no sex, no drugs, no violence, nothing too intense. Gentle realistic.

And ugh I was bored and just ready for it to be done.

Pragmatic.

Two stars for quality, the usefulness of the book gave it the extra star.

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