



Perfect Chemistry

Simone Elkeles

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A fresh, urban twist on the classic tale of star-crossed lovers.

When Brittany Ellis walks into chemistry class on the first day of senior year, she has no clue that her carefully created 'perfect' life is about to unravel before her eyes. She's forced to be lab partners with Alex Fuentes, a gang member from the other side of town, and he is about to threaten everything she's worked so hard for: her flawless reputation, her relationship with her boyfriend, and the secret that her home life is anything but perfect.

Alex is a bad boy and he knows it. So when he makes a bet with his friends to lure Brittany into his life, he thinks nothing of it. But soon Alex realizes Brittany is a real person with real problems, and suddenly the bet he made in arrogance turns into something much more.

In a passionate story about looking beneath the surface, Simone Elkeles breaks through the stereotypes and barriers that threaten to keep Brittany and Alex apart.

Perfect Chemistry Details

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Author : Simone Elkeles

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From Reader Review Perfect Chemistry for online ebook

Ana says

This was one of my favorite books as a teenager. Ok that's a lie. The first time I read Perfect Chemistry I was past legal age. I've reread it, many times. You can judge me all you want. A girl can't live on Tolkien alone. Sometimes I just need a dose of girly romance novels.

This series is so good. I want to break into a happy dance.

SueBee★bring me an alpha!★ says

★★★★★! Perfect Chemistry (stand-alone book 1). High school it-girl & rebel bad boy's take on star-crossed lovers!

“He touched me as if I were made of glass. He kissed me as if he'd savor it for the rest of his life.”

Perfect Chemistry (stand-alone book 1) is a modern take on star-crossed lovers. The rebel bad-boy from the wrong side of town, **Alejandro Fuentes, Alex** and the perfect good-girl princess with the world-at-her-feet, **Brittany Ellis, Brit** forced to be chemistry lab partners for the year.

But there is more behind their facades...

The rebel is smart and caring and if he cannot get of the gang, at least his brothers stand a chance at a better life. The princess hides secrets, might have a heart and soon discovers she is not sold on the fairytale.

Contempt blossoms into an unlikely friendship...

But soon jealousy, lust, secrets, betrayal and violence will **turn their lives upside down**. Her oh so perfect life will crumble. His bleak future will take a turn for the worse...

“Sometimes I wish there were do over years or fast forward days”

Seven words to describe **Alejandro Fuentes, Alex**: Smart, caring, noble, reliable, broken, hard-headed and

secretive.

“And may God strike me down right now because I want to make love to Brittany, not fuck her on my motorcycle like some cheap whore.”

Seven words to describe **Brittany Ellis, Brit**: Loyal, shallow, caring, conflicted, desperate, lonely and secretive.

“My life is perfect. My clothes are perfect. Even my family is perfect. And although it’s a complete lie, I’ve worked my butt off to keep up the appearance.”

Perfect Chemistry, told from dual POVs, is a beautifully told coming-of-age romance with hopes and dreams; sorrows and secrets; regrets and forgiveness. It ends wonderfully with an epilogue two decades into the future.

“It relaxes me.”

“Do I make you nervous?”

His gaze travels from my eyes to my breasts and down to where my dress meets my thighs.

“In that dress you do.”

Hero rating: 5 stars

Heroine rating: 5 stars

Sexual tension rating: 5 stars

Sex scenes rating: 3.5 stars

Sex scenes frequency: 4 stars

Plot rating: 5 stars

Dialogue rating: 5 stars

Storytelling rating: 5 stars

Story ending rating: 6 stars

Overall rating: 5 stars

Would I recommend this story: Yes.

Would I re-read this story: Maybe later.

Would I read future books by this author: Yes.

Inge says

Ha, I love Mrs P.

I read this book for the first time in 2012 and I loved the pants off of it. I was worried that, four years later, I wouldn't love it as much. That the clichés would bother me. But I'm happy to say that I still really enjoyed the story, even though I did find a few faults with it this time around. Having said that, I'm still happily aboard the 'I love Alex Fuentes' train.

The FountainPenDiva, Old school geek chick and lover of teddy bears says

My niece was reading this book and asked me what I thought of it. I read it last year and was so incensed at how horrible it was, this review (which has undergone several revisions from the original pissed-off rant) has been sitting in My Documents until now when the discussion of *Perfect Chemistry* came up again. I somehow managed to survive this EPIC RACEFAIL/GENDERFAIL of a book. Seriously, I wondered if author Simone Elkeles ever met a stereotype she didn't like or believe in. To say that she has become an automatic never-buy-or-read-even-if-she-were-the-last-book-on-earth is an understatement.

I never set out to just hate a book sight unseen and even though I had the feeling *Perfect Chemistry* was going to be a perfect *disaster*, I gave it a chance because some of my Goodreads friends recommended it since they know I love interracial romance. Yes Virginia, I *absolutely, positively HATED* this book and it's only the second book I've ever read where I wished I believed in book burning because this one would be roasting hot dogs by now.

Did I mention how stereotype-laden this dreck thinly disguised as a YA romance was? Okay, try Mexican teenage boy who's poor and is in a gang meets pretty, White and rich teenage girl and they fall in love much to the consternation of the people around them. Really? Mexican teenage boy in a gang? Whoa. Just as good as Mexican boy as gardener? Or Mexican teenage boy as car wash attendant? I guess Mexican teenage boy as geeky science student from a stable and loving family wouldn't have worked, right Ms, Elkeles? Don't tell me, readers wouldn't have bought it.

Worse still are her descriptions of "gang life" which read like they came straight from the film 'American Me' or from the docu-series on A&E, 'Gangland'. It's basically over-the-top gratuitous from the point of view of a woman who thinks a little google research and some television shows are all that's needed to portray 'realistic' gang life sans nuance. The first thing I thought while reading about Alex was, why did he have to be in a gang? The story would have been just fine if he was just from the wrong side of the tracks, a poor kid with smarts trying to make good. And what was with the random high school-esque Spanish thrown in when Alex was talking with his family and his friends?

Next on the chopping block, Brittany. There are few female characters I've had the urge to slap silly, and she's right at the top of the list. Puddles have more depth than this girl. Oh yes, she struggles to be perfect, but everything's about her looks. We're constantly told how she's this Barbie Doll brought to life with her perfect hair, skin, body, makeup, boyfriend, etc. Where's the rest of her? I'm sure she's smart but I never got that impression. I got the impression of a spoiled, self-centered little rich girl who tossed this Mexican gangbanger-gone-good named Alex at her upper-crust parents in order to piss them off. I just didn't see any indication that she really cared for Alex, nor he for her (since she was part of a bet over a car). Maybe it was

the writing, which was just painfully bad.

Unlike some readers, the sex and drugs aspect was probably the most accurate part of the book. Whether we want to deal with it or not, some teens are engaging in this behavior and we have to start dealing with it in an honest fashion. If there was any romance involved, I had a hard time seeing it because of all the rest of the FAIL.

The sad fact that this book won so many awards is just mindboggling at best but also shows these groups need a serious shot of diversity on their panels. There's no way a book this racially insulting should be winning anything save a Razzie, if they had them for books. The sad thing is, there's a dearth of well-written YA interracial romances out there. We need them featuring well-rounded characters and not stereotypes.

Julie Kagawa says

I adore this book.

This is not a genre I read often. The genres I read often include dragons, faeries, werewolves (I've sworn off vampires for awhile), wizards, magic, flying carpets, kings, queens, and talking pink rabbits. In other words, I'm a big fantasy buff. BUT, then I saw the booktrailer for Perfect Chemistry ...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hr0OtY...>

And was so intrigued and amused, I had to go buy it. I could give a summary, but the trailer does a much better job, so all I'll say is that it was amazing. I thought I would despise the female lead, Brittney, but from the first chapter, she shows she's not the stuck-up ditz I thought she'd be and I really connected with her. Alex, ah Alex. I always had a thing for stoic bad-boys with tragic pasts. And, what can I say, I'm a hopeless romantic after all. The chemistry (pun intended) between them was intense, and made me melt into a big happy puddle of goo.

So to summarize:

Story: A. A classic Romeo and Juliet story, only with gangs and cheerleaders.

Characters: A+. I've read a lot of YA where I couldn't stand the protag, especially if it's a female. Call me old fashioned, but being rude and condescending does not come off as "snarky" or "tough," just smack-worthy. Alex and Brittney never got to the point where I wanted to slap them. They both acted like real, relatable teenagers, each with their own set of problems that they were dealing with in their own way.

Writing: A. No flowery language or stunning descriptions here, but the writing is real and down-to-earth, yet executed in such a way that you really feel what the characters are going through. And the ending left me grinning like an idiot. Overall, I can't say enough good things about this book. So, watch the trailer, and then go out and get this book. You won't be dissapointed.

Kristi says

This novel was fantastic, it was wonderful, it blew me away! After I finished reading it, I wanted to read it again... something in the story just really got to me. If I had to describe it I'd say it's like Pretty in Pink meets West Side Story. You know Pretty in Pink, awesome 80's movie starring Molly Ringwald, rich guy falling for the poor girl on the other side of the tracks... West Side Story, forbidden love in the most extreme.

It's obvious that Elkeles did her homework with this one. The gang dynamic is terrifyingly real. I will admit that initially I was worried. I didn't think there was any way that she could spin a character that's a gang member to be likeable, a hero even. I mean when I think of gangs, it's drugs, drive-by's, you know extremely shady things, how can that be appealing at any level. And yet Alex was. He was a "good" guy, he was that tragic hero.

And Brittany, her character was even more complex that I think the novel even revealed. She seemed so real, it felt like I knew her, or someone like her. And despite the apparent differences between the two characters, they were so much more alike than I would have ever guessed. It still seems impossible and yet I've seen it!

The chapters are alternated between Alex and Brittany, and I was so happy for that. I loved being able to glimpse into each of their heads and really understand what they were thinking and how they were effected by each other. Had the story not been told that way, I don't think I would have enjoyed it as much. I think that is what won Alex over for me, because I got to see how he struggled with the life that he didn't want.

Elkeles writing was so smooth.... like butta. It just flowed right of the page, it was like I wasn't even reading... I was there. I was Brittany, I was Alex. It was powerful. *goose bumps*

On the surface it may read like a love story but there is so much more going on. It's a story of life lessons. Don't judge a person by the color of their skin, don't judge a person by the way that they look, talk, where they live.... I could go on. But I'll stop there, and leave you with the recommendation to pick it up.

I'm really looking forward to what Elkeles has in store for us next.

Nicole says

While I appreciate Simone Elkeles attempt to write a story with a lovely "moral" I can't help but point out that there *aren't any in this book. I don't support the explicit language and although I know by my daily junior-high life that teens actually talk like this, and 10 times worse, why encourage cursing? Is not the ultimate goal for every adult, and every teenager besides, to set the foundation for positive, sophisticated, and well-mannered demeanors? And the fact that Brittany and Alex had sex but ended up falling in love, getting happily married, and had a cute little kid while curing Alzheimer's to boot is not realistic at all. Only a small percentage of teens actually end up staying together after high school and on to college much less get betrothed. This only creates a fantasy for teens that if you have sex with your partner they will never forget you, go crazy about, track you down and then you live a happily ever after with them. And this is not even mentioning the violence and alcohol abuse used in the plot line. What is my advice to Simone Elkeles? Next time you write a novel, please consider whose moral compass you might contribute to destroying.*

Haleema says

This was good. Yes, it was insanely cliché, unrealistic, and would never happen to two teenagers in real life. We all know that. Some high school kids are too immature to fall in love. But I can't say for all teenagers. However, Elkeles made it so believable.

At first, I hated Brittany. The I'm-so-perfect facade she pulls off really angered me. I was Alex, hating her for being fake and perfect and untouchable. Then I slowly began to feel her pain. I began to know her and understand what she does and why she does it. However, sometimes she annoys me. She's so...angsty and tireless.

Anyway, obviously, this story is ridiculously clichéd. But I didn't mind so much. I loved how the romance slowly developed throughout the book. It seemed so natural. Nothing made me go, "Come on! You guys just *had* to bump into each other everywhere." It didn't annoy me for some odd reason.

Overall, I loved this book because of how it made me feel about so many things. Alex, Shelley, the pressure from parents, etc. It was so truly understandable.

Fran says

I'm just not the right person to read YA books. Even though I'm technically the target audience for these (me being a teen and all), I've found that I just hate 90 % of them. Even most of the ones other people seem to like, I hate. So if you're a person who doesn't dislike super cheesy writing and a million clichés, this book will probably be a fun read for you and you shouldn't let my bad review keep you from reading it.

I really only read this book because so many people on Goodreads seemed to love it. Otherwise I would have never in a million years picked it up. Reading the back of the book in the bookstore, I had my doubts about it but I still wanted to give it a try.

I can easily sum up the problems I had with this book: The cover is cheesy, the story is cheesy, the writing is cheesy.

Now of course the cover wasn't an actual factor in my decision to give this book a 1 star rating but I'd like to say that, had I looked at more closely before buying it, I would've been able to at least expect a cheesy book.

The story is what bothered me most because it's obviously been done a million times before. I generally wouldn't mind if it had been a good version of the "good girl falls for bad boy"-type story. The whole Latino Blood gang stuff and the rich people factor just made this book more ridiculous because that way they also added the "poor guy falls for rich girl" and the "oh no my parents will disapprove"-drama. So that was pretty stupid. I also hated the random Spanish that was used in every single sentence in all of the Alex chapters. It was just overused and made me cringe a lot. I sometimes also didn't really understand what he meant and they never really explained it but I figured it's not actually important to the story so I stopped trying to understand it eventually.

I don't wanna get too into it but the Latino Blood gang thing had me rolling my eyes every single time they mentioned it. It was just SO over the top and the type of cliché I couldn't even imagine a writer using before

I read this book. As soon as it was mentioned, I knew this book would not be one I'd end up liking.

The writing was also completely cheesy. (I'm really sorry for using that word so much by the way but I can't find any other one that fits.) Instead of showing us how the character feels, the author kept talking about it. It got to the point where I got angry as soon as a character mentioned feelings in any kind of way. It drove me crazy. Super cringeworthy.

Speaking of cringeworthy moments, there were a lot of those in this book. Brittany's unrealistic and clichéd parents, the fact that the author added Shelley to make Brittany seem less 'perfect' and give her a reason for it all, Alex's dad who got shot during a drug deal, Brittany being a popular girl with the perfect boyfriend who doesn't make her happy, Alex taking an interest in her because of a bet, ... I could go on because the entire book was a total cliché in my honest opinion and those tend to make me cringe.

I sincerely hope the reason why people seem to love this book so much is not "Alex Fuentes is hot and dangerous" (Ke\$ha reference not intended). I didn't like it at all and had to force myself to keep reading after chapter 5.

Yaz *The Reading Girl* says

**Oh My God! This book...I just thought it was...SO GOOD!
5 STARS ALL THE WAY!**

FANGIRLING MOMENT!

You might think that this is like those cheesy romantic teen books and movies where the girl after hating the guy falls in love with him and blah, blah, blah!!

Nope, its nothing like that. This book is more than that.It is one of the best romantic books I have ever read and very beautiful.

So lets start with the beautiful Brittany Ellis the main character:

She is your typical beautiful, hot blonde girl. Perfect ,rich, popular, a cheerleader,a good student who is nice with everyone and lives in the north side of town. She is dating the high school's football team quarterback and as you know, they are The Golden Couple. But behind all that perfection Brittany's life isn't what it seems to be. Her house is full of plenty of problems.

So then there is the sexy Alex Fuentes(ladies he is mine):

A poor Mexican boy who lives in the southside of town. He is your typical bad boy. In a gang and he thinks he is tough. But in reality all he wants is to graduate high school and get out of the gang.

So when they are thrown together as chemistry partners sparks fly and they start to understand each other. This book is told from the perspective of Brittany and Alex. The story of two teenagers who's life isn't what it seems to be on the outside and how they try to be together even if people threaten them.

Like I said, it is such an awesome book. I loved it. Its not ONE of those books. Its funny, sexy, sad, and kind of realistic.

I loved the cover. It just shows that there is like a connection to them or chemistry, I loved the writing. Lots of Spanish curse words and Spanish words and I loved that. I loved that it showed reality in some way. I loved all the characters. They were amazing even the bad ones. And Damn, it was a sexy, hot story all around(I know I have repeated that a lot, but its the truth) .But I won't spoil it.

It was a beautiful book, and Simone Elkeles you deserve LOTS of round of applause:

I recommend it to everyone.

Some Quotes I Liked:

“You are the one girl that made me risk eveything for a future worth having.”

“We're actors in our lives, pretendin' to be who we want people to think we are.”

“One of the things that makes me who I am is the loyalty I have to people I hold close to my heart.”

“If there's one thing I learned, it's that nobody is here forever. You have to live for the moment, each and every day . . . the here, the now.”

“I can't help but smile as I swipe a lone tear trailing down my cheek. How can I not be crazy in love with this guy? Time away from him didn't change anything. I can't deny him another chance. That would be denying myself. ”

See it on my blog.

Kat O'Keeffe says

A fantastic contemporary romance! I loved the relationship between Brittany and Alex, but I especially loved that the story wasn't JUST about their romance--they each had their own conflicts and struggles in life. I thought they were both really well-developed characters, and I couldn't help but root for them to get together.

What really won me over, though, was the humor and the emotional impact of this book. Any book that can make me laugh out loud then bring me close to tears is a winner to me! Definitely looking forward to continuing this series and reading about Alex's brothers' stories!

kat says

1.5 stars????

these are the notes i took while reading:

- the mOSt stereotypical characters (every mexican character=unstable homes, poor families, in or related to someone in a gang, guns)
 - i'm all for including a foreign language in your book, but sentences like "sí everything's bien" or throwing in chichis everytime alex is looking at brittany's chest is not the most effective way in my opinion
 - misuse of mental illness (anxiety does not equal uptight, depressed does not equal upset)
 - why is alex/other mexican characters the only ones with the g's removed from their -ing words. it's unnecessary
 - lowkey girl hate
 - go brittany for turning colin down multiple times and finally breaking up with him for pressuring her. it took her quite a while, but still
 - it's brittany's mission to change alex so that people will one day say their a perfect couple *rolls eyes*
 - their entire relationship begins bc alex bets that he can have sex with brittany and film it for his friends
 - over halfway through the book when brittany and he are dating he is still thinking about his idiotic bet as endgame
 - hector's betrayal was an obvious plot twist
 - "i can either take advantage of her and win the bet, which would be a slam dunk in her condition, or..." (i don't cae if you're high as a kite any guy who even considers raping a drunk girl (and filming it for his stupid bet) gets a strong -200/10 from me)
-

Emily May says

I read this a while ago and I always meant to review but never ended up getting around to it until now. I have a few things I want to say, the first that it wasn't entirely unenjoyable, the low rating reflects several things but I want to point out that I understand why so many people love this book and I think it would be better for the majority to read it themselves and make their own minds up - I know that I am again in the minority.

It's quite a nice Romeo and Juliet type of forbidden romance. Alex Fuentes is an outsider, a gang member, and his kind and Britney's do not mix. Britney is the most popular girl in school, very pretty and a cheerleader (of course), it always seems in these types of scenarios it's only a matter of time before she gets fed up with her squeaky clean world and falls for a bad boy - which is what happens. But the whole thing is such a cliché.

A cheerleader and a bad boy... it's *Grease* except the male love interest is Mexican, but the ideas are generally the same. The story is very predictable and therefore quite dull, despite the fact that there is definitely chemistry built up in the book. There are some fairly hot, if not very descriptive, sex scenes that set the book apart from all the other cliched teen romances - this I liked. But it still didn't make up for the extreme lack of originality on the author's part. There was also the usual (and annoying) displays of self-doubt and insecurities that seem to go hand in hand with romance novels.

I know it'd be no fun if they got together in chapter one, but why do they both always have to start questioning themselves. Especially seeing as sometimes it's blatantly obvious that the other person likes them, they couldn't be sending off much stronger signals if they came out with a banner saying "I'm into you". Are we really expected to feel sorry for Britney when she's checking herself out in a mirror and complaining about her faults? This is a girl who we are repeatedly told is Barbie come to life: perfect figure, perfect skin, hair, teeth... sorry, but the pity isn't there.

The thing is... the book is really... *cute*. But I'm tired of Ms good girl cheerleader meets mr bad boy gang member. That's why my rating is "it's ok", I wouldn't go as far as to say I actually liked it.

Lady Jayne *~*The Beach Bandida*~* says

5 Stars!!! - Also reviewed at: *Lady Jayne's Reading Den*

(This is an Adult-who-enjoys-reliving-the-stirrings-of-first-love-and-self-discovery-during-the-teen-years-through-YA books review)

CONTENT WARNING - Since this is a YA book I will include a warning that this book contains some Sexual, Drug and Alcohol, Course Language and Violent Content - Recommended for Older Teens

I **LOVED** this book!!! Perfect Chemistry is an urban story of star-crossed lovers from “different sides of the track” – Brittany Ellis, from the "North side", a picture-perfect rich girl who is captain of the pom squad (ie. a cheerleader), and bad-boy Alex Fuentes, from the "South side", a member of the Latino Bloods Gang.

At first, I wondered how I could fall for a gang member, but Alex totally stole my heart. The fact that my Alex Fuentes, while I was reading, looked like Steven Strait in my head didn't hurt either. ^_^

I was drawn into this story from the beginning and spent an enjoyable weekend reading it. I felt a connection to both Alex and Brittany, who wear masks every day and hide their true selves and fears from the world. But behind those veneers are two people who are struggling in their own worlds, and they find they have more in common than they thought. What starts out as a forced seating arrangement in a Chemistry lab turns into so much more, and starts an elemental change and pull that neither of them can resist. They must fight expectations, duty, prejudice and other chains that drag them apart.

The story may be one that has been told before, but it is how Simone Elkeles paints the story of Alex and Brittany through a blend of both their perspectives, with what I feel are very authentic voices, that brings an

honesty and depth to the characters, and thus, the story. I loved how each chapter alternated between Brittany's and Alex's POVs and yet the story flowed well. I couldn't help but feel immersed in their world and to care about what happened to them.

I loved Alex's friends, Paco and Isa, and Brittany's sister, Shelly.

The scene near the end left me in tears, and there's a violent scene in here that was very difficult for me to read because it brought back the pain of a violence that touched my own family's lives. As I closed the last page, though, I was left smiling and actually wanted the epilogue to keep going.

Alex and Brittany will hold a very special place in my heart.

This is the first book I've read by Simone Elkeles and I look forward to the sequel, Rules of Attraction, and reading other books penned by this author. Definitely HIGHLY recommended!

These are some of my favourite quotes:

"The reason I want you to put a shirt on is, well, because, um..."
'You've never seen a guy with his shirt off?'
'Ha, ha. Very funny. Believe me, you don't have anything I haven't seen before.'
'Wanna bet?' he says, then moves his hands to the button on his jeans and pops it open.
Isabel walks in at that exact moment. 'Whoa, Alex. Please keep your pants on.'
~*~*~*

"This connection we have isn't going away, it's only getting stronger. Because the more I spend time with her, the closer I want to be."
~*~*~*

"I want to know how to make this girl laugh. I want to know what makes her cry. I want to know what it feels like to have her look at me as if I'm her knight in shining armor"
~*~*~*

"Brittany: 'I'm losing control.'
Alex: "Mamacita, I've already lost it."
~*~*~*

*"I can't help but smile as I swipe a lone tear trailing down my cheek. How can I not be crazy in love with this guy?" - (I know just what you mean, Brittany! *sighs*)*
~*~*~*

P.S. Okay, I now have a different yummy image of Alex Fuentes - Alexander F. Rodriguez. Mmmm...
mmmm...he makes a FINE Alex!

My Alex (Alexander F. Rodriguez):

My Brittany (Diana Agron):

Reading Order for the series:

1. Perfect Chemistry
2. Rules of Attraction - Review [here](#)
3. Chain Reaction - Review [here](#)

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Elise ✕ a.k.a Ryder's Pet ✕ says

Re-read: 24.09.15

“You are the one girl that made me risk everything for a future worth having.”

“We're actors in our lives, pretendin' to be who we want people to think we are.”

Story: Brittany is **picture perfect**. She has everything. She's beautiful, she's smart, she is dating the popular guy at school. Everyone want to be her and be with her. **Her life is perfect**. Brittany is the white chick from the rich side of town. Alex is **the bad boy**. He's poor. **He is in a gang**. He is dangerous. He's hot, sexy, and in control. **People expect him to follow his dad's footsteps or his people's footsteps**. Alex is an Mexican boy from the other side of town.

“Playing with fire doesn't necessarily get you burned.”

They are **forced to be lab partners** and Alex has made **a bet with his friends to lure Brittany** into his bed. Alex gets to see through Brittany's mask, sees **the real Brittany** without the attitude, without the facade. He just sees her for who she really is. **They both thought they were so different...** But life has a way of showing you that you were (are) wrong. We can actually **learn a great deal of things from Brittany and**

Alex, specially with them being together, which is not common and looked down on from Brittany's "people".

“Makin' mistakes ain't a crime, you know. What's the use of having a reputation if you can't ruin it every now and then?”

Characters: *Brittany Ellis* is fantastic! She is **so strong and loyal**. I love how she is with her sister, Shelley. So careful and dedicated to her. **It's beautiful to see**. Brittany has quite a pressure from her parents, specially from her mother who is kinda crazy from my pov. **Brittany is beautiful, inside out**. She puts quite a mask on her, **pretending she is perfect, that her life is perfect, but really, nothing is perfect**, specially not her family. No one saw through her mask, except Alex...

“I'm losing control.”
Mamacita, I've already lost it.”

Alex Fuentes , oh my dear, Alex... Boy do I love you! You're bloody **fantastic, sexy, hot, loving and, and, PERFECT!** I love you!! Wait, didn't I just say that? **Anyways, I love you, Alex!** I love how much respect he has for his mother, how much he loves his family and how much he tries to help them even though he have to **give up his chance at having a good future**. He didn't really need anything else in his life, didn't need the distraction and the want for more, didn't want the feeling of something missing, didn't need to want to be a *good* man **until he got to know Brittany**, until he saw through her mask and wanted to know her more. Wanted to know who she really was... **Wanted to give her everything...**

This thing with Brittany is supposed to be about a bet, not falling for a north sider. I have to keep in mind that I'm only interested in Brittany because of the bet, and I better ignore what I suspect are real feelings.
Feelings can't be a part of this game.

Overall: Jesus, I cannot believe I waited so long before I re-read it :O **We all need a little Alex and Brittany in our lives**, just sayin' and I shouldn't have gone so long with out them... *Simone Elkeles* is a brilliant writer and her books are awesome. Though I haven't continued with this series, mainly because **I really only want Alex**, I have still read her other book '*Wild Cards*' which was awesome, but '*Perfect Chemistry*' is the best! I'm pretty sure **I'll re-read it yet again in the future** because it's simply that amazing.

“I want to try making things right because picking up the pieces is way better than leaving them the way they are.”

Oh, I forgot to tell you; the quotes in this book is so **fantastic and inspiring!** I love them ♥ Oh and I want more Alex btw... And **everyone** should read this book!

Rate: 5++++ stars.

Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says

First of all, I want to thank my Goodreads friend, Shannon, for recommending this wonderful book. My life was so enriched by the reading of it. I also want to thank Ms. Simone Elkeles for putting fingers to keyboard and bringing this incredible story of the love between Alex and Brittany to life.

Life is cruel and harsh, and we all wear armor to protect ourselves against the pain of loss and the hardships we face. In *Perfect Chemistry*, we see two very different people who have a kindred soul. They are both walking through life wearing protection and disguises for their survival. One of the most illuminating and fascinating parts of this story is when these two reluctant chemistry partners are asked to tell the class a little bit about each other. What they say represents what the two of them want the world to see about themselves, even if that's not who they want to be.

Alex is a tough gangbanger, macho (and very appealing) Latino young man. He has pretty much had to join the Latino Bloods gang because his family and his own life would be in jeopardy otherwise. So far, he has managed to stay out trouble with the law, and to avoid crossing the line and killing and selling drugs. But the time is coming where he may not be able to prevent that transition. He sees Brittany and she is all he ever wanted but couldn't have. He tells himself that she's just a blond princess type, no substance, but he soon finds out that is far from the case.

I fell head over heels for Alex. He was not perfect, but even his imperfections endeared him to me. Under the scary, macho gang facade, he is a very perceptive, intelligent, and loving person. His caring nature is evident in how he treats his brothers and his mother, and even his friend Paco, and also how he treats Brittany, despite the teasing and sexual innuendoes. He comes off as being hardcore, but his heart is very good. I have to say that he was a very sexy guy. I was surprised at how much charisma this eighteen year-old kid was. I could imagine this drop dead gorgeous guy with black hair and dark eyes, a seductive smile, and a hard-body, riding his motorcycle. I am not big on gangs or the urban lifestyle, but this was so much a part of him, that it didn't lessen his appeal at all.

I loved seeing the world through his eyes, and enjoyed the authentic Latino/Mexicano flavor of his thoughts and language. I have a deep appreciation for Mexican culture, and I feel that Ms. Elkeles showed this in a manner that did it justice, adding to the depth and the characterization of Alex and flavoring the life he lives. Gosh, I cannot tell you how much I adored Alex. He made some bad choices, but also suffered for things beyond his control, and my heart ached to see what he had to go through. But deep down, I never doubted that he had a good head on his shoulders and he would end up doing the right thing in the end. I wanted for him to get out of that destructive lifestyle, and I was holding my breath hoping that he did.

I loved Brittany as well. She was a very three-dimensional character, even from the beginning. She might seem like the girl that I would avoid like the plague in high school, one of the shallow 'beautiful people,' but she had a really good heart, and was a very loving person. She was under tremendous stress trying to keep things together and maintain a perfect facade that was getting harder and harder to keep up. Her homelife was very difficult, with her hypercritical mother who was on the edge of emotional collapse, and her father who spent more time at work and thinking about work than interacting with his family. She is weighted down by her family's enormous expectations to always be perfect and to represent them well. Her steadfast love for her disabled, mentally-challenged sister really opened my heart to her, from the first page of the book. Shelley was very important to Brittany, although even her boyfriend was uncomfortable being around

her. So she didn't let people come to her life or talk about Shelley. Not out of embarrassment, but because of the fact that Shelley was a private, personal part of her life that others didn't understand or know how to deal with. It meant a lot when she introduced Alex to Shelley and he hit it off with her right away.

Like Alex, Brittany impressed me as a very level-headed, mature for her age person. I really appreciated how she was able to look past Alex's scary gang facade and see the warm, loving boy inside. She inspired Alex to want to strive and to be the person he was meant to be. This book really teaches a lesson about judging a book by its cover. Brittany would be the kind of girl that would be envied by many. But the truth is, her life was very difficult, despite living in a big, beautiful house, driving an expensive car, and wearing designer clothes. Being the captain of the pom-pom team and dating the head quarterback isn't all it's cracked up to be, and Brittany knows this first hand. And it's clear that she would willingly give that up without any regrets to have a true love, even with someone so different from her as Alex. However, the fear of what will happen to Shelley if she lets go, keeps her on the narrow path that has been given to her to walk. It is wonderful when Brittany decides to go where her heart leads her, although she does have to deal with some anguish and heartbreak along the way.

This couple is one of my favorite couples of all times. That's saying something for this serious romance fan. I never thought I could feel that way about a couple in a young adult book, but I believe Twilight did open the door for me to young adult romance, and I am very glad about this. Alex and Brittany meet each other's needs in every way. They had blistering sexual chemistry between them, yet Ms. Elkeles wrote this book in such a way that I didn't feel conflicted about reading these teens expressing themselves sexually. You could see that every encounter came from a deep connection on a mental, emotional, and spiritual level. I loved how they saw each other clearly in a way that no one else did. That is what soulmates should do for each other.

The cast of secondary characters added to the flavor and the depth of this beautiful story. Some of the people in both Alex and Brittany's life are not good for them, and do much to hinder their growth, but people like Paco, Alex's best friend, Isabel, a childhood friend of Alex who becomes Brittany's friend, Ms. Peterson, and Sierra, Brittany's friend, do their part to help Alex and Brittany on the journey to self-discovery and finding a future together. Ms. Peterson, their chemistry teacher, was the kind of educator that we need more of. She works hard to inspire her students, and didn't give up on Alex and write him off as just another Mexican gangbanger who was going to end up dead or in prison.

This book has some parts that were hard to read, but they needed to be there, because it is a story about a young man who is surrounded by violence and crime on a daily basis. There had to be some of this in the book, or it would have lacked authenticity. Fortunately, this does not detract from the story, but helps you to see what Alex is dealing with, and to respect him for the choices he makes to have a better future.

The climax of this book will have your heart in your throat, and tears welling up in your eyes. But the way this book ends gives the reader so much hope and joy. It's truly a perfect ending to this book.

I could go on and on about how wonderful Perfect Chemistry is, but I will end by saying, if you read one young adult book, please put this on the list to consider. You won't come out of this book without having your heart touched.

Zoë says

THIS BOOK WAS SO CUTE. It wasn't just a mushy teen romance book but also dealt with more serious

issues. The character development was flawless and I'm so happy I read this book!

Megs ♥ says

I adored this book. This is the classic love story with a fresh new feel.

Hmm let's see...Certain parts cliché, certain parts stereotypical, certain parts predictable, but I was still able to enjoy this book for what it was: romantic and sweet.

Alex is a gang member, who doesn't want to be and Brittany is a cheerleader. When they first meet they don't hit it off. They think they know everything there is to know about one another just by what they see or may have heard. In time, they fall for each other, and find out that they are each hiding some dark and painful secrets.

Elkeles breathes new life into an old tale, and the writing is done in multiple POV, showing both Alex and Brittany's point of view, keeping Perfect Chemistry evenly paced. What I loved about the most is that this book could make you feel good while reading, but at the same time it would make you feel sad about the life Alex is trying to get out of, and feel sorry for Brittany's sister. These two both have so much going on in the background of their lives, yet they can give themselves completely to each other. There is also some great drama, gritty dialog and a couple of twists along the way to keep you excited.

This little love story will warm your heart, and make you long for the days of first loves, when you could look into someone's eyes and although they have flaws you see them as simply perfect. Even though Alex and Brittany's relationship does move at a fast pace, their thoughts, insecurities, hang-ups, and urges all ring true and are easy for nearly any teen to identify with.

Recommended to all romance lovers. I don't read too much romance, but this book intrigued me, and I'm glad I gave it a shot. There are two other parts to this series, and I'm sure I will read them both eventually when I'm in the mood for more romance.

Jo says

“Alex probably brings his dates sharp knives as gifts, in case she’ll need one when she’s out on a date with him.”

Initial Final Page Thoughts.

Well considering I thought I was going to read about two pages of this book before giving up, I'm surprised how much I enjoyed this one. Maybe I *am* a girl after all. Gosh.

High Points.

Brittany. Alex. PacoPacoPaco. Pom squad. Garages. Motorcycles. Science projects. Beaches. Leather jackets. Bandanas. Chichis. The phrase “ripped bod”. Muffins. Hand warmers...and sex.

Low Points.

I'll be the first person to admit that I get unnecessarily angry about epilogues.

WHY? Why are they needed? Books, as a rule, are better just left with an ambiguous ending. Because us readers like to fill in the blanks, don't we? We like to get our own way. We like to give our beloved characters a happy ending. We like to give our most hated characters a quick shove off a cliff.

Most epilogues force characters into ridiculous situations that are either twee, implausible or just so sickly sweet you just want to throw not the book out of the window, but yourself.

This epilogue was one of them.

I was half expecting Albus Severus Potter to be chilling out in the back of that classroom as they all come up with the cure for the common cold.

Also.... There seemed to be a whole lot of nothing happening in some chapters and then A MILLION things happening in others.

And, I think the American definition of 'gangbanger' is different to the British one.

If not... Alex just got a whole lot more interesting.

Heroine.

Oh, I loved Brittany. Like most people who've read this book I had pretty much decided I was going to hate her and read her sections with a scowl on my face.

But, out of the two, I actually preferred Brittany's chapters over Alex's. I'll go into this more later, but her narration seemed more natural and her feelings and thoughts were a lot more believable.

Even though I don't think we'd be friends if I had attended *this* Fairfield (My school was actually called Fairfield.... But unfortunately my chemistry lessons contained more old, wooden desks that put ladders in your tights when you get near to them rather than sexy Mexicano lovers ~~that put ladders in your tights when you get near to them.~~), I still liked you. It's just that we have absolutely nothing in common except we occasionally use muffin analogies to describe the state of our life.

But you were lovely and sweet and caring and a bit of a saucy minx when you wanted to be.

Car garages, eh?

Hero.

Alright, Alejandro. Sorry, I know you don't like being called that. But I like to say it... and then sing it. Badly.

But we'll stick with Alex.

You were very cute and I liked that you were a bit of a *one* and talked about chichis and how you'd keep the light on and *all sorts* of things to make a good girl like me blush.

I also loved your history and your background and how you were loyal and were a good hermano to the mini-Alex's that ran around in the background.

Also, you sound so effin' hot it's insane.

But, going back to the reason why I wasn't 100% sold on your chapters... saying things like "She's like a mystery, and all I can think about is unravelling the clues" and "We're actors in our lives, pretendin' to be who we want people to think we are" is a sure fire way of getting a slap from moi.

Seriously, I know you're not rotten to the core. You're all goeey in the middle and being a gang-whatever doesn't define who you truly are on the inside.

You don't have to keep trying to convince me.

I get it... you're deep.

"Problem is, the bathroom pass can't help you escape life".

OK, but can it help me escape those little nuggets of wisdom?

Theme Tune.

Love Goes Down by Plan B

I've chosen this song because it's one of the few modern love songs that isn't overly sappy and vile and errrrugh. And I just think this entire album is genius.

AND this song is before Mr Banks gets dumped unceremoniously, goes to prison and then kills someone in self-defence and everything is still lovely and cute and sexysexy.

But don't worry guys! We know our Alejandro doesn't share that same fate thanks to that cracking epilogue.

scowls

Boy/Girl Angst Level.

6/10. It could've been a lot worse.

I liked Alex and Brittany together, I thought they made a great couple... but I couldn't help but wish they had had more 'Urgh, I hate you' moments before they decided that they were going to be soul mates.

I don't know... but I loved their banter and their...wait for it... *wait for it...* **chemistry** when they were all fizzy and zingy and snarky with each other. Sure, they could be soulmates eventually... but I wanted more oomph.

Sadness Scale.

5/10. I wanted this book to be sadder and all the elements were there but, like I said before, the pacing kind of prevented it.

It seemed the truly sad and distressing moments were kind of just brushed over. Especially the bit at the end! Ohhh.

Recommended For.

People who are looking for a *slightly* predictable yet still fun romance book. People who don't mind a book about chemistry that isn't actually about chemistry. Unless we count the cure for Alzheimer's. But it's probably best if we don't. People who always add "And to sex" under their breath when they are making toasts. People who think garages are for sexytime. People who wish their driving instructor was a boy with a leather jacket (although a lovely Welshman with a ton of patience at me squealing whenever a sheep got too close to the dry stone walls that lined the windy (and icy) roads of Llanberis would always be my second choice). People who wish their teenage rebellion involved a sexy boy on a motorbike. People who use delicious baked treats to describe their mental states.

You can read this review and lots of other exciting stuff on my blog [here](#).

Jasmin says

[image error]
