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A realistic contemporary story of two girls, both named Naomi, whose divorced parents begin to date—perfect for fans of Lisa Graff, Sara Pennypacker, and Rita Williams-Garcia.

Other than their first names, Naomi Marie and Naomi Edith are sure they have nothing in common, and they wouldn't mind keeping it that way.

Naomi Marie starts clubs at the library and adores being a big sister. Naomi Edith loves quiet Saturdays and hanging with her best friend in her backyard. And while Naomi Marie's father lives a few blocks away, Naomi Edith wonders how she's supposed to get through each day a whole country apart from her mother.

When Naomi Marie's mom and Naomi Edith's dad get serious about dating, each girl tries to cling to the life she knows and loves. Then their parents push them into attending a class together, where they might just have to find a way to work with each other—and maybe even join forces to find new ways to define family.

Two Naomis Details

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Author : Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich , Audrey Vernick

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From Reader Review Two Naomis for online ebook

Jenna (Bookiemoji) says

Absolutely a 5 star read - especially for kids who are at the end of the elementary school years. This story will resonate with all of the siblings, single children and kids of divorced parents. Having been associated with (or being myself at one point or another in my life) all of the above, I totally *got* this book. Even if I am more years than I care to count older than the target audience age. I enjoyed the writing (it almost felt as though I was getting inside my daughter's head!) so much. And the story, the setting and the characters... they are all perfect.

This is a must read book full of diversity - when it comes to both families and representation. The range of emotions are diverse. The characters were true to life, unlike those in too many kid lit releases today.

I hope that Two Naomis will stick around on the shelves for many years to come... Libraries, take note: You want this book as part of your circulation.

Ms.Patterson says

Meh. These characters just bored me. The two voices bit doesn't work so well if every other sentence you have to remind yourself which character is talking - they were just too blandly alike. Each main character's best friend seemed kinda awesome. Just pointed out to me how much I didn't like it when I looked forward to their little side bits.

Mike Jung says

It's actually a little difficult for me to review this book without feeling emotional, because reading the book was such an emotionally complex and rich experience. I love Naomi Marie and Naomi Edith, for their wit, their vulnerability, their fallibility, their hearts, and their souls. Their lives become much more complicated and much more entangled when their parents began dating, and the two Naomis navigate that experience with all of the confusion, artlessness, stubbornness, and spirit in their possession. They're so wonderfully real, these characters; you ache for them during every moment of adversity, and you cheer for them every time they fight for a moment of connection. The laughs in TWO NAOMIS are abundant and meaningful; the emotional crescendos may very well bring you to tears. It's my favorite book of 2016 so far.

Yanira says

I started liking this one. But somewhere along the way this kind of fell apart for me. Especially that ending.

I was annoyed more at the parents than at the kids. I wish parents showed more respect to kids in this story. They rushed everything and then struggled when the child did not reciprocate feelings. Either way, I'm happy books like these exist.

Ms. Yingling says

ARC from Young Adult Books Central

Naomi Edith is living with her father, Tom, since her parents divorced and her mother has gone to California to be a costume designer. Her father isn't very organized about things, and meals are a haphazard affair, but they get along. Naomi Marie's parents are also divorced, but her father lives close by and often spends time with her and her young sister Brianna. When Valerie, Naomi Marie's mother, and Tom start dating, the two Naomis have to learn to put up with each other. Brianna is young enough that she is just glad to have more people around her, and doesn't have a problem with two girls having the same name-- she occasionally refers to them as "black Naomi" (Marie) and "white Naomi" (Edith). The two families spend a lot of time together, hanging out at both of the bakeries that the girls love, and even enroll the girls in a "Girl Gaming the System" coding class. There are some problems along the way, but the families are a strong support network for each other, and the girls eventually learn to like each other.

There are so many books out right now that deal with the death of a parent or some other horrible tragedy that has befallen a middle grade family, so it was extremely refreshing to read about a problem that many middle school students actually have: divorce and remarriage. While neither Naomi was tremendously enthusiastic about their parents remarrying, they were okay with it, but had understandable problems that were resolved after a lot of hard, thoughtful work.

I almost wish that a city were specified, because the setting was very vivid. The families don't have cars but rent them, and they go to the bakeries a LOT. I loved that Naomi Marie hung out at her local library and was involved in African Dance, and her little sister went to a Little Nubians play group, while Naomi Edith had her own interests and friends. Not surprisingly, since the book was a collaborative effort by two middle grade authors, there was a lot of discussion about how to get along with others and appreciate their differences even if you don't embrace them.

The inclusion of the computer coding class for the girls was fantastic! I wish that more readers would investigate the different coding languages that are out there and try their hand at it.

Perfect for fans of realistic fiction like Naylor's Alice series or Margolis' Boys Are Dogs that includes light drama, Two Naomis is a great book to show students that life can be challenging but isn't impossible to figure out.

Do have to say that I found this a little confusing, since both voices were very similar, and there was a cognitive disconnect between the expected audience (10 year olds) and the very tiny font. Perhaps the finished copy won't have that problem.

Adriyanna Zimmermann says

TWO NAOMIS is absolutely incredible, I was thrilled from start to finish! Reading the synopsis, I knew it'd be super cute but it was also so emotional. From happy to sad to angry to I-don't-know-what-I'm-feeling-but-I'm-super-emotional. The character development of Naomi Marie and Naomi Edith were off the charts. The

authors' were very good at making sure the reader understood not only both Naomis but their parents, family, and friends. It was like being in their heads'.

I loved both Naomis but I would say I connected with Naomi Marie a little bit more. She loved going to the library and making lists, just like me. She is also a bossy big sister, like me (haha). This is not to say I didn't love Naomi Edith, because I did, but I definitely saw more of myself in Naomi Marie. Both characters were incredibly unique and brought something different to the story.

This is such an important novel for MG readers with divorced parents, to understand that change is okay. I definitely wish I had this book growing up. Two Naomis is also valuable for MG readers with non-divorced parents, to see from someone else's perspective. If there was an emoji that was the combination of the heart-eyes emoji and the crying emoji, that would be my reading experience. I love, love, loved this!!

? + ? = this book ♥

Jasmine says

I am so profoundly grateful my parents didn't split up and force me to mesh my family with another one. This worked out okay, but it seems TERRIBLE.

Kate says

I just read a very early copy of TWO NAOMIS and loved it to pieces. This book about friendships and families, changes and challenges, is a true gem. The two Naomis, whose parents are dating, tell the story of how their folks coerce them into a friendship that neither wants but that both, perhaps, need. Forced to face family-changing challenges together, the girls are filled with good intentions and messy emotions, and they truly show readers what it means to try and fail and forgive. I loved the Naomis so much! Watch for this one when it releases in September 2016 - great for all kids in grades 3-7, and I think those who have faced similar challenges with changing families will hug it especially close.

Robin says

This is a warm and gentle book about two girls thrown together because their parents are dating one another. It very nicely presents their feelings of resentment and being out of control of what happens to them, as well as their wishes to do what's right and move forward. The girls are smart and introspective.

The voices of Naomi Marie and Naomi E. are not distinct enough. Even reading it through in one sitting, I often had to refer to the chapter headings or context details to figure out which girl was penning which chapter. Young readers may find this frustrating. Also, the parents continue to keep the kids in the dark and thrust important decisions on them as surprises. The girls grow as the story progresses, but the parents do not.

The design of the book does not match the target audience. The typeface is small and fussy, and the pages have little white space.

Worth reading if you have patrons in mind who you think are in need of comforting stories about families changing via re-marriage. Not of a time sensitive or trendy nature.

Nay Keppler says

Cute, but not nearly enough Naomis.

Michele Knott says

I think there are a lot of kids who will see themselves within the pages of this book.

Cynthia Levinson says

I zipped through this engaging book, in which you sympathize with everyone's angst yet root for them to work things out. The two main characters are distinct and appealing, with flaws and assets that make them whole and completely believable. The plot and the story arc flow so seamlessly, it's hard to believe that two people wrote it! I highly recommend this middle-grade novel for kids in flux--and which ones aren't?!

Nancy Kotkin says

A much-needed middle grade novel about two families that are in the process of blending. While the parents are well-meaning and obviously love their children, I struggle with some of their choices and behavior, especially the frequent withholding of information from their children and then always expecting those children to just go along with whatever they say. Both the Naomis seem too well-behaved given their age and circumstances. I expected some real blow-ups, but neither author exposed the raw emotions that would have made the children more realistic and relatable. Choosing to work together on the coding project, after being forced into the class by their parents, is especially a stretch of credibility. And the ending is rushed. Also, the biracial aspect of the blended family is not explored in any meaningful depth.

Vikki VanSickle says

The premise is a throwback to classic late 80s & early 90s contemporary middle grade, the kind of literature Judy Blume, Ann M. Martin and Paula Danziger were writing about; everyday kids dealing with everyday situations. Both Naomis are “average” kids, if I can use such a vague term here. No one has suffered major trauma or has significant hardships. They both have loving families and friends. But despite the classic “issue” driven premise, this is modern New York City. The girls have cell phones, attend a coding class, and use Skype.

The big challenge here is to distinguish between the two Naomis. The reader will have no trouble doing so. Naomi E is an only child, Naomi-Marie has a (very precocious) little sister. Naomi E is white, Naomi-Marie is black, this obvious differences leads to a funny moment when Naomi Marie's little sister Bree suggests they solve the two Naomi problem by calling them "Black Naomi" and "White Naomi." I love Naomi E's skepticism, her caution when it comes to friendship or big decisions, her tendency to be sarcastic. She doesn't suffer fools gladly and doesn't excite easily. Naomi Marie on the other hand is enthusiasm personified. She is a joiner, a leader, and very competitive. The girls' personalities may be different but are quite complimentary, something they come to learn (and appreciate) over time.

This isn't a story about divorce causing irreparable damage to a child. The parent-kid relationships are very positive. Both Naomis' sets of parents are quite civil and seem to have had amicable divorces. Although Naomi Marie lives with her mother, she sees her father frequently. Naomi E's mother is away in LA working in film, and her absence is definitely felt by her daughter and is the root of some of her anxieties. They Skype, but Naomi E is starting to crack with the longing to see her mother, and plans are made for that to happen.

There is something fascinating about peeking behind the curtain of someone else's home life. I felt like this reading Two Naomis. This is a funny, frank and positive exploration of how two tweens deal with their parents' dating.

Lindsay says

Beautifully told story about divorce. I loved the alternating POVs and the exploration of the very complicated emotions that arise when a family is going through such upheaval. Also, Rhuday-Perkovich must have been a librarian or know some librarians because all of those scenes rang sooooooooooooo true.
