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Second Helpings



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Par Megan McCafferty : Second Helpings before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Second Helpings:

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurKnowing that Ive just done something that will take decades off my parents lives with worry, youll excuse me for not getting into the fa-la-la-la-la Yuletide spirit this year. . . . The only difference between Christmas 2001 and Christmas 2000 is that I dont have a visit from Hope to look forward to. And Bethany has already packed on some major fetal flab. Oh, and now Gladdie doesnt need to ask a bizillion questions about my boyfriend, because shes already gotten the dirt from you know who.Jessica Darling is up in arms again in this much-anticipated, hilarious sequel to Sloppy Firsts. This time, the hyperobservant, angst-ridden teenager is going through the social and emotional ordeal of her senior year at Pineville High. Not only does the mysterious and oh-so-compelling Marcus Flutie continue to distract Jessica, but her best friend, Hope, still lives in another state, and she cant seem to escape the clutches of the Clueless Crew, her

schools in the Princeton guide to colleges I should attend in the first place. I've been banking on the idea that college will be the place where I finally find people who understand me. My niche. I have no idea if Utopia University exists. But there is one consolation. Even if I pick the wrong school, and the odds are 1600 to 1 that I will, it can't be worse than my four years at Pineville High. Incidentally, I didn't rock the SATs because I'm a genius. One campus tour of Harvard taught me the difference between freaky brilliance and the rest of us. No, my scores didn't reflect my superior intellect as much as they did my ability to memorize all the little tricks for acing the test. For me the SATs were a necessary annoyance, but not the big trauma that they are for most high-school students. Way more things were harder for me to deal with in my sophomore and junior years than the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Since I destroyed all the evidence of my hardships, let's review:

Jessica Darlings Top Traumas: 20002001 Edition

Trauma #1: My best friend moved a thousand miles away. After her brothers overdose, Hope's parents stole her away to their tiny Southern hometown, where good old-fashioned morals prevail, apparently. I can't blame the Weavers for trying to protect her innocence, as Hope is probably the last guileless person on the planet. Her absence hit me right in the middle of the school year, nineteen days before my Bitter Sixteenth birthday, shortly before the turn of this century. Humankind survived Y2K, but my world came to an end. Here's the kind of best friend Hope was (is) to me: She was the only person who understood why I couldn't stand the Clueless Crew (as Manda, Sara, and Bridget were collectively known before Manda slept with Bridget's boyfriend, Burke). And when I started changing the lyrics to pop songs as a creative way of making fun of them, she showcased her numerous artistic talents by recording herself singing them (with her own piano accompaniment), compiling the cuts on a CD (Now, That's What I Call Amusing!, Volume 1), and designing a professional-quality cover complete with liner notes. (Very special *muchas gracias* go out to Julio and Enrique Iglesias for all the love and inspiration you've given me over the years. *Te amo y te amo. . .*) I'm listening to her soaring rendition of Cellulite (aka Sara's song) right now. (Sung to the tune of the Dave Matthews Band's Satellite.) Cellulite, on my thighs Looks like stucco, makes me cry Butt of blubber Cellulite, no swimsuit will do I must find a muumuu But I can't face those dressing-room mirrors [Chorus] Creams don't work, and squats, forget it! My parents won't pay for lipo just yet My puckered ass needs replacing Look up, look down, it's all around My cellulite. If that isn't proof that Hope was the only one who laughed at my jokes and sympathized with my tears, I don't know what is. We still talk on the phone and write letters, but it's never been enough. And unlike most people my age, I think the round-the-clock availability of e-mail and interactive messaging is an inadequate substitute for face-to-face, heart-to-heart contact. This is one of the reasons I am a freak.

Speaking of . . . **Trauma #2: I had suck-ass excuses for friends.** My parents thought that I had plenty of people to fill the void left by Hope, especially Bridget. She is Gwyneth blond with a bodacious booty and Hollywood ambitions. I am none of these things. We share nothing in common other than the street we've lived on since birth. My parents also had a difficult time buying my loneliness because it was well known that Scotty, His Royal Guyness and Grand Poo-bah of the Upper Crust, had a crush on me. This was and still is inexplicable since he never seems to understand a single thing that comes out of my mouth. I found the prospect of having to translate every utterance exhausting and exasperating. I didn't want to date Scotty just to kill time. He has since proven me right by banging bimbo after bimbo, all of whose first names invariably end in y. My friendship with the Clueless Two, Manda and Sara, certainly didn't make my life any sunnier, especially after Manda couldn't resist her natural urge to bang Bridget's boyfriend, and Sara couldn't resist her inborn instinct to blab to the world about it. And finally, to make matters worse, Miss Hyacinth Anastasia Wallace, the one girl I thought had friend potential, turned out to be a Manhattan celebante hoping to gain credibility by slumming at Pineville High for a marking period or two, then writing a book about it, which was optioned by Miramax before she completed the spell check on the last draft, and will be available in stores nationwide just in time for Christmas.

Trauma #3: My parents didn't and still don't get it. As I've already mentioned, my parents told me that I was overreacting to the loss of my best friend. My mother thought I should channel all my angsty energy into becoming a boy magnet. My father wanted me to harness it toward becoming a long-distance-running legend. My parents had little experience in dealing with my unique brand of suburban-high-school misanthropy because my older sibling, Bethany, was everything I was not: uncomplicated, popular, and teen-magazine pretty.

Trauma #4: I was unable to sleep. I developed chronic insomnia after Hope moved. (I currently get about four hours of REM every night a huge improvement.) Bored by tossing and turning, I started to sneak out of the house and go running around my neighborhood. These jaunts had a soothing, cathartic effect. It was the only time my head would clear out the clutter. On one of those early-morning runs, I tripped over an exposed root and broke my leg. I was never as swift again. My

dad was devastated, but secretly I was relieved. I never liked having to win, and was grateful for an excuse to suck. Trauma #5: My menstrual cycle went MIA. My ovaries shut down in response to the stress, lack of sleep, and overtraining. I was as sexually mature as your average kindergartener. Trauma #6: I developed a sick obsession with He Who Shall Remain Nameless. He wasn't my boyfriend, but He was more than just a friend. I was able to tell Him things that I couldn't share with Hope. When I couldn't run anymore, His voice soothed me, and I was actually able to fall asleep again. My period even returned, welcoming me back to the world of pubescence. His motives weren't as pure as I thought they were. Whatever relationship we had was conceived under false pretenses. I was an experiment. To see what would happen when the male slut/junkie of Pineville High who just happened to be my best friend's dead brother's drug buddy came on to the virgin Brainiac. He thought that confessing His sinful intentions on that fateful New Year's Eve would lead to forgiveness, but it just made things worse. I was profoundly disappointed in Him and myself for ever thinking that He could've replaced Hope. No one can. Or should. Or will. Presentation de l'diteur Knowing that I've just done something that will take decades off my parents' lives with worry, you'll excuse me for not getting into the fa-la-la-la Yuletide spirit this year. . . . The only difference between Christmas 2001 and Christmas 2000 is that I don't have a visit from Hope to look forward to. And Bethany has already packed on some major fetal flab. Oh, and now Gladdie doesn't need to ask a billion questions about my boyfriend, because she's already gotten the dirt from you know who. Jessica Darling is up in arms again in this much-anticipated, hilarious sequel to *Sloppy Firsts*. This time, the hyperobservant, angst-ridden teenager is going through the social and emotional ordeal of her senior year at Pineville High. Not only does the mysterious and oh-so-compelling Marcus Flutie continue to distract Jessica, but her best friend, Hope, still lives in another state, and she can't seem to escape the clutches of the Clueless Crew, her annoying so-called friends. To top it off, Jessica's parents won't get off her butt about choosing a college, and her sister Bethany's pregnancy is causing a big stir in the Darling household. With keen intelligence, sardonic wit, and ingenious comedic timing, Megan McCafferty again re-creates the tumultuous world of today's fast-moving and sophisticated teens. Fans of *Sloppy Firsts* will be reunited with their favorite characters and also introduced to the fresh new faces that have entered Jess's life, including the hot creative writing teacher at her summer college prep program and her feisty, tell-it-like-it-is grandmother Gladdie. But most of all, readers will finally have the answers to all of their burgeoning questions, and then some: Will Jessica crack under the pressure of senioritis? Will her unresolved feelings for Marcus wreak havoc on her love life? Will Hope ever come back to Pineville? Fall in love with saucy, irreverent Jessica all over again in this wonderful sequel to a book that critics and readers alike hailed as the best high school novel in years. From the Trade Paperback edition.