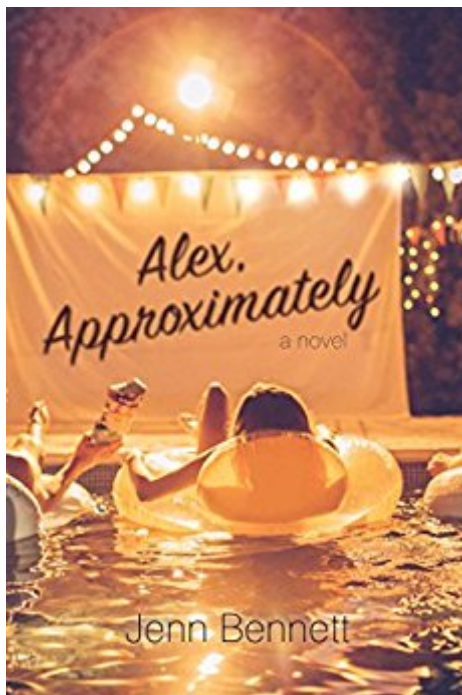


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Alex, Approximately



Synopsis

In this delightfully charming teen spin on *You've Got Mail*, the one guy Bailey Rydell can't stand is actually the boy of her dreams – she just doesn't know it yet. Classic movie buff Bailey – Mink – Rydell has spent half of her junior year falling for a sensitive film geek she only knows online as – Alex. Two coasts separate them until she moves in with her dad, who lives in the same California surfing town as her online crush. Faced with doubts (what if he's a creep – or worse?), Bailey doesn't tell Alex she's moved to his hometown. Or that she's landed a job at the local tourist trap, the oddball Cavern Palace Museum. Or that she's being tormented daily by Porter Roth, a smart-alecky yet irritatingly hot museum security guard. But when Porter and Bailey are locked in the museum overnight, Bailey is forced to choose whether she should cling to a dreamy fantasy in Alex or take a risk on an imperfect reality with Porter. The choice is both simpler and more complicated than she realizes, because Porter Roth is hiding a secret of his own: Porter is Alex. Approximately.

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Customer Reviews

This review was originally posted on the Goldilox and the Three Weres blog. I don't usually say this but the last few YA contemporaries I've read have been glorious! I think part of their appeal for me is that they're standalones. One book and you're done. I can't remember the last time I read a standalone book before I started my ARCs for this last month. *Alex, Approximately* was the YA *You've Got Mail* retelling I never knew I needed until I picked it up. Despite Jenn Bennett being one of my favorite authors, I was kind of nervous going into this book. *You've Got Mail* is one of my top five favorite rom-coms so I was worried I was going to overhype myself for the story and be disappointed. But Bennett totally pulled it off! This classic hate-to-love story felt fresh and modern while staying true to the original! This book was everything I love in a contemporary romance! It was swoony and the romance was everything! It's a classic hate-to-love story with the requisite witty banter between Porter and Bailey! The quips they volleyed back and forth were clever and those scenes were adorable! I loved that they manage to stump one another every once in a while and it just added to the dynamic. And hallelujah! There's no instalove in sight with this book. We get to watch Bailey and Porter's relation change over the course of a summer and it felt completely realistic and unrushed. Also, like Bennett's other YA contemporary, this book was very sex positive! There are open and honest conversations about and portrayals of sex, masturbation, and female pleasure in this book and we need so much more of that in YA. I could continue to gush about the romance but there were so many other great things that worked with it to make the book so amazing. There's great friendships and awesome family dynamics! It was so refreshing to read a YA book that didn't have absentee parents! I seriously loved Porter and Bailey's families! Bailey's dad is wonderfully nerdy and earnest and obsessed with *Settlers of Catan*. He was such a fun character to read! Porter's family was just as great! They're a surfing family and I loved seeing their interactions in their shop and at home. The other great thing in this book is the setting! The small town California atmosphere worked so great and only added to the story. I LOVED the museum Bailey and Porter work in! It's a weird mansion-turned-museum that was delightfully strange and quirky! It was almost like it was another character in the book! If you can't tell by all of my gushing, I ADORED THIS BOOK! If you're looking for a fun summer beach read, *Alex, Approximately* is definitely one to add to your list! ARC provided by the publisher via Netgalley.

Grade: B+ An e-galley was provided by the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for review consideration. *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*: Jenn Bennett has done it again. *The Anatomical Shape of a Heart* was a successful blend of romantic conflict and plot outside of the romance, and

Alex, Approximately is no different. Both Bailey and Porter have personal problems that they are trying to overcome, and they both have their own goals, although Porter's were featured a little less than Bailey's. I also liked the focus on family and friendship. Bailey's mom isn't perfect, but she isn't vilified either, and her dad is great and he tries hard, and Bailey isn't mad that he's dating again. I also liked that Bailey and Grace's friendship wasn't all smooth sailing, but their fights aren't petty. Their friendship pushes Bailey to trust people more and not keep them at arm's length. I love any book reminiscent of *You've Got Mail*, and this one delivered - for a bit. Bailey and Alex stop messaging altogether, and I honestly thought that would be a bigger part of the plot. I also thought she'd hate Porter for longer, so they get together a bit too quickly for my tastes. I mean, I liked them together of course, but I wanted more drawn-out tension. They didn't need to get together on the last page, but I would've liked a little more build-up. I did like how the online friends plot resolved and that Bailey's dad was smart enough to figure things out, and I liked how "Alex" and Bailey bonded over movies and then each chapter began with a film quote (and the last chapter got a *You've Got Mail* one, which made me exceedingly happy). The Davey subplot bugged the heck out of me. I know it was there for good reasons, but it still rubbed me the wrong way. A smattering of foul language. I think I only caught the f-word once or twice and the s-word around a dozen times. More sexual content than I like in my YA books, but it's less graphic than other books. One small little note: both Bailey and "Alex" have just finished their junior year, but Porter's already eighteen? So I'm not sure how that would work, and I don't remember it ever being addressed. The Verdict: So, so good. I'm really liking this crop of *You've Got Mail*-inspired stories cropping up (and not just because I'm writing one).

I adored this book from Lit Cube this month. I knew it was a take off on *You've Got Mail* which for obvious reading is one of my favorite movies (I met my late husband online). This book follows Bailey who recently moved to California to live with her dad, where incidentally her online boyfriend lives. Bailey is still recovering from a rather dark incident in her past that has given her PTSD. She spends time online with Alex watching classic movies. She begins working at a museum and finds herself dealing with the rather annoying Porter. Then she finds herself falling for him. But he couldn't possibly be Alex, could he? This book is full of romance and mystery. For the parents, if you have a younger teen I would recommend reading first. There is sex, drug use (by a minor character), violence, and the main character is definitely suffering from PTSD.

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