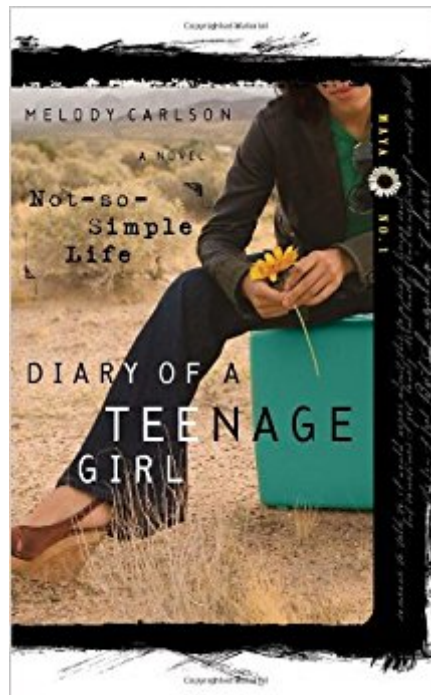




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Not-So-Simple Life (Diary Of A Teenage Girl: Maya, Book 1)



Synopsis

Fifteen-year-old Maya Stark seems to have it all—fame, fortune, a Beverly Hills lifestyle, and an eighties pop star dad who's making a comeback. But looks can be deceiving, and on the inside, Maya is miserable. Her parents are divorced, her dad is away on tour, and being biracial, she struggles with her identity. Then, to make matters worse, her mother has returned to using drugs and is quickly depleting their finances. In a plan to become emancipated from her messed-up mom, Maya takes a job on Rodeo Drive. Selling designer clothes compromises Maya's earth-friendly eco-green girl's values, but she is desperate. Just when Maya thinks she's got it all worked out, her life caves in. Her mom embezzles Maya's savings and is later arrested on DUI and cocaine possession charges and is facing jail time. With nowhere to live, Maya is sent to spend the summer with her relatives. In the collision of two very different worlds, Maya must figure out where she fits in—or does she fit in at all?

Book Information

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.7 x 8 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,976,165 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in Books > Teens >

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Literature & Fiction > Religious > Christian > Family #92 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian > Relationships

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Carlson's bestselling Diary of a Teenage Girl series gets a new star in Maya, who is the cousin of previous Carlson heroine Kim Peterson. Like the other dozen-plus books in the series, this one features teens with serious family problems—in Maya's case, a drug-addicted and abusive mom and a dad who's rich and famous but has no time for her. The grounded Maya, with her

environmental idealism and her resourceful maturity, is a plucky heroine. Carlson exposes the seamy underside of glamorous Hollywood, including the music and modeling worlds, so it's no surprise that Maya doesn't miss the fast lane when she goes to live a small-town life at her cousin's. There she is exposed to Christianity and begins to explore faith. Fans of the series will welcome this new character even as they enjoy the crossover appearances of characters they've come to love.

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As Maya Stark pours her heart out in her journal, readers are treated to an inside view of a life that is at times exotic and unfamiliar, and at other times hauntingly similar to our own. Maya's struggles become our struggles, her pain our pain, and her successes, therefore, even sweeter. A Not-So-Simple Life is another triumph for Melody Carlson. - Virginia Smith, author of Sincerely, Mayla and Stuck in the Middle "Fantastic book! Maya is so easy to like" "this is a hard story to put down!" - Erynn Mangum, author of Miss Match "Melody Carlson has proven her skill once again at writing gritty stories about characters in difficult situations. In A Not-so-Simple Life, Maya Stark seeks to escape life under the controlling hand of her drug-addict mother by acting on a plan for independence with admirable determination." - Michelle Buckman, author of Maggie Come Lately and My Beautiful Disaster "I just finished Melody's book and loved it! The journal format makes the story, and Maya, so real and believable. Readers will easily be able to identify with the realistic approach to a prevalent situation." - Patricia Rushford, author of the Max & Me Mysteries

Ms Carlson does a great job of getting inside the head of a teenager. We feel her confusion and pain. Then, we celebrate with her as she starts to figure things out. Great story!

This book was pretty good and the ending was inspiring. The one thing I didn't like was that almost every other page the main character's mom was out getting high again. This was all just part of the plot but I think it went a little over board. Other than that, this book had a great story to it and a really great ending.

Teen Read

My daughters devour every single one of these books. Great morals, nothing to decay their minds. GREAT reading! Even mom and dad like them!

My daughter tells me that this is her favorite book of the Diary of a Teenage Girl series.

I've known kids like Maya my whole life. This story was incredibly edgy, but that's what made it real. And the cool thing is that I read the second book first so I got to see her after she became a Christian. She is still learning what that means all through the next book. She struggles with things like real people do even after they find faith. Anyway, back to this book, which is the first in the series... Maya's feelings are so real. She sounds so much like a teenager even down to the honest thoughts and feelings about her parents. There is no attempt by the author to be politically correct. I appreciated that a lot. I also liked that she was trying to find who she was and become independent, but at the same time she just wanted to be loved and live a normal life in a regular family. Given her background, I could see the appeal of having a simple life. I loved the fight scene with her mom where her dad came and rescued her before they killed each other. I sensed the real emotion in that one. And even the desire to commit suicide made sense. Very realistic reactions and emotions in this book. Maya sounded just like a hurt, confused, depressed and hopeless-feeling teen would think and feel. Yet she doesn't follow through for good reasons. She knew she was missing something...peace...and where to find it. Well done!

As I said above in the preview , I didn't really get into this series a few years back when I tried. However I really enjoyed reading Maya's story and noticed that in the last few pages - the previous Diary Girls : Chloe , Caitlin, Kim are all featured. In Maya's story we see her as a fifteen year old turning sixteen in a few months , her not so simple life includes being Nick Stark "The famous musician's daughter" whose currently on tour at the moment and her life with her mum Shannon -who is an alcoholic and drug addict. In A Not so simple life we watch as Maya gets her first job , her second job and then her third job all within two months and her third job she becomes a model . All is going well for Maya until her mother goes on another binge and wipes out Maya's savings. Maya then heads to live with her cousin Kim and Uncle Allen -who is talked about in Diary of a Teenage Girl : Kim. Maya who has been homeschooled since she was 12yrs old , enrolls in Kim's High school and meets Chloe , Caitlin who are the other two girls in the Diary of a Teenage Girl series and is introduced to God. Read as we watch Maya start to become closer in discovering who God is and whether he truly is right for her. One thing I really liked about Maya's diaries , is that Maya is a Vegan for life and each day features an Organic Green Tip for the Day.

Maya Stark might have a celebrity dad and live in Beverly Hills, but that doesn't mean her life is easy. Her parents are divorced, her dad is touring, and her mom is on and off the drug and alcohol wagon so often Maya never knows who to expect. The problems with her mom force Maya to be the adult in the family. She cooks and cleans and hides what money she can from her mom. It's not enough. Despite Maya's earth-friendly values, she gets a job at an upscale clothing boutique in Beverly Hills. Her plan: save up enough money to get legally emancipated from her parents so she can take charge of her life. But just when Maya thinks it's all going to work out, life falls apart. She has no choice but to spend the rest of the summer with her cousin. Will Maya ever find home sweet home? A Not So Simple Life was a great read. Maya drew me into her world. I loved seeing her fight for her freedom and stand up to her parents. Despite her attempts, she's proof that we cannot control what happens in our life. That only God is in control. It was a relief to see Maya figure that out. I hope more of us do. Melody Carlson is off to another great series with Maya. Highly recommended.

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