

"A profound story of the ways the past and present become mysteriously and sometimes dangerously intertwined."  
—Lauren Oliver, New York Times bestselling author of *Delirium* and *Before I Fall*

# EDGEWATER

COURTNEY SHEINMEL



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*Courtney Sheinmel*

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Lorrie Hollander used to be a rich girl who spent her money on boarding school and equestrian camp. But that was *before*. It's been twelve years since Lorrie's mother skipped town and left Lorrie and her sister in the care of her unstable aunt Gigi. Together they live in a decaying mansion called Edgewater, the eyesore in a town of extraordinary wealth and privilege.

While Lorrie is desperately trying to keep her family from collapse, she meets Charlie, the son of an esteemed senator. Terrified that he will learn the truth about her, she holds him at a distance. But Charlie's family is hiding something, too. And Lorrie could never have imagined how their secrets, and their lives, are inextricably bound.

Courtney Sheinmel's *Edgewater* is a gripping story of scandal and romance, shame and redemption, and how one girl must come to terms with a shocking past in order to understand who she truly is.

## Edgewater Details

Date : Published September 8th 2015 by Harry N. Abrams

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Author : Courtney Sheinmel

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## From Reader Review Edgewater for online ebook

### Shannon (It Starts At Midnight) says

This review was originally posted on It Starts at Midnight

It wasn't that Edgewater was a bad book, it's just that it wasn't a good one either. It was fine, I guess. But I am not reading a book for "fine, I guess", I want to read a story, I want to have feeling evoked, I want to take a journey. I still am not all that sure what the point of this book even was. Lorrie was also "fine, I guess", though not particularly memorable. She wasn't awful either, so that was good. Her family was a weird mess, and I kind of don't understand how some type of child protective services wasn't involved? Their house was a disaster, they had no electricity, water, phone service, food... and the state of the house was clear to passersby, so... what gives?

So the family was a trainwreck, and the parents were off Parents-in-YA Syndrome-ing. Lorrie had a friend named... something unremarkable, and they ended up befriending Charlie, the son of some Kennedy-esque senator. They (of course) hit it off almost immediately, because why wouldn't they? They both have the personalities of drywall, so I see the appeal. ::side-eye:: Again, none of these characters pissed me off, they just didn't make me feel much of anything.

There's a side plot about a horse. I think Orion may have been my favorite character. I even remembered his name, so that's kind of a big deal. Of course, since Lorrie's family can't afford water and electricity, they probably don't exactly have tons of extra cash for her dreams of equestrianism, so this presents a problem for Lorrie. I did worry about her, because Orion was kind of her "thing". I... don't know if she had any other "things" except maybe hiding poverty and being surly?

Anyway, the plot moves pretty slowly, which I don't always mind as long as the characters were keeping my interest. Which they weren't, so I kind of minded. There were a few bigger plot twists which I guess might surprise some people, but I saw pretty much all of it coming.

Bottom Line: I feel like I am the black sheep here, because a lot of people on Goodreads seem to like this one. Like I said, I didn't hate it, I just have absolutely no emotions toward it in general.

\*\*Copy provided from publisher for review

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### Laura L says

This book is like Scandal and Grey Gardens rolled together, and I totally didn't expect the end. LOVED this one!

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### Katie says

The bond between a girl and her horse. This is a bond that not many people can understand or would even want to understand. Growing up riding horses and having my Paint Mare as my best friend - I understand oh so well how deeply connected a girl and her horse are.

Edgewater is a Young Adult novel, which touches on so many topics young girls go through while trying to "find" themselves.

Lorrie was used to living the life of the rich - memories of her mother abandoning her and her sister flood her mind daily. Living off a trust that has been monitored by her flaky Aunt Gigi. Lorrie went to the best school, attended a summer program with her horse Orion. When a financial nightmare takes place Lorrie is forced to return to Edgewater, leaving Orion behind and relying on the financial help of her best friend.

Edgewater is the home she dreads - the black market on town. Run down on the outside and falling apart on the inside. Embarrassed for anyone to see Lorrie never lets anyone inside.

When Charlie, the senators son falls for Lorrie - she fabricates and runs from the truth of her family. Little does she know her family is not the only one with secrets and she will soon find out that they share more than their romantic interest in common.

A very quick read, Edgewater will keep you turning pages. A great book for the beach or relaxing on a Saturday afternoon. It was one I could not put down.

\*Disclaimer - I received a copy of Edgewater for my honest review\*

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### **Kai says**

Edgewater is about Lorrie Hollander, who hates her mother for leaving Lorrie and her sister with their unstable aunt Gigi, in a run-down mansion in Long Island, NY. Wanting to escape being home with her family, Lorrie uses the trust fund her mom left to be away at boarding school and horse camp. But one day the trust fund mysteriously disappears, and Lorrie is forced home. At least she has her best friend Lennox to hang out with, along with a new friend, Charlie. Charlie is the son of a famous senator, and he and Lorrie are clearly interested in each other. But Charlie's family is obsessed with appearances, and Lorrie is also afraid of what will happen if he finds too much out about her.

I'm not going to say what happens next, because I don't want to ruin the story for other readers; but I'll just say there are about half a dozen twists I did not see coming. Courtney Sheinmel really kept me on my toes. It's a powerful book about family, friendship, belonging, pretending, and the secrets that we think make us different from everyone else—but really end up bringing us closer together.

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### **Tee loves Kyle Jacobson says**

Man oh man I did not expect this book to be what it was. I mean there is mystery, suspense, lies and hidden truths.

This story starts out with Lorrie living her dreams by going to Boarding school and having the life. Then one day the money is gone and she is sent to live with her estranged mother and aunt Gigi in a rich town full of mansions and money only she will be living in a neglected mansion that is falling apart. The mansion is called Edgewater because it once was beautiful but is now the towns eye sore.

The most wealthy people live here in Edgewater and as Lorrie settles in she meets Charlie who is a Senators son but down to earth and takes a serious interest in Lorrie. What Lorries doesn't realize is Charlie is hiding his own secrets that may or may not tie the families together.

This is a must must must read when it comes out!!!!!!

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### **Amy says**

This riches-to-rags story was riveting from beginning to end. Lorrie Hollander's home in a tony Long Island town used to be the kind of house people envied. But since Lorrie's mother skipped town, and left her children in the incapable hands of their aunt Gigi, everything has turned to shambles. Lorrie's younger sister doesn't seem to mind the chaos; in fact, she thrives on it. But Lorrie herself doesn't want anyone to know the truth about where she lives -- not her best friend, and certainly not Charlie, her new boyfriend whose father is an esteemed senator. Courtney Sheinmel does an excellent job portraying both Lorrie's shame, and her pride. I highly recommend this book.

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### **Christine Whelan says**

If you liked Grey Gardens, you will LOVE this book!

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### **Rebekkah Koons says**

Edgewater, by Courtney Sheinmel, is a beautifully written story about a girl named Lorrie Hollander, who is used to living a life with money and spending her time at her fancy equestrian camp during summer and the prestigious Hillyer Academy during the school year. At camp, she's an advanced horse rider with her own horse, Orion, surrounded by her equally wealthy friends. Little do her friends know, Lorrie is about to become broke and will be forced to move back home to her aunt's decrepit mansion called Edgewater. Once Lorrie returns to Edgewater, she realizes she must not only figure out where her aunt hid her trust fund money, but how to pay all her bills, so she can return to Camp with Orion and to boarding school for her senior year. In order to accomplish this, she has to face the family she desperately wanted to leave behind.

As Lorrie returns to her hometown to clear up her money issues, she realizes her aunt is not mentally capable of taking care of her trust fund anymore. Further, her sister is living in a delusional world, with her freeloading boyfriend, while their family home goes to ruin. Lorrie is forced to face herself, convinced she is not like her rich, snobby friends, but also not like her irresponsible aunt and mother—who abandoned both daughters to live with her boyfriend in London. What Lorrie thinks will be a simple fix turns into an epiphany. The perfect world she tried to create for herself begins to crumble around her as she investigates her family's financial problems.

Courtney Sheinmel is an extremely talented writer. The way she uses words to describe the beach town Lorrie is from and various other locations, allows you to picture it perfectly in your head. The reader becomes lost in her words and the story itself. The beginning was just right, giving you enough information to keep you from getting lost, while creating enough intrigue to keep you reading.

I stayed up well into the early morning finishing this book, hooked by the depth of Sheinmel's characters. I was especially impressed with Lorrie, whose inner conflict—between saving face and looking the “rich girl” part, and the empathy she had for her aunt and sister—was a constant struggle for her throughout the story. This tension showed in every interaction she had with the novel’s characters, including her beloved horse. I would suggest pre-ordering this book now if you like a story with complex character relationships, beautiful settings, mystery, or a love for horses.

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### **Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says**

Reminiscent of the TV series *Scandal* in several aspects, Courtney Sheinmel’s YA debut novel *Edgewater* brings a lush atmosphere, romance, political intrigue, and deeply buried secrets.

Lorrie’s life is all about keeping up appearances and living the life she feels entitled to, even though it’s fairly obvious that she doesn’t quite belong among the rich and carefree. On the surface, it seems quite shallow, but there’s more to Lorrie’s efforts than that. Abandoned by both her parents and left in the care of a flaky, possibly bipolar aunt, Lorrie sees boarding schools and riding camps as an escape from her shameful family and her embarrassing home. The family estate, Edgewater, was once an awe-inspiring house, but now it’s in ruins and completely out of control. Lorrie is deeply ashamed of her circumstances and her only goal for years has been to hide the downfall of her family however she can. When the funds finally dry up completely, Lorrie has to adjust her worldview, but just then, long ago buried secrets start coming to light. It seems that both her family and that of Charlie Copeland, political prince and Lorrie’s crush, have something awful to hide.

*Edgewater* may be Courtney Sheinmel’s debut YA novel, but she has plenty of other works behind her, and she already honed her writer’s voice into something gentle and distinctive, beautiful yet unobtrusive. Her style is fairly simplistic and clear, but it still manages to surprise and impress with a particularly clever turn of phrase or an unexpected epithet. Even more importantly, her sentences are saturated with emotions, Lorrie’s shame in particular screaming at us from every page.

If I were to offer any constructive criticism, it would be about secondary characters, which, on occasion, seemed a bit cartoonish and over the top. A lot more could have been accomplished by focusing more on Gigi and Susannah and less on the romance and Lorrie’s friendship with Lennox. I felt that those two characters in particular had more to give and I was disappointed that they weren’t used to their full potential.

Otherwise, though, *Edgewater* was a breath of fresh air that pushed me right back into reading YA after growing tired of it in late spring. It’s not your average contemporary YA and not just another mystery. It jumps skillfully back and forth between genres and enchants with depth of emotion and its rich atmosphere.

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### **Joannah Keats says**

*Edgewater* hooked me from the first chapter. I have always been a sucker for stories about how the “other half” live, and thus I was drawn in by imagining a life of huge NY mansions, boarding schools, celebrity

boys, and of course – owning a horse to bring to riding camp.

The mysteries and twists Sheinmel includes are bonus material. Certain elements may be predictable to some readers, but many of them I simply did not see coming. I appreciate an author with the ability to still surprise me.

Despite an ending that felt a bit too seamless and my only emotional reactions being tied to a horse, this tale was very well-written and enjoyable. There is no mature content I would find concerning, so I recommend it for ages 11-12 and up.

A bit reminiscent of Augusten Burroughs' *Running With Scissors*, a little like Curtis Sittenfeld's *Prep*, and with much in common with the horse stories I loved as a preteen, *Edgewater* is an engaging book about what it's like to find out that not only do you not have it all anymore, but nothing you believe is as it seems.

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### **Bri says**

I really enjoyed this book. It was sort of a mix between realistic fiction and mystery and in my opinion it was very unique. Full of secrets, I needed to know answers and couldn't read fast enough!

The plot moved sort of slow at a few points, but once I got past them I couldn't put it down. Overall it was fast-paced though and I loved how descriptive the writing style was. I will definitely be reading more by this author!

At first I really didn't trust Charlie, I didn't really know if he truly liked Lorrie or if he was just playing her but over time he became my favorite character. I loved how he wasn't the rich, snobby politician's son that he seemed to be on the outside, and he actually had problems much like Lorrie's. I think that they were very alike, and I really liked them together as a couple. The romance didn't take over the whole plot and it helped me pay attention and remember all the things that Lorrie was trying to find out concerning her mom who left years before. It seemed like the perfect amount of romance for this specific book.

Aunt Gigi really started to annoy me, what with her not being a good guardian and not telling Lorrie what really happened to her mom. This is a story where all the characters made at least one mistake, but I feel that it was the author's intention to show that no one in the world is really who they seem to be and you should forgive and forget.

I really liked how Lorrie's passion was horses. It showed that she was actually very 3D and made her seem like a real person to me. Sometimes I just can't connect with characters in books if they don't have any personality, but luckily that wasn't the case with this book.

I would really recommend this to almost anyone. It has something in it for almost everyone and I can assure you that it is an edge-of-your-seat story that will keep you interested throughout the whole book.

\*\*\*I received an ARC of this book in exchange for my honest review.\*\*\*

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### **Katie says**

I finished reading Edgewater last night and was late to a party because once I got about 50 pages from the end, I just couldn't put it down. (I know people say that as a throwaway expression for any good book, but I mean it literally.) From the amazingness of EDGEWATER, you would have no idea that Courtney Sheinmel hasn't been writing YA her whole career. It is fast-paced, exciting, and feels so real. Unlike so much YA, EDGEWATER isn't just the story of a relationship between a girl and a guy. While it has a great romantic storyline, it really covers so many different and important relationships: between family, between sisters, between best friends, between a rider and her horse. Put all that together with Sheinmel's killer writing and a very unexpected twist, and you have all the ingredients for what should be the next big thing in YA. Read this book!

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### **Logan says**

I couldn't wait to read Courtney Sheinmel's Edgewater. My children have read all of her Stella Batts' series and while I have read her middle years books (Positively is amazing!), I was excited to see her take on an older audience. Edgewater is beautifully written; it is rich with detail, so much so that I saw the images playing in the movie screen in my mind. The story is compelling, thought provoking, and explores the complicated subjects of money, love, politics, and shame. I could not put it down!!!

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### **fee says**

4.5/5

I found this book absolutely brilliant, The only reason I dropped half a star was due to the ending.

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### **Altana Elings-Haynie says**

As an equestrian, I found this book to be so authentic and honest. Although, I think non-equestrians would love it as well. I recommend this book to anyone and everyone -- my favorite read of 2015!

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