

Get Real

By Betty Hicks

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Dez is unusually neat. Her mom and dad are unusually messy. They like Cheez Whiz and swamps. Dez likes elegant food and grand pianos. How can she even be related to them? And how can Dez help her best friend, Jil, who's adopted and who will stop at nothing in order to meet her birth mom? What is it, exactly, that makes a parent "real," anyway? Get Real is about wanting a parent who is very different from the one you have. It's about discovering, "Who am I?"

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Get Real By Betty Hicks Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Grade 5–8—Eighth-graders Destiny and Jil joke about the differences between their families. Dez's English-professor father, weather-obsessed scientist mother, and younger brother keep their household messy and chaotic. The teen finds it remarkable that Jil doesn't realize she is lucky to have been adopted by perfect people whose luxurious home is always in order. Although her friend complains that she feels stifled, Dez is still shocked when Jil confides that she's meeting her birth mother, Jane, and her 10-year-old half sister, Penny. Dez counsels caution, but the more impulsive Jil is rapturous about her newfound family and chooses to spend holidays and the summer with them. When Jane falsely accuses Jil of shoplifting in order to protect Penny, the teen leaves, tries to live on her own until she can think of what to say to her parents, and gets Dez to join her. Hicks does a good job of conveying how difficult, tedious, and potentially dangerous it is for 13-year-olds to survive this way, even for a night or two. Jil finally acknowledges that her adoptive parents offer her what she needs-love, stability, and mature nurturing. The protagonist's longing to meet her birth family and quest to discover her identity are believable, but the girls' discussion of which parents are "real" is handled with little subtlety. Although the book captures two young people trying to work out relationships and may appeal to fans of realistic fiction, it is likely to be of special interest to adoptees.—*Deborah Vose, Highlands Elementary School, Braintree, MA*
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From Booklist
Best friends Dez and Jil have polar-opposite families. Dez thinks the neat, organized Lewises are elegant and intriguing; Jil thinks the scattered, eccentric, academic Carters are cool. The parents seem like typically normal, weird adults to their offspring. Dez is completely baffled, however, when adopted Jil becomes obsessed with contacting her birth mother, ultimately opting to spend weekends and holidays with her newly discovered parent and her new little sister, Penny, rather than with the Lewises. Hicks avoids the temptation to be didactic, allowing the authentic voices of Jil and Dez to sort out their "parent issues" realistically. The girls' friendship is a successful vehicle for unearthing the complexities of adopted children's emotions and their families' dilemmas. More than that, though, Hicks offers a solid YA novel featuring strong characters, deep friendships, supportive families, and the joy and pain of growing up. *Frances Bradburn*
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About the Author

Betty Hicks says, "I'm adopted, but I've never wanted to search for my birth parents. I did want to explore the different ways of affirming your own identity, adopted or not." She lives in Greensboro, North Carolina, and is the author of *Out of Order*, praised as "humorous and insightful" by Publishers Weekly in a starred review.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eva Velasco:

Information is provisions for anyone to get better life, information today can get by anyone at everywhere. The information can be a expertise or any news even a huge concern. What people must be consider whenever those information which is in the former life are difficult to be find than now's taking seriously

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