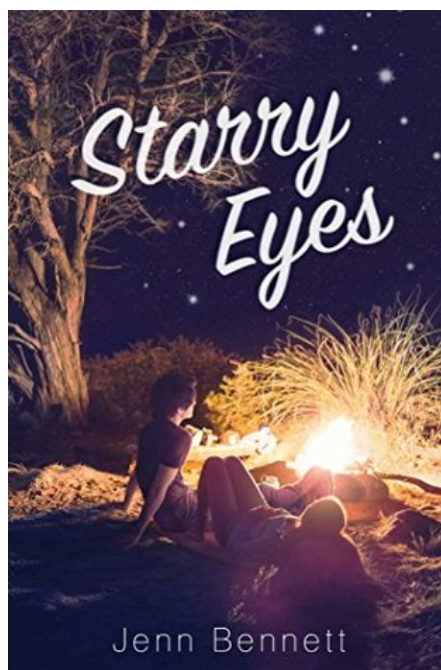




Starry Eyes

Jenn Bennett

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In this romantic dramedy from the author of *Alex, Approximately*, a teen girl's way-too-ordinary life is driven off the beaten path when she's abandoned in the wilderness with her worst adversary—the boy who broke her heart.

Ever since last year's homecoming dance, best friends-turned-best enemies Zorie and Lennon have made an art of avoiding each other. It doesn't hurt that their families are the modern day, Californian version of the Montagues and Capulets.

But when a group camping trip goes south, Zorie and Lennon find themselves stranded in the wilderness. Alone. Together.

What could go wrong?

With no one but each other for company, Zorie and Lennon have no choice but to hash out their issues via witty jabs and insults as they try to make their way to safety. But fighting each other while also fighting off the forces of nature makes getting out of the woods in one piece less and less likely.

And as the two travel deeper into Northern California's rugged backcountry, secrets and hidden feelings surface. But can Zorie and Lennon's rekindled connection survive out in the real world? Or was it just a result of the fresh forest air and the magic of the twinkling stars?

Starry Eyes Details

Date : Published April 3rd 2018 by Simon Pulse

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Author : Jenn Bennett

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From Reader Review Starry Eyes for online ebook

Christy says

4.5 stars!!!

This was such a fantastic read! Seriously, from start to finish, I adored it! The characters, the setting, the experience, I loved it so much! *Starry Eyes* is a modern day Romeo and Juliette telling without the sad ending and all the heart!

Zorie and Lennon were best friends. They were on their way to becoming more than that. Now, they don't even talk anymore. They avoid each other. Their families are sort of enemies and it makes things even more complicated. Both end up on a summer camping trip and Zorie has no idea Lennon is coming, but there he is. And she is stranded out in the wild with him. Forced to face each other and what happened to them, will Zorie and Lennon reconnect, or will things get a whole lot more complicated?

This was one of those books that kept me hooked from the start. I couldn't tell you which one of the main characters I loved more, I loved them both so much! Lennon was pretty perfect and Zorie was amazing as well. And the moms! The moms were great! There was a bit of angst, a lot of emotion, some humor, and all around this was just a wonderful read! Highly recommend!!

jessica says

although i didnt adore this as much as bennetts other YA contemporary novels, this was still enjoyable! it was an easy, breezy read with relatable characters and fun plot. very simplistic, but i think this would be a cute summer read for anyone interested!

3.5 stars

may ❀ says

i posted an actual review i know, incredible

Without a DOUBT, jenn bennett has now earned herself a place in my top favourite contemporary authors to ever exist bc gosh damn THIS WOMAN CAN WRITE

- So, I've been hardcore slumping for a *whiiiiilleee* and somehow this book saved my entire reading career, amazing
- ? enemies ? to ? lovers ? trope ? I ? am ? WEAK ?
- I love love loveD THIS BOOK FROM THE START like not only is the writing soooooo easy to slide into but the plot and adventure and characters and conflict feels so REAL and genuine
- I found my one true love, lennon mackenzie, plz marry me

- My snarky, emo baby I love him sm
- THE BANTER IS WILD
- M A P S
- Even the mc was fantastic and relatable and actually *smart* without being annoying, I just have so much love in my heart for this book aaaaaaa
- The kids in the book GO ON A CAMPING ADVENTURE and it turning into a flaming disaster, you don't wanna miss out
- Its. So. Bloody. Cute. I. Can't. Even. Breathe.
- Also I just wanna talk about how much I LOVE the relationship zorie has with her step mom, theres none of that animosity or any sort of strained feelings but they genuinely love each other so much my heart is bursting
- GRANDMA ESTHER
- Its funny and entertaining and engaging and BASICALLY THE PERFECT SUMMER READ WHAT ARE YOU DOING GO READ IT
- Zorie's dad tho, hes a walking trash bin ugh
- The only thing I can complain about is the fact that it ended too soon, I could have read this book forever

"Planning can't save you from everything. Change is inevitable and uncertainty is a given."

Cait • A Page with a View says

Release date: April 3, 2018

4.5 stars. I've been missing national parks, backpacking, hiking, camping, wilderness survival, etc so this story turned out to be exactly what I wanted to read right now! I really loved the setting and the characters.

Ok this plot is weirdly hard to summarize because there are a lot of side stories going on... but that also means everything weaves together perfectly in a way where nothing's ever dull!

I'm just going to leave the book description here:

"Ever since last year's homecoming dance, best friends-turned-best enemies Zorie and Lennon have made an art of avoiding each other. It doesn't hurt that their families are the modern day, Californian version of the Montagues and Capulets.

But when a group camping trip goes south, Zorie and Lennon find themselves stranded in the wilderness. Alone. Together. What could go wrong?

With no one but each other for company, Zorie and Lennon have no choice but to hash out their issues via witty jabs and insults as they try to make their way to safety. But fighting each other while also fighting off the forces of nature makes getting out of the woods in one piece less and less likely.

And as the two travel deeper into Northern California's rugged backcountry, secrets and hidden feelings surface. But can Zorie and Lennon's rekindled connection survive out in the real world? Or was it just a result of the fresh forest air and the magic of the twinkling stars?"

So the hate-to-love relationship & wilderness setting got all of my enthusiasm. But I also loved how so many other details in the story worked together to make everything feel super realistic. All of the characters were so relatable, flawed, and fully developed that the family dynamics ended up being one of the strongest parts of the story for me. The fights, secrets, and misunderstandings were totally believable because the people were all so very *human*.

Zorie has some pretty hilarious inner dialogue, too. Her motto is "don't be cautious. Be careful." She plans everything thoroughly but eventually learns she can't control all of life's events. Her mom died when she was a kid, so she's closest with her Korean-American stepmother now. Her father's a bit of a homophobic racist who looks down on Lennon's Muslim father and lesbian mothers who own the sex shop next door. He's hiding secrets of his own and Zorie has to figure out where she'll fit into civilization as well as the wilderness.

The pacing was great and the writing style was so easy to read that I flew through the story in one sitting! There are also some really great maps of their locations in the book, which made the setting even more fun.

Side note: parents who are more conservative often ask me whether a story would be appropriate for their kids, so I do want to mention that maybe the sex shop and/or teens having sex might not be a topic they're comfortable with. It's nothing too graphic or anything most teens aren't exposed to in pop culture, though.

Thank you to the publisher for sending me an ARC.

Warda says

Ugh, cuteness galore!

Features:

- A protagonist who's super into planning everything!
- Has a Korean mother who's a masseuse
- A lesbian couple for neighbours with a son that's pretty much a genius (and that I'm in love with!)
- His mothers are so loving it makes me sick
- Oh and they own a sex toy shop. Casual shit.
- Banter galore
- Safe sex (which YA book preaches about this nowadays?!)
- Our main character goes camping, exploring the wilderness with her lover/best friend turned enemy
- Like I said, she loves planning things to the T!
- Naturally, everything goes to shits

This book was too cute! I adored the characters and the journey they undertook, where she ended up discovering herself and to take life as it is, and deal with whatever it may throw at you. If you love your contemporaries, I can't recommend this book enough.

Khadidja says

[Read in an annoyingly high pitched voice used in commercials]

Looking for a cute light read for summer?
Tired of all those cheesy plotless contemporaries?
Want to read more books with diverse characters?

Here you have Starry eyes, where the protagonist is into planning for every single little thing and has a Korean step mom who isn't evil. She has a lesbian couple as neighbours and they own a sex shop and they have an amazingly dark smart gorgeous son!

Not only this but you'll also find :
Friends to enemies to friends to lovers trop!
Camping in the wilderness with the friend who turned into enemy and soon-will-be lover.
An overdose of cuteness.
Feels!!

[Cue]
NOW READ THE BOOK

~~I just love how i said RTC and wrote a pisspoor review now. Welcome to my world~~

~~~~~

This was so so SO CUTE!!! Loved the story, the characters AND THE DIVERSITY IM DYING

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## Heather 'Bookables' says

Another @j3nn\_benn book that I love! Last year I read her book, Alex Approximately & adored it so I was so excited for #starryeyes and once again I adored it!

I don't think I liked this one as much as Alex but I still really enjoyed it! Another perfect summer read as well!! This one has a camping and hiking aspect to it which I enjoyed but good lord I am not like that at all! I am not a camper at all but I loved reading Zorie's & Lennon's hiking journey!! ?? ?  
Overall would definitely recommend this especially for a summer read!

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## Stacee says

I'm a sucker for anything that hints at R+J or BFF to more, but to have both AND it comes with Jenn Bennett's name attached to it? Yeah, I'm sold.

Love love love Zorie and Lennon. She's addicted to planning and organization and loves the stars. He's snarky and maybe a bit sullen and loves hiking. Together there's a lot of history and hurt and feeeeeeeelings between them and I absolutely loved reading them figure it all out. There are some other characters, but it quickly becomes the two of them and that's when the magic happens.

Plot wise, it's quite interesting because it's a setting that I wouldn't normally be interested {I'm much like Zorie in the beginning and believe the outdoors can be avoided}, but I was captivated at how the scenery was

described. There is a fair share of drama, but it's tempered with positive and present parents, sweet swoons, and kissing. Not to mention the fact that Zorie and Lennon talk talk talk and there are some very sex positive scenes.

Overall, I loved these characters and this story and basically want to read Jenn's words forever.

**\*\*Huge thanks to Simon Pulse for providing the arc free of charge\*\***

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### **Amy Leigh says**

This was a quick read but a feel good adorable ya contemporary that I may re-read just because. After reading Alex, Approximately I knew I had found a new auto read author. This book did not let me down at all! I loved the romance and awkwardness and everything about it. I highly recommend this to ya contemporary romance fans and invite you to fall in love!

Zorie is an astronomy geek with future plans to work at NASA. For now, she is working part time at her parent's wellness clinic as a receptionist. Her step-mom, Joy, is determined to get her and her ex best friend Reagan back together (even though Reagan tossed her aside for the rich and popular crowd) and collaborates with Reagan's mom to have Zorie invited to Reagan's glamping trip. It just so happens to be the same week as a meteor shower trip with her astronomy club that Zorie does not want to miss.

While at work her step mom asks her to retrieve a package from the shop next door. Zorie loathes walking in that shop, not just because it is a femme sex toy shop but because it is owned by their neighbors and she doesn't want to run into their son Lennon. Lennon is her childhood friend and she loathes every handsome part of him. She somehow winds up promising her friend Avani that she will meet her for the meteor shower and agrees to go on the glamping trip after finding out her long time crush Brett is going. Her family's dirty secret that she is trying so desperately to hide doesn't hurt as motivation either.

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### **Sruthi T S says**

Nothing makes me more happier than this book!!! Okay, let me rephrase that sentence so that it'll sound even cheesier, "this book is a river and I'm desperate to drown".

Wow. Zorie Everhart and Lennon Mackenzie. Their chemistry had me drooling and the tension between them was so high that even I was sweating and drawing ragged breathes.

Zorie is the future astrophysist and is a planner with blueprints and lists. She emits the scientist vibe, glasses and all. And Lennon!!! where do I even start !! dark hair, dark eyes and dark clothes has god like perfection.

The first few pages were going in a slow phase and I was waiting for the action to kickstart. Then the glamping with the not so friends began, ending with a series of unfortunate events after which Zorie and Lennon finds themselves abandoned in the wilderness. After that there's no turning back. We get a lot of intense moments where my heart was beating frenzily.

We later come to know how these two best friends turn to worst enemies by exploring the past and I had no more tears left to cry.

Lennon is my hero.

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## Jessica says

4.5 stars

Books like this one are why I love reading contemporary YA and YA romance in particular. Compared to adult books, YA romance cannot rely on sexual tension as much, at least not to the same extent as adult romance can. The authors need to make you feel that giddy, tingly anticipation without lots of innuendo and sexy scenes. Not that adult romance can solely rely on that but a good dose of sexy does make things easier, I think. Giving you, as a reader, that feeling of falling in love, making you giddy and smiley with butterflies and everything, is truly a work of art. There are some authors who have such a knack for creating swoon worthy romance - one that makes your heart pound - and Bennett is surely one of them.

This was a very classic setup - best friends who tried at more at some point and imploded because of a misunderstanding which could've been dealt with if only the characters had freakin talked to each other. Throw in some family drama and a few not-so-honest friends and you have almost all the standard contemporary YA elements. So definitely nothing new or particularly special but the execution was just plain beautiful. ♥?

We have Zorie our MC, an obsessive planner, aspiring astrophysicist, a chic geek, as she calls herself, who's maybe a little bit naive, but overall a really likable character. But the real star here was my sweet, sweet boy Lennon. From the moment he stepped on the page I was smitten. Quite dark, with a dry sense of humor, a soft spot for all things reptilian, a little emo, a little punk rock and just so freakin precious. I love the best friends to lovers trope and Zorie and Lennon were absolutely adorable together!

I also loved the camping aspects of the story, it reminded me of the time I spent hiking through US national parks myself and that particular magic that comes with sleeping under a starry sky far away from civilization.

I think I've read pretty much everything by Bennett and while her UF series wasn't that big of a hit with me, I really loved all of her YA books. She has become what Kasie West and JLA have once been for me - a go-to author for swoony feel-good reads. Please keep up the good work, Mrs Bennett, and don't disappoint me like the others did. Thank you.

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## Abbie (boneseasonofglass) says

I enjoyed this so much!!

I loved the whole story, the kind of friends to enemies to lovers things was perfect  
The characters and supporting characters were wonderful, and I loved the personal journeys that they all took

It was so well written, and tbh it made me want to go camping, and I am one of the least outdoorsy people ever haha

The setting and descriptions were so beautiful, and also it is so wonderful that there were maps, I absolutely loved that aspect!

I would 100% recommend this to read during summer if you love some cute contemporaries!

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## **(Bern) Mom to 2 Posh Lil Divas says**

***Starry Eyes* by Jenn Bennett was a fun, sweet contemporary YA/NA read.**

Sometimes you just need a fun contemporary YA/NA (I say NA due to some sexual content) read to lighten things up. This book did just that for me. It was a perfect summer read - camping, hiking, stargazing and a friends-to-enemies-to-lovers plot between Zorie and Lennon. Throw in family strife stemming from secrets and parental infidelity and you have a story that was relatable and engrossing. Bennett's characters were very human and flawed.

I really enjoyed that Jenn Bennett focused on nontraditional families. Zorie's relationship with her stepmother Joy was wonderful. It was a relationship built on love, mutual respect and support. The scene where Joy reassures Zorie touched me. It was perfect.

***"I am raising my own kid. You are mine. I didn't need to give birth to you to love you, sweet thing."***

Admittedly, I'm kind of a sucker for a friends to lovers story. Especially when it involves the adorable boy/girl next door. What can I say - I'm a cheesy romantic at heart! Zorie & Lennon's love story was just that and it was adorable. Amidst all the teen angst, misunderstandings, secrets and camping mishaps you could just feel their chemistry. I was rooting for Lennon from page 20 when he first appeared in all his side swept spiky hair, anime loving, teen goth glory. He was so snarky, witty and sarcastic. Luckily, he was also good out in the wild which comes in handy when their so-called friends leave them stranded out in the wilderness without a car or a way of getting home after an argument. Zorie and Lennon's story was adorable to watch unfold. It wasn't surprising in the least - more like you know it's coming and you're simply looking forward to it finally happening.

***"A map of us. It's years in the making, and it's messy and convoluted, some of it even tragic. But I wouldn't change the route, because we walked it together, even when we were apart. And the best part about it is that it's unfinished. Uncertainty isn't always a bad thing. Sometimes it can even be filled with extraordinary potential."***

Zorie's dad - I have no words for him. He was despicable. Thankfully Zorie was surrounded by a strong support network with her stepmom Joy, her grandparents (Joy's parents), Lennon and Lennon's moms (yes moms - they were a lesbian couple!) and her friend Avani. Once again I have to mention how much I loved the strong family bonds presented, especially as they weren't related by blood but by choice.

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## **Camila Roy •RoyIsReading• says**

RATING: solid 4/5

*"When I looked up at the stars, I saw us. You were the stars and I was the dark sky behind you"*

*"Without dark sky you couldn't see the stars"*

*"I knew I was useful" he says*

“You’re essential”

This is the first **Jenn Bennett** book I’ve read but it definitely won’t be my last! I couldn’t put down this cute, lighthearted and very fun novel. So many awesome moments I could mention??

I found the plot very refreshing and unique in its own way. I’ve read about camps before but never about an actual camping trip (definitely not about one as long as this one) so I can’t really compare. The writing was descriptive enough so that I could picture the places but thankfully not too much or I would’ve been bored (I detest long descriptions, they are my pet peeve in books AND real life).

Both **Zorie** and **Lennon** learn very important lessons in this story. Zorie learns its okay to be spontaneous, while Lennon learns its important to fight for what you want. I have a soft spot for snarky, sarcastic characters, like Lennon, and for controlling, slightly obsessive characters like Zorie. Opposites do attract because damn...talk about chemistry!! They fit together so perfectly??

There are more characters obviously and hey, the parents are actually involved in the story!?? AND they’re likable (most of them anyways). The resolution of family conflicts is my favorite part in YA books. Romantic partners come and go but family is forever, even if you’re not blood related.

Definitely recommend it! I will be checking out *Alex Approximately* pretty soon :)

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## Candace Robinson says

Honestly, I hated the first couple of chapters of this book. Zorie was annoying, then the whole Brett thing was ridiculous, because he was ridiculous, not sure how she didn't notice that at first... Butttt The Anatomical Shape of A Heart is my favorite contemporary ever, so I was like let me just proceed. And thank goodness I did because this is one of my favorite contemporary books this year. Given, this is the only contemporary I have read so far in 2018, but I'm pretty positive it will stay at the front of the line.

Then there was Lennon. He was all kinds of cuteness and funniness wrapped in a ball of swoon. Loved him! The setting was excellent, because camping, come on! Some of the drama could have been left aside, and I don't really see how they didn't talk sooner if they were best friends. But the story was funny, beautiful and addicting. I still haven't read Alex, Approximately, so I'll be checking that one out next!

Review on my blog <https://literarydust.wordpress.com/20...>

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