



A Place For Us Part 1

Harriet Evans

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The FIRST of four exclusive part-serialisations of a A Place for Us by Harriet Evans - you'll be desperate to read on ...

The day Martha Winter decided to tear apart her family began like any other day.

So opens A Place for Us by Sunday Times bestselling author Harriet Evans, a book you'll dive into, featuring a family you'll fall in love with ... and never want to leave. If you devour Rosamund Pilcher and Maeve Binchy and have discovered Jojo Moyes, you'll be thrilled to add Harriet Evans to your collection of favourite authors.

The house has soft, purple wisteria twining around the door. You step inside.

The hall is cool after the hot summer's day. The welcome is kind, and always warm.

Yet something makes you suspect life here can't be as perfect as it seems.
After all, the brightest smile can hide the darkest secret.

But wouldn't you pay any price to have a glorious place like this?

Welcome to Winterfold.

Martha Winter's family is finally coming home.

A Place For Us Part 1 Details

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From Reader Review A Place For Us Part 1 for online ebook

Pearl says

A Place for Us (Part One) written by Harriet Evans for me was an exceptional read filled with unforgettable characters and fantastic writing throughout. The actual story is based on one family and their many secrets and lies throughout and this is one book now I have finished part one I am greedily waiting for the next chapter in the lives of the winter family. Through the author's wonderful descriptions each member of the large family are brought alive and I was immediately enthralled with such a family who were as different as chalk is to cheese but connecting each of them with an invisible thread was Martha a talented artist in her own right and her husband David also an artist who was not only famous for his cartoons in a well-known paper which included Daisy and her dog Wilbur. The cartoon figure was named after Martha and David's wild daughter Daisy who is in-fact the daughter who seems to be the dreaded family member who other family members treat like the social misfit. Daisy is a mystery in her own right, and when all family members receive an invitation from Martha inviting each of them to her eightieth birthday party as she has a very important announcement to make. As each invitation arrives at each of their homes far and wide they narrate their own lives and how their life is really not continuing the way Martha really believes they are, therefore Martha is not the only one holding back secrets. David also has his own massive secrets which I know will be a major part of the story, the difference in David is his secrets relate back to the time of the Second World War when London was being bombarded with bombs, David with his talent for drawing was able to bring the many memories he had of his time alive with a stroke of his pen and through his pictures he brought his memories alive and those looking at them soon realised what horrors he witnessed. As the village of Winterfold calls the family back home how will they react and what will the many consequences be when secrets are found out, and what is Martha's secret which only David knows? So many questions the first part of this brilliant series has brought to me and personally I am sitting patiently waiting for part two in this very exciting book as for me personally if the next chapters holds such exceptional storytelling as part one contained I know I am in for an exciting read. A Place for Us (Part One) written by Harriet Evans for me was a fantastic read which I thoroughly enjoyed and I am extremely happy to recommend this brilliant read to all readers of modern day fiction laced with secrets from the past.

Thank you to Net Galley for sending me the first part of this book free of charge in exchange for a honest and frank review which this is.

Susan Foulkes says

I have to admit that it's been a while since I read Harriet Evans...I enjoyed her books but because of events in my own life I found myself reading new genres and new authors.

I was so pleased to be offered this book via Netgalley. Harriet's writing style has matured and whilst I would agree that fans of Rosamund Pilcher would enjoy this novel, I was reminded more of Elizabeth Jane Howard and the Cazalet books.

The opening sentence had me hooked...

"The day Martha Winter decided to tear apart her family began like any other day."

This is the story of the Winter family and their house, Winterfold.
It is also a story of secrets and half truths and how the past defines who we are.

The family members are well written characters...and each and every one of them has a secret...

Both children and grandchildren describe the wonderful times they had at Winterfold....which makes it surprising that none of them seem keen to visit...until Martha sends out the invitations to her 80th birthday party stating that "an announcement" would be made.....

We are left to speculate (along with the characters) as to what this announcement will be....probably something to do with Daisy, who appears to have been the fly in the ointment of an otherwise idyllic childhood for Martha's son Bill and her eldest daughter.

We are never told why she was regarded like this or what she actually did....Bill's second wife, Karen complains that nothing is ever explained, simply alluded to as though everyone already knows.

The novel is being published in four parts on a monthly basis and I'm not sure how I feel about this....with a story this good that I can really get my teeth into I want to keep reading.

I suppose having to wait a month for Part 2 will teach me patience!

Emily says

I was pre-approved for this book on Netgallery, which has never happened before! So I read it the next day.

Matha Winter is turning eighty, and decides it's time to let her family know the secret she's been hiding. She sends them all invitations inviting them to her 80th birthday party, with a worry message that "There will be an important announcement". It is this line that worries the family, their lives are hard enough as it is, without anything else to upset the balance. Florence will have to make a special trip back home, after running away twenty years ago to pursue her history of art studies in Florence. It's easier for Bill to attend, as he's stayed close to his parents, as the trusted village doctor, loved by all, except his wife. But what about Daisy? Having run away from home, leaving her baby girl, no one has heard from her in four years, as she is doing charity work in Africa. Despite her mother leaving her.

I love a book that has different narratives, and this book has many! We get perspectives from about seven different and interesting people, which although is confusing at first, is very gripping. My favourite character was Florence, who is stressed with a lot of things on her plate, including a big secret about a colleague, and is starting to get to breaking point. However, due to all the view points, it means the story is quite slow moving. We get to the end of the book, and only one of the 3 people has arrive at the family home, with still about a week to go before the party. Inevitably, we do get a told what Matha's secret to be revealed is. Unfortunately, it was predictable.

I think I probably would read the next book, as I was interested in the characters, and I would like to see their reactions to the news.

For this review, and others like it, see: <https://tumblingintowonderlandbooks.w...>

Jill's Book Cafe says

On the occasion of Martha Winters' 80th birthday all the family and friends are invited back to Winterfold, the family home. Part 1 sets the scene and introduces the individual characters who will form the backdrop to what is about to be announced.

It's an intriguing start that alludes to the fact that there is clearly a bombshell about to be dropped. This introduction gave enough background to the characters to give them some life along with hints of secrets of their own that certainly left me wanting to read more.

My main criticism would be that it is written in a serialized format, not something I am a fan of. I wanted to know what happened next without waiting for what turned out to be monthly installments. No problem if you come to the serialization late, but in all honesty I'd have to read Part 1 again before starting Part 2.

The good news however is that *A Place for Us* is to be published as a complete book. The Kindle edition is due on 15th Jan 2015, so I would recommend waiting until then, especially as it is also cheaper than buying the individual parts.

Romance Readers Retreat says

To begin with, I would start by saying that I'm afraid I just didn't follow the story at all.

I've done a little investigating and believe that the book was originally released in pb and that this, the ebook version is a part of that original book, which is now being broken up into smaller books.

Not having read the full pb version, I found that there were too many characters for me to keep up with and not enough of a story surrounding any of them to sink my teeth into.

Just when I thought I might have someone figured out, it switches to another family member and I felt lost all over again.

I found the writing to be a little verbose and although that works in some books, I didn't feel as if it added to the story. That may be because I didn't feel that the characters were thrashed out enough. That's not to say that the writing style was bad, it's beautifully written, just not meaty enough for me.

The synopsis mentions JoJo Moyes, who's books I have loved, but I thought that the difference between this book and her work, is that I was not drawn in, it lacked the emotional pull - I feel this is mainly due to there being too many characters and, again, not enough about any of them. I wanted to know more.

I honestly believe that this book could be great if the original was broken up in a different way, dealing with fewer characters at a time - allowing the reader to invest in one or two characters instead of trying to introduce all the characters in part 1.

Martha and David could tie all the books together but I felt that Bill, Karen and Joe could have their own story. As could Cat and Olivier. Lucy fits in somewhere although I don't know where. And Florence? Well, she's a novel all on her own.

I was so disappointed with the way it ended so abruptly. I found it totally anti-climactic as I didn't feel it answered any of the questions and let me feeling unfulfilled. I wanted to know so much more about all the characters who each seem to have such interesting stories of their own.

I'm no author (far from it) but couldn't help feeling a little overwhelmed. I'm sure as a whole, the pb is gripping and just wish it could have been broken up differently.

I'm sorry I wasn't able to give this a higher star rating but I hope I have explained why.

Synopsis:

The day Martha Winter decided to tear apart her family began like any other day.

So opens *A Place for Us* by Harriet Evans, a book you'll dive into, featuring a family you'll fall in love with ... and never want to leave. If you devour Rosamund Pilcher and Maeve Binchy and have discovered Jojo Moyes, you'll be thrilled to add Harriet Evans to your collection of favourite authors.

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Ana says

Also posted on This Chick Reads

Copy provided by publisher in exchange for an honest review

Book serialisations seems to be very IN these days, don't you think? Is it marketing or the author's idea of keeping up the suspense, I don't know but it has proved to be a very smart move.

'A Place for Us Part 1' is the first in what will be a four part series and which will be released as a complete novel in January 2015. This installment is not only the first part, but it's actually the first work by Ms Evans I've ever read, though I've been hearing people praising her writing. I was over the moon when I got the opportunity to read this one, and let me tell you, it's fantastic!

It tells the story about Martha Winter who decides to throw a big party for her 80th Birthday. Most of the family (and they are a rather big family) will be there as well as the people from surrounding since the Winters are very popular and respected. However, the reason for this party is not just to celebrate Martha's Birthday, seems she wants to gather the whole family to reveal something she's been keeping it a secret for so many years. Naturally, some of the members of the family are surprised, some haven't even been in contact for quite some time. What is the purpose of this big reunion, that's what all they'd like to know. But Martha is wise and will reveal that when the moment is right.

First off, I simply adore family dramas which revolve around big family secrets. Ms Evans perfectly manages to portray one very peculiar family, whose members are so different. Though they've fallen apart throughout the years, there are many strong bonds that tie them and their future together. Honestly, I couldn't put this book down. It's short yet not the easiest book to read, but it's complexity and many characters shouldn't be something to worry you. The copy I've been sent even came with a family tree, which was a great thing and sure made things easier for me. But listen, once you get into the story and get to know these characters, you'll know how to distinguish one family member from the other. I really don't know how Ms Evans managed to develop each and one of them, making them seem so real for the readers, but she did it! Hats off!

The writing is beautiful, rich and unique. Ms Evans certainly has a knack for keeping us all in suspense, while gradually building it till BOOM, you're simply blown away by the outcome. It's cleverly written book with events you won't be able to predict. There are many nail biting scenes, especially the ending...which yes, is a huge cliff hanger but in my opinion, was THE BEST way to end this installment.

Completely mind blowing, insanely gripping, 'A Place For Us Part 1' is a smashing start of this series. I strongly recommend it to everyone, especially those who love gripping reads about deep, dark, family secrets. You're in for a treat, I'm telling you.

Book-shelf Shelf says

A mixture of old and young characters, who all have a story tell about there family, or to be more precise daisy the daughter who left her own baby daughter and emigrated to india. The story pulls you in and its hard to stop reading, the characters flow into each other well and talk of previous years and current time with out being confusing. There is a really mystery in this story and it got to an amazing climax and then finished I need part 2 I have a real feeling of needing to read the second part to find out the whys and hows of the climax it really left me on the edge of my seat.

Agi says

Publishing books as parts of the instalment is very popular lately and while, in my opinion, not all of them should be published in such a way, A Place for Us is a win - win as it is an amazingly good read, a read that you won't forget easily and will be waiting for the next parts to be released. Just like me.

It is said in the blurb that Martha, the matriarch of the Winter family, is going to reveal a big family secret at her 80th birthday. But as we are reading further it is quickly obvious that it's not only Martha keeping a secret, that it's actually every single member of the family that has something to hide. But, together with all the other characters, we are left to speculate what this important announcement is going to be...

So the first part works actually as a teaser. We get to know all the characters and I personally am DESPERATE to learn about their secrets. On the surface, the Winters are a happy family, with no problems at all, but it looks like there are some troubles to come and dark things to be revealed.

Every chapter is told from a different family member's point of view. There aren't all of them, I think - yet. It is great to learn about their lives and story told through their own eyes. All of them has something to add to the story. What surprised me was the fact that actually no member of the family is too keen to come back for Martha's birthday, while they all hinted so gladly that they enjoyed their years and times at Winterfold - are the problems so big? Are the differences too big to overcome?

We don't have a big chance to get to know the characters too well, but right now I developed a liking to Cat and Luce mostly. There is something in Martha that I'd rather stay away from this woman but it's just my feeling and everything can change with the next parts!

I can't say that there is a lot of action, that there happens a lot, but the tensions, drama and secrets are palpable enough to make this book a gripping, interesting read. The writing style is very nice and easy and

you can feel that there is really something big going to happen.

Part 1 has of course ended with a cliff - hanger and I am really desperate to read the next parts of the book. I felt like crying out loud NO WAY when the book ended and left me with so many questions.

Copy received from publisher in exchange for a review.

Lisa Bentley says

Synopsis

Being part of the Winter clan is something incredibly special. Equally, being part of the Winter clan can be an albatross. The Winter's, like most families, harbour many dark secrets; stories that they have failed to share. For although they are a close family there are some things that you just keep to yourself.

When Martha Winter, mother and matriarch of the family, calls all her children and grandchildren back to Winterfold, the family home, everyone is beyond curious. Hidden as an excuse to celebrate Martha's 80th birthday, the family know that there is more than meets the eye to this party.

The house of Winter is about to be rocked to its very foundations.

Review

I love Harriet Evans. Never have I read a book by her and not been entranced and completely in love with the setting, the characters and the story. I was a little disappointed in myself that I found A Place for Us: Part One so difficult lose myself in. Don't worry, it happened, just not as quickly as I had imagined it would.

Personally, I think I initially struggled with the multi-character perspective. This is not something I usually struggle with however, what I initially saw as a detriment actually turned out to be one of the great strengths of this book. Each character became distinctive. Their foibles and problems and desires and similarities became more and more evident as the tale went on. The everyday soap opera dramas juxtapose so easily with the long standing secrets making this book all the more intriguing.

The best way I can describe it is that A Place for Us is like going into the attic and finding a box of old photographs of people that look familiar that you don't quite know. You try and piece together their story and it is only as more and more snapshots are revealed that you realise that you have an epic saga on your hands. That is what A Place for Us felt like for me.

I love stories that have the ability to make me want to be part of the featured family and help uncover the shocking familial revelations. I can honestly say that I have not read a saga like that in years – possibly since the Sweet Valley Sagas released in my teenage years.

Cleverly, Evans has serialised her novel which now has me chomping at the bit to read the next instalment. Well played, Harriet Evans. Well played, indeed.

All four instalments of A Place for Us by Harriet Evans are available now.

You can follow Harriet Evans on Twitter @HarrietEvans

Louise Seraphim Reviews says

I was offered this book to read by Netgalley in exchange for an honest and fair review

When I was auto approved on this book, I honestly wasn't sure if I would like it. It's not really the sort of book, I generally go for. Yet, I decided I would give it a go. When I started the book, I thought it was a little slow, and the characters were maybe a little older than I could relate to. I know that sounds odd, but the main 2 characters are in their 80's and for some reason, I wasn't sure if I could become engrossed in the story.

Well, I ignored that fear and persevered on.

A lot of characters were thrown in to the book, a lot of POV's to take in and absorb. All different stories and backgrounds, all of them surrounding the main 2 and the gorgeous Winterfold house that they lived in. Winterfold is the centre of everything, the family, all of their lives. It's where Martha Winter and her husband brought their children to start a fresh life, many years ago when they had no money and many secrets. It's always been the centre of stories and home to many famous parties. The secrets are still there and have multiplied since then. Now Martha Winter is turning 80, and has requested the whole family to join her for a party and a reveal of some news. With 3 members of the family in different countries, it's tricky. Yet they all know to come, when requested. Although, they all seem to fear this announcement that will be made by Martha.

We are taken through all the generations of stories, not every single one of the family, but six people at the moment. It's a lot to take in, but once I knew whom everybody was, I picked up the pace easily enough. What has me gripped, is all the endless secrets intertwined in their lives. They all have their share of pain and torment, and little by little we are learning it all.

I didn't enjoy all the characters but I loved all their stories and uniqueness. They were completely different from any characters I have come across in a while, and I enjoyed that!

The places all over the world that the family live in, are written about beautifully and make me long to go visit.

A funny little fact, once I started reading this book, I thought the surrounding places sounded familiar, I think the fictional(?) Winterfold and its surrounding area may be where I live or very close by!! That was a pleasing little find for me, Yes little things please me. Lol.

So, I'm glad I decided to read this first part in A Place For Us, I know it is 4 parts from one book, but this individual part was incredibly revealing. I am desperate to find out the rest of the story.

A surprising, and enjoyable read. 4 stars.

Jacqueline says

It's been quite a while since I read anything by Harriet Evans, so when I was offered the chance to review her new serialized story I was straight onto it. I love her writing style filled with strong characters and a long, yarn, usually spanning several generations of one family. This one too is about one family who we gradually learn about from the first person narrative as they prepare for the matriarch, Martha's eightieth birthday party.

This is really not a story where lots happens, instead the drama and the tension comes from piecing together

what the characters are not saying, and trying to guess what the big secret is they are all complicit in. There is so much going on under the surface.

I loved the writing style in this, it was beautifully understated yet still built up the anticipation nicely. It was perfect for relaying the brooding, slightly sinister tensions simmering between the members of this family, but like most of the characters, it was quiet and repressed.

I really enjoyed reading about Martha's grown up village GP son, Bill and his much, much younger second wife, Karen. They're growing apart and she looks like she's up to something too, but we don't yet learn quite what:

"Bill picked up the post on the hall table, thumbing carefully through it. She watched him, in silence. Their marriage was based on silence these days. More and more. What they didn't say was everything, and what they did, inconsequential."

I was pretty engrossed in this - now I'm interested to read how they behave around one another when they all get together and dying to know what this deep, dark secret is - I have a few theories, but there are so many possibilities. Recommended, quality read. No sex, sadly, but I live in hope...

Louise says

This was a preapproved book that I thought I'd read. It was just OK, I enjoyed that many narratives and characters in the book but I found the story predictable and knew what was coming to a degree. I would say it was interesting characters though, especially Florence lol she intrigued me most. Overall an OK read but not brilliant.

Elaine Aldred says

The beginning line is certainly one that intrigues, but the first two chapters do give the impression of a great deal of information being unloaded about the family, both past and present, before the story is able move on. The sense of mystery feels overemphasized at this stage. However when the story does get going, it becomes an enthralling study of the Winter family through the eyes of its members and two outsiders, Karen, the wife of one of the children, and Joe, the chef at the local pub.

Juggling an ensemble of protagonists, each of whom has a viewpoint of equal importance in terms of the plot, might make the story feel fractured and difficult to follow, but this is not a problem in 'A Pace For Us Part 1'. The read flows well and compels the reader to move onto the next chapter for fear that if they put the book down too long, life within the novel might have moved on without them. Harriet Evans' writing succeeds in not only providing some very poignant observations on human nature but also gradually turning up the heat under a cauldron of bubbling intrigue. The cliffhanger ending certainly leaves the reader with a sense of needing to find out what happens next.

Jackie White says

First in a series of 4, I think you can also buy as an entire book but I didn't realise this when I downloaded the four parts in separate books.

Part 1 is really just a taster, introducing Martha Winter & her extensive complicated family one by one. Martha is approaching 80 and invites all of them back to the family home Winterfold for a birthday party.....but it looks like she also wants to make an announcement about a family secret....part one only hints at what this might be.

Onto Part 2 to find out more but I'm expecting good things!

Suze Lavender says

Martha Winter is organizing an important party for her family. The big house is empty now while it used to be so lively and filled with talk and the best parties in the village. She's living there with just her husband and there aren't many visitors. Martha and David bought the house together when their three children were still very young. They've been hiding something all those years and Martha thinks it's time to reveal the truth. Martha wants to share their secret with everyone. She will announce it on her eightieth birthday, at the party. She sends special invites to make sure her family knows how important it is that they're coming.

In *A Place for Us* the reader isn't only introduced to Martha, but to all the people who are invited to or involved with the party. There's Joe, who's going to do the catering. Martha's daughter-in-law Karen, isn't happy in her marriage. The two grandchildren Lucy and Cat are struggling and can't seem to find their place in life. The reader also meets Martha's daughter Florence who's working in Florence and has some problems as well. Everyone is coping with the difficulties of life and still this isn't a heavy and sad read. The clever writing makes this series a joy to read. I'm so curious to find out what the secret is. I loved reading about all the different and sometimes quirky family members. Nothing is as it seems and slowly the truth will be revealed. I can't wait to read the next part of *A Place for Us*!
