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Every summer the Newton family retreats to their beloved home on Nantucket for three months of sunshine, cookouts, and bonfires on the beach. But this summer will not be like any other. When Arch Newton, a prominent New York attorney, dies in a plane crash on his way home from a business trip, his beautiful widow, Beth, can barely keep things together. Above all, though, she decides that she must continue the family tradition of going to Nantucket, and at the same time fulfill a promise that Arch made before he died.

Beth invites Marcus, the son of Arch's final and most challenging client, to spend the summer with her and her teenage twins, Winnie and Garrett, who have mixed reactions to sharing their special summer place with this stranger. Always a place of peace before, Nantucket becomes the scene of roiling emotions and turbulent passions as Marcus, Winnie, and Garrett learn about loss, first love, and betrayal. And when they stumble upon a shocking secret from Beth's past, they must keep it from destroying the family they've been trying so hard to heal.

Summer People Details

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From Reader Review Summer People for online ebook

Jennesa says

Elin did it again! Love anything she writes :)

Alyson Larrabee says

Not the author's best, but pretty entertaining. I read it with a flashlight during a Nor'easter power black out.

Marleen says

Oh dilemma, because I'm hesitating between a 3 and a 4 stars for this one. I know I'm in for a nice treat when I read a book by Elin Hilderbrand, that's for sure. I may not always like all the characters she puts on paper (as in this one), but I always thoroughly enjoy her writing style and the stories she brings, set on beautiful Nantucket. This one, centering on the Newton family, might well be the most touching I've read so far by this author. The parts that revealed what happened in the past were extremely vital to the story. They were heartfelt and made the story very appealing. This read kept me entertained and I couldn't wait to find out what happened next.

Admittedly, (and without wanting to reveal spoilers) there were things that made my blood boil a little, like the extreme self-absorbed attitude of the twins, Garrett and Minnie, but then they are teenagers, and, in the end, they are genuinely good kids. I also had the feeling while reading that I wished the author had fleshed out a few of the characters more, especially Beth, the Mom. I didn't like how David was portrayed. Right from the first sentences when he appeared in this story, he came across as quite selfish, and sadly, he remained rather self-centered. At times it felt that the book went over certain events occurring on the island that summer a little quickly.

By far my favorite characters were Marcus, and yes, Arch. The dynamics they created – in the past and the present - were in essence, the soul of this story.

Jules says

This book could have been so much more. The characters could have been stronger and built up... knowing more about them like Marcus' mother, etc. I thought it was so stupid that the big secret that Beth had was that she was married for 2 weeks (no pregnancy, no kids, no drama, nothing)... big fucking deal! And her 2 spoiled ass kids spread her husbands ashes without her... they would be dead too if I had a say in it. And then at the end Rosie decides to show herself... the author should have brought her earlier in the story to stir up some stuff. Anyway, it (the book) was a bit of a disappointment.

Jennefer says

I will start by saying I am a big fan of Elin Hilderbrand. This is the sixth novel I have read from this author and I think it is one of my top favorites. I have read "Barefoot", "The Island", "The Castaways", "The Love Season", and "Silver Girl". I can honestly say that I could not put this book down. There is an ease to her writing style that pulls you in to her story and makes all the characters very relatable.

As proven in her previous books, Hilderbrand is a master at dealing with the family dynamics no matter what the issues are. In the beginning of this book we are introduced to Beth & Archer Newton and their two teenage children (twins – Winnie & Garrett). Quickly we learn Arch dies in a tragic plane crash leaving the family behind to grieve. As the Newton's do every summer they are leaving their luxury Manhattan apartment and are head to their Nantucket summer, beach home only a few months after Arch's death. I found this part of the story very relatable as I recently lost a loved one suddenly and I understood the feelings of loss, disappointment, & confusion that the family experiences during this first year of loss. Also accompanying the family this summer is Marcus, another 17 year old from Queens whose mother has just been convicted of murder. The recently deceased Archer Newton was defending Marcus' mother at the time of his death and, before he died, he had extended the invitation to Marcus. Beth feels it's only right to honor this invitation if for no other reason than to fulfill her dead husband's wishes.

The next few months we will see the twins exploring new relationships while Beth learns how to deal with life without her husband. Hilderbrand is great at filling her books with hot summers spent on Nantucket Island where past secrets are abound and waiting to be revealed. This book is no exception as the reader will find out family secrets throughout the chapters. While this is an "excellent" beach, vacation read, I'd recommend it anytime of the year. As her novels are enjoyable and easy reads. I also find myself wanting to visit this Nantucket Island every time I finish one of her novels. Happy Reading my friends!

Lucy says

I needed a summer fluff book. This book and its \$4 price tag at Costco accommodated me.

It was fluffy. Once I understood the title, that there are wealthy people who spend entire summers doing nothing in their second homes on beautiful and quaint islands, I forgave the shallowness of most of the characters. It is supposed to be about seemingly shallow people albeit shallow people who are grieving for their dead spouse and father. That doesn't forgive the lack of depth Hilderbrand wrote all the other characters but I read it in a day....in the summer...and am not much worse off for it. The book did its job which was to distract me from the long list of to-dos after a few weeks of my own travels. Moving on.....

Daveia says

SPOILERS BELOW.

If I were Elin's editor, I would have told her "this so called plot twist? is a BUST"

Wow. The big secret is that the mom was married, twenty-five years ago, for two weeks. Years before she met her long-term spouse, years before she had children, she was married for two weeks. No entanglements,

no long-term consequences, just a young girl who made a silly mistake and managed to rectify it before it got ugly. My mom was engaged before she met my father. That didn't work out. Thirty years later I'm not mad at her about it, I don't even care. It was before she knew my dad, before I was even a thought in her brain, let alone a fetus in her belly. Yet this character's kids feel so BETRAYED. They don't know their mother anymore. They take their father's ashes and scatter them without her. Her kids are hideously selfish and shameful. The plot is snooze-worthy and honestly regrettable. I feel like I wasted a day reading this. I keep reading this author's books because so many people think they are great. I hope it improves soon.

Kelly says

3.75 - First I've read of her books. I liked the story, but it moved a little slow for me.

Kristin says

More than anything else, this book is about loss, and the different ways people grieve. You might think that would make a book depressing, but I actually found it to be optimistic and even humorous at times. It's summer, and the wealthy, upper-East-Side Newton family is headed to their beach house on Nantucket, as they do every year. This year, however, they do it without their father, Arch, who was killed three months earlier in a plane crash. His children, twins Winnie and Garrett, have been unable to adjust to the loss of their father and are still mourning. Garrett is moody and surly, and Winnie won't eat and never takes off her father's old sweatshirt. In the car with them is Marcus, a black boy from Queens whose mother is in prison for murder and whose life is entirely different from their own. Arch was a lawyer and working to defend Marcus' mother when he died, and he had already invited Marcus to Nantucket; his wife, Beth, decides to honor his wishes and thus the unlikely group is off to spend the summer together. Summer People isn't really about death, although the death of Arch stays with his family as they try to move on. Every character has somehow lost someone; Marcus is trying to adjust to losing his mother, and his loss seems almost greater than Winnie's and Garrett's. His mother made a conscious choice with apparently no regard for her children, while the twins at least know their father loved them to the end. Beth soon develops a friendship with David, her first love, and realizes that he's spent 20 years trying to get over losing her, without really succeeding. Even David's daughters are mourning their parents' recent divorce. The relationships in the novel are so layered and genuine, as are the character's emotions. They all help each other grow and endure what Beth calls "the most awful summer."

Kerry says

3.5 stars - easy, enjoyable summer read.

Carol Brill says

3.5. You can always count on Elin Hilderbrand for a good beachread. Beth's husband, Arch, was killed in a plane crash just 3 months before she and her teenage twins go to Nantucket for the summer, maintaining a family tradition. Before he died, Arch invited Marcus, the teenage son of a murderer he is representing, to

join the family in Nantucket. Out of a respect for Arch, Beth honors Arch's invitation. The first person Beth's sees in Nantucket is her first love, who is recently separated. His two teenage daughters live with him. As the summer unfolds emotions run rampant as everyone try's to heal from loss, old love and secrets surface, and first love grows. An easy read. One quibble, a point of view change in the last chapter felt contrived and didn't work for me.

Lynn says

A nice light summer read. Just what I was in the mood for. Although it does address some serious topics, it doesn't dwell on them. The ending isn't what you would expect, but it is the right one. Well done.

Lori says

I was actually quite disappointed with this book. This is the first by this author I've read and now I'm not sure I'll be in a hurry to read anything more.

SPOILER WARNING ~ ~ ~ ~

I cannot believe that the mother in this book didn't shred her kids for scattering her husbands ashes without her knowledge and/or consent. That is one of the worst things you could do to a person, your own parent for that matter, over a secret they felt they were entitled to know. So for me, that just didn't work. First of all, her secret was NONE of their business and for her to cave and tell them all about it shortly after discovering they scattered her husbands ashes, and then pretty much just let them off the hook for that, just doesn't make any sense to me.

I really didn't like the way things ended with her and David either.

I don't know, this book just really didn't work for me.

Sherrie says

Awful, awful characters. The only tolerable one is Marcus. Beth, the mother, is quite simply an immature tease who borders on the psychotic. Her husband dies suddenly, then she teases her first love all summer even though she doesn't really love him, then decides she should move on with him because she doesn't want to be alone (but she still doesn't really love him) then is disappointed that he didn't wait for her and got back with his wife. Seriously, that happened. Garrett is a complete prick with no redeemable qualities. Winnie is a vapid teenager. They bring Marcus with them to their summer home, and because she "loves" him, then and only then does she decide to attempt to befriend "the couple of black girls in her school". Are you kidding me?! There were messy story lines that were left unresolved along with many other problems in this novel. Don't waste your time.

Holly says

Another new author who I have fallen in love with! I love books set in places in New England and along the water front of the East coast so Nantucket during the summer was perfect in my book for a summertime read. A little slow for me at the start, but once I got into it (and past some of the darker parts), I was hooked.

