



The Dirt

Lori Culwell

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Lucy Whitley cannot wait to get out of Palm Desert. It's not a place for a frizzy-haired science nerd, particularly when her fashion-obsessed older sister Sloane is the head of a clique of pretty girls who rule the school -- and practically the whole town. Fortunately, life is about to change forever. Lucy's dad is getting re-married, and then she can transfer to a boarding school in Connecticut, escaping all the mean girls and the endless whispers about the Whitley family scandal. Everything is going to be perfect -- as long as the wedding goes smoothly.

The Dirt Details

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From Reader Review The Dirt for online ebook

Carrie Ardoin says

Lucy Whitley is the only moderately normal one in a house full of otherwise crazy sisters. Sloane is the oldest, and queen of the popular girls at school, which makes her more than a little mean. Frankie is the youngest and a total adrenaline junkie...she's kind of like the brother they never had. All three girls are being raised by their workaholic ex-NFL player dad, since their mother abandoned them and took their other sister, Megan, over nine years ago.

The girls are all ready to be in their dad's wedding when something happens that brings it to a screeching halt. Even though the Whitleys' lives are turned upside down, their dad is determined to make the most of it, and insists on uninterrupted family time during their Christmas break. The Whitley girls are forced to get along, and learn things about each other they never could have dreamed.

I'm starting to like contemporary YA a bit more, and it was refreshing to read a novel that centered around a family rather than a relationship. My feelings overall were very mixed, though.

All of the sisters have distinct personalities, but none of them are perfect. This makes for a very lively household, to say the least. Having a lack of parental supervision definitely adds to the craziness.

My biggest problem with this book was the end. Reading this book hit very close to my heart, because I am the oldest of 4 siblings, 3 of which are girls. My two sisters and I also have VERY different personalities, and we have been known to not get along a time or two. In spite of that, and no matter what any of us have done, we are always there for each other, and would never intentionally try to tear each other down. Unfortunately, the love between the Whitley sisters was just not there. I understand that Sloane had done some particularly nasty things, but getting back at her was not the way to go. I was disappointed in the way the book did not have the sisters make up at all towards the end, and we get the sense that basically Sloane's whole persona, which she has worked on for her entire high school career, is ruined. No matter how evil she may be, you just don't do that to your sister.

I did enjoy the author's writing style, and it made for a very quick read. The book didn't have many dull pauses or dragging moments. There were a few heartfelt moments that I liked a lot.

I liked the book, but I just think because of my particular history with my sisters, I wasn't able to fully love it. I would recommend it for anyone who wants a fun, non-romance YA story.

Arlene says

The Dirt by Lori Culwell was both a quick and light read that I was able to finish in one sitting. It's filled to the brim with entertaining family drama and sibling rivalry that has you screaming foul play right from the beginning. Readers looking to entertain themselves with a mean-girl-esque type story will find that The Dirt more than fits the bill.

Lucy Whitely has never really found her place in the small town, desert community her wealth family resides in. Where her older sister Sloane is at the top echelon of the elite popular crowd and heads a secret girls society, Lucy is a misfit, honor roll, science dork. In this story, she's just trying to make it through her father's wedding with minimal drama before she heads off to a boarding school to re-invent herself. The

story kicks into gear when the wedding is crashed by their missing sister of nine years. Scandal breaks out for this rich, media prone family and the wedding is cancelled. As the drama unfolds, their father decides to keep the girls away from the media frenzy until things calms down. During this down time Lucy and her now three sisters try to get to know one another, but hidden agendas, life-long secrets and sister rivalry make it difficult for them to find a connection.

I really feel the author Lori Culwell had a promising premise here, but slightly fell short in delivering the full potential of this story. I wish she would have headed down a different path than the one she chose. Having grown up with two sisters myself, I can never imagine being so mean and vindictive to them, so it was hard for me to connect with any of the cast. I did like Lucy to a certain degree, especially when she finally laid her assumptions to rest and tried to discover the truth about Megan and Sloane. However, she proved to be flighty and not so smart despite what her grades tell you about her. I was starting to like Sloane there for a minute, but to uncover what she was capable of doing to her sisters I just ended up cringing at her actions. OUCH! Frankie's sporadic appearances, left me wanting to learn more about this sister. And finally, the mother, grandmother as well as would-have-been stepmother all seemed to play filler roles that never really got off the ground.

There was a lot of little events that felt random and shoved into the storyline. But despite the disorganization, I found myself following the story and going along with the flow including its sharp twists and turns. I enjoyed the sporadic emails that were randomly placed in the novel, and I wish the author would have included more of those communication pieces.

Overall, I finished this novel quite quickly because it kept my attention for some reason... possibly the constant drama. And, despite not being able to connect with this unique group of sisters, I found myself entertained by their actions and the lengths they would go to in order to achieve what they wanted.

Sana says

What do you do when your whole life has been defined by a single act that occurred years ago? When your family has money but that doesn't do anything to better your image? When your older sister is in a super exclusive club AKA PG consisting of women who controls everything in your town from who gets to be the prom queen to who needs to be dumped. That's the catch: you virtually cannot do anything. And it doesn't help that you don't have the courage to stand up to all the unfairness but fume as silently as possible. Welcome to Lucy Whitley's life in Palm Desert.

Only things are looking up now that her father is finally getting remarried after years of waiting for her mother dearest to return. The mother who one day took her middle sister, Megan, and ran off to never be heard from again. But now the stepmother-to-be has struck a deal which allows Lucy to graduate in a boarding school as far away from home as possible. In the meantime, thank God for friends like Dylan and Finch who just *get* you like no one else can.

It's not that Lucy isn't smart, she definitely is. But she doesn't have what it takes to speak for herself. Even Frankie, the youngest sister isn't afraid of Sloane and her PG-ness. Lucy is all about the environment, her favorite book being *The Origin of the Species*. However, it is not possible for her to not get insulted by Sloane even for once and even though, in her head she's had enough. It just keeps on happening 'cause she is the responsible one who doesn't want any more trouble in her life as is.

But the wedding never happens and that little detail manages to overthrow Lucy's current life as well, as undesirable as it already. Her father is in a family vacation mode and instead of a family moon in France, they

instead get to spend the Christmas break on a Lake Arrowhead. Why does that happen is something I am not giving away but it's an aspect that manages to change Lucy's whole life.

Suddenly, the PG sister Sloane, is whisking her away to the life of a PG from makeovers to parties to dresses and fashion advice you wouldn't otherwise have a chance to ever experience. Lucy sees it as a way of going undercover but is soon charmed by all the attention. The friendly side of Sloane alarms her at first but not for long. Of course, being overshadowed all her life, Lucy definitely needs a boost to her self-esteem. This comes at the cost of her friendship with Finch and Dylan but then it seems to late to set it straight.

I had a little problem with Lucy claiming to be a vegan only to eat the pepperoni pizza once 'cause Dylan ordered it and it would go to waste. Despite this, there is a huge food fight that occurs and well, a ton of food goes to waste. This annoyed me a little and also because I am big on not wasting food.

Moving on, *the* New Year party of the year happens and everything seems to be perfect for once but it's just a prelude of worse things to come yet again and Lucy is down on her luck. Now with no prospect of running away to boarding school, Lucy really just wants to commit social suicide. But revenge is sweet and it seems someone has the power to set the record with Sloane straight once and for all. And does Lucy finally get a life away from Palm Desert? Well, you need to read to find out for yourself!

Savannah (Books With Bite) says

In the words of Edward Cullen, "What's a wedding without some family drama?." DRAMA! Who doesn't love drama!! I liked that the start of this book it filled with angst.

What I liked most about this book is the great drama. Sibling rivalry, a lost daughter and mom, and just a family trying to move on from the hurt in their lives. I adored reading from Lucy point of view seeing that she is not like her other sisters. Lucy is a great character that is coming of age to understand things. I liked that she is swayed by beauty or money.

The plot of the book is also great! I loved seeing the sisters fight. But what I especially loved is the new sister coming in to play. I hadn't expected that!! The dirt that comes out from the family and what the family does is a good read. I like the dad is doing his best for his family. Being a single parent is hard. I loved that he remained with his family no matter what.

This book is good drama and a fast read. If you want some family drama, good sister fighting and secrets exposed left and right, read this book.

Beckie says

First Impressions: I have come to find I adore the genre of Chick Lit and have recently been reading many of these types of books. So when I was asked by Lori's Publicist to read and review her book I was super excited. I just love the cover of the book, so very simple and fits the story to a tee. From what I read in the blurb about the book provided for me I knew *The Dirt* would be a excellent fit.

My Review: Upon opening the book and reading the first page I was hooked already. The story moved along very quickly and as I read I found there was never a dull moment throughout the book. While *The Dirt* is a short read with only 205 pages it surely packed a punch; leaving the reading always wanting more.

Lucy Whitley and her two sisters, Sloane and are the talk of the town. Being rich and having wild gossip always surrounding them is part of there every day lifes. Lucy wants nothing more than to get through her Father's wedding, move away from all of drama and go to a prestigious boarding school in Connecticut. Oh course nothing seems to go as planned for Lucy. When her Father and new step-mother are about to say their "I DO"S", when "someone" from the past shows up with shocking news. Now Lucy is being forced to leave for vacation with her family and the "new addition" is coming along for the ride. While what comes in the story next will blow you away. *The Drama, The Deception and The Dirt* makes for a thrilling read.

I adore everything about the book from the cover to the story itself. Very fresh and unique. I loved how smooth and fast the pace of the book when. The story and the character's were very entrancing. I could not put the book down, literally. I stay awake until 1 AM to finish the book. I just found I NEEDED to know what came next and how it would end. I really enjoyed Lucy's characteristics although I did feel she was a but whiny at times. Sloane. Well she is the girl you love to hate, always at the root of all the drama and scandal's. Author Lori Culwell has written such a fun book for all ages and definitely knows how to dish out *The Dirt!*

Final Thoughts: The book has beyond any doubt lived up to my expectation's. *The Dirt* is a true form of a Chick Lit novel. Anyone who enjoy these types of books as I do would wholeheartedly "dig" *The Dirt*.

Sarah Jacquie says

Lucy Whitley is a fortunate and intelligent high schooler who describes herself as geeky. With glasses, frizzy hair, she doesn't fit in with her superficial territory which is a bunch of rich brats. Thankfully, her smarts also brings her the chance to escape to a science boarding school and away from a family and clique that plague her very existence.

The Whitley family is rich, and Lucy has friends, but in the clique-ish desert area near the Coachella Valley in California, the only successful existence is to be one of the "PG", an exclusive but large and powerful group of beautiful people. What makes matters worse, is that Lucy's sister Sloane is the Queen of PG. Sloane is cruel, and blood is not thicker than PG blood, and predictably she treats Lucy like she is the scum of the earth, or on good days, like she doesn't exist.

The Whitleys make headlines, a lot, especially over the disappearance of their mother and one of the four sisters, but a new step mother might be the key to "starting over". Lucy can get away from Sloane and the PG, and paparazzi headlines can be a distant memory - if the wedding only goes right.

Of course, something does happen at the wedding - good or bad remains to be seen. It threatens the balance of both Lucy and Sloane's social lives and both seem to become allies... for now or for good? Lucy has the chance to enter Sloane's world, discover the sister they never knew, and leave Lucy teetering on the edge of being true to herself.

A good indulgent book to read, but at times predicable. The story is told via Lucy in first person, which can be amusing. However, I couldn't connect with the luxury and money that surrounds the family, nor the extent of a powerful clique like PG. While its fun and light hearted, it uses southern California stereotypes and paints a very narrow and shallow outlook on life. Name dropping brand names, comparing style looks of

celebrities (watch for the Angelina Jolie knock) I just felt their world was very small, and while high school is hell for us all, even the geeky who might be the best at having some empathy, is very self absorbed.

What could have made this better: Megan staying all goth and shaking up Palm Day high school, showing that different is beautiful and destroying the powers that be at the same time - the black lipstick and Lucy's frizzy hair and glasses should have stayed. Having your hair "Japanese straightened" is not a must for catching a guy - at least a guy who will respect you for your heart and mind, not your image.

Good read, just too shallow. Getting a makeover and nabbing the dream boat who had gastric bypass, mean girl goes down... it's been done too many times and no one can relate to the money that oozes out of these people. Well, maybe the 1%.

Me, My Shelf and I says

The Skulls meets Mean Girls - read the full review here! <http://www.memyshefandi.com/2011/12/...>

Neysa (Papier Revue) says

[FOR MORE REVIEW, CHECK OUT : <http://mnkbooklife.blogspot.com/>]

" I stare at the three of us in the mirror, and can hardly believe my eyes."

—Lucy

The first thing that came to my mind when I first saw this book was the cover. I mean, it was gorgeous and eye catching, and the blue background and blonde hair did a good job creating a striking yet cool cover. And the title was actually intriguing enough for me to read the blurb, and later, the whole story. And have to say, I don't regret my decision.

The Dirt told us about everyday life of the no-so-ordinary Lucy Whitley. Being born into a wealthy and influential family of Palm Desert, camera and people's attention has become a common thing. But when her dad decided to marry again, Lucy thought it would be her perfect chance to get out from Palm Desert, from her family, and from her old life altogether. But when a girl crashed her dad wedding and claimed to be Lucy's long-lost sister, her dream of getting away from Palm Desert is going to be just a mere dream forever . . . if she don't act soon.

The plot of this book was actual pretty enjoyable. It started slow in the beginning, but as the story progress, it picked up its pace and moved quite fast. I love how the hint was being dropped here and there, and by the end, everything exploded and all well ended well.

Lucy Whitley as our main character was well-developed too. Sure, she was not that nice or good. She was easily tempted by popularity and she wasn't loyal to her friend. She was not exactly what I would call 'nice', but she was definitely a constant character and stayed true to her personality, even if her personality was not that great.

Megan Whitley, the long-lost sister of the Whitley's family as she claimed it, was quite great too. And she was actually very likeable, being witty, clever, unique, and solved problems with her own original way, which was very interesting. I also love how she would went against anything to defend herself and being fearless if it was worth it.

Sloane Whitley, the oldest of the Whitley sisters as well as the most beautiful, she was the main reason why

Lucy wanted to get away from Palm Desert. She was the leader of a popular girl of Pal Spring, the PG. And as the leader of popular girl, she could be as mean as she wanted to be. And I like it how she was sly and cunning, and when she was nice, other person would be just like yes-Sloane-I-would-do-whatever-you-say. Her mean personality seemed so believable, and it was easy to picture her as well.

One thing I'm not quite fond of this book was there were some parts of this book that totally sagged the story, like the camping trip they made during a snowstorm, I think that actually, it was a bit pointless. And also, the Whitley's Dad, I think that his personality was actually not quite developed as the other character. Like his existences was all just to control the Whitley sisters and that's all.

Overall, if you like to read contemporary novel, or if you like that nerd v.s chic kind of novel, something about friendship and family bonding, or if you're just searching for something light to be read, try this one and you won't be sorry. Totally recommended.

Siobhan says

After reading this book, I remembered why I stopped reading only contemporary books. I really wanted to like this book more than I did, the concept seemed interesting; A family that was left to deal with the scandal of their mother leaving then come to find their long lost sister has returned. But I found this book to lack many of the elements that I love in a book.

I could not get into the story whatsoever. I found it to be a quick read because I skimmed over most of the boring parts and went straight to the dialogue because that was where I thought the story was the most interesting. The characters themselves could not have been more one dimensional. There was the sister who hated everyone and was popular and hated by all. Then there was the main character who just wanted to get away from it all and finally there was the long lost sister who dressed all in black and carried a secret with her. There was no mystery here and I really just wanted the secret to come out early.

I really don't like bashing a book, because I feel like authors put so much time and effort into their books that bashing it would seem mean. But I am really having a hard time finding something good to say about it. The writing was very simple and very juvenile and I felt myself rolling my eyes at what certain characters said. Maybe another reader will find the good in this story, and I hope they do. But for me, this book was just too simple and not my style.

1/5 Stars

Brandi says

Fun Young Adult read!!

Mandy says

I received The Dirt in return for a honest review as part of the blog tour hosted by AToMRTours. Lucy is a hot shot Lawyer whose wife went missing nine years earlier running off with one of their daughters creating a huge media scandal. After years Lucy is going to get what she's been waiting for. Her father is going to get

remarried to Lisa which will allow Lucy to move to a fancy science school away from her PG (pretty Girl) mean sister. It's a chance for Lucy to escape the scandal of her mother running away with her sister years ago, and her mean sister. However on the day of the wedding her long lost sister shows up ruins the wedding because there mother is very much alive. Lucy's dad is thrilled to have Megan back after all she's been missing for years and packs the family off to the mountains away from the media to spend the Christmas break. Now Lucy isn't so sure she will be heading off to her fancy school now that Megan is back in their lives.

The more Lucy gets to know Megan the more she likes her even though she dresses different and is a little on the Goth side they do share a lot of the same interests. When the girls dad decides they should go camping in the mountains and hike in everyone is less than thrilled with the idea except for Frankie who is a little on the tomboyish side. Unfortunately there camping is cut short when Frankie gets hurt breaking her leg in two places and the group returns to the ranch to spend Christmas. Lucy and Megan come to an understand about their friendship. When faced off with Sloane things change, causing Sloane to accept both girls into the PG which has Lucy wondering what Megan is up too. Lucy only agrees to be a part of Sloane's plan because it will help her in the future when she gets into medical school, plus she wants to take down the PG and she's curious as to what Megan is up too.

I really like Lucy she was her own person, however the more the story progresses she turns into a copy of Sloane. However it's not like she wanted to be a copy of Sloane she had good reason too, but I felt like maybe she shouldn't have ditched her best friends the way she did. It's a quick fast pasted story that captures your attention so well that you don't notice the time till you're done. I spent more of the story wanting to know what the back story was with Megan. It reminds me a little of the movie mean girls not in a bad way but that's the way I picture Sloane is when to her sister until Megan shows up and puts her in check. I found The Dirt well written, the concept is very entertaining. I found The Dirt to be clean so that any age group would be able to enjoy it. Overall it's a very entertaining story that kept me on my toes as I learned more about Megan story.

Raquel Vega-Grieder says

I highly enjoyed reading The Dirt By Lori Culwell. She wrote a great story about a family of four sister's from the perspective of one of them Lucy Whitley. It captured my attention from the very first page which actually consisted of e-mails between the family. I enjoyed that because it made the book somehow more real if that makes sense.

Lucy Whitley is the nerdy sister of the group. She has a low opinion of herself because she feels her sister Sloane it the "pretty" sister. Her sister belongs to a super secret society of girls called the Pretty Girls or PG for short. Therefore her sister is a raging terror in and out of school. Lucy has two best friends Finch and Dylan. They are more like sister's then friends and they vow to never be PG (even if anyone would actually ask them....lol).

At the start of this book they are getting ready to go to the wedding of their father and his girlfriend Lisa. Lisa seems to be the typical soon-to-be stepmother. She would like to erase all signs of a family before she got their and create her new starter family. Although Lucy doesn't really want her dad to marry Lisa she supports him in the hopes of going to a boarding school in Connecticut called Darlington. Lucy feels this is the best way to escape her sister Sloane, being teased at school and the whole "Whitney Family Scandal". But something happens at the wedding that turns Lucy's whole world upside down.

I would really love to tell you more BUT I feel you need to read what happens at the wedding for you to

really enjoy what goes on in the rest of the story. This book kind of reminded me of the Lindsay Lohan movie Mean Girls (LOVED that movie). If all Lori's books are as great as this one sign me up to read them all. On a scale from 1-10 I give The Dirt a big 10. If you are looking for a great story with radically different siblings, a fast paced story, "mean girl" type antics, and of course a great guy you MUST READ The Dirt. Everyone needs to go out right now and pick themselves up a copy and learn what it really means to be a Whitney.

Zoe says

The Dirt is an enjoyable read with lots of twists and has an interesting storyline. Set in Palm Desert, science nerd Lucy Whitley can't wait to escape to boarding school away from her chaotic family. However, a massive scandal at a wedding sends all her perfect plans for the future adrift.

I thought the book was fairly enjoyable. There are a lot of cliffhangers and unbelievable happenings that made me want to laugh and cry at the same time. However, I found the beginning quite boring. The first few chapters seemed to go on for a while and even though I had an understanding at this bombshell that has landed on Lucy's life, I just didn't seem gripped to the story. Perhaps this is because I didn't know the characters that well so I didn't really feel like I knew how 'big' the event was. After the first few chapters, I sped through the book quite quickly. I think I read the last half of the book in one sitting, actually. After a lot more twists, the ending is totally unpredictable.

Lucy's voice is very clear in the book. All the characters worked really well together and I really liked the mix of personalities. By the end of the book I felt like I have known them all my life. My complaint about the characters is that some things didn't seem realistic. Like, for example, some things that character said I know a typical teenager wouldn't say. However, this didn't have a big impact on my reading and it only occurred once or twice.

Overall, I found this an enjoyable read (hmm...I seem to be using that word a lot, don't I?!). It is not absolutely amazing but it is not bad either. The writing is beautifully detailed and witty at times which lots of people are sure to like. I wouldn't class this among my favourites but who knows? It might be just up your street.

Alice in Readerland says

Check out my full review of 'The Dirt' & author interview with Lori Culwell on my blog, 'Alice in Readerland': <http://aliceinreaderland.wordpress.co...>

Lucy Whitley wants this wedding to be perfect. Because as soon as her dad re-marries, she finally gets to leave Palm Desert, which means that she gets to start her new life:

- a) At a boarding school with a science program that's almost a guarantee that she'll get in to med school at John Hopkins.
- b) Without her older sister Sloane ("the original Mean Girl", according to Lucy) and her unofficial group called PG.
- c) Away from everyone gossiping about "The Whitley Scandal". About how Lucy's mom just took her sister and left.

But all this requires that the wedding go smoothly. Which means that she has to keep her active little sister, Frankie, from wearing Converse with her dress; get a dress sash away from her deaf dog, Clementine, before it goes to “Doggie Stomach Land”; make sure haughty Sloane’s not late; make sure her dad’s not late to his own wedding; and dodge the items that the PG throw at her head.

All the while wearing her hideous bridesmaid dress. The dress with the shrug that has shoulder pads that make her look like she’s on Star Trek. The dress that is so bad that she took a picture of it at the fitting, posted it on Facebook, and her friends voted it “Scariest Bridesmaid’s Dress of All Time” by the time she got out of the fitting.

But what happens when a mysterious guest arrives at the wedding? A girl with pale skin, black hair, a pierced lip, black eye makeup and lipstick, white face powder, and combat boots? And what happens when she interrupts the wedding with a shocking secret? Will Lucy still get her new life?

Secrets will be exposed, hilarity will ensue, and Lucy will be challenged more than she’s ever been in this fantastic book.

If you’re looking for a fun read, this is the book for you. This book deals with staying true to yourself and to your friends, family drama, popularity, and will keep pulling out the surprises as Lucy discovers more about her family and PG. You’ll laugh (and cringe) at Lucy’s disastrous family camping trip, identify with Lucy’s struggle, and smile at the awesome conclusion.

Pick up your copy of *The Dirt* today!

Tammi says

What if your future depended on everything going smoothly with something that you had no control over? That is what happened to Lucy Whitley. She wanted to get out of Palm Desert, away from her family that is always in the press and go to Darlington Academy, a boarding school that is focused on the sciences. First, she has to get everyone ready and the wedding has to happen. The wedding is between her father and Lisa Sullivan. This is simple, right?

Lucy’s sisters are not as easy to steer in the right direction. The oldest is Sloane. She is the president of a secret organization called “PG.” She does whatever she wants and doesn’t answer to anyone. Getting her to do what is asked of her for the wedding is a hard task. She also picks on Lucy for her being “ordinary.” Her younger sister is Frankie. She is the dread-wearing, skate board loving one who wears her converse sneakers underneath her bridesmaid dress.

Everything is going as planned and Lucy has started the countdown until she can start at Darlington, when a surprise happens. Someone shows up to the wedding that wasn’t expected, her sister Megan. They haven’t seen or heard from Megan since their mother left with her nine years ago. Why does she show up now? What does she want? Is she really their long-lost sister, Megan?

This book wasn’t one of those books that hooked from the get go. I find that true with contemporary novels. I guess it’s because I don’t read them enough. Like the contemporary books that I have liked in the past, I warmed up to the book and couldn’t put it down. I liked the dynamics of the relationships between the members of the Whitley family, especially Sloane, Lucy and Megan. This alone is worth reading the book for. Would I recommend this book? Absolutely.
