

Some glittering reviews for the **GEEK GIRL** books:

“Charming, flawed, wise and true... Geek Girl has transformed funny fiction in a way unseen since the mighty Louise Rennison”  
***The Bookseller***

“Funny, original and this year’s must-read for teenage girls”  
***The Sun***

“A must-read!”  
***The Guardian***

“Delightfully quirky”  
***Teen Now***

“Uproarious misadventures”  
***Publishers Weekly***

“A timeless classic that will be remembered forever”  
***LoveReading4Kids***

The **GEEK GIRL** series in reading order

GEEK GIRL

ALL WRAPPED UP (a *Geek Girl* novella)

TEAM GEEK (a *World Book Day* novella)

MODEL MISFIT

PICTURE PERFECT

ALL THAT GLITTERS

SUNNY SIDE UP (a *Geek Girl* novella)

HEAD OVER HEELS

FOREVER GEEK

For teenage me.  
*High-five.*



**FOREVER  
GEEK**

**HOLLY  
SMALE**



HarperCollins *Children's Books*



First published in Great Britain by  
HarperCollins *Children's Books* in 2017  
HarperCollins *Children's Books* is a division of HarperCollinsPublishers Ltd,  
HarperCollins Publishers  
1 London Bridge Street  
London SE1 9GF

The HarperCollins website address is:  
[www.harpercollins.co.uk](http://www.harpercollins.co.uk)

1

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HARDBACK ISBN 978-0-00-757469-8  
PAPERBACK ISBN 978-0-00-757466-7  
TRADE PAPERBACK ISBN 978-0-00-757468-1

Holly Smale asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of the work.

Typeset in Frutiger 11.5/18 by Palimpsest Book Production Ltd,  
Falkirk, Stirlingshire  
Printed and bound in England by Clays Ltd, St Ives plc

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**luck** [lʌk] noun

- 1 The chance occurrence of situations or events  
favourable or unfavourable to a person's interests
- 2 A person's apparent tendency to have good or ill  
fortune
- 3 An expression of good wishes
- 4 To prosper or succeed

**ORIGIN** fifteenth century, from early Middle Dutch  
*gheluc* – “happiness or good fortune”



I

My name is Harriet Manners, and I am lucky.

I know I'm lucky because:

1. I'm right next to a window, even though seats are randomly allocated so my chances were only one in four.
2. My Wi-Fi is working perfectly, which means I can let everyone at home know I'm sitting next to a window.
3. And send them a list of points detailing how amazingly lucky I am... Much like this one.
4. I've just watched *seven* documentaries back to back, thus deepening my understanding of aeroplanes, orcas, mating rituals of the flamingo, Russian space stations, the Yucatán Peninsula, parrots and Christian Dior.



5. I actually enjoyed the last option, even though it was definitely not voluntary.
  
6. So far this morning, I have already been to Hong Kong.

Since waking up today, I have ridden a glass cable car across Tung Chung Bay to a giant statue of Buddha, taken photos of the South China Sea and educated tourists in the immediate vicinity about the political tension caused by the Chinese government trying to claim the region for itself.

(A couple of Americans tried to tip me ten dollars for my knowledge, although the official park guides didn't seem quite as impressed.)

And it gets even *better*.

In the last twenty-four hours I have crossed thirteen countries and three oceans, travelled 9,865 miles and eaten three and a half doughnuts (two of mine and one and a half of Bunty's).

With the aid of a map and satellite navigation, I have tried to spot the 960 bridges in Berlin, stared in wonderment at the 62 per cent of Austria covered in the Alps, watched the dark sands of the Karakum Desert in Turkmenistan and the shimmering lakes of Sakartvelo (also known as Georgia).



I have identified Clear Air Turbulence over France.

But the *main* reason I know I'm lucky is because of whose head is currently resting on my shoulder.

I'll give you a couple of clues: she has dark, wavy hair.

Her eyes are gently closed, and her nose is twitching like an adorable baby rabbit. Her feet are crossed at the ankles, her arms are flopped loosely across her stomach and her mouth is slightly open.

Every now and then our seats jiggle and she mutters, her head moves a bit to the side, her eyes open and –

*"Harriet, will you please stop watching me sleep?"*

Delighted, I beam at my Best Friend.

Natalie Grey: Sartorial Genius, Temper-Loser, Truth-Sayer and the non-kissing soulmate of my sixteen-year-old life. And – as of yesterday morning – my intimate travel-adventure companion. The Samwise to my Frodo; the Robin to my Batman; like Tom and Jerry, except without all the firecrackers, hammers and attempts to poison each other.

The widely loved salt to my less popular pepper.

"Nat!" I say happily, handing her the half of doughnut I saved specially. "You're awake!"

She blinks, sits up stiffly and gazes blearily around the plane. "Harriet, it's been a twenty-four-hour journey interrupted by an unexplained walk up a mountain to see a big fat stone man," she says, yawning widely and

rearranging her ponytail. "Honestly, I'm as surprised by this news as you are."

"It was Siddhartha Gautama," I inform her. "And he was made out of bronze and quite slim compared to some other representations of the father of Buddhism."

Then we both lean forward to look curiously at Bunty, propped up on the seat next to us. My nomadic grandmother has a pale pink velvet cushion wrapped round her neck and a blue silk tasselled scarf tied round her eyes, and she's snoring so loudly the tiny child in front of us keeps popping up over the seat and asking if she's "broken".

Nat takes the doughnut-half and grins.

"So how much longer have we got?" she says more perkily, leaning over me to stare at the approaching clouds. "Are we nearly there yet? Give me the precise facts, Harriet Manners-style."

The seat-belt light pings and my beam widens.

"Twenty-eight minutes, three hundred and one miles," I say, obediently clicking myself into place then pushing rule-breaking Nat back into her seat and doing the same to her. "Or twenty-eight thousand feet."

There's a small plane shudder and my ears pop.

"Twenty-seven thousand feet," I amend in excitement, watching the screen in front of me. "Twenty-six thousand..."

“Twenty-five...” Nat laughs.

“Twenty-four, twenty-three...”

“Twenty-two.”

And – with a squeak – we high-five each other loudly. Because this is the *biggest* reason I know I’m lucky.

The word *gravity* comes from the Latin *gravis*, which means *heavy*, and the force of Earth’s gravity on us at all times is a constant  $9.80665 \text{ m/s}^2$ . Gravity holds the universe together: it pulls stars, galaxies, planets and subatomic particles towards each other, anchors us to the floor and keeps us grounded.

But science and the screen in front of me can say what they like: gravity has nothing on me any more.

We may be going Down Under, but I’m on top of the world.

Because as the clouds finally clear and the blue ocean expands beneath us, I look down at the home-made badges pinned to our T-shirts:

## OZ – THE LUCKY COUNTRY

This is going to be the holiday of a lifetime.

Australia, *here we come*.