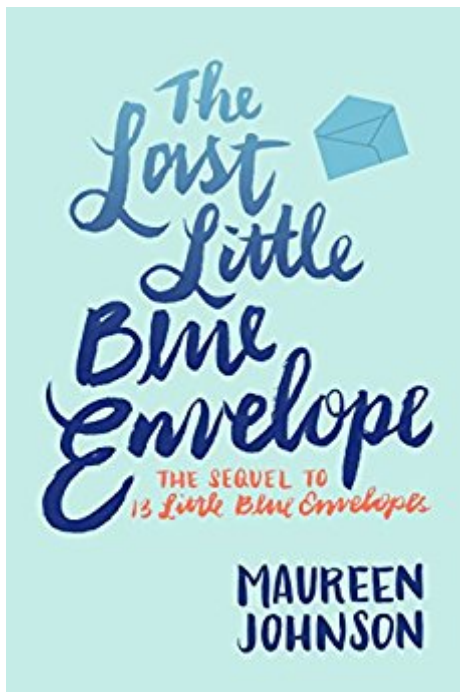


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The Last Little Blue Envelope



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author Maureen Johnson's fun, romantic, and hilarious sequel to her breakout hit *13 Little Blue Envelopes* gets a brand-new cover! Ginny Blackstone spent last summer traveling around Europe, following the tasks her aunt laid out in a series of letters before she died. When someone stole Ginny's backpack—and the last little blue envelope inside—she resigned herself to never knowing how the adventure was supposed to end. Now a mysterious boy has contacted Ginny from London, saying he's found her bag. Finally Ginny can finish what she started. But instead of ending her journey, the last letter starts a new adventure, and Ginny finds she must hold on to her wits . . . and her heart. This time there are no instructions.

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Customer Reviews

I never expected to see a sequel to the first book. I took it as one of the lessons in life. Particularly the one where not everything in life will come with resolution. I was happy surprised to discover this book and ordered it fairly quickly. Much like the first book, once I picked it up, it was hard to stop

reading. The feel of the book is a little different, something that naturally comes with time difference, even for the character who has had time to reflect. Wonderful book with a few unexpected surprises. A delightful addition to the first book.

I want to find out what happens next. I enjoyed the books. I am not an author . I just love to read especially books like these two. It was like a scavenger hunt. The way she talked about the towns and countries had me imagining what it would be like to travel in all of those places. At first I didn't like Oliver but he turned out to be a very caring person. I started to feel sorry for him the way Keith treated him. I hope someday we can hear what happens after she goes to England to the Uni.

The sequel to the 13 Little Blue Envelopes where 17/18 year old Ginny follows the trail of her (late) Aunt Peg's adventures through Europe following the instructions in each of the little blue envelopes was better than I imagined it would be. Ginny had lost (actually it was stolen along with her backpack) the last of the letters in the little blue envelopes and had not actually completed the adventures her Aunt had led her on. This book starts with a mysterious email saying someone had her bag and all the little blue envelopes, including the last one Ginny had not yet opened. The timing is Christmas holidays from school and Ginny goes to London to retrieve her last envelope. Mr. Mysterious however does not immediately hand it over but compels Ginny to join him in the last adventure that takes them from London to France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Ireland and back to England for the finale. It is a good story, a few dashes of adventure, a love triangle, and a more confident, mature Ginny than we met in the first book. The characters are more rounded out, you get a better sense of who they are in this sequel than in the first. However I think a reader would have less understanding of who the players are if reading this book first, or only. The prequel to this book really is a necessity to get the full story, although technically one could read just this book on it's own - I just don't think the reader would find it quite as good all on it's own. Why Ginny is doing what she does, who is this Aunt Peg and what was she all about, what's with the love interest side of the story -- the first book covers those topics and sets the stage for "the rest of the story" in this book. Might it be that there will be Book # 3? It would need a new title since the envelopes are all done with, but Ginny's story is not yet done. If there is a 3rd book, I will look forward to reading it.

Last summer Ginny's Aunt Peg sent her on a whirlwind adventure to England and across Europe. Thanks to thirteen little blue envelopes containing letters with very specific instructions, Ginny followed her beloved, eccentric aunt's footsteps, along the way learning a lot about not only her aunt

but the woman she wants to be on the cusp of graduation. But the adventure was cut short by the theft of the final letter, leaving Ginny with a frustrating mystery -- she learned so much about herself and her aunt the summer of the blue envelopes, but without closure, without knowing Peg's intended conclusion to her letter-driven adventures, Ginny is left struggling with the sense of a quest unfinished. And that unfinished adventure casts a shadow over Ginny's future, leaving her struggling with her post-high school plans. Then a mysterious English boy e-mails Ginny proof that he has the final letter, and he's willing to give it to her -- for a price. Unable to resist the siren call of adventure, the tantalizing chance to finish the journey she started months earlier, Ginny flies to England for Christmas, hoping to reconnect with the boy she met last summer and discover how her aunt planned to end the blue envelope adventures. But with the final letter held hostage by the enigmatic Oliver, Ginny soon discovers that this final adventure has no rules, and Aunt Peg's final gift may be the most precious of all -- testing her resilience and driving her to the realization that the chance of love is worth the risk of heartache.

While Johnson's *13 Little Blue Envelopes* was a charming, escapist fantasy, a well-executed travelogue, but the characterization of Ginny left me flat. Compared to the descriptions of every place she visited and the colorful characters she encountered, she was just there, never really engaging in her experiences or with the reader until the end of the novel. Fortunately, Ginny's sequel rectifies those issues and delivers an adventures that improves in every respect on its predecessor. From the first pages Ginny was a character I could connect with and cheer for, someone I wanted to see succeed because Johnson finally gives us a window into Ginny's soul, laying bare what makes her character tick, her uncertainties and fears, her hopes and her dreams. Yes, there's still a bit of a plausibility issue when it comes to her AWOL parents, but Ginny's character was so well-drawn in this outing that I could accept instead the hodge-podge family (I love her Uncle Richard! He needs his own book!) of friends and acquaintances she develops thanks to her aunt's letters and accept the fact that she's a barely legal and essentially free agent traveling the world. I loved how Johnson plays with the concepts of artistic "merit," the power of creativity, and most particularly how one responds to one of life's constants -- the change factor -- that can impact one's path, purpose, and passions. This is perhaps most starkly illustrated in Ginny's discovery that Keith, the boy she fell in love with over her magical summer, has moved on in her absence and acquired a new girlfriend. For much of the novel Ginny is left pining for Keith (and frankly he is a master at sending mixed signals), while determining to shut the enigmatic Oliver out of her life. Now I loved Keith in the first novel, so it was a little painful to see him act like a bit of a jerk, but Johnson develops the situation with heart-wrenching realism. The boy you first fall in love with is rarely the one you end up with, but that doesn't make the heartache any less

-- and the introduction of the brooding, snappily-dressed, morally ambiguous Oliver is Johnson's entree to play with the idea of letting go of the good to get the better. As Peg advises Ginny in her final missive, "you can never visit the same place twice. Each time, it's a different story" -- and that coming-of-age wisdom is the heart of the novel, a powerful reminder of the power and pain in growing up, letting go, moving on, and allowing both joy and heartache, embracing life's messes and allowing them to enrich our life experience. The Last Little Blue Envelope provides a more than satisfying conclusion to the questions left lingering at the end of Ginny's first adventure. Happily, Johnson leaves the door open for the possibility of a third outing to Ginny's world, while at the same time providing a wholly satisfying reading experience with this sequel. Filled with eye-popping delights for the armchair traveler, unexpected romantic sparks, and surprisingly poignant ruminations on the power of art, change, and a life well-lived, The Last Little Blue Envelope hits all the right notes -- a sterling example of a sequel that gets everything right.

Enjoyed the character, Ginny in the story and her adventures. Sometimes wanted to smack Keith for being a bully to Oliver even though Oliver kind of deserved it. No matter your age, this book makes you want to be adventurous and brave like Ginny! I would definitely recommend this book to friends.

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