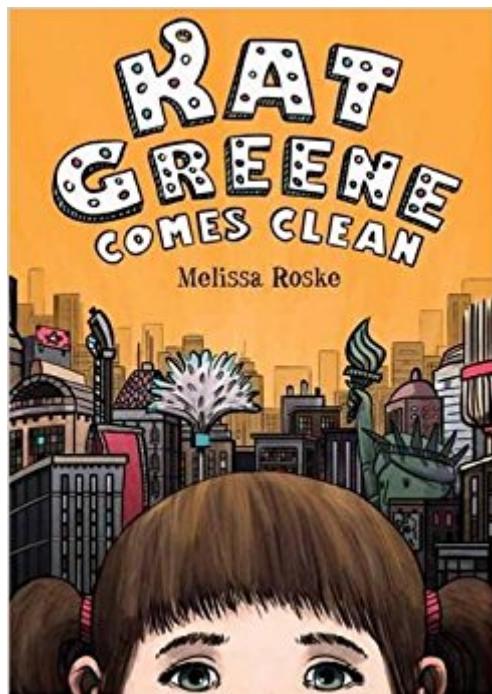


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# Kat Greene Comes Clean



## **Synopsis**

Kat Greene lives in New York City and attends fifth grade in the very progressive Village Humanity School. At the moment she has three major problems—dealing with her boy-crazy best friend, partnering with the overzealous Sam in the class production of *Harriet the Spy*, and coping with her mother's preoccupation with cleanliness, a symptom of her worsening obsessive-compulsive disorder.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Melissa Roske is a former advice columnist for *Just Seventeen* magazine in London, where she answered hundreds of letters from readers each week. (Her column was called "Life Sucks," but it was Melissa's job to insist it didn't.) *Kat Greene Comes Clean* is her debut novel. Melissa lives in New York City.

Kat Greene has taken her place as one of my favorite middle grade heroines. She is full of heart, humor, and just the right amount of quirky personality. Kat lives with her mother, who is a compulsive cleaner. At first, she just seems like a germaphobe, but it quickly becomes apparent that there is a real problem here. In addition to her stress with her mother, Kat's best friend is boy crazy, causing tension in their relationship. Kat is placed in a difficult position, having to make grown up

decisions about her mother, and I felt her struggle as she tried to do the right thing. Roske does a beautiful job juggling the range of emotions that Kat feels, including fear, anger, concern, and embarrassment, but always with an overarching sense of empathy and compassion. She also shows a positive portrayal of divorced parents who work together and get along, still caring about each other and especially Kat. The process of dealing with a mental illness isn't minimized, and Roske shows a positive role model in Kat's school counselor as well. Balanced with the heart-wrenching moments are hilarious scenes at Kat's "free-thinking" school, sloppy first kisses, and the joys of friends. *KAT GREENE COMES CLEAN* is a genuine portrayal of what it feels like to be a tween, and it will resonate with middle grade readers for years to come!

Have you ever read finished a book and immediately missed the main character? That happened to me with *KAT GREENE COMES CLEAN*. Kat's an 11-year-old New Yorker whose mom is obsessed with cleaning. To add to her troubles, her best friend cannot stop talking about her crush, and Kat has been given an insignificant part in the school's dramatization of *Harriet the Spy*. I loved how authentic Kat is. She has problems to deal with but she isn't sarcastic or snarky. She is real and relatable, and I can see middle grade readers loving her story as much as I did. Melissa Roske has done such a great job with the story, the setting and the characters, I felt like I was really in Kat's world. And when the book ended, I was sad to leave it. I can't wait to share this book with the young readers in my life.

Eleven-year-old Kat Greene is having a tough time--her mom has become obsessed with cleaning and germs, her best friend has become obsessed with her crush, and she has been given the boring role of the boy with the purple socks for her school's production of *Harriet the Spy*. And in the midst of all of this, it seems no one is really paying much attention to Kat. I loved how the author wove in little bits of *Harriet the Spy* throughout. Although very different in tone and subject matter, the NY setting, frequent references to a classic MG novel, and game show element made me think of one of my favorite books, *When You Reach Me*. This seems to be the year for awareness about OCD and OCD-related disorders in MG fiction. And I'm so glad. Increasing awareness and looking at the impact these disorders have on children is crucial in helping others develop empathy and support for those dealing with these issues over which they have no control. Add in some important lessons about communication, understanding, and forgiveness, and this is a book I would recommend to any child. Overall, a really lovely debut by a talented author! I can't wait to read more from Melissa Roske.

Give me a kid in the City and I'm hooked, even more so if that kid is big-hearted Kat Greene and she lives in Greenwich Village with a mother who can't stop cleaning. Then, if you add Harriet the Spy (and her upper east side capers) into the mix, can I be triple hooked? On the serious side, I have a soft spot for children of damaged adults. Growing up is hard enough without having to deal with your mother's OCD. Kat is smart and brave as she strives to understand her mother. Fortunately Kat is able to get help from another adult which is something many children might avoid. Even so, Middle Graders will love this humorous and heart felt book. We have a school play, a cleaning show contest, funny characters and familiar troubles with friends and boys. I have followed Melissa Roske on social media and I am impressed by her whole hearted support of other authors. She is as generous in her life as she is in her writing. The kid lit world is lucky to have her.

I loved everything about this book, from the downtown-uptown New York setting to the Harriet the Spy references to the sensitive exploration of a child dealing with a parent's mental illness. But most of all, I loved Kat herself: her smarts, her caring, her quirky Snapple cap collection, her wonderful observations on people and life. There are so many fabulous details in the book-the character names! the hilarious dialogue (the 11-year-old New Yorker who asks his friend's parent if they rent or own! : ) This would be a great addition to any classroom collection. A wonderful read!

Eleven-year-old Kat Greene will steal your heart. Her voice rings true, as do her mishaps -- it can't be easy juggling a school play (Harriet the Spy!), a broken friendship, and a mother struggling with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. But Kat handles it all, as well as a middle schooler can. I love that Kat asks for help when she realizes she's in over her head. Something that isn't easy for many of us. Told with sensitivity, grace, and a healthy dose of humor, KAT GREENE COMES CLEAN is a wonderful addition to any classroom or library collection.

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