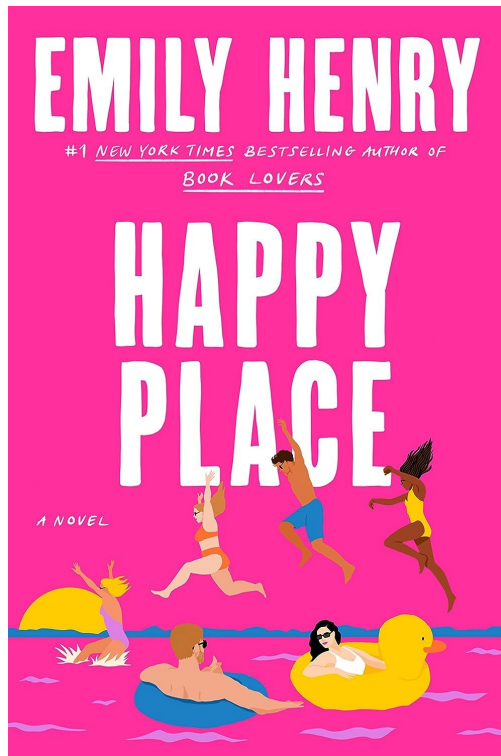


Happy Place



Adult

By Emily Henry

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Book Summary

A former couple pretends to still be together during their final friend group vacation in Maine, while secretly struggling with their lingering feelings for each other.

Summary of Concerns

This book contains; alcohol, death/grief, derogatory terms, depression, drugs, explicit sexual activities/sexual nudity, phobias, and profanity.

CONTENT WARNING

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Adults Only

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254	His fingers tighten on me, his breath stilling. And then, like he's answering a question, his lungs expand on an inhale and his lips meet mine. When I let out a shaky breath, his tongue slips into my mouth. The taste of him reaches deep and loosens something I've spent months tying into knots. Need stretches out in every direction, waking up my skin, nerves, blood. Wyn angles my face up, deepening the kiss, and his tongue sweeps mine, hungry, tender. A whimper rises out of me. His hand spreads across my stomach, finding its way several inches up beneath my shirt, and my spine arcs into him, every muscle in my stomach trying to draw closer to his. He locks an arm around me and walks us backward. His shoulder collides with the shower stall's door as he hauls me inside and knocks it shut again. My clothes are already wet from being held by him, sticking to my skin in places, but he shields me from the water anyway as he peels my shirt over my shoulders and drapes it over the wall along with his towel. I lean back against the wall, catching my breath, as he methodically undoes the buttons on my shorts. He takes his time easing them down my legs with my bikini bottoms, and I stand there, skin prickling, breath uneven, and mind on fire. He hangs those too, without taking his eyes off me. "Is this real?" I ask. He reaches for my waist. "What else would it be?" "A dream," I say. He pulls me in against him, his warm, damp stomach sliding against mine. "Can't be," he says. "In my dreams, you're always on top." My laugh catches as his thumb sweeps up the outside curve of my breast. I wind my arms around his neck, and he lifts me against the wall in a smooth motion, my thighs wrapping around his waist. I gasp into his mouth at the sudden sensation of so much of him on so much of me. The bands of muscle across his stomach tighten. My lips part hungrily under his. His hands untie my bathing suit top, peel it away, and my heart pounds into his urgent touch.
255	He whispers my name at the hinge of my jaw, the water spraying over his shoulders, wrapping us in its heat. He groans, palming me in slow, intense circles as my breath quickens. His mouth glides down my throat. "Are you sure about this?" he murmurs. I hold him tighter. He draws back to ask again, but I pull him close, my tongue slipping into his mouth, finding the bitter, bready taste of Corona and sharp tang of lime. I reach between us and thrill at the feeling of him in my hand. His head bows into my shoulder, one of his hands coming to grip the top of the wall behind me. "I didn't bring condoms here," he says, but neither of us has stopped moving, looking for more friction, for release. The muscles all down his back and stomach and arms and ass are rigid with tension as our hips roll together. His hands slide roughly behind my hips, canting them up to him. "We shouldn't do this while you're upset anyway," he says. I move my hand down him. "I'll be less upset once you're inside me." He wraps a hand over mine, holding me still for a second, our hearts slamming together, hot water racing down us. "We don't have a condom," he says again. Some kind of pathetic sound of dissent squeaks out of me, and he seems to forget what he was saying, pushes me back into the wall, our hips grinding together, nails skating over wet skin. He lifts me a half inch so he's right against me now. It's not enough. He grabs the top of the wall again for support as we move together. "Harriet," he rasps against my ear. "You're so fucking soft."

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255	"Thanks," I say, breathless, "I don't work out." "Don't joke right now," he says. "We can joke later. Right now, tell me what you want." "I already told you," I say. "We can't," he says. "I'll find a way to get some while we're out for dinner."
256	I laugh into his throat, catch a rivulet on my tongue. "Are you going to hang out in alleyways and wave twenties at strangers who look like they're packing condoms?" "I was thinking I'd go to a drugstore," he says, "but I like your way better." He draws back, his hands slowing my descent until my feet meet the wet cedar planks. Everything in me rises in protest until he turns me, lifts my hands to the edge of the wall, and lets his own slide down the backs of my arms, down my sides. One slips around my hip and between my thighs as he presses in behind me. For a second, I can't breathe. Even my organs are too busy wanting to do anything else, every last brain wave occupied with the sensation of his hand. His other arm winds around me, pulling me flush against him, his mouth on the spot between my neck and shoulder. "Was this your goal for the week?" I ask. He bites the side of my neck. "Actually, it was to make it through the rest of the week as a perfect gentleman." "Occasional failure's good for a person," I say. "Is it?" he teases. "Good for you?" I push myself back into him, pleading. "Please." Wyn swears, grabs my hips, and turns me again, pinning me back against the wall and kneeling in front of me. My joints seem to liquefy as he kisses the inside of my thigh, moves up to my center. My hips lift into the pressure of his mouth. His left palm skims up my stomach, the right moving around to cup my ass, angling me up to him. I try to urge him back up me, but he stays where he is, the insistent heat of his mouth edging me closer to unraveling. "Wyn," I beg. Goose bumps erupt over his neck. He murmurs, "Come for me, Harriet." I try to resist, to ask for more of him, but my body bows up. His name rushes out of me in a breathless plea. He drives me into a wave so heavy
257	and dark that, for several seconds, there's nothing but sensation. No woods, no cedar shower, nothing but his mouth. When it recedes, I slump back against the wall, knees weak. Wyn rises and gathers me into him so that my chin rests on his shoulder. The hot water pours down us as he leaves a string of kisses down my throat. "Thank you," I say through the dreamy haze.
279	My nerve endings light up in concentric circles that reverberate outward. Cellular fireworks. Neurological Ferris wheel spokes. My hands sift into his hair, and he flips us onto the bed, the twin sheet falling over us as gently as snow. He shifts his weight back long enough for me to slough his shirt off, then stretches himself over me again, our mouths colliding, his knee dipping between my thighs. His hands roll heavily over me. My nails scrape over his warm back. He kisses down my sternum, sneaks his tongue under the fabric, follows it with his teeth. I cry out from the relief and the simultaneous need. We arch closer. His hand works behind my back, finds the clasp for my bra, and after a brief struggle, he's pulling it away from me, tossing it out of our way, and our chests are finally pressing together, mine flattening under his. He groans. His palms move heavily over my chest, cupping, lifting me to his mouth.

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279	The bed creaks as we move together. He shifts onto one elbow, his other hand grating down my ribs and waist until it reaches the side of my underwear. He jerks them down my hip, and his hand skims my thigh. "I miss hearing you," he whispers against my ear. "All the little sounds you make." Just by saying it, he's coaxed out a few more. "We should fight more often," I say. "I agree." He jerks my underwear down over my other thigh. I reach for the buttons of his pants, and his head lolls against mine on a groan as I slip my hand into his waistband. "Did you find condoms?" I whisper. "Before dinner." He fishes a strip of three out of his pocket and tosses them beside us. "I've been carrying them around all night, like some fucking teenager hoping to sneak into the bathroom at prom." "If I'd known," I say, "we could've skipped the fight entirely." He grabs my thigh and places it against the outside of his hip. "Please don't leave," he says in a low grate. "When this is over, don't go sleep in another room. Stay with me all night."
280	"I won't leave," I promise, sliding his pants down, kissing the jut of his hip. His arm straps around my low back, and he rolls us again so that I'm on top of him. He lifts his hips enough to push his briefs down, and then I fold over him, nothing separating us now. Nothing has ever felt so blissfully good as this simple contact. He grasps my hips, sliding me over him, our breath shallowing. He pulls my wrists above his head, stretching me over him, and drags his parted lips, his tongue, over my chest. I search through the bedding for the condoms, tear open the first one, and work it onto him. As I lift up, he takes hold of my hips, his eyes heavy and dark, guiding me onto him. His head tips back, a throaty sound emanating from him as I rise up and sink lower. He feels so familiar, so right, but after all this time, strangely new. Our movement is slow but urgent, so intense I keep forgetting to breathe for a second too long, like nothing else is quite so necessary for my survival as this. His hands are careful on my jaw, his lips soft on mine, his tongue skimming into my mouth almost tentatively until I can barely take any more gentleness, any more restraint. I'm tired of him holding back any piece of himself. When I tell him so, he flips us over one more time, my arms pinned above my head. Sweat slicks our skin as we become feverish, wild. I bow up under him, meeting his rhythm, trying not to come apart, not yet. I say his name like it's a spell.

Profanity & Sexual or Derogatory Terms	Count
Ass / Jackass / Asshole etc.	18
Bitch	1
Breast / Tit	3
Dick	1
Fuck	42
Penis	1
Shit / Bullshit etc.	37
Slut	4
Sacrilegious & other offensive language usage	Count
Damn	3
God / God damn etc.	30
Hell	10