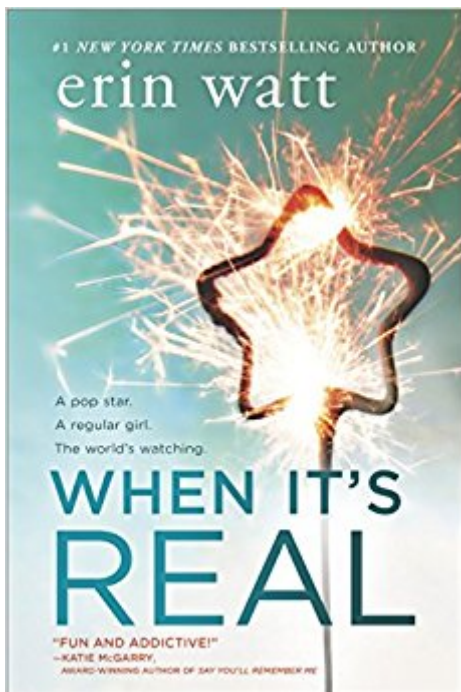


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# When It's Real (Harlequin Teen)



## Synopsis

Wealth, fame and a real-life romance she never expected; seventeen-year-old Vaughn Bennett lands it all when she agrees to become a pop star's fake girlfriend in this smart, utterly addictive novel from #1 New York Times bestselling author duo Erin Watt

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Erin Watt (pseudonym) is the brainchild of two bestselling authors linked together through their love of great books and an addiction to writing. They share one creative imagination. Their greatest love (after their families and pets, of course)? Coming up with fun -- and sometimes crazy -- ideas. Their greatest fear? Breaking up. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I have such high hopes of anything Erin Watt because I was obsessed with all the paper princess books. I also obsessively follow the emails awaiting more of Gideon's story but this one fell flat for me. I think part of it is the celebrity romance type of novel... Its hard to relate to because that does not feel like everyday life for most of us, but even outside of that I have to say the connection was hit and miss. Just when I thought things might be getting more interesting or the couple was finally jiving or I felt a slight bit of chemistry the story would then go flat again. I guess that's my biggest complaint is it did not feel consistent. the couple was very hot and cold and I needed WAY more chemistry between the two. way more heat. I hope this duo continues to write more of the royal

family because it seems they are very in tune with that story where I just didn't feel this story stayed consistent.

I really enjoyed reading this book, you guys. Like all the Erin Watt books, *When It's Real* is no less addicting, but unlike *The Royals* series, this story is a bit more innocent, I think. This book is definitely much more YA and is perfect fit for teen readers. Oakley Ford is a teen phenom who has made it big in the music industry with tons of followers. He's gotten into a ton of mishaps for his party-going self and hasn't put out an album in a few years. A few years in the music industry is a very long time. The thing is, Oakley loves music, but he doesn't want to go back to the sound that's made him famous. And he needs to clean up his image in order to get a well-known producer to take him seriously and agree to work on his music for the next album. Then there's Vaughn Bennett, a hard-working seventeen-year-old who graduated from high school early so she can pick up some jobs to help pay the bills in her family. She has an older sister and two younger twin brothers. Their parents died without leaving them much money and now it's just her and her sister trying to make ends meet. She knows she wants to go to college, but doesn't know what exactly she wants to study, unlike her friends who seem to know what they want to do with their lives. Well, when the opportunity to earn a lot of money quickly comes up by pretending to be the wholesome, girl-next-door girlfriend to famous Oakley Ford, she finds herself saying yes in order to help her family out. I really enjoyed this book, because there's something really centered and real about the characters that also seem to apply to today's world. We've seen the teenage celebrities that have grown up way too fast with industry pressure and parents hammering in from all sides, but what this story shows is what it's like to be that celebrity. Oakley is surrounded by "yes-men" and a posse that do everything for him - from scheduling his life to running his social media accounts. He seems to have reached the point where he's outgrown his partying days, and even the spotlight. He loves making music, but he doesn't want to put out another album like he's already done. He wants something to reinvent himself and to show he's grown up. But the damage is already done on his public image, and Vaughn is his way to getting there. While Vaughn might have had a crush on Oakley when she was younger, she's completely outgrown him when they meet and after their first interaction, it's almost like a hate-to-love story (and I love the trope a lot). The crux in this entire scenario is that Vaughn needs to be Oakley's public girlfriend. It's all smoke and mirrors, even their "interactions" on social media are being managed by Vaughn and Oakley's social media manager and not Oakley himself. But the problem is that Vaughn still very much acts as a boyfriend. I'm not sure I liked Vaughn's boyfriend, known as "W", to be such a big villain in all these. I mean, W is awful to

Vaughn. He's absolutely toxic and keeps pressuring her to have sex (because all his college friends have already hooked up with girls at their parties) and uses her as an excuse for the terrible stuff he does. W is the character written to make Oakley look good. But the thing is, Oakley is a perfectly great guy once he realizes he's done something wrong and apologizes, so it seems to me that W's awfulness is a bit over-the-top. Oakley starts off as the bad boy, when he's not really. It's more of a side-effect from the world he's grown up in and he's honestly not a terrible person. Oakley's parents are never in the picture. His parents are both famous actors, and his dad is a terrible father who never has time for his son unless photographers and reporters are involved, his mother doesn't seem quite as terrible as he makes her out to be. I loved the scene at the restaurant that's just between Oakley's mother and Vaughn. It's actually really awesome to see a well-mannered, lovely parent in YA interacting with the MCs. Overall, I really loved reading this story and kind of makes me want this to be in a series of spin-offs, or continuing series between other characters. For one, I would love to see a story between Vaughn's older sister, Paisley, and Ty, Oakley's bodyguard. This is a quick read, and the interactions between Oakley and Vaughn are totally fun to read. They're really cute and I loved every moment they have together. So, I highly recommend this book for a fun contemporary YA. Even if you're tentative about starting this book if The Royals series wasn't for you, don't be! When It's Real has a different, more light-hearted feel to it that makes for a fantastic summer romance read!\*\*\*Thanks to Nina Bocci for providing an ARC via NetGalley\*\*\*

This was another wonderful book and story by Erin Watt (the wonderful authors Jen Frederick and Elle Kennedy). I loved their Twisted Palace series and this was a different story but still a fantastic read. Oakley Ford is a nineteen year old Pop Star whose tired of so many things and he feels blocked with any new music. He's the child of Katrina and Dustin Ford, world famous actors. Instead of following in his parents footsteps, he was born with the love of music and he was discovered when he was just sixteen years old. He ended up getting emancipated from his parents because they weren't supportive of his dreams. The paparazzi and the tabloids just love him because of his many outrageous exploits. His manager and publicist come up with a way to repair and fix up his image. They want him to date a "normal" girl and seem to have a relationship to show his growth and maturity. Vaughn Bennett's the "normal" girl his team want to become his fake girlfriend. Her older sister Paisley works at Diamond Talent Management and his manager saw a picture of her and knew right away she was just the girl they wanted. Their parents were killed in a car accident leaving Paisley and Vaughn to raise their twelve year old twin brothers. Vaughn graduated early and is taking a year off to help Paisley with money. The "fake" relationship will really help them pay their

bills and set up a college fund for the boys. Vaughn is a wonderful character that has dealt with great loss at such a young age. Too much responsibility was thrown on her and Paisley but they took it on and did everything they could for their family. When she was a couple of years younger, she had a celebrity crush on Oakley. But with all the tabloid stories and rumors, she just had no interest anymore. Oakley's a great character too but he's been in the spotlight since his birth and has always pretty much got whatever he wants. Women fall all over him and he's never been turned down. But he's grown tired of it all and most of the time people just want him for his title or money. It's a wonderful story about finding what you want and need when you didn't know what you were looking for it.

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