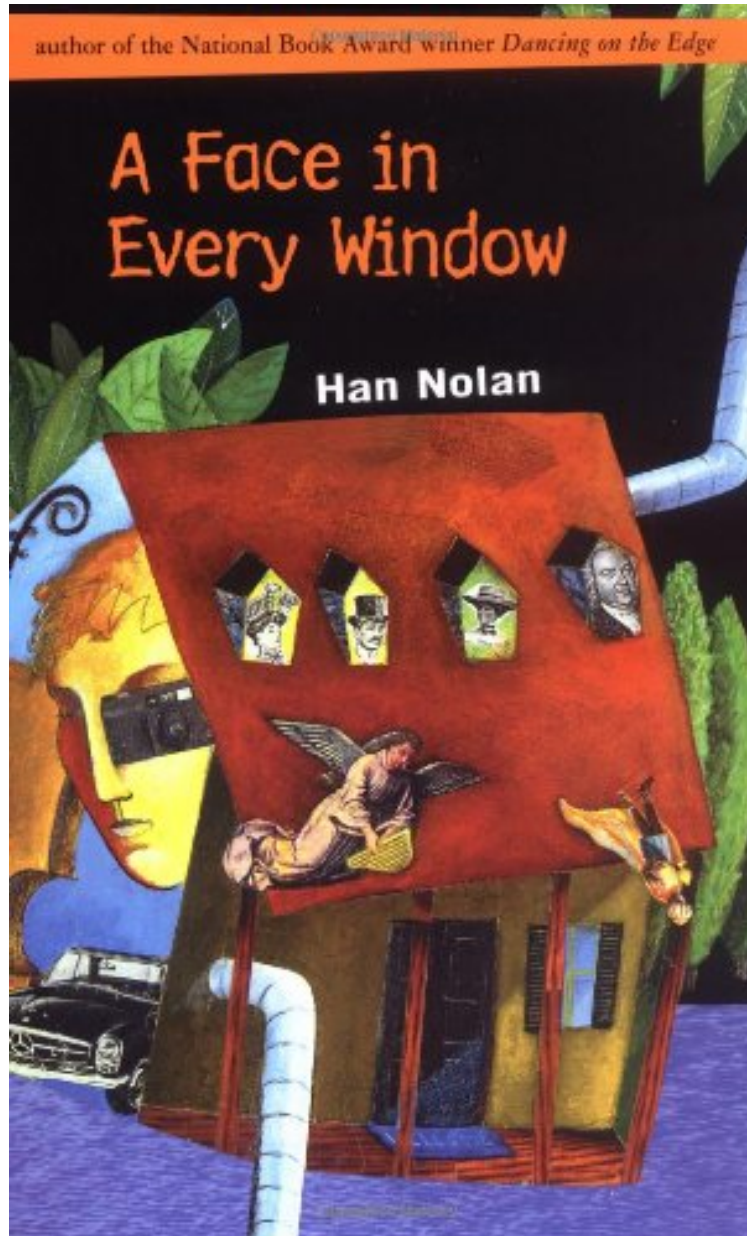


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A Face In Every Window

Han Nolan

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Han Nolan : A Face In Every Window before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Face In Every Window:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Even if you don't like her, you'll love this! By Sara I picked up Dancing on the Edge awhile back and found the sort of sci-fi tie in weird. I heard this book was good, so I picked it up,

having a school book report done soon. I finished it in two days, because I could never put it down. You wrapped up in the story of J.P. and his odd family. You can't help knowing how he feels at some times. When J.P.'s grandmother dies, his family falls apart. His mother starts seeing a doctor a lot and his mentally retarded father has found a new fetish of staying on the roof with an illuminated Nativity set. His mother wins a contest where the prize is a farmhouse in New Hope. They fill their house with people, a girl with an abusive father, an abandoned kid named Larry and all his poetry friends. This story really hits home. I promise you'll love it. Even if the cover looks bizarre, you'll pick up what all the things represent while reading it. Trust me, this story is amazingly well written and you won't regret it!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. **Weird Individuals Form a Family** By A. Luciano JP has always known his family was unusual. His father is mentally retarded and his mother is often sickly and thinks she might die. His father and mother are like children when they are together. JP's grandmother is the one who holds the family together, and the four of them live together in a happy home. Then JP's grandmother dies unexpectedly when he is fifteen, and the safety of his world shatters. Without his grandmother there for stability, things deteriorate into chaos. JP, who thrives on routine and the expected, is more and more uncomfortable every day. Things get worse. JP's mother is spending a great deal of time with the doctor who treated her the most recent time she was in the hospital, and JP is convinced they are having an affair. When JP's mother wins an old farmhouse in an essay contest, she uproots JP and his father and the three of them move in. But they aren't the only ones to move there. Bobbi, a neighbor of theirs whose father beats her, joins them. There are few people JP hates worse than Bobbi. One of those people he hates worse, though, may just be his friend Tim's older brother Larry, a former drug addict whose family doesn't speak to him anymore. JP's mother also has Larry move in with them. Soon the entire house is filled with weird people, who disrupt JP's routine and borrow his things without asking. He can't stand this life and can't stand the way he feels about everything. But is there any way for him to fit in with this new family?

I liked all of the different characters in this book and the ways JP found to relate to them. I also liked how the emphasis of the story was entirely on JP's home life, and his school life wasn't discussed at all. I thought JP's mother was incredibly insensitive. I couldn't believe she didn't see something was wrong with her son and didn't make an effort to make him more comfortable in his own home.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. **Courtesy of Teens Read Too** By TeensReadToo When JP O'Brien's Grandma Mary dies, his orderly world quickly begins to unravel - his mentally challenged father becomes completely lost, and his mother, Mam, starts acting quite unlike her usual sheltered self. JP tries to make do in this new world, but when Mam wins a farmhouse in an essay contest and the family moves, things really come apart. Mam insists on opening the farmhouse to just about every neighborhood outcast who comes by, and suddenly the house is filled with strangers who borrow his things without asking, and seem to be creating a world in the farmhouse that doesn't include JP or his father. All JP wants is for the world to reorder itself, and his family to be restored to what it used to be. But what if the world is meant to stay the way it is? As the people in his life begin to make space for this sudden chaos, JP finds himself realizing that maybe family is more than just the people you're born with, and maybe chaos isn't the worst thing that has happened to him.

In this novel, Han Nolan presents a boy struggling to maintain control of his world even as it slips between his fingers. JP O'Brien is a sympathetic protagonist whose worries draw the reader into his world, and we find ourselves hoping that he gets what he wants. Not everything that is broken gets fixed in **A FACE IN EVERY WINDOW**, but this novel is a heartwarming tale of family and friendship nonetheless.

Reviewed by: Rebecca Wells

When his grandmother dies, 15-year-old JP's family is set adrift. His mother starts acting like a teenager, leaving JP to care for his mentally challenged father. Then she wins an old farmhouse in an essay contest, insists that the three of them move there--and, because she wants to "share her luck," invites some of the neighborhood outcasts to live there, too. There's Larry, whose parents discount his art; Bobbi, abused by her father; and the various poets, painters, and artists who are drawn to JP's mother and her vision. It's a vision JP doesn't see nor share--and, lost in the chaos of his new household, he doesn't know who he is anymore, or if he matters to either of his parents. This eagerly awaited novel by the author of the National Book Award winner *Dancing on the Edge* will capture readers--and show them a new way to look at family. "In addition to a supporting cast as compelling and offbeat as the main characters, the author delivers a profound and heartwarming message about the various manifestations of love."--Publishers Weekly, starred review "Rarely does a novel of this depth and complexity bear the moniker YA . . . Readers will be reluctant to have the book end."--Booklist, starred review "Readers will applaud JP as he gains tolerance for the complications of family life with all of its imperfections and inexplicable tangle of emotions."--School Library Journal, starred review.

.com Life at James Patrick's house is a party that never ends--and he hates it. Grandma Mary was the caring matriarch who previously had held his small family together in a haven of comfort and order, a safe place where no one ever had to grow up. But now that she has died, Mam, his childlike and formerly introverted mother, has become enraptured in newfound self-discovery. After entering a contest and winning a country house, she invites a crowd of young wannabe poets, musicians, and lost souls to move in. All-night fun-a-thons, piano and guitar music, readings, arguments, and cookouts in the snow ensue. "Isn't this so fun?" says Dear Pap, JP's sweet-natured but "mentally challenged" father, as he surveys the scene from the roof (where he hangs out next to life-size Nativity figures). Mam's happy dream of "a

face at every window" has come true. But JP wants stasis and order. He's miserable with these people he considers pretentious lunatics in his kitchen, his bedroom, his closet, and he wants his parents back for himself. Even worse, Mam is getting far too cozy with her arrogant friend Dr. Mike, and when she returns from a trip pregnant JP finds it impossible to face her. Han Nolan, winner of the 1997 National Book Award for *Dancing on the Edge*, creates complex characters and an outlandish household in this richly textured novel about a young man learning lessons of life, love, and acceptance. (Ages 12 and older) --Patty CampbellFrom Publishers Weekly

In this sometimes outlandish, often poignant exploration of a chaotic household, Nolan (*Dancing on the Edge*) delectably takes the notion of "nontraditional family" to extremes. The novel opens when narrator James Patrick (JP) has just lost his grandmother. The son of a fragile mother and mentally disabled father, JP begins to realize just how much his grandmother held them together. When his childlike mother attempts to take charge, she moves them to a rambling old farmhouse that she wins in a contest for invoking a Harpo Marx quote ("When she came home from work each day she wanted to see 'a face in every window' "). JP becomes increasingly distressed as his mother invites an odd assortment of outcasts, artists and musicians to live with them. Nolan takes readers on an emotional roller-coaster ride right along with JP, who initially holes up in his room, trying to distance himself from the unwelcome visitors, then opens his door and heart little by little as he begins to accept his new role in an ever-changing family. In addition to a supporting cast as compelling and offbeat as the main characters, the author delivers a profound and heartwarming message about the various manifestations of love. Ages 12-up. (Oct.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From School Library Journal

Grade 7 Up-When 14-year-old James Patrick's grandmother dies, the small family that she kept solidly knit together comes undone. Left in the care of his fragile and impractical mother and his retarded father, the mature and highly intelligent JP feels his orderly life slipping away. When his mother returns from convalescing at the hospital, she is increasingly preoccupied with the attentions of her doctor. When she wins an old farmhouse through an essay contest, JP must steel himself and Pap through another transition fraught with emotional turmoil. Mam becomes a social magnet, attracting an odd assortment of people who take up residence in their rambling new home. JP is beset with annoyance over her free-spirited behavior and is disquieted by the crowded living arrangements. Pap's love for his wife and son remains solid and unconditional, yet his intuition alerts him to the shifting relationships, and his vulnerability and innocence deepens JP's despair. Mam takes a trip to Switzerland with the shadowy Dr. Mike, but returns early and announces that she's pregnant. JP confronts the man, who suddenly, and quite tellingly, is no longer in the picture. The teen then confronts himself, making a far more satisfying discovery. Revealed through JP's eyes, the story engages readers and leads them to accept the reality and prevalence of human frailties, allowing for mistakes and best intentions gone awry. They will applaud the young man as he gains tolerance for the complications of family life with all of its imperfections and inexplicable tangle of emotions. Nolan has used her adroit writing skills to show the pathos of unusual circumstance within everyday lifestyles. Alison Follis, North Country School, Lake Placid, NY

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