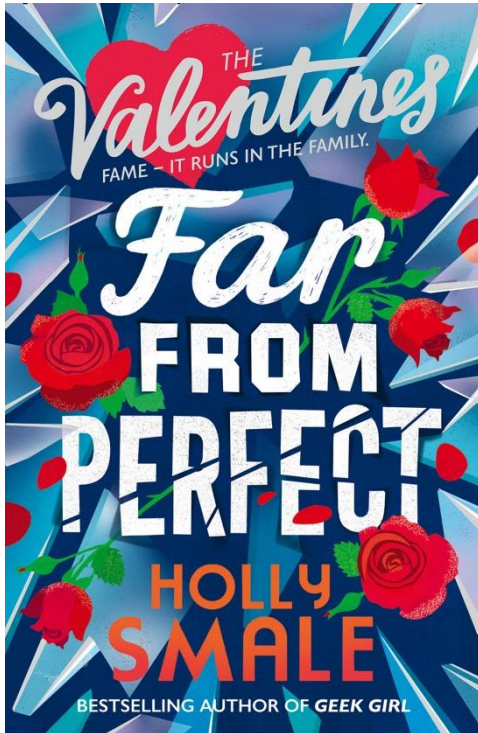# Berkshire Book Award 2021 – Shortlist title
Far from perfect by Holly Smale

The second sensational book in the Valentines series – a hilarious and heart-aching story about the impossible standards for being a girl.

Be yourself but, you know, someone else . . .
Enthusiastic but not desperate; calm but not dull; funny but not try-hard; sparky but not crazy; feisty but not aggressive; beautiful but relatable; elegant but not icy; confident but not arrogant; feminine but not girly; nice but not boring.

Faith Valentine has it all – fame, money and extraordinary beauty. But what she wants more than anything is a quiet life away from the cameras. Except nobody ever asks Faith what she wants, and her family's expectations are crushing her. The world thinks she's perfect, but is there is more to perfection than meets the eye?

Discussion questions

The Valentines are a family of actors, with 3 sisters (Mercy, Faith and Hope) all following the family tradition. Brother, Max, doesn't seem to be part of the 'acting dynasty'. How would you feel if you were excluded from something that your siblings or friends were all doing and you weren't? (Regardless of whether you actually wanted to be part of this 'gang'.)

The book is quite long (439 pages), although the layout style is quite open. Would the length put you off reading it?

Hope was the focus of the first book in the series (called 'Happy Girl Lucky'). Do you think she is a believable character in *this* story, given that she is 15, nearly 16?

What did you think of the late revelation in the book? Did you enjoy this revelation? Or did you feel cheated at being kept in the dark so long?

Faith realises during the story that nobody ever asked her what she wanted. Have you ever felt pressured to do, or be, something you were unhappy about?

Do you ever get to the end of a story (any novel) and think 'Hang on! Where did all that come from?' If you do that with 'Far From Perfect', then try re-reading the first 4 chapters, to uncover some hints!