

**Chapter 1 : Seven Kisses in a Row by Patricia MacLachlan**

*"Seven Kisses in a Row" is good to read by oneself or with others. It is a c I would give this book two and a half stars, but it should be noted that my rating scale runs much more to the low side than most people's I've seen.*

Emma opened the door and looked in. Her mother and father were away for five days. Her father was an eyeball doctor, though he called it something else. He and her mother had gone to an eyeball meeting. Uncle Elliot with his face in the pillow and Aunt Evelyn with her mouth open. Emma walked over to the bed and stood there. Emma leaned over to examine Uncle Elliot. He was making funny noises into his pillow. She had lots of curly hair and pierced ears: Aunt Evelyn closed her mouth and opened her eyes. Emma went over to Uncle Elliot. Uncle Elliot made one big ooshing sound into his pillow. The cereal boxes were empty. Her big brother, Zachary, had eaten breakfast. Emma made three peanut butter and toast sandwiches. The peanut butter melted on the toast and ran down her chin. He had his earphones on. And I want divided grapefruit with a cherry in the middle. Zachary shook his head. He turned over so Emma could scratch his stomach, but soon he fell asleep and twitched his legs, chasing a dream. He was not good company. Emma ate four more pieces of toast and two apples and wished she had a parrot. She had read that parrots could talk and laugh. Just so everyone would know, she wrote a note: You did not make me divided greatfruit with a cherry. You did not give me seven kisses in a row. Papa always gives me seven kisses in a row. You did not let me listen to your Moris Fibly record. He sings flat anyway. Emma found an old letter written to her father so she would know how to end the note. Fond regards to the family, Emma Emma packed a paper bag with five apples and one pear, some writing paper so she could write letters, and a grape Popsicle. If she had had a parrot she would have taken him, too. She walked down the street, past a brown dog who was watching a crack in the sidewalk, past the grocery store, past the post office, until she came to Mrs. Emma always went to Mrs. Groundwine was in her yard hanging sheets on the clothesline. She waved at Emma. Groundwine was the only person in the world who called Emma Emmy. Seven made Emma think about seven kisses in a row. They sat on the counters, the tables, the chairs, and Mrs. She ate a warm biscuit and told Mrs. Groundwine that nobody loved her. But they are asleep. And Zachary is too busy. Groundwine, nodding her head. Minna only comes when she feels like it. And Molly is much too busy with her kittens now to give me any time. Sometimes they are busy being cats. And Zachary, who was busy being busy. Emma ate one more biscuit. It was too late for her Popsicle. There was a knock at the door. Groundwine and the cats, who did not speak to them. He followed Emma into her bedroom and watched her get back into bed. He thought a bit. Then he gave Emma one more kiss. He knew most times she liked things even. Rules Aunt Evelyn and Uncle Elliot came with lots of rules. They had rules about cleaning and messing up, playing and resting, how to dress and when to. In the morning Aunt Evelyn and Uncle Elliot exercised. They ran about a lot, but they did not call it exercising. He made the same kinds of ooshing sounds that he made when he slept. Aunt Evelyn did not make ooshing sounds. She made no sounds at all as she bent her legs and arms in odd ways. First Aunt Evelyn twisted herself into the shape of a swan. Then a large U. You should try it. Dogs love to run. He pulled while Zachary pushed Wayne from behind. When they left, Emma and Aunt Evelyn smiled at each other. When I was your age we had a rule to get our homework done early. No kicking or biting. Any rule can be changed. Maybe that is just about enough rules. The knitting was bright purple with shiny silver spangles on it. Emma thought it was very jazzy. And you, and your mother and father. She pictured it looking like Aunt Evelyn, short curly black hair, three earrings, purple spangled booties. It would be, Emma knew, a very jazzy baby. And it would have lots and lots of rules. Emma watched as Aunt Evelyn took one finished spangled bootie out of her knitting bag. The bootie was extremely large, almost large enough for Emma. Emma looked at the silver spangles. She thought a moment. And my mother told me what I was like. They will eat spangles on booties, and wet and spit up milk and cry and wake up and sleep whenever they want to. She looked at the purple spangled booties. They are not purple. I could give them to you. They were pink and blue. And they were very small. Aunt Evelyn loved them. I think the purple spangled booties will fit you. After a while Uncle Elliot and Zachary came back from running. Uncle Elliot was carrying Wayne. He put Wayne down and Wayne found his favorite sun spot on the

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floor and lay down. Uncle Elliot lay down on the couch. They are about sitting, lying down, sleeping, and eating. Emma set the table for dinner. Zachary came to the table wearing his favorite false nose and glasses.

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