



ROMANTIC

BOOK CLUB KIT

COMEDY

CURTIS SITTENFELD

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *PREP* AND *ELIGIBLE*

A LETTER FROM CURTIS SITTENFELD

Dear Reader,

There's a writing axiom similar to that famous line about being the change you wish to see in the world: Write the book you want to read.

This time around, I wanted to write a novel that was, above all, fun. The last few years have been rough ones in big and small ways for just about all of us. That's why I longed to escape to a fizzy, delicious, romance-filled parallel universe—one that I could exist in while I was writing and share with you after I finished.

My husband, kids, and I really embraced watching *Saturday Night Live* during the pandemic, and I'm sure I'm not the only one who's noticed the real-life pattern of talented but somewhat ordinary (dare I say mortal?) male writers and cast members from SNL dating and even marrying gorgeous, extremely accomplished female celebrities (dare I say goddesses?) who appear on the show as hosts or musical guests. What would happen, I wondered, if a female writer on a show like SNL created a sketch mocking this phenomenon and pointing out that it would never happen if the writer was female and the celebrity was male? And then what would happen if, to her own surprise, the writer found herself hitting it off with that week's gorgeous, extremely accomplished male celebrity guest host? What if the two of them bantered and flirted and had great chemistry and lots of sexual tension, but what if the writer was so neurotic and burned by past relationships that she couldn't believe this magnificent lovefest was really happening to her and risked sabotaging it?

I researched the late-night comedy show setting of *Romantic Comedy* by reading memoirs written by SNL cast members and listening to comedians interview one another on podcasts. Once while I was walking around in the snowy bitter cold of Minneapolis, where I live, I found myself listening to Bill Hader giggle wildly on Mike Birbiglia's *Working It Out* podcast, and from inside my huge puffy coat, in the zero-degree chill, I started laughing, too. I thought to myself, *Writing this book was such a good idea*. I hope you agree.

XOXO,
Curtis

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Where have you seen the Danny Horst Rule play out in real life? What's your opinion of it? Have you seen the reverse happen?
2. Why do you think Sally finds it so hard to believe that Noah might actually like her? Did *you* find it hard to believe?
3. Sally learns from her mother that we all have public and private selves. How would you describe Sally's selves? How would you describe Noah's? When do you think they switch from using their public to private selves with each other?
4. How would you characterize Sally's relationship with *The Night Owls*? Why do you think it's so hard for her to conceive of leaving?
5. How might this novel have been different if Sally were a cast member on TNO, not just a writer?
6. Sally is both extremely confident and extremely insecure. How do you think these facts can both be true?
7. Discuss the different romantic relationships in the book, from Sally and Noah to Annabel and Danny to Viv and Dr. Theo. How would you describe each couple? Which relationship feels most like your own, or one you'd like to be in?
8. Danny tells Sally that the Danny Horst Rule matters only if it matters to Sally and Noah themselves. Did you agree? How does this realization help Sally?
9. What did you think of the email section of the book?
10. What did you think of the ending of the book?

MUSIC OF THE HEART

Listen to Sittenfeld's *Romantic Comedy* playlist (yes, of course it includes "Dairy Queen").

1. "Love Me Now" by John Legend
2. "In the Blood" by John Mayer
3. "Leave the Door Open" by Bruno Mars
4. "Primetime" by Janelle Monáe
5. "Perfect (duet with Beyoncé)" by Ed Sheeran
6. "Here Tonight" by Dar Williams
7. "Heaven" by Brandi Carlile (Bryan Adams cover)
8. "You Can't Hurry Love" by The Supremes
9. "Adore You" by Harry Styles
10. "Good for You" by Dessa
11. "Love on the Brain" by Rihanna
12. "Dairy Queen" by Indigo Girls

SKETCH YOU LATER

Bring on the belly laughs: Enjoy this mix of the author's favorite *Saturday Night Live* sketches.

“The Love Toilet” (1991)

“NPR’s Delicious Dish: Schweddy Balls” (1998)

“What Up With That?: Al Gore, Mindy Kaling” (2012)

“(Do It On My) Twin Bed” (2013)

“Meet Your Second Wife” (2015)

“Crucible Cast Party” (2016)

“Election Week Cold Open (Hallelujah)” (2016)

“Joan Song” (2019)

“Romano Tours” (2019)

“Amazon Go” (2021)