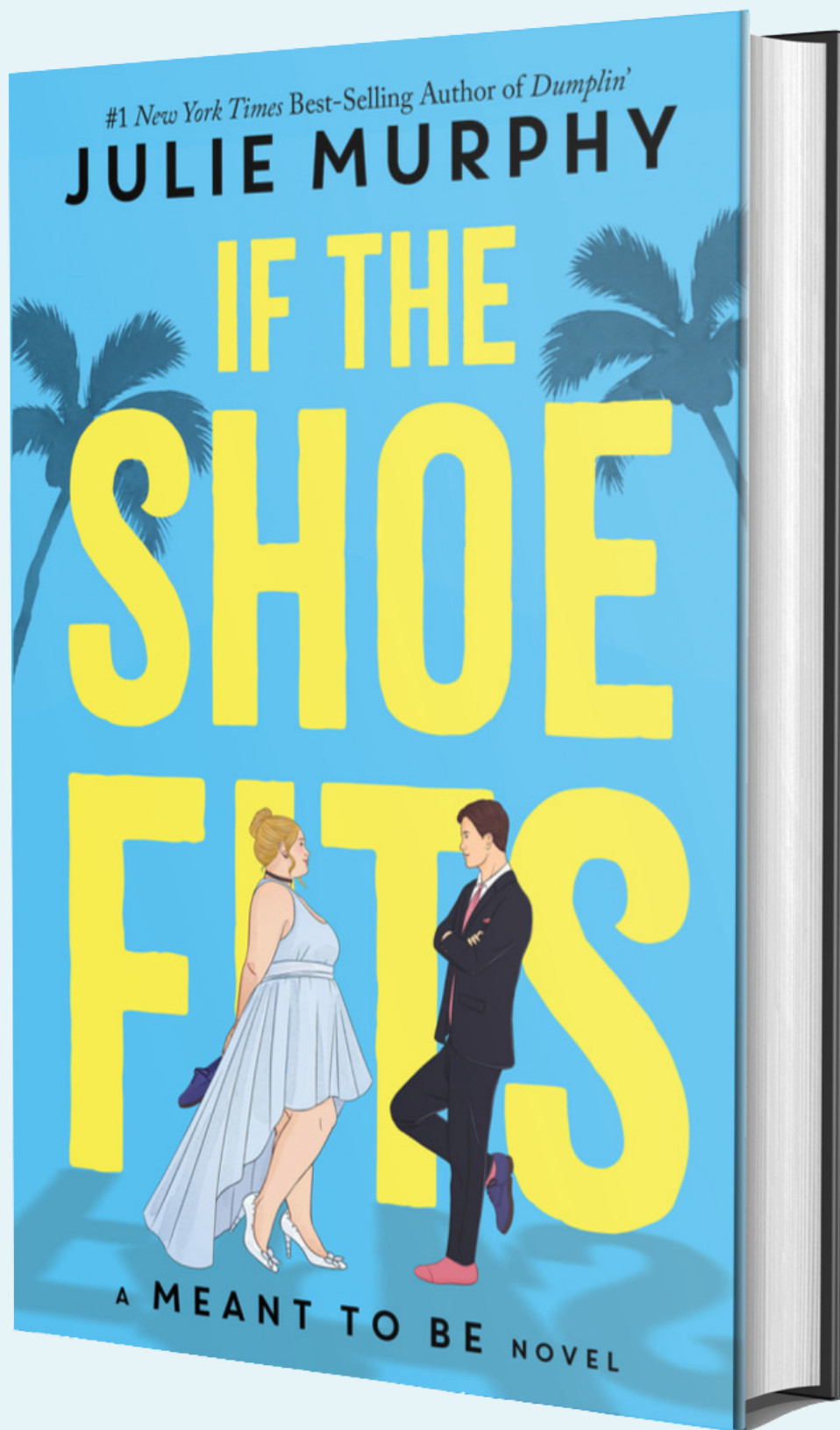


# BOOK CLUB KIT



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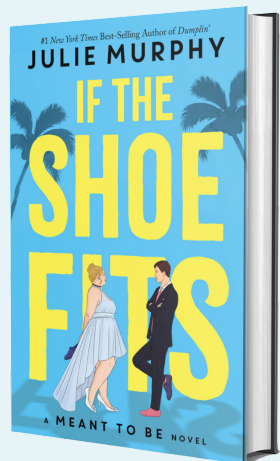
# CONTENT WARNINGS

Fatphobia

Grief

Mention of death of a parent  
(cancer)

Mention of death of a parent  
(car accident)



# AUTHOR INTERVIEW

**When you were invited to be part of the Meant to Be series, you “knew immediately” you wanted to write Cinderella. What drew you to her story in particular?**

While Cinderella wasn't the first Disney princess, she was my first Disney princess, and I think many of us will always remember our first Disney princess. For me, Cinderella has always felt iconic and emblematic of the truest form of happily ever after. I couldn't imagine a more exciting opportunity than redefining her tale for a modern audience.

**What do you think is the key to a good fairytale retelling?**

I think it's important to hold on to the things that excite and to have that same attitude when deciding which aspects to update or flip. Any time a writer is considering a retelling, it's important to examine why the story is worth retelling and what makes the retelling necessary. For me, seeing a plus-size iteration of Cinderella is what made this necessary. The rest of it really comes down to having fun and finding ways to be inventive while keeping the source material in mind.

**What inspired you to reimagine the relationship between Cindy and her stepfamily? Was there anything else you instantly knew you wanted to change or keep the same?**

I love a good villain as much as the next person, but I was really drawn to the complexities of a blended family, especially since Cindy is an adult and is returning to a home that's never truly been her home.

As for other aspects, I knew I wanted to dig into Henry's character and find ways for him to be more than this ideal prince charming. Just a quick glance at the cover will show you that the script on the shoe situation has been flipped. I also loved the idea of a reality television show acting as the iconic ball we all remember from the original.



# AUTHOR INTERVIEW

What are the challenges of writing a romance where there's an entire cast and crew working to keep the hero and heroine apart?

This aspect of the book allowed me to get really inventive with how Cindy and Henry would get to know each other, because essentially when they're not filming *Before Midnight*, the two of them are pretty much sequestered and forbidden from being together. This really helped to feed the slow burn romance and allowed Cindy and Henry to establish chemistry, so I was pretty excited to meet the challenge head-on.

There are so many layers to the title: *If the Shoe Fits*. There's a clear nod to Cinderella, but also to the ways Cindy sometimes is unsure of where she fits in with her family, the idea of the reality show working to find two people who are a 'perfect fit' as a couple, and the way that the fashion industry ensures through non-inclusive sizing that only a handful fit into certain clothes. Did you know from the beginning that you wanted to weave all of those layers together through this theme of what it means to "fit in" in various ways?

Without a doubt, yes. Those are the very things that drew me to this project to begin with. From the very beginning, I leaned very hard into what it meant to "fit" and how that played out in every aspect of Cindy's life. The average American woman is above a size fourteen, and still, the fashion industry refuses to cater to that. It's gotten better in recent years, but Cindy's struggle to "fit" is very much born out of the struggles me and so many other women have faced as plus-size people. Cindy's love for shoes originates in her teen years spent at the mall with friends, searching for anything that might fit her in all the stores her straight-sized friends dragged her to. So the "fit" aspect of this story is baked in every layer from the physical to the emotional—at least that was my intention.



# AUTHOR INTERVIEW

**This is your adult debut! Did writing for a different audience change your process in any way? Was there anything about it that surprised you?**

Moving into the adult space is something I've hoped to do for a while, and this project felt like the perfect first step. Since the romance is on the tame side, I've found that it's really a good bridge between YA and adult for those YA readers who are looking to branch out. I like to say it's the kind of adult romance you could easily read along with your mom.

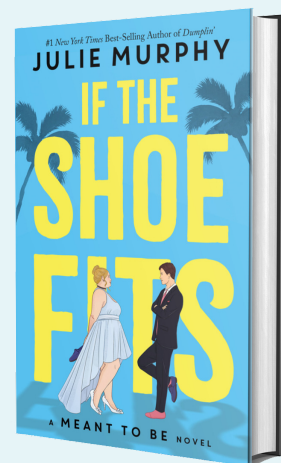
As for the actual writing process, I had so much fun! It felt like having my first adult apartment by myself. No rules! (But lots of dishes—ha!)

**The reality show dates offer some of the most fun scenes in the book. If you could be on any reality tv show, which would it be and why?**

Ooooh, I love reality TV, but I don't think I'd enjoy going on a dating show. I think I'd have a lot of fun on an HGTV show or *Queer Eye*, though.

**What are you working on now?**

I'm currently working on my next adult romance, which will be out next year. I should be able to share more details about that soon! But in the meantime, I've got *Faith: Greater Heights*, the sequel to *Faith: Taking Flight*, on November 2nd. It's a fun superhero coming-of-age story with a bubbly fangirl protagonist!



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) *If the Shoe Fits* is the first book in a new multi-author series inspired by classic fairytale stories. What fairytale would you like to see a modern rom-com retelling of? Which author would you want to write it?
- 2) What do you think is the key to a good retelling? Discuss the elements Julie Murphy changed from the original and what she kept the same and how it served to modernize the tale.
- 3) What do you think about the book's title? How do you see it connecting to different aspects of Cindy's life?
- 4) Why do you think Julie Murphy chose to open the book with Cindy as a young girl? How did it impact the way you viewed Cindy as an adult?
- 5) Discuss the roles friendship and sisterhood play in the novel as a theme, especially in a reality TV setting where women are pitted against each other.
- 6) In what ways do you think her time on *Before Midnight* helped Cindy reach a place where she was ready to confront her grief?
- 7) Cindy's mother tells Cindy to "choose yourself... choose joy." What role do you think the letter plays in the path Cindy chooses? Do you think she would've made a different decision if she hadn't read it? What does choosing joy mean to you?
- 8) Discuss the ways that *If the Shoe Fits* explores themes of fatphobia in the fashion industry and microaggressions that Cindy faces, even from those who love her.

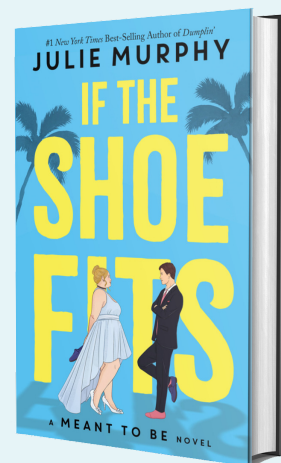


# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 9) By the end of the book, do you think Cindy's changed the way she thinks about fate and destiny?
- 10) Cindy expresses herself through fashion, and shoes are her signature. What would your signature fashion item be?
- 11) Discuss the importance of representation in both the media we consume and the fashion industry. What would it have meant to you to see a character like Cindy when you were growing up?

Here are three questions suggested by Julie Murphy:

- 12) The step-family is a little different from the Tremaine family in the original *Cinderella*. How are Erica, Anna, and Drew reminiscent of the original and how are they different? What did you like/dislike about this spin?
- 13) If you could be on any reality television show, what would it be and what pair of shoes would you wear?
- 14) As a plus-size character, Cindy offers an updated take on an iconic classic. What other classics—Disney or not—would you like to see updated and how?





# BOOKMARKS



# BOOKMARKS



# HOW FAR WOULD YOU MAKE IT IN *BEFORE MIDNIGHT*?

**You arrive at the chateau to learn you have to share a room with three other contestants. You...**

- A) Are thrilled to have a slumber party!
- B) Ask to speak with a producer, this is unacceptable
- C) Smile but secretly hope the others go home soon
- D) Make the most of it by seeing who wears the same size shoes to double your wardrobe options

**Time to meet the suitor! What confidence-boosting shoes are you wearing?**

- A) Coral platform wedge T-strap Mary Janes
- B) Stilettos encrusted in crystals
- C) Blue suede flats
- D) Strappy turquoise heels with matching feathers

**What do you do at the ball to stand out?**

- A) Make a splash by the pool
- B) Steal the suitor away every chance you get
- C) Lay on the charm
- D) Let your style speak volumes

**Why are you really here?**

- A) It sounded like a fun adventure!
- B) The money
- C) To find true love
- D) Exposure

**Which crew member revealed you're secretly their favorite?**

- A) Zek
- B) Wes
- C) Irina
- D) Beck

**What's your motto?**

- A) I *am* here to make friends
- B) All press is good press
- C) The higher the heels the closer to God
- D) If the shoe doesn't fit, make your own

**Which group date are you most excited about?**

- A) Boxing ring pillow fight
- B) Who cares about group dates? It's the one-on-ones that count
- C) Baby goat yoga
- D) LuMac fashion show



# HOW FAR WOULD YOU MAKE IT IN *BEFORE MIDNIGHT*?

## RESULTS

### **Mostly As: You're sent home on the first night**

Someone has to be the first to go, and this time around it's you. While you're bummed to leave life at the château—your memories of your fun and brief stint there are going to last forever!

### **Mostly Bs: You're sent home right before the villas**

You have a bit of an edge, and the producers loved it—as Beck will tell you, it makes for good TV! You miss your chance at the trip to the villas, but your 15 minutes of fame is sure to buoy you into your next adventure.

### **Mostly Cs: You made it to the final two**

Your charm and fun-loving energy ensured that you found your way to the top. While you weren't the one the suitor chose, as the fan-favorite, you're sure to get a spinoff!

### **Mostly Ds: You receive the final scroll**

Pop the bubbly and get ready to celebrate! You arrived on set wanting to show your most authentic self and along the way won the hearts of the viewers, your fellow contestants, and the suitor. Turns out staying true to yourself really is the key to living happily ever after.

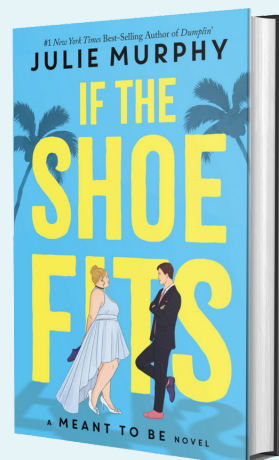


# SHOE DESIGN CHALLENGE

Break out the craft supplies! Draw inspiration from Cindy and challenge your book club members to try their hand at designing a shoe.

Print this page for all of your club members and set a time limit of 10 minutes. Offer glue, tape, scissors, and craft supplies. We recommend glitter, feathers, colored pencils, and sequins.

When you're finished, have members show off their completed products. You can have the group vote for their favorite with the winner receiving a small prize!



# DISNEYBOUNDING CHALLENGE

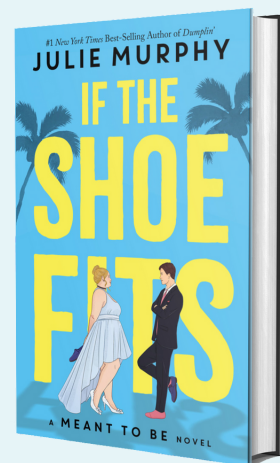
Does your book club love a challenge?  
Encourage everyone to DisneyBound at your meeting!

DisneyBounding was coined by Leslie Kay and involves dressing up as Disney characters using contemporary clothes (peep the Instagram example below!).

It's a fun way to cosplay without being in costume, and we just know Cindy would adore this fashion-forward way of paying homage to beloved characters.

Follow in Cindy's footsteps and start your book club meeting with a fashion show. At the end, have everyone vote for their favorite.

The winner can take home a small prize!



# BOOK CLUB BINGO

Cindy and Henry's first non-televised date is bingo! Now it's your turn to play: Give everyone a copy and see who scores a bingo first.

Finished the book before anyone else	Read Julie Murphy before	Selected <i>If the Shoe Fits</i> for book club	Made it farthest in the <i>Before Midnight</i> quiz	Seen more than one <i>Cinderella</i> movie
Has the most siblings	Won shoe design challenge	Watched a season of <i>The Bachelor</i>	First to arrive	Last to finish reading
Won DisneyBound challenge	Been to Mexico		Wearing yellow	Been to a fashion show
Shares Henry's fear of helicopters	Seen <i>Dumplin'</i>	Been to New York City	Listened to the audiobook	Can name all three of the triplets
Watched a season of <i>The Bachelorette</i>	Made a grilled cheese in the last year	Can name the most <i>Before Midnight</i> contestants	Been to Cinderella's Castle	Wearing blue shoes



# PIZZA RECIPE

Cindy believes that “pizza is always fated,” and we have to agree. Follow in her footsteps by having a make-your-own pizza station at your book club!

## Directions

Mix yeast, sugar, and warm water in a large bowl or stand mixer. Let rest for 5-10 minutes.

Add olive oil, salt, and flour. Mix on a low speed until dough forms.

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead for 3 minutes, or until dough slowly bounces back when prodded.

Place dough ball in a greased bowl. Cover and let rise at room temperature for 1 hour.

Punch down the dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Divide into four equal pieces. Cover and let rest for 10-20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 475°F.

Using your hands or a rolling pin, shape the dough into a flattened circle. Poke dough with fork prongs to prevent bubbling. Drizzle with olive oil.

Have each guest add their desired toppings.

Bake on a tray dusted with cornmeal for 15 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

## Ingredients

1 ½ cups warm water  
1 packet active dry yeast  
2 teaspoons sugar  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 teaspoon kosher salt  
3 ½ cups all-purpose flour  
Cornmeal for dusting  
16 oz jar of pizza sauce

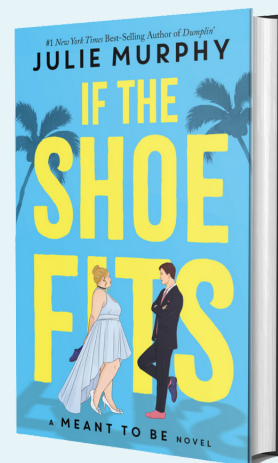
## Topping ideas

Mozzarella cheese  
Pepperoni  
Banana peppers  
Fresh basil  
Mushrooms  
Sausage

## Yields

4 six-inch pies

Tip: Pressed for time?  
Buy pre-made pizza dough to skip  
right to the assembly phase!





# COCKTAIL RECIPE: THE CINDY

Inspired by the pomegranate seltzer Cindy drinks at Erica's and Champagne, the first drink Henry buys for her, this cocktail is certain to start your book club meeting off right!

## Ingredients

4 oz Champagne or other sparkling wine  
1-2 oz pomegranate juice  
1/4 tsp of edible gold glitter

## Garnish

Pomegranate seeds

## Directions

Add chilled pomegranate juice to an empty glass.

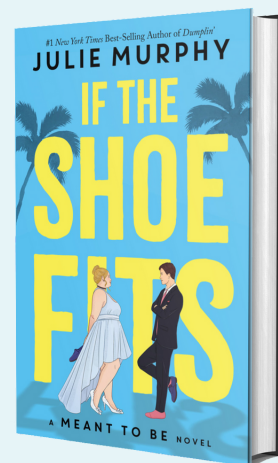
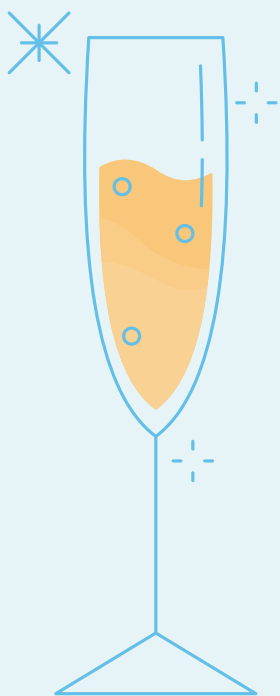
Stir in edible glitter.

Top with chilled Champagne.

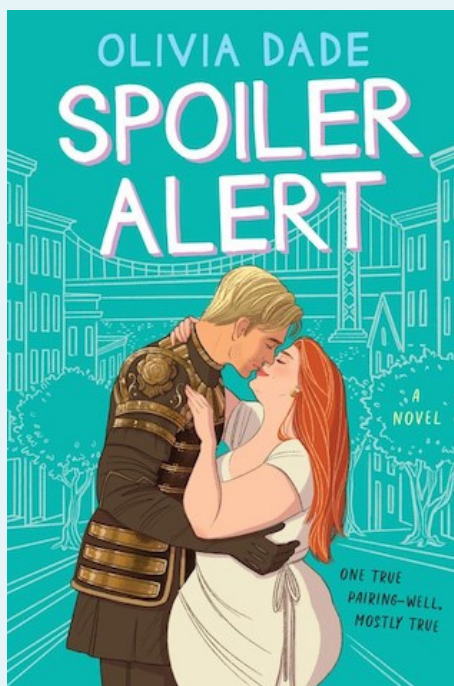
Add pomegranate seeds for a garnish.

## Mocktail Directions

Replace sparkling wine with a non-alcoholic Champagne or with a lime flavored sparkling water to compliment the pomegranate.



# WHAT TO READ NEXT

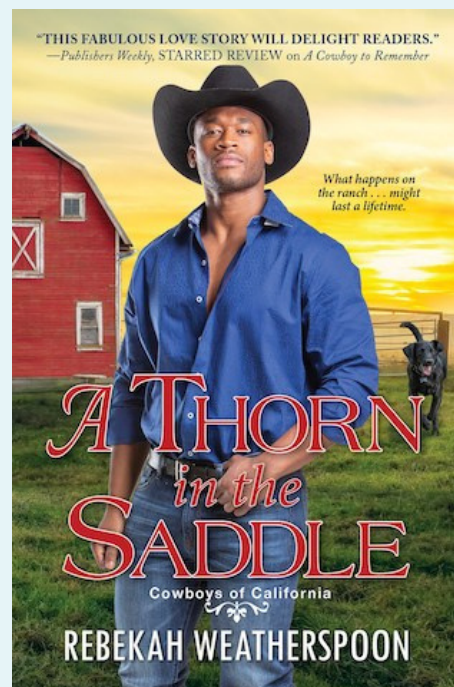


## *Spoiler Alert* by Olivia Dade

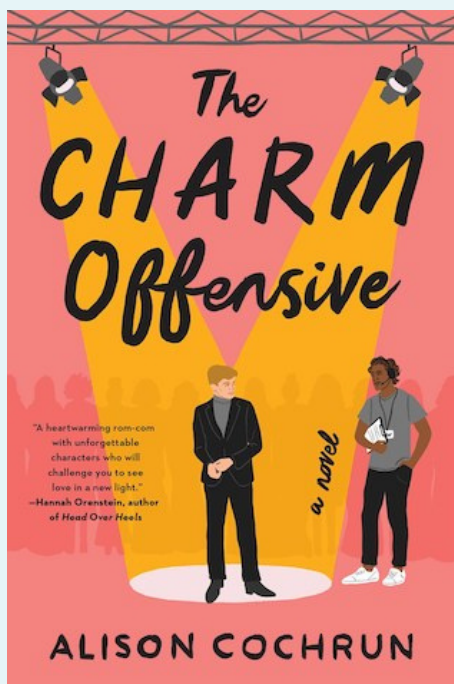
Geologist April is thrust into the limelight when an Internet troll mocks her cosplay and actor Marcus steps in to defend her. Little do they know, they've been talking for years under pseudonyms on a fanfiction website. As the two grow closer, Marcus' eyes are opened to fatphobia in the fandom community and what his future could be like if he let the real him shine through. A fat heroine who makes her own incredible cosplay outfits? Cindy would love April!

## *A Thorn in the Saddle* by Rebekah Weatherspoon

Want more modern fairy tale retellings? Dive into Rebekah Weatherspoon's Cowboys of California series. This third romance draws inspiration from *Beauty and the Beast* with its brainy heroine and a hot-tempered hero. Ranch owner Jesse Pleasant believes he's cursed to be alone, but when he meets tech consultant Lily-Grace he wonders if fate might have something different in store for him.



# WHAT TO READ NEXT



## *The Charm Offensive* by Alison Cochrun

If Julie Murphy's novel has you wanting more romances featuring reality TV, you'll want to check out Alison Cochrun's debut. Charlie Winshaw doesn't believe in true love, but he does think that a stint on the reality dating show *Ever After* might be his ticket to rehabbing his image. As it turns out, dating 20 women at once on TV is far harder than he thought, especially when he can't keep his eyes off of the show's producer, Dev Deshpande.

## *What the Hex* by Alexis Daria, narrated by Jacqueline Grace Lopez

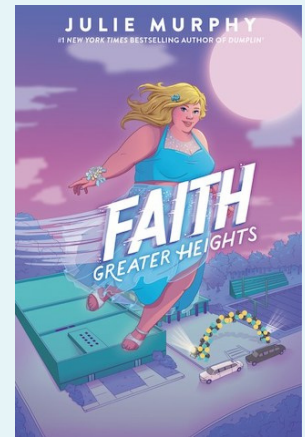
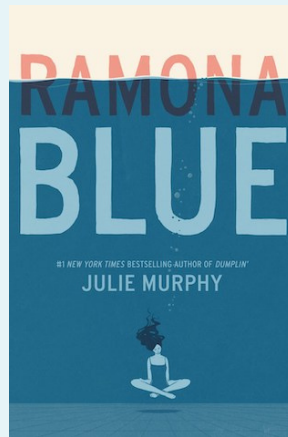
Looking for a pinch of magic in your next read? Give this Audible Original novella a listen. Like Cindy, Cat Cartagena has an eye for fashion and a big family. Also like Cindy, she's been feeling disconnected from both lately. Her ability to enchant clothing once wowed, but these days she's struggling to cast even the smallest spell. Can a trip home for a wedding, a demon possession, and a reunion with her childhood rival help set her back on track? You'll have to listen to find out!



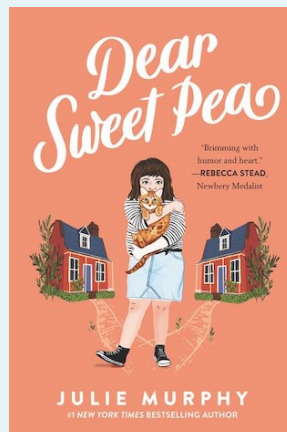
# MORE FROM JULIE MURPHY

## Young Adult

Adapted  
into a  
Netflix  
movie!



## Middle Grade



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julie Murphy lives in North Texas with her husband who loves her, her dog who adores her, and her cats who tolerate her. After several wonderful years in the library world, Julie now writes full-time.

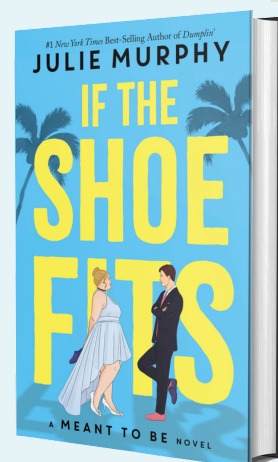
When she's not writing or reliving her reference desk glory days, she can be found watching made-for-TV movies, hunting for the perfect slice of cheese pizza, and planning her next great travel adventure.

She is also the #1 New York Times bestselling author of the young adult novels *Dumplin'* (now a film on Netflix), *Puddin'*, *Ramona Blue*, and *Side Effects May Vary*. *Dear Sweet Pea* is her debut middle grade novel. *If the Shoe Fits* is her adult debut.

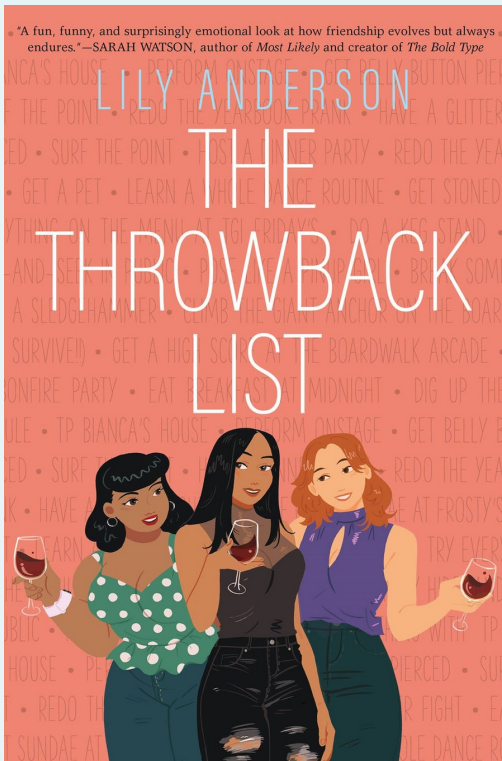


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# COMING SOON FROM HYPERION AVENUE



Welcome to Sandy Point, Oregon: a sleepy beach town that's home to a giant anchor statue, a sometimes-karaoke-bar, and Frosty's questionably legendary Sunday Sundae Surprise. A town Jo, Autumn, and Bianca thought they'd left far behind when they graduated high school, finally moving on to greener pastures than the midway point for tourists heading to the Goonies house. But life seldom goes according to plan.

Bianca Boria-Birdy, former prom queen and valedictorian, has always been an overachiever. As she juggles managing the family tattoo parlor, caring for her grandmother, and adjusting to a new marriage, Bianca's schedule becomes stricter than ever, with no room for disruption. What she really needs is a vacation, but not even Bianca Boria-Birdy can achieve the impossible.

Autumn Kelly used to be an actress. Now she teaches drama at Sandy Point High. She may have had to kiss her movie-star dreams goodbye, but molding the next generation of performers has given her life meaning in a whole new way. Until the sudden reappearance of her ex-best friend throws everything off-balance.

Jo Freeman has it all together. With a cool job in Silicon Valley, connections at the trendiest fitness studios, and a down payment on her dream condo, she's well on her way to reaching every one of her goals before thirty. Or she was, before she got fired and landed right back home with her parents and teenage sister.

When Jo finds an old bucket list in her childhood bedroom, it sets the three women on a path that brings them closer to one another with each task. And it just might lead to a life none of them could have planned.

On Shelves: October 5

# ABOUT THIS KIT

This book club kit was created by the team at We Are Bookish, an editorially independent division of NetGalley LLC.

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