

BOOK CLUB KIT

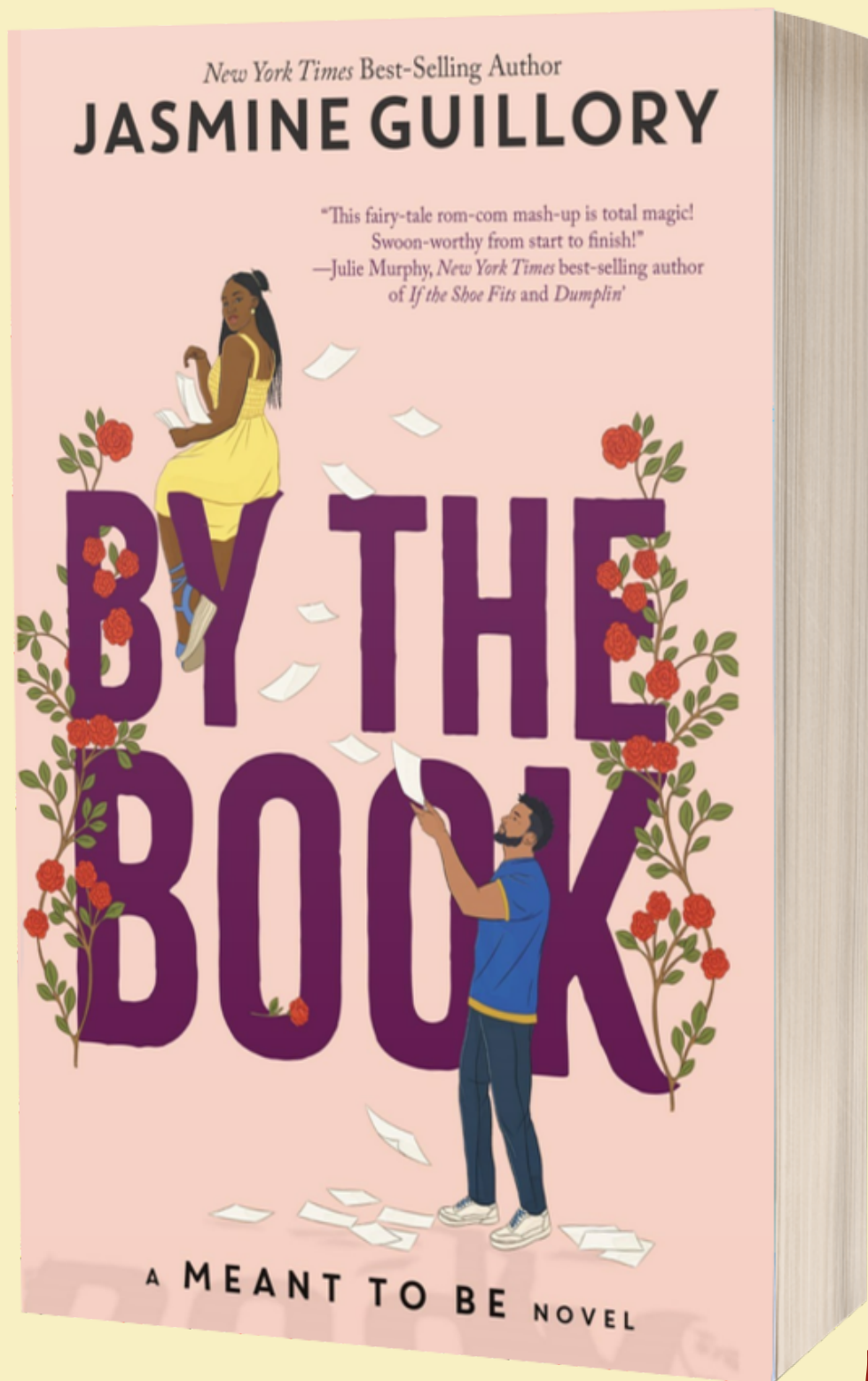


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NOTE TO READERS

SPOILER WARNING

This kit was created for book clubs to use in their discussions of *By the Book* and contains spoilers.

CONTENT WARNINGS

References to racism
(including microaggressions in a work environment)

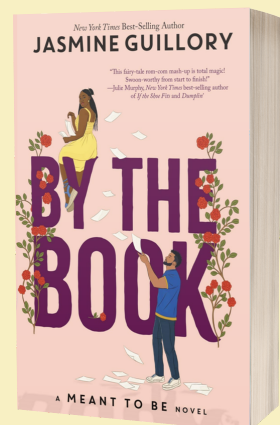
Toxic work culture and burnout

Familial estrangement

References to a manipulative parent

Parental death (off-page)

Grandparent death (off-page)



AUTHOR INTERVIEW

WITH JASMINE GUILLORY

What was your first thought when you were invited to be part of the Meant to Be collection? What drew you to wanting to reimagine Belle's story?

Sheer excitement! I grew up watching Disney movies, and I was thrilled to be able to write a Black princess. I was a huge bookworm as a kid (and still am as an adult!), so I've always related so much to Belle. It felt natural to want to tell her story.

This is your seventh book and first retelling. Did the fact that this is a retelling change your writing process in any surprising ways?

Not really. For me, the key to any book is knowing my characters well and figuring out who they are and what they want. The most important thing for me was to figure out who Isabelle and Beau were and why they would each end up in that house together. There were definitely some fits and starts along the way as I learned about each of them, but that's often how my writing process goes!

When you sat down to write *By the Book*, which elements of the original story did you immediately know you wanted to keep and which did you want to change?

I knew I wanted to keep the love of books and reading, the magic feeling of the house that they live in, and the slow, gradual way Belle and the Beast fell in love. But I wanted there to be a lot more choice for Isabelle; I wanted her to be there in the house of her own volition, and I wanted the experience to change her, as well as change Beau.

What do you think is the key to a good fairy-tale retelling?

I think there are two: to have a firm grasp on the fairy tale itself and to know what your own twist is on it to tell the story in a way that makes it uniquely you.



AUTHOR INTERVIEW

In working on a book about writers, did you put more of yourself and your own experiences into them than with other characters?

I always put little bits of myself into every character, but there was definitely a lot about my experiences with writing that Izzy and Beau share—the good and the bad! The joys and frustrations of writing can be so high and so low, and they each experience some of that.

What writing advice would you give to Beau? And to Izzy?

It's all there in the book! So much of the advice that Izzy gives to Beau is the advice I would give to them. It's all advice that I've both gotten from other writers and have given to writers (and myself) quite often.

As an author, did you know what Izzy's job as an editorial assistant entailed, or did you need to research to learn more?

Luckily, I've had the pleasure of working with a number of editorial assistants over the past five years, so some of that comes from working with them. I also did some other research, talked to some other publishing people, and paid attention to lots of conversations on social media and elsewhere. I'm so grateful to everyone who shared their experiences!

Izzy is the pep-talk queen! If you could pick a Disney character to give you a pep talk, who would it be and why?

Absolutely the fairy godmother from *Cinderella*! She would always give you the perfect boost.

If you can share, what projects are you working on now?

I'm working on my eighth book right now! More details to come soon; follow me on social media to hear about it first.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) *Beauty and the Beast* is one of the more popular fairy-tale retellings. As a reader, what draws you to revisiting this tale as old as time over and over again?
- 2) What do you think is the key to a good retelling? Discuss the elements Jasmine Guillory changed from the original and what she kept the same and how it served to modernize the tale.
- 3) Why do you think Jasmine Guillory chose to make Beau a writer? How did this impact his growth, particularly when it came to confronting his grief and regrets?
- 4) In the Disney classic, Belle doesn't have friends to turn to from her old life. How did Izzy having an external support system through a friend like Priya change her arc compared to the original?
- 5) Discuss the role burnout plays in Izzy's work life and the challenges of having your favorite hobby, your passion, and your job intersect.
- 6) Izzy stays with Beau to help him write his book. In what ways do you see Beau having also helped Izzy?

Find more questions on the following page.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 7) Izzy often feels alone without a mentor who understands her experiences as a Black woman in the publishing industry, and she longs for books that feature more characters who look like her. Discuss the importance of representation in both the books we read and share together. What would it have meant to you to see a character like Izzy when you were growing up?
- 8) A trademark of a *Beauty and the Beast* retelling is the forced proximity trope. In what ways do you see this creating deeper intimacy for the characters? How does sharing a space impact Beau and Izzy differently?

Here are two questions suggested by Jasmine Guillory:

- 9) Have you ever had writer's block or the equivalent? What got you out of it?
- 10) What would make up your ideal snack cabinet?



COVER DESIGNER INTERVIEW

Have you ever wondered how a book cover is designed? Here Marci Senders (Manager, Design, at Disney Hyperion) walks us through the process of designing the cover for *By the Book*!

1) What's the first thing you do when you sit down to design a cover?

The first thing I do is read through the Art Form created by the editor. It's a document containing the summary, character descriptions, comparison books, and cover suggestions from them and the author.

2) How do you decide which elements of a story should be featured?

I create a mood board of inspirational images that I gathered from when I read the book. I then add the images and ideas from the author and editor. The editor and I sit down, look at the mood board, and discuss which elements are the most important to the story and will be the most dynamic on a cover. It is helpful to discuss different concepts with visuals so everyone can get on the same page (pun intended). Communication (and listening) is key. Good collaboration is when everyone's ideas merge together.

3) For a collection like this, how do you go about blending the fairy-tale elements with the contemporary setting?

For fairy-tale elements, especially a Disney fairy tale, a little goes a long way. For *By the Book*, we had illustrator Stephanie Singleton incorporate a few key elements to show this story is a retelling of *Beauty and the Beast*. When a yellow dress, book pages, and roses are put together, it's clear what the fairy tale is. That allows the artist the freedom to showcase the characters in this book and tell their story.



COVER DESIGNER INTERVIEW

4) How does designing a book that's part of a collection differ from one that's a stand-alone?

When starting to design a new collection, I discuss with the editor what elements we want on each cover and what elements should change on each book. We have to find a good balance to make sure each book looks different enough from one another but still related. For the Meant to Be collection, I knew from the beginning that we wanted each book to have its own color palette and to always show the relationship between the two main characters, especially since the characters changed with each book. It is helpful that each Disney princess already has a designated color!

5) What's something about the cover design process that would surprise readers?

People are surprised to hear how many voices are involved in the process. I think designing a cover is like putting together a puzzle. The "pieces" are the suggestions from the author and editors, the trends and what is working in the market, the important concepts from the book, and the feedback from our Sales, Marketing, and Publicity departments. It's the designer's job to put all the "pieces" together in a visually pleasing way that also is unique. It's a really fun challenge!



BOOKMARKS

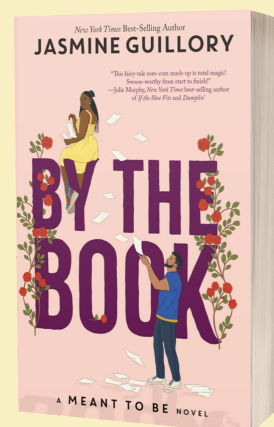


BOOKMARKS

A TALE AS
OLD AS
TIME . . .



"I LOVE WHEN READERS DISCOVER BOOKS THAT
FEEL LIKE THEY WERE MEANT JUST FOR THEM,
AND THEY'RE SO HAPPY AND GRATEFUL AND
EMOTIONAL THAT EVERYONE IN THE ROOM
WANTS TO CRY, AND SOMETIMES THEY ALL DO.
THOSE BOOKS DO CHANGE LIVES."





PEN NAME GENERATOR

Use your initials to discover your pen name!

FIRST NAME

| | | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------|----------|
| A | Adam | J | Paige | S | Michaela |
| B | Isabelle | K | Belle | T | Ewan |
| C | Beau | L | Jeanne-Marie | U | Howard |
| D | Jasmine | M | Emma | V | John |
| E | Robby | N | Dan | W | Linda |
| F | Holly | O | Alan | X | Audra |
| G | Angela | p | Maurice | Y | Hattie |
| H | Josephine | Q | Luke | Z | Priya |
| I | Gaston | R | Nina | | |

LAST NAME

| | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| A | Benson | J | Guillory | S | Leprince de Beaumont |
| B | O'Hara | K | Towers | T | Wallace |
| C | Potts | L | Woolverton | U | LeFou |
| D | Henry | M | Trousdale | V | Evans |
| E | Lansbury | N | Russell | W | Marlowe |
| F | White | O | Menken | X | Thompson |
| G | McKellen | p | Moore | Y | Tucci |
| H | Watson | Q | Ashman | Z | Stevens |
| I | Orbach | R | Wise | | |



WRITING EXERCISES

Channel your inner Beau and Izzy with writing prompts!

Have each member select a prompt and write for 15 minutes.
You can share what you've written aloud or by email.

Here are five memoir prompts inspired by Beau:

- 1) Try to capture one of your favorite moments from childhood.
- 2) Write about a time you saw someone you knew in a different light.
- 3) Share the best meet-cute you've ever experienced.
- 4) Describe a meal that changed your life.
- 5) In what ways have books made an impact on your life?

Here are five fiction prompts inspired by Izzy:

- 1) Imagine if your favorite side character from a fairy tale were the protagonist.
- 2) What do you think Priya or Michaela's happily ever after would look like?
- 3) Write a story where a fairy-tale hero is the villain or the villain is the hero.
- 4) Tell the story of a character who gets their dream job only to discover it isn't what they thought it would be.
- 5) Write about two characters trapped in a house together.





IZZY'S WRITING ADVICE

Throughout the novel, Izzy offers Beau writing advice as he works on his manuscript. Here's a look at some of her best tips for aspiring writers!

Write for an hour a day

"You can even break it up into thirty minutes at a time, or even fifteen minutes, if you're feeling antsy. Just write as much as you can during that time, and don't let yourself edit or stress about it, just go."

Get words on the page

"It's impossible to work with a blank page, but as long as you have a first draft—no matter how bad you think it is, or how much work you think it needs—that's a victory right there."

Go one page at a time

"It feels overwhelming to write a whole book—don't think about it like that. Just think about it step-by-step, page by page."

Jump around

"You also don't have to write in chronological order! I know that trips people up a lot—they hit a difficult scene . . . and they just stall. Instead, you can jump around. Write your way into it."

You can fix bad writing, you can't fix a blank page

"It's all building blocks; even if you can't see them, they're there. It will all inform the work you'll go on to do . . . Everyone deletes stuff in a panic sometimes. How about next time you feel like deleting something, just open a new document . . . Just save it somehow."

Switch things up

"Sometimes, if you have a block, or things aren't going well, it helps to switch from one way of writing to another."



HOW TO MAKE A PERFECT CHARCUTERIE BOARD

Snacks are the best part of book club and we know that Izzy and Beau would agree! For your *By the Book* meeting, encourage your members to get creative and build mini charcuterie boards based on their favorite snacks.

See the next page for idea inspiration, and below learn how to create a perfect board.

1) Pick your board

Charcuterie boards come in all shapes and sizes. When selecting one, consider the food you have in mind and think about the board that will best fit and display the items.

2) Consider dishware

Dishware isn't a must-have but can help to add some dimension to your board and display items. Tiny plates, bowls, and jars are useful.

3) Plate the largest items first

Start by plating the largest items, making sure to not place them too close together. This will usually include any dips or spreads.

4) Plate medium-sized items next

On a traditional board, this is when you'd set up crackers and cheeses. No matter what you're plating, try to use these items to create flow and movement on the board.

5) Fill in the gaps

Use your smallest items (such as nuts or small fruit) to fill in any open space.

Charcuterie Tip

Look online at boards you like to get a sense of how you'd like to display your snacks.



CHARCUTERIE BOARD IDEAS

The possibilities are endless when it comes to creating a snack board, so for those who need a bit of help, here are some ideas:

Pretzel Board

A board-themed around this salty snack could have both soft and hard pretzels in various shapes. Pair with cheese, beer, and mustard dips.

You can even bring a touch of sweetness with a chocolate dipping sauce or yogurt-covered pretzels.

S'mores Board

Take smores to the next level by packing your board with various flavors of graham crackers and types of chocolate and marshmallows.

Spreads such as peanut butter can be used to add new flavors and everything from sprinkles to fruit could be added to the inside of this sweet sandwich for texture and taste. Since Izzy thinks marshmallows are only good melted, we bet she'd approve of this board.

Movie-Night Board

Beau and Izzy love curling up on the couch to watch *This Provincial Life* with snacks, making a movie-night board perfect for your meeting.

Fill your board with different kinds of popcorn (buttered, cheddar, chocolate drizzled) and favorite movie theater snacks, like Twizzlers!

Themed Board

Beyond boards inspired by types of food, members can select items based around a specific color (a green board could have everything from olives to green M&M'S®), cuisine (a French board could be filled with cheese, croissants, and more!), or even scenes from the book (tacos, anyone?).





SPARKLING ROSÉ MARGARITA



Beau and Izzy enjoy both wine and margaritas together, so this cocktail that combines the two (with a nod to that famous fairy-tale rose) is as perfectly matched as they are!

Directions

Strawberry-basil-infused blanco tequila

In a glass jar, combine sliced strawberries and fresh basil leaves with blanco tequila. Seal jar tightly and let sit, unrefrigerated, for 3 to 5 days. Shake daily. Strain out solids, and rebottle.

Rose salt

Add sea salt and dried rose buds to a mortar and pestle, and gently grind. Place on a small plate to rim glasses.

Cocktail

In a punch bowl, combine the tequila, lime juice, and agave syrup.

Add cubed ice, and stir with a ladle to mix.

Top with the sparkling rosé.

Garnish punch with 1 cup sliced strawberries and lime wheels from 2 limes.

Rim punch glasses with rose salt before serving (optional).

Yields
10 drinks

Ingredients

Strawberry-basil-infused blanco tequila

1/2 cup sliced strawberries

1/2 cup fresh basil

750 milliliter bottle blanco tequila

Rose salt

4 tablespoons sea salt

1 tablespoon dried rose buds

Cocktail

10 ounces strawberry-basil-infused blanco tequila

5 ounces lime juice, freshly squeezed

4 ounces agave syrup

1 (750 milliliter) bottle sparkling rosé

1 cup strawberries, sliced

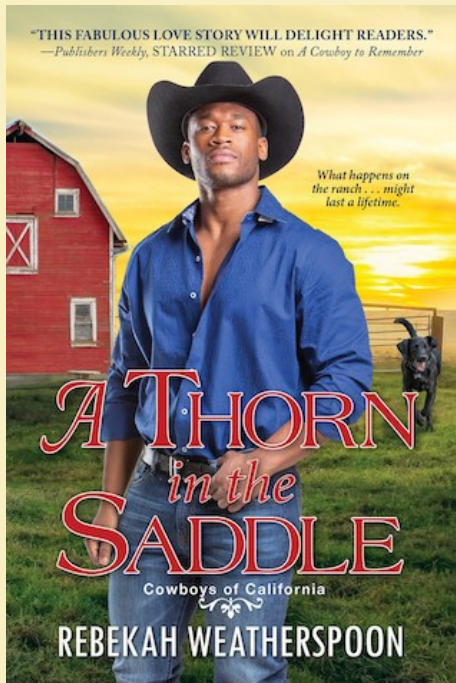
2 limes (cut into wheels)

Ice

Recipe from:
liquor.com

WHAT TO READ NEXT:

RETELLINGS

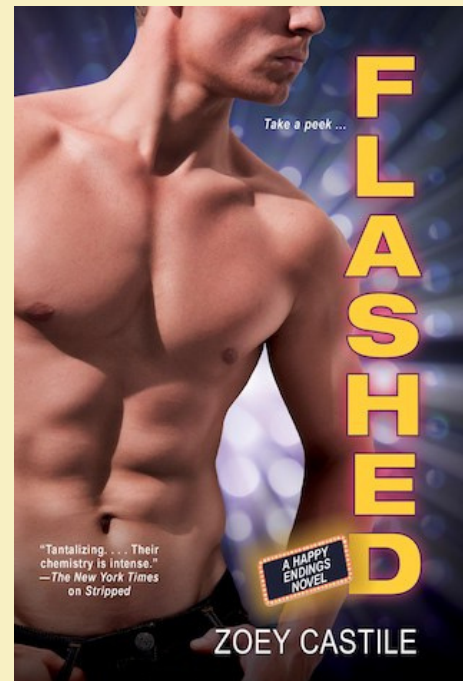


A Thorn in the Saddle by Rebekah Weatherspoon

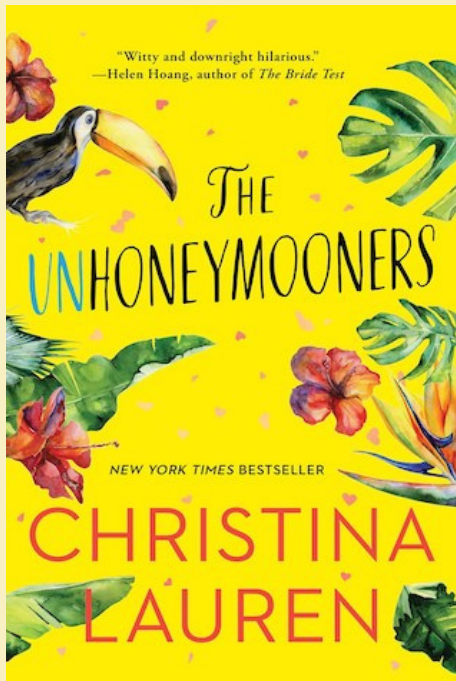
If you love a good fairy-tale reimagining, you can't go wrong with the Cowboys of California series. This third installment is a *Beauty and the Beast* retelling. Ranch owner Jesse Pleasant believes he's cursed to be alone, but when he meets tech consultant Lily-Grace, he wonders if fate might have different plans.

Flashied by Zoey Castile

This is the perfect book for readers wanting a bit more heat with their retellings. The third book in Zoey Castile's Happy Endings series blends *Magic Mike* with *Beauty and the Beast* for a sizzling tale of romance between Pat, a reclusive former soccer player, and Leda, who takes a job as his housekeeper to support her dreams of becoming an artist.



WHAT TO READ NEXT: ENEMIES-TO-LOVERS

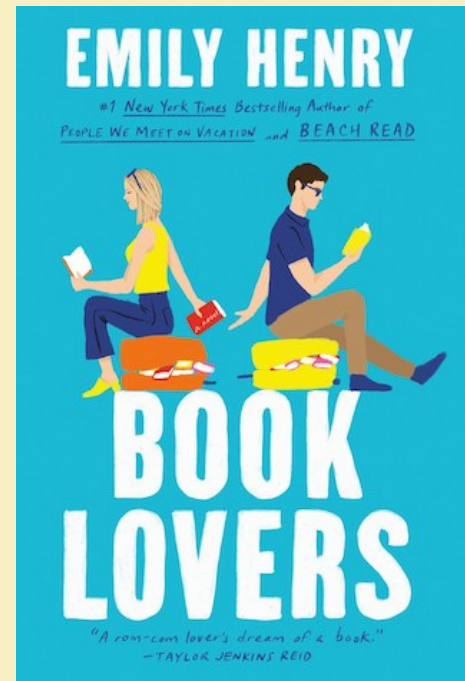


The Unhoneymooners by Christina Lauren

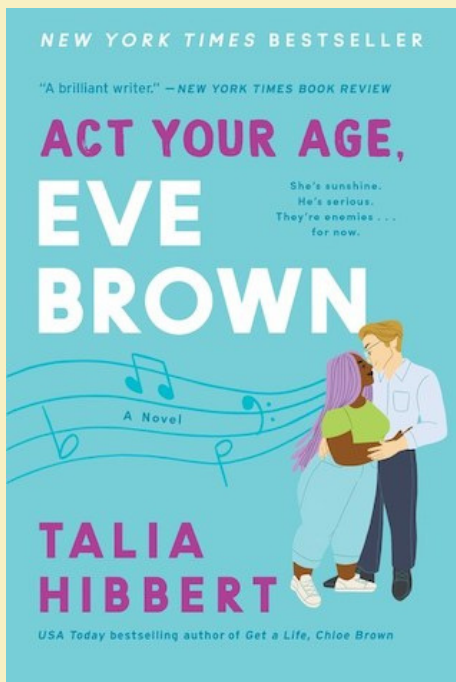
Looking for another enemies-to-lovers in forced proximity romance? When her sister gets food poisoning, maid of honor Olive is sent in her place on her Hawaiian honeymoon with none other than the best man. The two agree to enjoy their free vacation while staying far away from each other. But a chance encounter with Olive's future boss forces her and Ethan to pretend to be happy newlyweds.

Book Lovers by Emily Henry

Liked the glimpse into the publishing industry via Izzy? Your next read should be *Book Lovers*! Literary agent Nora Stephens arrives in North Carolina with her sister hoping to learn how to become the heroine of her own story. Unfortunately, her plans keep being thwarted by run-ins with Charlie Lastra, an editor she knows from back home.



WHAT TO READ NEXT: SELF-DISCOVERY

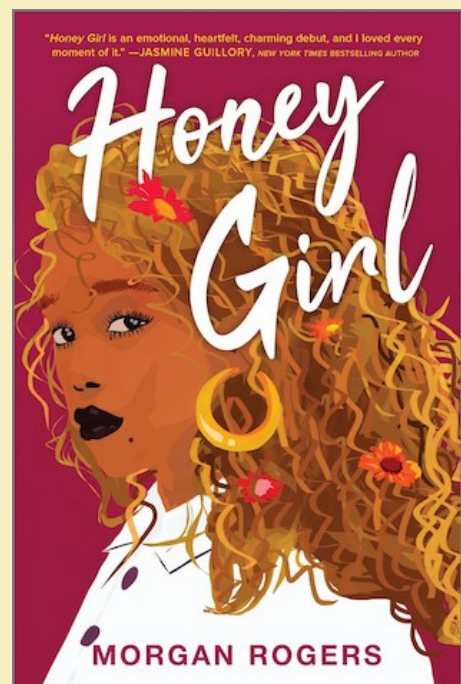


Act Your Age, Eve Brown by Talia Hibbert

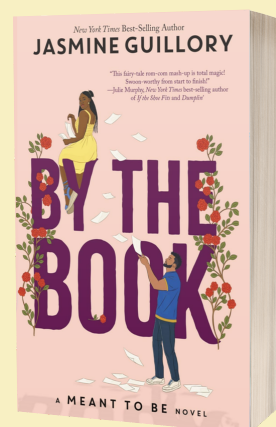
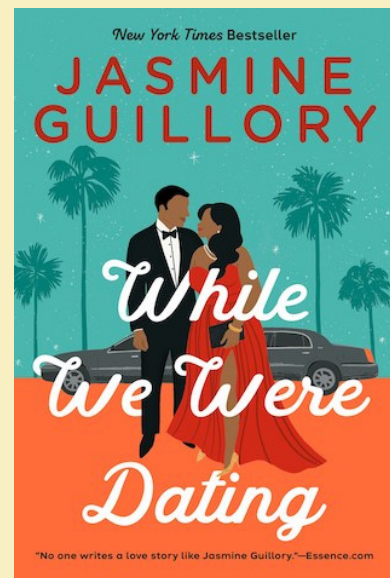
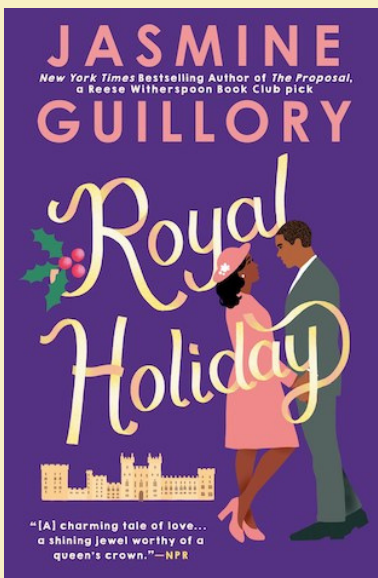
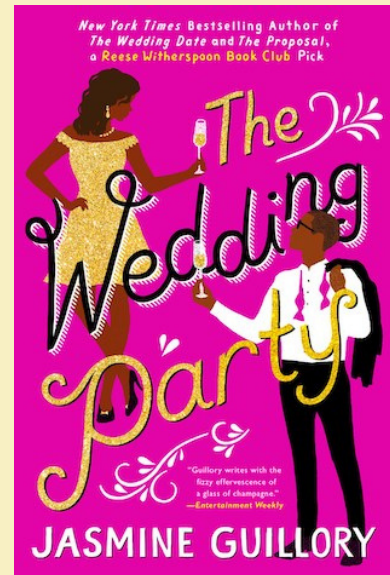
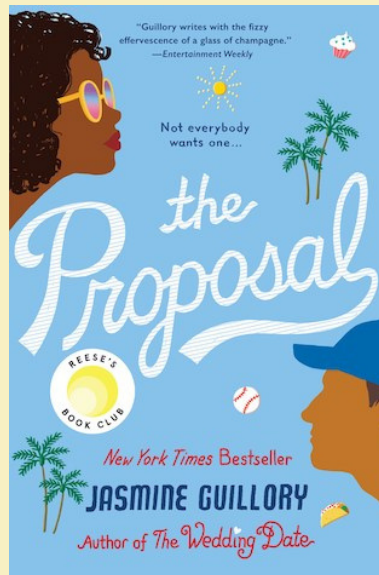
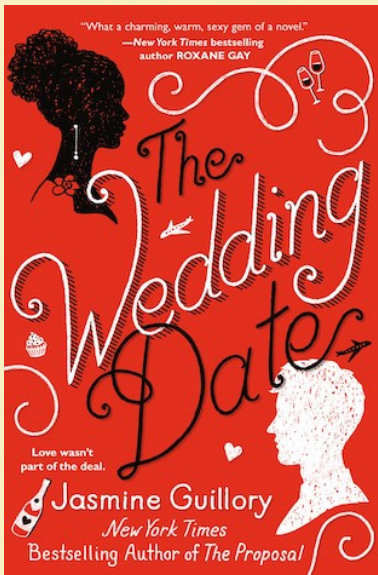
If you connected with Izzy's journey of finding her path, you'll enjoy this romance. Eve is searching for a way to show that she isn't the mess her family thinks she is. On her way to proving this, she accidentally hits Jacob with her car and steps in as the chef of his bed and breakfast while he heals. Along the way, Eve learns that finding the right path is all about finding the one that's right for her.

Honey Girl by Morgan Rogers

After graduating with her PhD in astronomy, 28-year-old Grace Porter is burnt out and uncertain of where life is taking her next. Between juggling her parents' expectations and her own desires, she needs to blow off some steam and hits Vegas with some friends. When the night ends with a surprise wedding, Grace decides to follow her new wife to New York City.




MORE FROM JASMINE GUILLORY




ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jasmine Guillory is the *New York Times* bestselling author of six romance novels, including *The Wedding Date*, *The Proposal*, and *While We Were Dating*. Her work has appeared in *Cosmopolitan*, *Bon Appétit*, *Time*, and *O, The Oprah Magazine*. She lives in Oakland, California.



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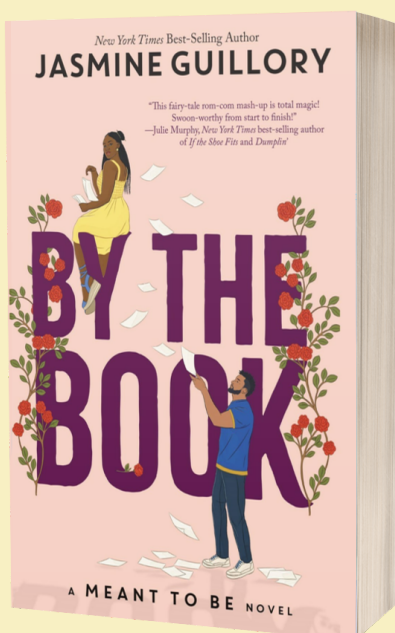
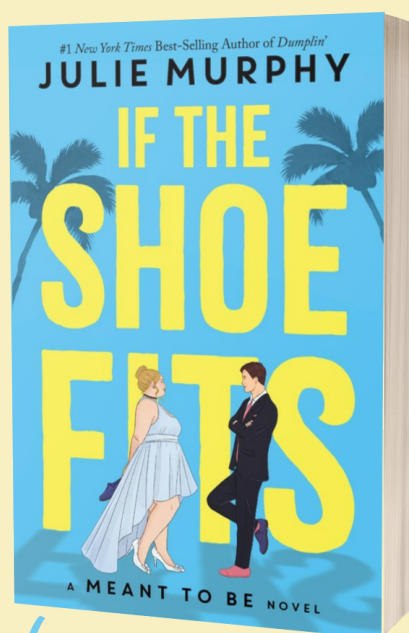
www.jasmineguillory.com



NEXT IN THE MEANT TO BE COLLECTION

Look for the next book in the Meant to Be collection from
Hyperion Avenue:

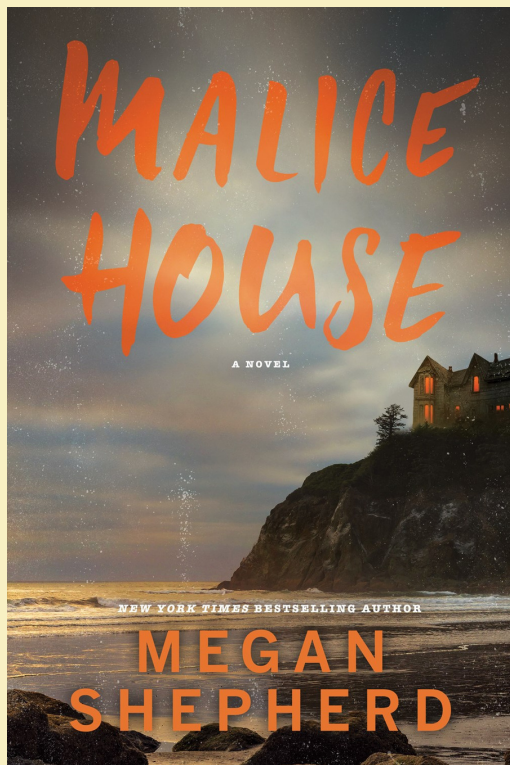
Kiss the Girl by Zoraida Córdova, a modern tale of unexpectedly
falling in love and finding your voice, coming in Summer 2023!



GET THE
BOOK CLUB
KIT!



MORE FROM HYPERION AVENUE



New York Times bestselling author Megan Shepherd (*The Madman's Daughter*) weaves a complex tale of dark magic and family secrets when a woman attempts to settle the estate of her father, an acclaimed horror novelist. Perfect fans of *Lovecraft Country*, Leigh Bardugo's *Ninth House*, and *The Babadook*.

Of all the things aspiring artist Haven Marbury expected to find while clearing out her late father's remote seaside house, *Bedtime Stories for Monsters* was not it. This secret handwritten manuscript is disturbingly different from his Pulitzer-winning works: its interweaving short stories crawl with horrific monsters and enigmatic humans that exist somewhere between this world and the next. The stories unsettle but also entice Haven, practically compelling her to illustrate them while she stays in the house that her father warned her was haunted—clearly just dementia whispering in his ear.

Reeling from a failed marriage, Haven hopes an illustrated *Bedtime Stories* can be the lucrative posthumous father-daughter collaboration she desperately needs to jump-start her art career. However, everyone in the nearby vacation town wants a piece of the manuscript: her father's obsessive literary salon members, the Ink Drinkers; her mysterious yet charming neighbor, who has a tendency toward 3:00 a.m. bonfires; a young barista with a literary forgery business; and of course, whoever keeps trying to break into her house. But when a monstrous creature appears under Haven's bed right as grisly deaths are reported in the nearby woods, it's clear she is about to uncover dark, otherworldly family secrets—and completely rewrite everything she ever knew about herself.

On Shelves: October 4

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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For more book club kits, visit:

netgalley.com/pub/wearebookish

