

*Whatever
happened to
Some good ol'
Love?*



NEHA SETIA

Whatever happened to
some good ol' love?

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By

Neha Setia

Disclaimer

I'm not a decent writer. Chances are, that you'll find typos, unstructured sentences and other stuff which may make Grammar Nazis commit suicide. Please excuse me this one time - I promise I'll do better next time.

About The Author




Neha Setia is a day dreamer who is currently working with the startup **Inshorts**, as their UR Manager. Residing in Delhi and a graduate in Chemistry from Delhi University, she has begun her writing venture with **Whatever happened to some good ol' love**, a novel about a girl who's finally found the love of her life, only to lose him because of a drunken mistake.

One can usually spot her trying hard not to suck at video games, worshipping Eminem or watching 'cult' movies.

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About The Book



Whatever happened to some good ol' love is about a teenage girl Sana Chopra, who has just passed out of school and broken out of a relationship. What follows is a tale of friend-zoning, dating best friend's friend, cheating, running into trouble with cops and finally, passing out drunk. Amidst all these 'new-generation' complications, one really wonders - **Whatever happened to some good ol' love?**



Dedication



To My Brother Jatin

Acknowledgment



I know you probably want to get to the ‘good stuff’, but since you’ve landed on this page- mind if I appreciate some really awesome people in my life? Not to mention, some of them will only buy the book to see their name in print.

First and foremost, I’d like to thank Bhavika Bhuwalka, who squashed some really major errors in the book, with her sword of awesomeness. This book would have never been published, had she declined my offer (read: I put a knife to her throat) to proofread my ‘masterpiece’. I’d also like to thank (wow, this feels like an Oscar speech...) Rohan Sharma, Chitrarth Srivastava, Parul Chanana, Gaurav Arora, Sunny Setia, Ashish Dua, Mayank Nagar, Sneh Kakar and Shreya Bhartia for inspiring some major characters in the novel. Had it not been for you guys, I would have never been able to write such ‘life-like’ instances. I owe you guys a big one.

Of course, a huge thanks to the pillars of my strength, my parents (Pankaj Setia and Kamal Setia. Of course they want to see their name in print too. They’re grown up, but not THAT grown up). Thank you, not just for constantly encouraging me, but for tolerating me when I threw some of my worst tantrums. My relatives, especially my uncle Vinay Sethi, one of the first readers of the draft, who provided me with brutally honest feedback. I’d also like to mention my aunt Sunita Kapoor, who is one of the strongest women I’ve ever met, and like a second mother to me.

My sister Saumya Setia, and my brother Jatin Setia, I don't know what I'm thanking you for, but whatever. A huge shoutout to my Inshorts family, who make working fun. My idea of escape revolves around my office, and that itself should give you an idea of how much I love my work and my colleagues. A special thanks to Jamal, who constantly guided me. I'm really one of the few lucky ones who's got the coolest bosses ever (this one's for you- Azhar, Anunay and Deepit!).

My daadu and daadi- Chaman Lal Setia and Shanti Devi Setia- I miss you guys. Thank you for making me who I am. My naanu and naani- Raghu Nath Sethi and Kiran Sethi- you guys are an inspiration. I can always count you, this I know.

My aunts Kavita Sethi and Gauri Sethi, the two very rocking ladies! My loving cousins: Deeksha(who literally sat next to me, making sure I write her name), Ronit, Namrata, Gaurav, Karan, Rahul, Varun and Jasika.

I'm sorry I can't take names of all the people who have touched my life in some way or the other, and hence inspired some instances in the book. To all my relatives and friends I didn't mention above- thank you for all your support and constant encouragement.

Thank you. All you guys are the reason I'm sane today (at least according to my definition of 'sane'). I really love you all and can't imagine my life without you. Thank you for making this book possible.



Prologue



Not every marriage is made in heaven, but mine certainly was.

He's every girl's dream come true. He's romantic, intelligent, sophisticated, and can charm the pants off any woman with his sense of humor. He never forgets to pull out a chair for me—turning eyes everywhere we go with his chivalry. Sounds too good to be true? It is.

I am neck-deep in love. As I look at his picture-perfect body lying next to mine, I catch myself asking the same question I ponder over a million times a day: What on Earth did I do to deserve this man? I am living in a fairytale with my tailor-made prince charming.

I bend over and cover myself with a bed sheet as I give him a light kiss on the forehead. I don't want to wake him up. He's had a pretty tiring night. With me.

I get up and start getting dressed for the day. Suddenly, I feel a familiar pair of arms creeping around my waist. He turns me around to face him and pulls up my chin. I am too shy to look him in the eye, not to mention, afraid of turning into putty under his scorching gaze. He brings his lips and locks them with mine. Everything else can wait.

“You look beautiful, love,” he says.

It's so easy to believe him. That's the thing about him; he holds the ability to turn the most mundane of sights into things of beauty. I blush. It's been years and his voice still sends tingles down my spine. He's got the voice of a man; deep and mysterious, yet warm and soft. With him holding me so tightly, I feel secure, and

everything seems true, real, pristine. They say perfection is unattainable. I beg to differ as I look at this Greek god of a person.

“I love you,” he says.

“Then don’t go,” I hit him in the chest and he kisses me hard in return.

As always, butterflies flutter in my stomach. I now know love like never before. Every day, since the day I got married, I’ve lived with love. My husband is the closest personification of the most divine sentiment the world alludes to.

Fifty minutes later, our small family sits around the dining table to have breakfast. This is my favorite part of Sundays. My in-laws aren’t the kinds you see in daily soaps. They’re warm and kind-hearted people who treat me like their own daughter. To me, they are like my parents. Maybe more. Definitely more.

“All right. I’ve got to leave. I’m getting late,” he says hastily.

“Wait, I’ll get your wallet,” I shoot back, running through the house.

In another five minutes, he pecks me on my cheek, bids me goodbye, and leaves. It’s heart-wrecking to see him go, to see him one last time before he disappears for four entire months. And owing to the nature of his job, one can never be too sure. I won’t be surprised if he shows up straight after a year. That’d suck.

I turn away and sigh, only to once again find those familiar pair of arms around my waist, his broad shoulders completely engulfing me. He knows I love this. He whispers an “I love you” in my ear and when I turn to reciprocate, he’s gone for good.

How did I even get here? It only seems like yesterday when I saw him for the first time, when my heart first skipped a beat, when I first took his hands into

mine. It only seems like yesterday when he first spoke those three magical words. Time sure does fly.

I have nothing to do all day. Our domestic help takes care of all the chores. I sit on the couch in my room and stare at the solitaire on my left hand. It reflects the sparkle in my eyes. My mother-in-law knocks at the door. She looks a little tired.

“Haanji, mummy?”

“Are you OK, beta?”

“Yes, why?”

“Well, he’s gone,” she says, seeming unsure of how to continue. “We’re used to this. The reality of him leaving might not be very striking right now, but it gets painful with time.”

“Ma,” I say in an explanatory tone, “maybe his absence feels more real to you, but trust me, I have come to value his presence all the same. All these past years, I was with him too. We weren’t living together, but I was there. I know how it feels. In fact, it’s only gotten better with time, I think. I’m getting used to the fact that he might not be around all the time. Sure, it makes me feel bad, but what choice do I have? You’ve got to lose some to gain some.”

She looks at me with sympathetic eyes as I blink back tears and force a smile. Love is beautiful, but it can be a pain in the ass. I watch her leave, her demeanor looking fragile from a distance, and it reminds me of the time I first saw her, when she was younger and I was young. She looks back at me and her lips curve into an all-knowing smile. I slowly blink my eyes to tell her I’m OK. Or that I will be.

Back in the solitude of my room, I look at our picture together. “I love you too,” I say, and tears finally come streaming down.

"No Sana," my father said, "you're going to ANDC for graduation, and that's final."

And that's how he set me up with the second love of my life...

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Whatever happened to some good ol' love. Also, she has dramatically vowed to never stop writing clichéd love stories. One can usually spot her trying hard not to suck at video games, worshipping Eminem or watching 'cult' movies.

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