



Cutting The Ties

Francine Pascal

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For Jessica and Elizabeth, the sweet life begins at 30...

Three years after the events of Sweet Valley Confidential, Elizabeth and Jessica Wakefield are back in Sweet Valley and inseparable once more. But Jessica, still paying for her mistakes with Todd, finds herself at a crossroads in a new relationship. Meanwhile, reality TV star Lila Fowler is facing a life-altering choice. And as Elizabeth fears Bruce is slipping away, she makes a bold decision to act that could change the course of their lives. The Sweet Life: Cutting the Ties will delight, excite and leave readers hungry for the serial's explosive final installment.

Cutting The Ties Details

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From Reader Review Cutting The Ties for online ebook

Maile says

As always, ending on a cliffhanger. Just like I was 12.

Melinda Elizabeth says

After all that wet, steamy sex in 'Secrets and Seductions', Pascall takes it down a notch with 'Cutting the Ties', as we get back to the business of clearing Bruce Patman's name. However Bruce isn't helping himself as he hides out in France with Easy Annie (why is she so irresistible?) and the crew back in Sweet Valley is starting to really put in the hard yards with the investigation. Robin Platt is starting to raise suspicions, and the Wakefield's brother in law gets a chance to act as a PI, where he tries to uncover who exactly this Robin chick is.

Jessica's made some pretty powerful enemies at her PR firm, and she's leaning on Liam for attention when everyone else seems to want to avoid her. My thoughts are that psycho Liam is putting the heavy on these other men to stay away, and I'm hoping my suspicions are confirmed in a dramatic climax in the last book.

Fran says

This part, and the preceding part, kind of merged into one for me as I read them so close together. They're a bit filler/padding-ish, just drawing out to the (mostly) predictable endings.

A few daft 'twists' are thrown in that stretch the believability rather too thin; other things are dragged out. Standard soap stuff.

Everyone in Sweet Valley needs to be in counselling, because no one can communicate properly or express their feelings in a normal, healthy fashion. Sweet Valley also seems to suffer from an epidemic of gullibility.

Kelsey says

Cleary there is a bit of Gossip Girl copying going on in this series. Carolin Pearce knows everything and sends out blasts that apparantly everyone gets even though the twins aren't celebrities.

The story continues and while I finished this book and already picked up the last, I'm getting ready for it all to be solved and Jessica to end up back with Todd and Elizabeth with Bruce and find out how Robin Platt is not who she says. I just hope the story doesn't make her "secret" that she was a drunk or addict and that's why she did it, but it looks like things are headed that way.

I do appreciate the pop culture references in this book that are getting more high brow, like fracking. Who knew I'd read about fracking in a Sweet Valley book?

Cheryl says

Jessica has decided to play the field now that she and Todd are officially spilt. Jessica decides to go out with her boss, Michael.

Elizabeth has finally discovered that Robin has been playing her for a fool. Elizabeth knows what she must do in order to when Bruce back. She must find out the truth once and for all. Even if it means losing her job as a reporter at the Tribune. Elizabeth learns that Robin grew up in Kentucky. Elizabeth heads to Kentucky as she knows this is where she needs to start at the beginning. Will Elizabeth help Bruce in time or will it be too late?

As this mini series is winding down, it is getting more interesting and picking up speed. Elizabeth's skill as a reporter shows some in this book. I actually felt bad for Jessica. She kept getting knocked down. However in Jessica fashion, she does not stay down for too long. Not so much feeling the budding romance between Bruce and his attorney. If Bruce really cared for Elizabeth, he would hold out for a while longer. I can not wait to finally get the big reveal with the truth.

Rouselle says

Book is, again, too damn short. I think I finished it in just an hour or so. Super sleuth Elizabeth is still useless here, Jessica finally realized that pretending to like a sexy movie star is just not gonna cut it, Lila Fowler is super sorry she ever cried wolf hundreds of times in the past and Aaron Dallas finally uncovers the true identity of Bruce Patman's alleged victim. Only one book left and I'm already missing these intriguing people.

Virginia Mae says

Francine Pascal must really love the first name Robin. I miss Robin Wilson.

Elizabeth is finally catching onto clues every reader has doubtless been shouting at her since the first installment of the series. Sigh.

Liam is totally going to turn mega-crazed stalker a la Lifetime Movie any minute now and I can't wait.

Not enough Lila in this one - I want to know what's going on with her. And I want her to get a real man instead of boring old Ken Matthews.

I feel bad for Annie Whitman.

Aaron is kind of awesome.

Samantha March says

I am nearly done with The Sweet Life eSeries from Francine Pascal, and just finished the fifth installment. Cutting Ties brings the drama to more of an edge, almost letting readers get the true story on Robin Platt and her accusations against Bruce Patman. The cliffhanger made me very anxious to get the final puzzle piece. I'm still hoping Jessica and Todd can make it work, though I'm really unsure Elizabeth and Bruce will get another shot at love, with the Annie obstacle now. And Lila wasn't brought up a whole lot in this book, but I'm curious where she will finish out the series with her drama. The one part I really disliked and stood out to me was when the POV turned to Jake – Jessica and Todd's son. I thought that was really unnecessary, and going from always being in the adult's minds to suddenly a toddler's was confusing – and abrupt. But if you loved the Wakefield twins and the rest of the Sweet Valley, you'll want to read this eSeries!

Victoria says

Oh, my - this fifth e-serial certainly is a fast read! There's plenty of excitement and drama for each character! Caroline Pearce is as awful as ever - and Jessica is embroiled in even more relationship drama. She also seems to be a victim in the schemes of more than her evil assistant/new boss at work, but another, more personal campaign may also be working against her... The plot against Bruce begins to unravel - but will it still be too late for Elizabeth and Bruce? Lila continues to lose sympathy and Aaron Dallas hones his investigative skills while Elizabeth acts a bit snotty in Kentucky (yes, there is Internet even in states like Kentucky!).

And poor Mike McAllery loses his first husband status again - Todd is actually Jessica's third husband, not her second... And I have to admit, with all the real celebrity name dropping, it makes me miss the old fake celebrities - like Johnny Buck - where is the ten years later for his stellar career?

Haha, but, either way - I can't believe that this e-serial is drawing to a close! I do hope that they decide to continue on with the series - if they stretched out the 2nd grade, 6th grade, high school and university books for so long, they can surely extend this new Sweet Life!

Paula Phillips says

So it's back to Sweet Valley High and in Cutting the Ties , we read as Bruce and Annie are getting it on in France or are they ? If Caroline Pearce's blog is anything to go by , it seems lawyer Annie known as "Easy Annie" back when they were all in High School is a Sex Addict. Elizabeth has quit the paper and has decided to work her own angles about whether or not Bruce is guilty and has asked Aaron to go undercover into Warner's firm to see if he had anything to do with the rape allegations. While doing this though, she hasn't contacted Bruce , will this play badly on their relationship ? Jessica and Todd seem to have a Love/Hate relationship going on and with the Divorce all up in the air - Jessica has seemed to moved onto Liam but is she ready to settle down or will we see Jessica go back to her High School Antics ? Our dear Lila is really pregnant now , will she tell Ken the truth and will they play a happy family or will Lila go for an abortion ? Does Todd love his family enough to find out the truth about Sarah or will she have Todd in the palm of her hands and have the power to crush Jessica Wakefield out of his life for good ?

Cutting The Ties unlike the other books didn't really have a main focus but seemed to act like a continuation

of Book #4 and I found this one shorter than the others.

However as I get ready to turn into Book #6 , I feel sad as I will no longer for now be reading about the Sweet Valley Characters unless Francine Pascal decides to write more

Sara says

I can't believe that after this, there's only ONE installment left in this wonderful series. What will I do without a new Sweet Valley novella to look forward to every Sunday?!?

In France, Bruce is busy trying to hide from his problems - which, if no one's learned from any of the hundreds of previous Sweet Valley books, never works well. Then again, considering all the consistency errors riddling the entire series, previous books don't always count for much in the world of Sweet Valley. Anyway, Bruce is trying to hide and Annie Whitman's there with him, serving as his lawyer but getting totally sucked into how romantic the South of France is, etc.

Back in Sweet Valley, Liz is worried that perhaps she should have believed in Bruce's innocence from the beginning (duh). She interviews the alleged victim once more, demanding personal details about her life, which the girl readily provides. Then Liz heads off on a fact-finding mission to the girl's hometown in Kentucky, looking for any sort of proof that the girl is lying. I just love how *deep* Liz's meddling goes and how little loyalty she has to her boyfriend. It's both obnoxious yet totally awesome because that's just who she is.

Speaking of obnoxious, resident gossip Caroline Pearce is keeping tabs on everyone's life, including getting photos from Bruce and Annie's supposedly romantic time in France together, posting all updates and photos to her blog, pearingbitches.com (awesome!).

Jessica's back at work, where a smear campaign is running against her. She knows who's behind it but doesn't have proof and doesn't have enough energy to fight against it. Her personal life has become a mess too, as she tries to get over Todd by not just dating a movie star but also her boss and another guy she knows from work. Gotta love it! It's just so typical - not the moping part, but the dating-a-ton part. Todd was barely in here, only thrown in on one or two scenes, and then just to fight with Jessica. Come on! Where's the drama in Todd's life?!? Especially after the salacious details about Todd that came at the end of the last installment. I need more!

Lila barely got any page time in this book. She's struggling with her new pregnancy she's keeping from Ken, who's now filed for divorce and dating one of Lila's reality show costars. I really liked the interaction between Jessica and Lila in here, but there was too little of that. Then again, there's too little of almost everything in this series - each novella is just too short!!

There are really only three problems I had with this novella:

1. It's too short. WAY too short... like the rest of this series.
2. So much history from SVH or SVU or other Sweet Valley series seems to be completely ignored (granted, some of those series were contradictory in themselves, but still). For example, this book says that Reagan (introduced in *Sweet Valley Confidential*) was Jessica's first husband, but that's not accurate if prior books are to be believed.

3. There were no major revelations or bombshells in this installment. It was entertaining, but it was mainly filler material, leading up to what will hopefully be a fantastic final installment next Sunday.

kylajaclyn says

Welcome to "Shark in the Water" or The Sweet Life #5: Cutting the Ties.

The editor needs a strong tongue lashing for this one. I did not shell out two bucks for constant missing commas and grammatical errors. Yeesh.

Did you guys see this week's issue of Entertainment Weekly (James Bond)?? The Sweet Life is number 3 on the Must List!!

Anyway, I can't believe we only have one more e-serial next week! I have to warn ahead of time for those awaiting my review that I am moving to a new city for college next weekend, and I have an interview for a job on Sunday. I might not get around to reading it until Monday or Tuesday. This sucks for me too, because, believe me, I'm dying to know how it's going to end. I hope it won't get spoiled... I'm usually able to avoid that kind of stuff. But be patient next week, and I promise I will get around to reading and reviewing #6.

Last book's sexcapades left us with only one pressing question: Will Annie and Bruce sleep together?? No, my friends, they do not. This is due to Annie's extraordinary willpower (not possessed by the Wakefield twins). I'm assuming it's Annie and Bruce on the cover? I don't know who else it would be. Why do all the women do the same poses on the cover of The Sweet Life? It's always a side-cheek or a nose-in-the-air. Anyway, Annie eschews Bruce with a firm hand (ha! ... maybe a little limper now) because she really has changed and she knows Bruce has too. They've still kissed, and I still feel Liz won't forgive that so easily because she is a judgmental cunt, but I am very glad they don't sleep together. Hurrah! Somebody in Sweet Valley has changed!! I still don't believe Jessica has. Even if she only wants Todd, her problems STILL always involve a man. So no help to the feminist movement will come from Jessica Wakefield. ANYWAY... Annie should be coming home, especially since she ISN'T sleeping with Bruce. She knows there is nothing left to do for the case in Cannes. Somehow she just cannot bring herself to go. Bruce flies into another rage for not getting laid, and then another one later on for being followed by paparazzo. Annie calls Bruce's psychiatrist to try and get some answers on whether he may have bipolar and to ask the woman if she can testify on Bruce's behalf. The lady says she is pretty certain Bruce doesn't have it, but she can't say 100%. Annie thanks her and hangs up... and still refuses to fly back to Sweet Valley.

It would make more sense to jump to Liz & Caroline now, but I am going to go ahead and recap Jess & Lila first. This is my review, after all.

So there is literally one chapter on poor Lila. If Francine would give Lila her heart back, she really would be poor Lila again, like in Don't Go Home With John. Instead, she's Fowler McBarfsALot. She has terrible morning sickness, though it would seem more like the plague since she barfs about fifty times in that one chapter. Jessica has come over to console her, but Lila is in the middle of a shit storm. She refuses to tell Ken (I just wrote Bruce! They are meant to be together, dammit!) that she really IS pregnant now, since she knows he'll never believe her after she just lied about it. This makes Jessica Wakefield and Enid Rollins (irony!) the only ones who know that Lila really is pregnant this time. In the bathroom, Jess & Lila commiserate that they are both almost divorcees. "This would have never happened in high school," Jessica says. Well, that's only because you, Jessica, were a sociopath and Lila was your (fortunately) slightly more

empathetic enabler. It is also mentioned that Regan was Jessica's FIRST husband. AHEM. NO, Jessica. Todd is your THIRD husband. You are the kind of woman (and so is Lila) that tears through guys like the tissue paper you are now tearing through to dry your tears. Seriously, though. They were both barely out of high school when they married Mike McAllery and Tisiano. I am deeply offended at this FAILED mention of those men. Anyway, as I said, Jessica's problem's have always involved men, so I really don't know what she's on about. Speaking of...

Same bat time, same bat channel. Jessica and Todd aren't speaking. Turns out Jess & Michael (her boss) didn't sleep together in the previous installment. Their dating has been going well, however, and Jessica is much more into Michael than Liam. They never make it to the sack because things head south at work. Also presumably because Jess never tells Michael she still hasn't cut Liam loose. Anyway, Emily, Jessica's scheming assistant, is the best friend's daughter of Tracy, Jess's other boss. Emily leaks things about new Maybelline products all over Facebook, and Jessica is left to look like a dumbass. She doesn't even know why she's bothered with work anymore since she's clearly about to get fired. So, Michael hates her now. Luckily Hurricane Jess met a guy at a bar named Cal and she goes on a date with him. Then HE doesn't call her back either. So she starts acting like the normal human she's never had to be and calls him first. No reply. Oh, Jess. It's called karma!! Suddenly Liam is back in town and Jessica is very glad for the attention no one else but Jake will give her. Liam wants to have sex again but Jessica refuses. Then Liam PROPOSES and Jessica feels like the walls are closing in on her. Liam demands that Jessica say she loves him, but she can't do that either. She tells him she needs him instead. Close enough. Todd calls Jessica at work to fight with her over what Liam's constant presence is doing to their son. Liam buys Jake tons of new presents all the time, but apparently Jake is scared of him. This is news to Jessica, and she's furious with Todd for trying to dictate her life once more. However, she knows she's a whipped woman now. She's tired of Cal's and Michael's cold shoulders, and she's fed up with Liam's constant shadow mixed with hers. She is going to break it off with Liam for good so that she can finally win Todd back. It took her five books to think of this, ladies and gentlemen.

Caroline Pearce is an incredibly despicable character, but her blog is called PEARCINGBITCHES.COM, which I have to give her props for, if nothing else. Now that she has destroyed Lila's life in the last installment, she thinks it's time to take down Saint Liz. She posts columns and pictures of Annie and Bruce hanging out in France looking a bit too cozy. She then heads to interview Annie's ex-husband Charlie Markus. He claims that she's a sex addict that will never change. He fully believes that Annie and Bruce are sleeping together. Caroline couldn't be more delighted with this (unsubstantiated) news from a bitter ex. She is a cold, cold person. I'm sure not even the Devil wants Caroline Pearce in Hell. So she laughs all the way back to her blog to make sure Liz is the first to receive this latest bit of dreg.

Liz Wakefield has been useless so far, what with her loyalties blowing hot and cold and her refusals to talk to Bruce. She finally decides to soldier up and head to Robin Platt's hometown of Richmond, Kentucky to get to the bottom of things. First, she confronts Robin without calling first to see if she's hiding anything. The girl acts shady as usual, and Liz STILL wonders if this trip might all turn out to be a waste of time. Fuck you, Liz. She gets names of people in Robin's hometown as well as a retelling of her childhood, which checks out with what she told Liz before. Liz is ready to be on Bruce's side as she should have from the beginning. This has to stop, Francine. Liz sucks as a person almost as much as Jessica. So she's off to Kentucky. At first she finds nothing except that Robin is telling the truth. Then she finds out two random things, though they seem to have nothing to do with Bruce's case. Apparently, Robin is a lesbian. She also never attended Mass in her hometown despite telling Liz that she was a devout Catholic. With nothing left to discover, Liz decides to head for the airport... until she spies a psychiatric center she hasn't yet checked out (or checked in to, as she clearly should be doing). She knows there is no logical reason to stop there, but she also knows she should leave no stone unturned, so Liz turns around and heads for the clinic...

Meanwhile, Aaron is still snooping around Warner Gas for Liz. Ever since the failed Rose Palley experiment, he has not been able to turn up anything else of interest. However, he has just run a report on all the female employees working for Warner at the time of the claims against Bruce. This time he comes across a Mona Thomas with no picture and locked information. He figures that he can coax a few words about Mona out of the secretary, Nola, as he has before. Basically, Mona was fired for being undependable. She embezzled money from the company (that's MORE than being undependable) to further her drug habit. Holy Shnikes. I see what's coming next... So Aaron still has no picture to prove that Mona and Robin are one in the same. He is looking at a picture of Robin on his phone before he goes over and talks to Nola about the aforementioned information. But when he bends over to pick up a pen that she has dropped, his phone falls out of his breast pocket and lands on the floor with the picture of Robin staring up at him. "Why do you have a picture of Mona Thomas on your phone?" asks Nola. BINGO!!

Until we meet again, friends. Happy Californian trails!!

Lisa Ottone says

Two questions:

Who the heck is this bronde girl on the cover? We all know Liz and Jess have hair the color of spun gold and eyes like the Pacific Ocean, not hazel. Is Jessica just caught in some poor lighting?

What's up with Annie's six-year-old son? There's earlier mentions that she has primary custody. She just ups and leaves for France on a whim and stays there for several weeks. Does she clear this with Charlie first? Does she ever call to check in on the kid? Surprisingly, she's making Jessica look like Mother of the Year. At least Jessica leaves Jake under the care of a nanny and makes a genuine effort to spend time with him.

THESE THINGS MAKE NO SENSE

Andrea says

The sexist misogyny tho!

I mean, yeah, it's like a train wreck and I can't look away.

But I swear if I read another "Easy Annie" I may throw my Kindle.

Maria says

Wtf, there's a whole lot of nothing about nothing, Annie going on and on about her feelings for Bruce and if she should or shouldn't, Elizabeth being all sorry and miserable and trying to convince herself that she believes Bruce but still having doubts and going back and forth. Basically, she's just dragging it on and on. Tedious...until 2 pages before the end when there is this big breakthrough. I'm really mad right now and this sucks, I feel like I lost some brain cells having read this. Thank goodness there's just one more.

