



My Ridiculous, Romantic Obsessions

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Sarah Howard's first year at the university is everything and nothing she expected especially when a very cute boy named Ben in her Art History class starts to show interest in her.

Sarah feels like she's an average, normal, everyday girl. So, when Ben (to whom she secretly refers as Adonis because she thinks he could be a Greek god) begins to take interest in her, Sarah is in denial. For one thing, last year she was deeply crushed and humiliated by Jesse James a guy who she thought liked her.

She's determined not to get burned again. But in her heart of hearts, what she really wants is a Jane Austen kind of romance. Ridiculous, right? That kind of romance doesn't exist anymore . . . or does it? Sarah is smart and fun to be around and even pretty, despite her Medusa-like red curls. She even plays the guitar. (So does Ben!) Yes, Sarah is everything Ben has wanted. He's crazy for her, but Sarah is just not getting it. She's playing hard to get, and if she's not careful, she's going to lose a real hot gentleman -- her 21st-century Mr. Darcy.

My Ridiculous, Romantic Obsessions Details

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Ana says

Lucu yet romantic <3
revew to come

Dulu saya pernah mencoba baca roman harlequin. Cuma karena penasaran aja. Tapi akhirnya saya menyerah, karena, yah, saya tak bisa berharap banyak dari cerita indah di novel tersebut. Karena hidup kenyataannya ngga semulus perjalanan cinta sang Dukes dengan kuda putihnya menjemput sang putri berbaju lebar dan berlapis-lapis itu.

Sepertinya, Sarah akan setuju dengan saya. Dari judulnya aja, My Ridiculous Romantic Obsession, bisa ditebak bahwa tokoh utama kita ini punya obsesi yang cukup weird dalam urusan percintaan. Lantaran kebanyakan baca novel roman (yah, macam novel-novel yang di covernya menampilkan laki-laki shirtless dengan dada bidang dan perut kotak-kotak yang seakan mengundang untuk dielus *ups*), Sarah ini jadi suka berpikiran yang "engga-engga" tentang do and don'ts di dunia percintaan. Buku roman baginya udah seperti Buku Pedoman Pembelajaran Percintaan deh. Bahkan dia mampu menciptakan skenario lengkap di kepalanya; sosok si ini pantasnya jadi pemeran utama sedangkan yang itu cuma pantas jadi sahabat si tokoh wanita yang agak bodoh dan ceria.

Ngga bisa engga, saya ketawa lepas setiap kali Sarah melakukan hal konyol tersebut. Hanya karena rambutnya keriting dan agak susah diatur, membuatnya menganggap bahwa dirinya sendiri ngga pantas untuk jadi pemeran utama di "novel" yang ada di kepalanya itu. Dia membayangkan si pemeran utama wanita haruslah seorang perempuan yang berambut halus dan lurus sempurna, bertingkah laku anggun dan bersuara mendesah-desah.

Sampai suatu ketika ia dekat dengan Ben, cowok yang hanya dengan sekali bertemu saja sudah membuatnya tergila-gila. Sayangnya, karena obsesinya terhadap "segala sesuatu itu harus mirip dengan novel roman yang ia baca", Sarah malah justru menyalahartikan perhatian yang diberikan oleh Ben. Dari sini, alur cerita akan berkelok naik turun dan kiri kanan sampai membawa ke garis finish yang melegakan.

Saya suka dengan karakter Sarah. Meskipun otaknya mungkin udah keracunan novel harlequin, tapi pada dasarnya dia baik dan saya bisa relate dengan si tokoh rendah diri ini. Selain itu, karakter Sarah terlihat sangat manusiawi dan ngga dibuat-buat. Saya yakin banyak kok remaja cewek macam Sarah yang ngga pede dengan wajahnya, dengan rambutnya, dengan caranya bersosialisasi. Hal inilah yang membuat karakter Sarah ini membumi, jadi ngga susah untuk menempatkan diri di posisinya.

Menurut saya, karakter Ben agak-agak too good to be true ya. Meskipun nanti di tengah-tengah cerita, kita akan mengetahui kekurangan si cowok ini, namun ngga mengurangi kesan bahwa dia diciptakan untuk membuat kisah "si pangeran yang jatuh cinta pada seorang gadis biasa". Agak double standard sebenarnya, di satu sisi saya menangkap bahwa novel ini bermaksud "menyindir" novel-novel bersampul dada lelaki di luar sana, namun di sisi lain saya mendapati bahwa ternyata ceritanya ngga jauh-jauh dari "menjual mimpi seorang gadis biasa". Ini bukan protes lho, karena toh saya menikmatinya!

Pesan yang saya tangkap dari novel ini adalah, bahwa sebagai remaja yang sedang dalam fase "mencari jati diri", ketidakpercayadirian itu mudah sekali datang. Apalagi kalau dia tidak memiliki komunitas sosial yang mendukungnya secara mental. Oleh karena itu melalui Sarah dan Ben, pesan bahwa menjadi diri sendiri tanpa harus merasa minder itu disampaikan dengan cukup baik dan lucu!

Untuk terjemahannya, saya berikan jempol! Bagus dan mengalir, meskipun ada beberapa typo tapi ngga mengganggu! Novel ini saya rekomendasikan bagi kamu yang suka baca novel bersampul dada telanjang cowok-cowok sekaligus yang suka baca teenlit romantis nan jenaka. Selamat membaca :):)

Cover: Saya suka cover Indonesia, sayangnya kok rambutnya jadi kelihatan tipis ya?? heheh... tetep suka <3

Darla says

(Genre:LDS YA fiction/romance) This story focuses on a college freshman who suffers from a low self esteem and just cannot see herself as the romantic heroine in her own love story (she's read a lot of books and she thinks that she just doesn't fit the mold). So when a really cute boy starts showing an interest in her, she is expecting the relationship to end before it even gets started. Her low self esteem can be traced to a boy in high school who led her on and then "dropped" her in a very public and humiliating manner. I think it also stems from her dysfunctional parents who don't seem to enjoy or want to spend time with her, as well. Who could feel good about themselves with familial support (or the lack thereof) like that? No wonder she has a complex. I almost gave it 2 stars because it hit upon a pet peeve I have about drug abuse. In one scene the girl is chugging down over the counter medicine (without measuring) directly from the bottle and she drinks most of it. What is that about?! I can't believe that the author included that. Maybe a few teens are stupid enough to do that, but this girl has a high IQ. Let's give her a little credit. Other than that, though, it was entertaining and a very quick read with some positive messages at the end (except for the part about downing the over-the-counter medicines without thought or care...can you tell that I am a bit obsessive about that? :)).

Lisa says

I liked this one so much more than *Check Me Out*. I loved Ben. Sarah could be ridiculous at times (makes sense, per the title), but she grew on me. I wish she would have reacted differently when Ben told her about his problem, but other than that this was a cute, fun read.

Cyndie says

I took this on my cruise for a little "brain candy" reading. What a delightful read. It was a bit like talking with your best friend. As I read passages that made me laugh to my husband, he said that he thought I was enjoying it because the author writes like I talk. Probably correct, he's known me for over 30 years now!

Sarah is a brand new college freshman who has never felt like she fit the descriptions of the romance novel heroines. She likes to characterize everyone she encounters as to how they would fit into one of the novels as

in, "not handsome enough to be the hero, but perhaps the preacher's assistant". She has chosen her college, and her major, based on the description [and covert cell photo:] of the Art History professor's T.A. In her classes, she meets Ben - or as she refers to him, Adonis. As Ben/Adonis continues to pay more and more attention to her she just knows that soon he will come to his senses and realize that she is not good enough for him - so she will enjoy it while it lasts!

Yes, there are some predictable plot lines, but I enjoyed Sarah's descriptions and the author's writing style. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend this book. It is appropriate for all readers, and speaks to any woman/girl who has never felt like she was 'good enough'.

Graham Bradley says

Let me open this review with a big, fat, huge, 'IN MY DEFENSE' pre-qualifying statement, since I am a MAN and apparently this isn't the type of book I should be reading. (According to one of the nannies who complained about my review of another YA chicklit).

The bookstore where I work has an employee-reading-incentive program, where if you read a handful of books off of the approved list, you get perks. I like perks. Perks are like mass, acceleration and gravity in the sense that they make the world go round.

So anyway, I don't like to just camp in one genre, so I pick from a few different ones (the point of the program is for the employees to know a little about every genre). Last year I read Wilhite's "Bright Blue Miracle" and although the story didn't resonate with me, she's a talented writer and has a good voice.

I walked into this book expecting not to like it, because let's be honest, romance novels are to women what action flicks are to guys: they appeal to a basic biological need that is often devoid of reason and long on contrivances. Let's not focus too much on story, character depth or motive. I just wanna see stuff get blown up. Girls just wanna get swept off their feet by Fabio.

Well, the back cover says "This is not your typical romance novel", and that feels about right. It's about a girl who beats up on herself psychologically and emotionally (we all know one) because she got embarrassed by a major A-hole guy in high school (we all know that one too). So when a genuine nice guy takes an interest in her in college, naturally she's uber-suspicious and reluctant to assume he might actually like her.

The climax and ending of the book were really well-done, very thorough. Basically this novel does a great service to nice guys who often get shafted by girls who refuse to accept polite and tactful advances for what they are: tasteful demonstrations of affection. Not very often in literature do the guys' feelings get considered--it's only the women who can get hurt.

In the end, Sarah (the main character) learns a valuable lesson about how to read a guy, and makes amends with the dude who's been falling all over her since chapter one. Sarah was a convincingly real character without being overbearing, and Ben (main dude) had a lot of admirable traits while still having a major flaw. He wasn't an impossibly ideal male protagonist, a Darcy or Cullen by any stretch.

So in the end, yeah, I liked it, and I'd recommend it to people looking for a good, clean, uplifting romance. At 180 pages, it's pretty short too.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go read The Running Man. :-)

Sandy says

3.5 stars

I was hooked from the opening scene and finished this book during one delightful plane ride to Hawaii. The book opens with Sarah's parents dropping her off at college, and it seems they can't drive away fast enough. Turns out, they're leaving for a cruise.

Let me share: I am the youngest of four children, and by the time I was a teenager, my parents had checked out of the whole parenting thing. Lucky for them I liked school and didn't have a wild streak because I had almost no supervision. The day I left for college, my dad looked up from his breakfast and morning paper, and we had the following exchange:

Dad: "You're up early. Going somewhere?"

Me: "I'm leaving today."

Dad: "Oh, where are you going?"

Me: "TO COLLEGE."

Dad: "Well, drive safely."

Dad proceeds to return to his newspaper and breakfast.

(Side note: My parents' indifference ended up working to my advantage, though, because a boy I had a bit of a crush on from a new admit weekend saw me moving in alone and carried all of my boxes. Then he invited me to a party. So there, Dad.)

Let's compare this to my oldest brother's experience. Our entire family had to come along for the 3.5 hour drive, tour his dorm, and walk around campus listening to my parents relive their college highlights.

(Ooooooh...it's the engineering building they built my senior year and so on.) Needless to say, I am not one of those spoiled youngest who always had everyone do everything for them. No, I am the other breed, the polar opposite--the ones whose parents moved on to the whole empty nest thing a few years too early and left the littlest chick to fly on her own. I'm not bitter--I swear.

(/Therapeutic ranting)

So you can see why Sarah's parents had me laughing from the first few pages. I can so relate.

My Ridiculous, Romantic Obsessions blends humor, wit, and charm into a sweet, predictable love story. Major props for the college setting, something seen too rarely in YA lit.

My only critique is that Sarah is a bit too...judgey. When she finds out a certain flaw about a certain character, she makes a judgment about him that had me fuming. I was certain Sarah's critical, condescending attitude regarding another character was a set-up for her to learn the error of her ways and be more accepting...but it wasn't. Sarah stayed critical and judgey of this character until the end, which was disappointing and a missed opportunity for a deeper message to the book.

Overall, however, this was a light, fun read where I lost track of time as the pages melted away. Sarah is not my favorite protagonist, but humorous inner exchanges and setting brought a smile to my face.

Jill Williamson says

Review by Gretchen Hoffman

Would you guess from the title that this book is about romance? Yes? Then you'd be correct! Sarah is a typical girl, not a blonde bombshell or a supermodel, just an average college freshman. When she meets gorgeous, Greek god-like Ben, she wonders why someone like him would fall for someone like her. Does he really like her or does he just want help for their art history class? After being dissed like that by a guy before, Sarah has determined never to let that happen again. So is this thing with Ben for real or is it just another ridiculous, romantic obsession?

I could relate to Sarah. I've definitely had a few ridiculous, romantic obsessions of my own. (Is that guy looking at me? He is! He must like me too! Oh, wait, I've got food stuck in my teeth. That's all.) The cool thing is that both Sarah and Ben have real flaws and issues, which make them all the more lifelike. Sarah's best friend, roommates, and co-workers are fun and quirky, great secondary characters. Some parts in the middle were a little slow, but the events at the end were hilarious. Reading this was fun and light-hearted. If you enjoy romance, check this book out!

Brooke says

Wow. All I can say is that I adored this book. Thank you, Becca Wilhite.

What starts out as a lighthearted, giggle inducing read turned into a book that just about any girl who has been heart broken and, in turn, suffered self doubt due to said heartbreak, can relate to. That being said, I thought it was fresh, charming, sometimes cheesy (but utterly romantic) story about first love, which I would recommend to just about anyone.

Enter Sarah Howard - main character. Sarah is beginning her first year at University. She is at a particular University due to photographs sent to her by her best friend of a drop dead gorgeous Teachers Assistant from her Art History class. Sarah is quite happy to begin her education by blending in and avoiding any unnecessary (not to mention unwanted) attention. Her plans don't quite go according to plan thanks to Ben, a guy also in her Art History class who could, quite possibly, be even more gorgeous than the TA.

When Ben starts showing interest in Sarah, she doesn't know how to act. This is attributed to a nasty, embarrassing break-up with a guy she labels Jesse James; he was just plain cruel. Ben is charming; he compliments Sarah constantly, follows her around like a puppy dog, and yet she cannot convince herself that he is genuinely interested her. She is sure she will be burned again.

While the storyline moves back and forth in a 'will they, won't they?' series of events which reminded me of Ross and Rachel (butterflies in my stomach and all), you can only hope that things will work out for the best. The characterization was fantastic - I felt as though I was experiencing each emotion being described in the book myself, and it made everything feel incredibly real. While the plot was quite simple, I found myself struggling to put it down and therefore read it in one day. I thoroughly enjoyed it from front to back cover, and that's saying something as I very rarely pick up a stand alone book of this kind. I can't wait to read what Becca Wilhite releases next.

melmarian says

Sarah--tokoh utama dalam kisah ini--sama sekali bukan tipikal tokoh utama dalam novel-novel romantis. Dia tidak langsing, malah cenderung gemuk. Rambutnya tidak berkilau keemasan dan selembut sutra, tapi ikal dan liar seperti rambut Medusa. Sarah mengalami krisis pede akut jika berhadapan dengan cowok (ganteng). Dan dia membaca terlalu banyak novel roman, yang hanya membuat *Prince Charming complex* yang diidapnya ini makin parah.

Awalnya Chel, sahabat karibnya, yang memprovokasi Sarah untuk berkuliah di kampusnya. Di kampus ini, konon ada seorang manusia yang sangat terkenal, berjenis kelamin laki-laki, dan dia luar biasa tampan. Dia adalah Asisten Dosen dalam kelas sejarah seni. Sang Asisten Dosen, sebagaimana Sarah menggambarkannya, punya ketampanan ala orang Iran, laksana Dewa dari Timur Tengah. Tak dinyana, dalam kelas yang sama pula, Sarah bertemu dengan makhluk yang tak kalah tampannya dari sang Asisten Dosen. Sarah menyebutnya Adonis (salah satu dewa dalam mitologi Yunani yang melambangkan ketampanan). Dasar Sarah yang malang, ia gelagapan ketika harus menghadapi si Adonis yang sedang mengkoordinir kelompok belajar. Padahal Adonis--nama sebenarnya Ben :D--sebenarnya sangat-sangat baik.

Lama-kelamaan hubungan Sarah dan Ben semakin dekat. Ben mengantar Sarah pulang sehabis kelompok belajar, main ke apartemennya, mereka bermain gitar bersama, makan es krim bersama, dan Ben mengajak Sarah ke acara pernikahan kakaknya di rumah orang tuanya. Belum lagi Ben selalu mengirim SMS dan menelponnya. Sarah rasa-rasanya tak percaya semua ini. Bagaimana mungkin--Ben yang setampan dewa Yunani ini, bisa tertarik padanya--cewek aneh yang sama sekali tidak menarik? Tokoh utama dalam novel romantis sama sekali tidak mirip diriku, pikir Sarah. Mereka cantik, tinggi langsing, anggun, dan punya rambut berkilau seperti mutiara yang tergerai lembut sepanjang punggung. Mereka bisa membuat laki-laki manapun bertekuk lutut hanya dengan mengibaskan rambut atau mengerjap-ngerjapkan mata. Teman-temannya menyebut Sarah sedang pacaran dengan Ben, tapi dia menolak mempercayainya. Ben mulai merasa *insecure* karena Sarah tidak merespon segala perhatian yang diberikan Ben kepadanya. Sementara Sarah begitu takut bahwa semua ini hanya permainan, dan ia akan berakhir dipermalukan seperti pengalaman di masa lalu. Novel ini punya *happy ending* dan ceritanya cukup gampang ditebak, tapi seru juga mengikuti ke-'on-an Sarah menuju *happy ending*nya, hehehe.

Ini bukan novel romantis biasa. Itu kalimat *tagline* yang tercetak di bagian atas cover buku. Dan kurang lebih saya setuju (walaupun saya sangat jarang membaca novel romantis :p), karena: 1. Buku ini *mbanyol* sangat, mampu bikin saya cekikikan sendiri ketika membacanya, cukup menghibur lah. 2. Tokoh utama perempuannya sama sekali bukan *heroine*, tapi cewek yang *dorky* dan o' on gak ketulungan terutama jika berhadapan dengan cowok. 3. Punya pesan moral yang bagus. Bahwa setiap cewek harus percaya diri dengan diri mereka masing-masing. Dan setiap cewek layak mendapatkan cowok yang pantas bagi mereka. *And never take the one you love for granted, you might regret it.* 4. Saya suka warna-warna di covernya. 5. Saya suka dengan tokoh Ben yang 'sempurna tapi sebenarnya tidak sempurna-sempurna banget'. *He was so*

lovable, dan resmi menjadi kandidat untuk masuk daftar *Top 5 Book Crushes* tahun 2012. LOL.

Karena saya membaca buku ini berbarengan dengan nonton film From Prada to Nada, malah kebayang Ben itu seperti salah satu aktor yang main di film itu, yang punya nama Nicholas D'Agosto :p

Ada satu kalimat di hal. 115 yang saya suka, tidak disangka bisa muncul dalam novel roman jaman sekarang ini:

"Kau tidak bisa membiarkan orang-orang ini--bahkan yang benar-benar asing--untuk melihatmu bersama Ben jika hubungan kalian sewaktu-waktu tidak berhasil. Kau benar-benar yakin bahwa seharusnya kau tidak boleh terlihat dalam situasi romantis dengan orang yang tidak akan menjadi suamimu."

Tiga bintang untuk novel romantis nan konyol ini!

@melmarian
<http://surgabukuku.wordpress.com>

Cami says

I hated this. I picked it up to read it so that I could be the good mother and now what my daughter was reading. The problem was that I couldn't put it down until I was done. No housework, no feeding kids, nothing happened until I was finished. That said it's such a cute little romance novel. Perfect thing to have your daughter to read if she stuck in vampireland.

Vanesa says

Completely head over heels for this book! Such a charming, fresh and utterly romantic story! Hopeless romantic? This is the book for you!! ..

I adore the fact that is just not the story of two people falling in love...but a story about self-esteem, friendship and coming of age issues....Sarah is just too sweet and completely charming to do not like her...and Ben is just perfect!...I wish I had a boyfriend like him!!! I'm just in cloud nine after reading this book...

I just regret how short the story is! I honestly didn't want to finish it and was panicking over the fact that I was pretty much half way in one day!

I can't say enough about this book and the great message of loving and believing in yourself and to know we all deserve great things no matter your shape..your issues or your past!

Amazing Job!

Nomes says

3.5 stars

My Ridiculous Romantic Obsessions is a charming, breezy read for people who love their romances light (occasionally cheesy), flirty and clean.

Sarah has a thing for romance novels and is the kind of girl who daydreams about love and romance. The main plot line is about Sarah wanting to be "the heroine" in her own romance story. She dated a jerk in the past which has left her feeling insecure and like she is always destined to be the leading girls side-kick friend without her own man. Enter Ben ~ "hot as a Greek god" ~ who readers will easily see is captivated by Sarah. Sarah is oblivious yet hopeful and makes some stupid assumptions along the way.

At 180 pages it's a light and fast read. The pages just fly by. There's not too many surprises in the plot ~ it's one of those books where you know the outcome but read it to enjoy the ride. And it is enjoyable ~ there's little bursts of humour and cute embarrassing scenes and also plenty of little swoon-y 'awww' moments.

I was drawn to this title looking for a chick-lit, fluffy read ~ but I was pretty keen due to the fact it is set in college with older YA protags who have finished school. However, it felt very innocent and still similar to high school aged reads.

I was a teensy bit disappointed, hoping it would fit more into the older YA bracket. I don't mind the occasional sweet-romancey book ~ but this one really does match the title: it has a fun 'ridiculous' quirky vibe, and it really does centre around the romance side of things. At times, it was a bit too cute for me. As a love interest Ben was a regular nice grinning guy ~ a gentlemen and a little bit charming but not particularly memorable as a leading male for me (and he's another YA guy who plays the guitar :D).

I enjoyed the funny little narrations comparing her life to romance novels and discussing meet cuties and "what would happen right now if I was starring in my own rom-com scenarios."

I would have *adored* this book as a teen ~ and think it's a perfect fit for girls who like cute, charming romances. It also has a fab (but not preachy) little message with confidence and being yourself. I was pretty impressed with the "voice" and effortless style that Becca Wilhite writes ~ a little bit funky, a little bit sweet and with lots of heart.

*I also think the cover matches the vibe/tone of the book. Swirly and smiley and daydreamy and a little bit fun.

Alysia says

At the beginning of the book I wondered what I had started reading and thought I wouldn't enjoy it one bit. Something with the way Sarah talks just annoys me a bit. But, she did grow on me slightly, although during some scenes, her obliviousness was a bit too extreme. But, despite these annoyances with the main character, there were some cleverly written super funny scenes that made me laugh out loud. And, it's a quick

read...short book.

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

I related to the main character, Sarah. She is off to her first year of college, leaving home for the first time. She takes a class because there is a "hot" TA, that girls like to drool over instead of the professor.

One day after class, someone asks if anyone would like to be part of a study group, Sarah raises her hand and turns to find a guy that looks like "Adonis". She refers to him in her inner conversations as Adonis, doesn't find out his first name. He wants to spend time with her, she is stunned.

I laughed out loud when she finds out his name is Ben and said "Hi Adonis". Then had the voices in her head argue about how she did not just call him that.

I understood the insecurities, how she doesn't feel that she is good enough for someone as wonderful as him to be interested in. Those feelings are real to so many of us, Me in particular. (Thank heavens for my wonderful husband who helped me get over it!)

She has to go through her crisis, where she has to come to terms with her own inner demons and learn to accept that he is not perfect and has his own insecurities.

Jessica says

I'm glad that the word ridiculous is in the title so I don't have to use it to describe this book. The book was funny and I enjoy the writing style when the first person perspective is really a person's thoughts. Especially when they are funny thoughts, but I'm tired of the story line of a girl who thinks she is ugly and the authors spends a great deal of time convincing you she is ugly only to have some gorgeous guy fall in love and find out that others find her beautiful. It is 2010, let's get some self confidence ladies!
