



How to Get a (Love) Life

Rosie Blake

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Some people book last-minute holidays, walk barefoot in the grass or party on a week night. Not Nicola Brown. Nicola is the kind of girl who double-locks the front door, leaves the plastic covering on new furniture, sticks to a super-strict diet and definitely, absolutely Does Not Date.

Her colleague Caroline – loopy, warm and exasperated by her, knows that Nicola's reluctance to lose control means she's living only half a life. And so she lays down the gauntlet: Nicola must cast aside her hang ups and go on as many dates as it takes to find true love in time for Valentine's Day.

The pick of local men is, quite frankly, a bit rubbish. And there are only three months until February 14th. Surely it's an impossible task? But, as Nicola is about to find out on her dodgy dates, letting go isn't quite as scary as she imagined. In fact, it's rather a lot of fun...

How to Get a (Love) Life Details

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From Reader Review How to Get a (Love) Life for online ebook

Blodeuedd Finland says

Nicola was a bit OCD about things. She likes to eat certain dinners on certain nights, that goes for all her meals. She plans, she cleans. But hey, I like organised, it's a good way to be.

Of course the book is not about her being organised, but about her coworker daring her to try to find a date for Valentine's. Double dare. Oh yes! You do not back out of a double dare.

And poor girl, those are some lousy dates she tries. It's amusing and we have all been on them. Her friends sure know how to pick them. But I liked how she went for it, she had not been dating much in quite some time and she put herself out there. Lousy results, but hey it's the effort that counts.

And of course it has a HEA. I mean she has to meet someone right...right..right!? Yes someone is right for her and I was happy with what I got.

Sweet and romantic.

Melinda says

4.5*

Margaret Madden says

Thanks so much to the girls at <http://www.noveliciousbooks.com/> for the ARC of this book.....

Nicola is a creature of habit. Her flat is immaculately clean, her office desk organised to within an inch of it's life and her menu planned weeks in advance. She desperately needs to get a life. And soon, as her work colleague, Caroline dares her to get herself a date for Valentine's Day. Nicola accepts the challenge and here is where the fun starts....

Nicola tries many means of finding a man. This leads to some laugh out loud encounters that I could imagine must be based on real life. A carpentry class, a date with a famous actor who she hates, a freezing kayak in a borrowed wet suit and a chance meeting with a Ferret Breeding, lute playing guy, are just some of the moments the reader can cringe along with Nicola.

This is such a funny book. I have read a lot of Chick Lit recently, but this is by far my favourite . I'm not the age demographic for this novel (I'm 41) but I could still picture the dire dates that I would have to go on, had I not met my soulmate 20 years ago. This book is a great bit of fun and thank God Novelicious gave Rosie the chance to get this published. Can't wait to read the next one, Rosie!

Rosie can be contacted via Twitter @RosieBBooks and is great for a bit of banter :)

Laura says

How To Get A (Love) Life (HTGALL) is Rosie's debut novel and I was more than desperate to read it, so much so, when it landed in my inbox, I screamed, did a dance and then started reading it straight away. How beautiful is the cover too?! Novelicious are always triumphant when it comes to covers!

HTGALL follows Nicola Brown on her quest to get a love life aided by her work colleague Caroline, her brother Mark and one internet dating site. Perpetually single Nicola starts the novel standing in an airport, on Valentine's Day, about to embark on her first singles holiday. Before we have the chance to get excited about sun, sea and sexy single men, we are whisked back to the 'beginning' of Nicola's quest and to the start of her brand new job working in an acting agency.

Nicola's work colleague, Caroline, is convinced that Nicola needs to get out more and find a man to love, so dares her to find true love by Valentine's Day. What follows is Nicola clumsily navigating the dating scene, dating her brother's friends and finding that love is actually quite hard to find. But, perhaps, love might just find Nicola when she least expects it...

I wanted to love this book SO much but, it just fell a little bit short for me. After all of the Twitter hype surrounding this book I was waiting for a genuine LOL fest and a really clever and witty book about one single woman finding love. Whilst this book was very funny in places, I did find some of the 'comedy' scenes to be quite cliché and some of the ideas were far from original (for example a scene in the book where Nicola is mistaken for an actress), very reminiscent of a lot of novels, films, TV shows I've seen before.

A few little things bothered me too: we didn't have a very clear indication of how fast these events were happening, there was no kind of time indication between events so I didn't know if they were happening days, weeks or months apart from each other. At times the narrative also felt a tad nonlinear and we jumped from event to event disjointedly. (I've just used the word 'event' far too many times!)

My other gripe with the book was there was a humongous lack of chemistry between Nicola and her main love interest. It was almost a shock when things happened between them because I couldn't pick up on any tangible spark between the two...they were quite rude to each other, Nicola was especially blunt and there seemed to be no indication in their mannerisms or thoughts that they liked each other. I think this was why I felt a big disappointment when they 'got together'. I didn't feel like they knew each other at all. It would have been nice to have some more scenes between the two of them and more indication from Nicola's thoughts and feelings that she was interested in him and felt something there.

Aside from that, I really did enjoy Rosie's narrative voice. It was a nicely paced book and I was constantly turning the pages waiting to see what trouble Nicola would find herself in next. I enjoyed her relationship with Mark (her brother) and found him to be a very intriguing and comical character. Caroline was also full of laughs and her two children were adorably cute. Some of the dates were really well written and I particularly like the date in the kayak: that was some great writing.

Nicola was an interesting protagonist and I found her to be quite shallow to begin with but over the course of the novel she redeemed herself and I thoroughly liked her by the end. I just wish she had a bit more oomph to her and a little bit more confidence to make her voice heard in certain situations.

If I'm honest, I think the main reason I struggled with this book is because it was very different from what I was expecting. I was hanging onto the hope Nicola would flee dreary England and spend some time in a warm, sunny country finding love and when that never happened, I was a bit gutted. The prologue threw me off a bit and I feel the book would have worked better without it being there so we jump straight into the action instead.

I am really keen to see how other readers enjoyed this novel because I feel like I've missed something and I need to re-read to fall in love with this book.

Rosie is a fabulous person but for me, this novel didn't work as well for me as I hoped it would.

A fast paced debut about searching for love in all the wrong places when the right person for you is already in your life.

Shaz Goodwin says

This was such a fun book to read!

I identified with Nicola. Enjoyed watching her realisations change her and relax her to the possibilities and opportunities others were throwing her way.

Caroline her work colleague, Mark her brother and James her boss are a great support cast of characters. They all brought something different to the story.

Hilarious dating scenes and events in the office. Many laugh out loud moments (note of caution, those around you may openly look at you as if you're mad).

Refreshingly, this romance was more than the usual 'will they won't they'. Definitely recommend if you need cheering up as I can guarantee you it will!

Full review coming soon.

Bharti says

I won this title as an e-book Twitter/BookBlog Giveaway. I had read so much about it on Twitter n Blogs. Coming to the actual story it was ok. Nicola sets out on an adventurous path to find herself a love life. She goes on some interesting dates and trips only to find love much closer to home. The pace was good but the story ended too soon. I thought it ended abruptly and a bit outta nowhere making me think what did I miss? Something missing or may be it's just me I was left thinking o.k. nice but well o.k.

Stacey says

Review from Fairy Tale Ending Book Reviews

Read: 28 January 2014

Why: Copy received in exchange for honest review

Brief synopsis: When Nicola was younger she never imagined that at 29 she'd still be single, living alone and eating the same set menu each week.

Her work colleague Caroline decides it's time for Nicola to loosen up and get herself a love life. Daring her to find someone before Valentines Day... in just 3 months time.

What I thought: I really liked the idea of this story and wanted to love the book but sadly I was disappointed.

Whilst there were things about the book that were good, unfortunately nothing really jumped out at me as great. The humour seemed very forced in places and for me, there were a few scenes, like the one with the psychic in the office, that didn't really seem to add anything to the story whilst other parts were rushed or even skipped. There was no depth behind the story of the ultimate love interest and prior to him announcing his boyfriend status, I hadn't really detected any chemistry between the two characters. It certainly wasn't a blossoming romance.

Carol W says

Nicola Brown is happy in her work, happy with her friends and family but is missing that someone special. She has never had a date for Valentine's Day and when Caroline discovers this she challenges Nicola to find a guy before Valentine's Day.

So begins the hilarious story of Nicola's search for love. Fabulous supporting cast including the smarmy guys. There are some cringeworthy moments along the way and when all seems lost Nicola finds love where she least expects it.

Perfect for romance, perfect for humour, perfect for Valentine's day reading.

review copy

Joana says

****2.5 stars****

It did have it's moments but overall it was an ok and enjoyable read...but the truth is that I expected more.

Ana says

Also posted on This Chick Reads

Copy provided by publisher in exchange for an honest review

I started reading this book with high expectations, whenever I would log in to twitter I'd see at least 50 tweets from people reading it/wanting to read it. I must admit, I was DYING to check it out and see what the hype is all about. I LOVE Novelicious (Rosie Blake's publishers), LOVE Rosie's tweets (which are hilarious!) and LOVE the cover of this book! It's simple yet grabs your attention! So, as you see, this book had a lot to prove to me. I remember the day I got my copy, my hands were literally shaking from all the excitement. I FINALLY HAD THIS BABY IN MY HANDS!

So now that I've read it I have to admit I'm slightly disappointed. NO, the book is not bad or anything, it just didn't live up to my expectations.

The story follows Nicola Brown on her quest to find Mr Right. Now we all know this is not an easy journey for any of us, and we've all experienced our share of horrid (sometimes humiliating too) dates, but Nicola here is really trying to do the impossible. It was actually her friend and colleague Caroline who dares her to find a boyfriend till Valentine's day. Nicola didn't even think she had such a depressing love life, she actually was not even bothering with having one, but the more Caroline talked about Nicola's not so adventurous side, the more she realized she needed to do this. So she accepts Caroline's challenge, and though there's only 3 months before Valentine's day, she does her best in finding her soul mate. Some of the dates were hilarious, I did laugh out loud while reading these parts. And Nicola is really something. Very down-to-earth type of gal, OCD owner, I liked her from the very start! It was very easy to relate to her and root for her.

What I did enjoy the most was her relationship with her brother Mark, who shows up at her place WHENEVER he wants. He's a hilarious character and each time there was a scene with him, I was literally flipping through the pages waiting to see WHAT THE HELL he's come up with this time. Having a brother myself (and older one too) I really loved the closeness they had, Mark trying to fix her up with his mates and stuff like that.

But unfortunately, there were some things which did bother me, hence the 3* rating. First off, I expected few more laughs, and some parts were just too difficult to understand not knowing when they are happening exactly. I had no idea how much time she has left for her quest...I don't know, I seemed a bit lost in the plot, having no time frame of the events happening in each chapter.

The writing was interesting, yet some parts felt dragging and irrelevant to the story. However, 3* rating for a debut is NOT that bad in my book actually. I just wish I got to see more of that charm and humor Rosie as a person possesses.

Carla says

Nicola Brown is not an adventurous woman. A few years ago, his boyfriend broke her heart and, since then, she got used to being alone. But when a colleague dares her to find a date for Valentine's Day, Nicola starts to wonder if she really is that happy on her own. And so, she opens her mind and starts dating... not seeming to realise, between a series of disastrous dates, that the right person for her might be closer than she thinks. Part of the charm in this cute and funny story is the fact that it reminds of a romantic comedy, with its bizarre episodes, despaired search for happiness and... well, disastrous steps towards it. Nicola is reluctant to accept the dare, then to meet the men her friend and brother want to introduce to her... and she seems to be quite right, even if for the wrong reasons. This is the funniest part in this book – the strange dates, the peculiar characters, and the way the main character reacts to all this and persists. But, of course, there's also love waiting to happen. And, though the solution for Nicola's problem is, indeed,

a bit predictable – it's isn't that hard to guess who is, in fact, the right person for her – the things she has to go through to get there, and all the circumstances surrounding her adventures are still quite enthralling. And yes, maybe the end is a little bit rushed. But it works that way, leaving just enough to imagination and, somehow, making up for all the failed adventures in the main character's life.

As for the characters, the most enthralling feature lies in their sense of humor. Mark, and her cute and surprising relationship with her sister. Caroline, with all her exuberance. James, so apparently serious, but with an obvious heart of gold. And, of course, Nicola, unsure of herself, but finally willing to move on and get out there. They're all interesting characters and, together, they make quite a good story.

So, with nice characters, lots of fun and just the right amount of romance waiting to happen, it all sums up in a light, funny and enthralling read. And quite a good book to cheer up on a sombre day.

** I received this book from Corvus in exchange for an honest opinion.

Sally Whiteside says

This was amusing, had me laughing out loud and some good likable characters.

JoAnna says

"Lubi? by? w domu sama ze sob? i swoimi rzeczami. ?adnych sprzeczek, k?ótni, walki o pilota od telewizora, pozornie nieszkodliwych komentarzy, które prowadz? do awantury, jakiej si? wcale nie chcia?o. Nie ma nikogo, kto z?ama?by mi serce."

Nicola Brown pracuje w agencji reklamowej. Jej ?ycie jest uporz?dkowane tak samo jak jej biurko. Wszystko ma swoje miejsce, a rutyna nie przeszkadza lecz uspokaja i zapewnia poczucie komfortu i bezpiecze?stwa. Wkrótce b?dzie mia?a trzydzie?ci lat (aktualnie 29), ale status niezale?nej osoby jej nie przeszkadza. Ceni sobie powrót do w?asnego mieszkania, gdzie panuje cisza i spokój. Cho? czasem co? chwyta za serce, kiedy widzi na ulicach zakochanych, nie zamierza nic w ?yciu zmienia?. Dopiero wyzwania rzucone przez Caroline (kole?ank? z pracy) sprawia, ?e Nicola podejmuje si? zmiany stylu ?ycia. Cel to znale?? kogo? do czasu Walentynek.

"Chcia?am powiedzie?, ?e lubi? swoje towarzystwo."

Powie?? rozpoczyna si? na kilka tygodni przed Bo?ym Narodzeniem, poprzez Sylwestra swój fina? znajduj?c w Dniu Zakochanych. Ju? prolog pokazuje, ?e misja trwa? b?dzie do ostatniej chwili. W mi?dzyczasie m?od? kobiet? czeka seria katastrofalnych randek - cz??? umówionych przez jej znajomych czy rodzin?, cz??? stanowi?ca prób? nawi?zania kontaktów ze znajomymi z czasów studiów. Autorka podzi?kowa?a osobom, które z takich okropnych spotka? jej si? zwierzy?y, wi?c sporo z nich opartych jest na prawdziwych sytuacjach.

"By?am sama. Zupe?nie sama i nikt nie móg? nic z tym zrobi?, poza mn?."

Sama Rosie Blake swój? powie?? "Jak zyska? ?ycie (mi?osne)" - gdyby t?umaczy? tytu? dos?ownie - po raz pierwszy opublikowa?a w 2014 roku. Jest to pocz?tek serii, w której kolejnych tomach wyst?puj? inni bohaterowie, a ??czy je podobnie sformu?owany tytu?. Styl, jak na gatunek taki jak chick-lit przysta?o, jest

bardzo lekki. Kolejne rozdziały rozpoczynają opis, jaki zamieszczała ona na mediach społecznościowych pod swoim zdjęciem profilowym. Zawiera się w nim zawsze przykre doświadczenie wynikające z poprzednich randek. Dialogi są zabawne, a sytuacji komediowych tu nie brakuje.

Bardzo łatwo przychodzi też się zidentyfikować się z rozmyślaniami bohaterki, szczególnie kiedy jest się w podobnym wieku (tak jak ja - nawet ten sam znak zodiaku). Sama panna Brown to niesamowicie pozytywna osoba, która łatwo się nie zniechęca. Może troszkę ma na to wpływ fakt, że cała ona traktuje jako swego rodzaju projekt. Tyle nieudanych randkowych spotkań ma o kto być w stanie znieść.

"... w duszy zamigotała mi maleńka nadzieja. Nie mogła się poddawać. Muszę szukać dalej. Miałaam naoczne dowody, że warto."

Gdzie ona spotkała tego jedynego? Może właśnie na portalu randkowym? Może ukrywa się wśród znajomych znajomych? A może na warsztatach rozwijających wspólne pasje i zainteresowania? Czy może się zdarzyło, że to ktoś, kogo znała się już od lat?

"Tylko Ty" to powieść, która równie mocno jak na ekranizacji (ma już prawdziwie filmową okładkę) nadaje się na lekturę idealną w okresie poprzedzającym Walentynki - niczym komedia romantyczna z happy endem, gdzie rzucone wyzwanie staje się początkiem drogi by zmienić siebie.

Recenzje zawsze na Zakładka do Przyszłości

Agi says

How to Get a (Love) Life is Rosie Blake's debut novel turned into a lovely, gorgeous paperback and even though I've read it few years ago I was desperate to get a copy of this book in my greedy mittens and read it again! It was a great joy to meet with the characters for a second time, the story was just up to my street and what more can I say? I love Rosie Blake and her brilliant, funny and uplifting stories! So there.

Nicola has OCD. Yes, I love OCD people, maybe because I am very far away from OCD myself. I am a big fan of the routine, as long as the routine is a far cry from me. Nicola is very straight and very good organised and it is such a pleasure to read about such people, believe me. She is very careful with what she says and what she does, she's very punctual, she eats the same things on certain days, she's very VERY. She may seem shallow at the beginning but actually I found her totally nice and I have warmed to her immediately. She is actually happy with her life and it's not a problem to her that she's 29 and single. It is more problematic for her work colleague Caroline and when she dares Nicola to find a date for the forthcoming Valentine's Day, Nicola agrees. And starts dating. On a series of dates set by her brother and Caroline.

Apart Nicola we have a little cast of characters in the book. There is Mark, her brother, with whom she has a brilliant relationship and who appears on her doorstep whenever he wants, there is Caroline, Nicola's work friend with her two hilarious children, and James, the boss. The most significant characters in the book and all of them brilliantly written, all of them warm, funny and likeable.

Some of Nicola's dates were ridiculous and I have laughed more than often reading about them. The dates and the men that she met were crazy, were impossible, and altogether disastrous. For me it was a great fun, an easy read that I needed so much, and I have enjoyed seeing Nicola coming out of her shell step by step with each date.

I also liked that many of the chapters began with a personal ad, and each ad summed the previous disastrous dates up. They were really funny and each one of them made me chuckle.

I know that some of the reviewers said that they haven't felt any chemistry between Nicola and The Obvious One but well, I have. And although I have known after reading approx 30% of the book how it's going to end and that Nicola shouldn't look far away for her date for Valentine's Date, it hasn't spoil the book for me at all. It was a real pleasure to see how Nicola develops and leaves her comfort zones. It was a light, fun, feel - good read, women's fiction at its best, something that I needed very much in the moment. Keep them coming, Rosie!

copy provided by the publisher in return for an honest review.

Smelleykins says

I just adore Rosies' books. They are so relatable and fun. I was sent this book from the publisher in exchange for a review. I've read all the previous books by Rosie and this is her debut finally released in paperback.

We follow the lovely Nicola on her quest to find a boyfriend by valentines day. It's around chritmas in the book and the quest was a dare by her work colleague Caroline. Nicola is sensible, does things as part of a routine and doesn't mind being on her own. She's not someone who takes up dares, she doesn't go too far out of her comfort zone. But this dare brings her all sorts.

I loved reading the disasters and fun times Nicola had when she was set up on blind dates by her brother and also Caroline. The way Nicola, even though she didn't want to do it, still went on them, even for the fact that she didn't want to let the other person down. My favourite was kayaking in November. Realy? Who would do such a thing??

I really enjoying Nicola coming out of her shell, finding her trueself again. I enjoyed the fact she even decided to do stuff on her own terms, such as joining classes, going to boy-ish places, in case she could meet someone.

I think there was some predicablity in the story, but it takes its time to reveal all and i like how Nicola and her soul mate came together. It was very sweet and fitted in well with the storyline.

Overall i think this is a cracking debut. I think there are parts in this book that everyone can relate to. Either Nicola as a person or the dates she goes on. Certainly worth a read.
