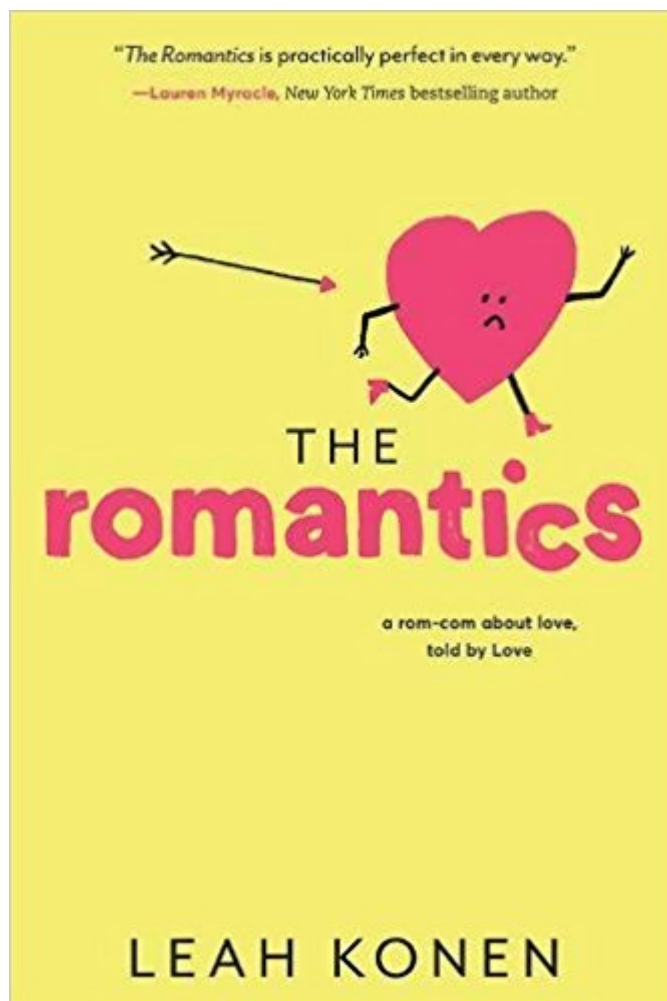


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# The Romantics



## Synopsis

Perfect for fans of Lauren Myracle and Rainbow Rowell, *The Romantics* will charm readers of all ages. Gael Brennan is about to have his heart broken when his first big relationship crumbles on the heels of his parents' painful separation. Love intervenes with the intention of setting things right—but she doesn't anticipate the intrusion of her dreaded nemesis: the Rebound. Love's plans for Gael are sidetracked by Cara, Gael's hot sauce-wielding "dream girl." And the more Love meddles, the further Gael drifts from the one girl who can help him mend his heart. Soon, Love starts breaking all her own rules—and in order to set Gael's fate back on course, she has to make some tough decisions about what it means to truly care. **A**

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**Gr 8 Up** Gael Brennan is a 17-year-old high school senior in Chapel Hill, NC. He plays the sax in marching band, loves Alfred Hitchcock and Wes Anderson films, and is a smart, well-behaved kid. So why do bad things keep happening to him? The summer before his senior year, his parents separate. Almost two months into the school year, his girlfriend breaks up with him (in a horrible way). This novel follows Gael (a romantic at heart) and his quest to find love as he lives through this trying time. Or, more aptly, this is Love's quest to lead Gael into brighter times ahead. Konen cleverly personifies Love as a lighthearted and empathetic narrator. The remaining characters—Gael, his friends, his sister, and his parents—are all perfectly imperfect, creating relatable and enjoyable scenes in this slice-of-life novel. **VERDICT** A jaunty, entertaining work that will reach a broad range of readers, with a feel-good cast of characters teens can root for.

A general purchase for most YA collections. — Stephanie DeVincentis, Downers Grove North High School, IL --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

"Love delivers this sweet little bonbon of a story in a voice that's always chipper, sometimes funny, and pretty darn smart. For romantics and skeptics alike, this fresh dose of optimism will warm the cockles of the heart." (Kirkus)Konen makes good use of numerous tropes of romantic comedy films, incorporating them into this light and utterly sweet read. Impressively, Konen treats her subject matter seriously while maintaining a playfulness that will keep readers engaged and rooting for Gael. — (Publishers Weekly)"A jaunty, entertaining work that will reach a broad range of readers, with a feel-good cast of characters teens can root for." (School Library Journal) — "The Romantics is practically perfect in every way, just like love — and Love. My heart is bursting at the seams. — (Lauren Myracle, New York Times bestselling author of TTYL and The Infinite Moment of Us)Altogether practical, clever, yet hopelessly romantic, this book will make you question whether many of life's small, seemingly insignificant moments might in fact have one very important, very wonderful purpose. (Lucy Keating, author of Dreamology)Yup. That's what teenage love feels like. From meet cutes and slow burns to heartbreak and divorce, Leah Konen takes a look at love in all its forms and gives it a voice. — (Adi Alsaid, author of Let's Get Lost and Never Always Sometimes)"A smart, snappy look at romance tropes and a feel-good love story all in one." (Booklist)"Yes, yes, love is patient, love is kind, blah, blah, but Love also happens to be delightfully saucy, and it narrates this rom-com with a tongue-in-cheek wit that still holds all the warmth and affection you'd expect from, well, Love." (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books)" This playful, entertaining take on love by Leah Konen (The Last Time We Were Us; The After Girls) should find plenty of ardent fans." (Shelf Awareness)"This book is fresh and an amazingly funny look at romance when it is least expected, and Love is one of the best book narrators of all time. This one is not to be missed." (VOYA) --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Just finished reading The Romantics and thoroughly enjoyed it! Konen lends an authentic voice to Love in its many forms and places in our lives — not only in romance but in family and friendship as well, and reminds us of the value of each. Young adult readers will relate very well to Gael and other central characters and not-so-young adults will enjoy the trip down memory lane to their own true love stories, college experiences and sometimes messy but ultimately strong family bonds. Fun concept and great read!

Great book! The author Leah Konen writes amazing books! Read the whole book in two days. Couldn't put it down! Great book for teens but still really enjoyable for adults as well! Definitely recommend it!

Solid 4.5 ~ I usually dislike books narrated by dogs or Death or other gimmicky things... but have to admit that I found Love to be a delightful narrator. I full-out giggled reading Love's side comments and enjoyed losing myself for a few hours in this fun, sweet, and quirky tale. My bucket list now includes eating nachos with Leah Konen.

This book was so fun and whimsical. Loved it.

Didn't realize this was a YA book when I purchased it! That being said, a cute and quick read. Well written to boot

Enjoyed Gael's character. Loved the story. Leah Konen is a terrific writer.

Love is patient. Love is kind. Love totally dropped the ball with Gael Brennan's parents and feels the best recourse is to save Gael's own love life. And that means keeping him away from the rebound girl. "... leave it to the Manic Pixie Dream Girl trope to convince a guy that someone who straight-up irks him will also somehow save him." I might cross-stitch that onto a pillow. The problem with Gael is that he's a romantic. Not like he's into romantic comedies or anything like that, because he's not. He likes real movies, like Wes Anderson ones. But he falls in love too hard and too fast. So it's not surprising that his very first relationship ends in disaster when he blurts out the big ILY way too early. Hurt, Gael is desperate for a reminder that love is real. So when he runs into Cara in a meet-cute, he puts too much importance on the moment. But even as Gael is perusing Cara, Love knows his real destiny is with Sammy, his younger sister's babysitter. This is a cute, fun read. That said, if you remove the quirky element of Love as the narrator, this becomes a very basic, expected romance. It's clear early on that a Sammy and Gael pairing is the endgame, and while I accepted the premise, I didn't think it grew organically. Sammy was supposed to be perfect for Gael, but I didn't really see it. In any case, this is a quick and mostly satisfying YA romance for those so inclined. I received a free copy of this book courtesy of the publisher and NetGalley

\*\*\*Review posted on The Eater of Books! blog\*\*\*The Romantics by Leah KonenPublisher:

AbramsPublication Date: November 1, 2016Rating: 4 starsSource: ARC sent by the

publisherSummary (from Goodreads):Perfect for fans of Lauren Myracle and Rainbow Rowell, The Romantics will charm readers of all ages. Gael Brennan is about to have his heart broken when his first big relationship crumbles on the heels of his parents' painful separation. Love intervenes with the intention of setting things right but she doesn't anticipate the intrusion of her dreaded nemesis: the Rebound. Love's plans for Gael are sidetracked by Cara, Gael's hot-sauce-wielding "dream girl." The more Love meddles, the further Gael drifts from the one girl who can help him mend his heart. Soon Love starts breaking all her own rules and in order to set Gael's fate back on course, she has to make some tough decisions about what it means to truly care.

What I Liked:I was sent an unsolicited galley of The Romantics from the publisher (and this in no way affected my review). I say this because it was sent unsolicited, and I rarely read unsolicited galleys. But I decided to give this book a chance. YA contemporary is not something I usually seek out and/or enjoy, but I was delighted to find that I liked this book. This book is told from Love's narration. It's the story of Gael, after his heart is broken. He tells his girlfriend he loves her... but then finds out that she has been cheating on him with his best friend. The poor guy can't seem to catch a break! Now he has no girlfriend and no best friend. This is the "aftermath", how Gael navigates the maze that is Love. I thought I might not enjoy this book, because I had a feeling that the romance wouldn't be for me. But I was surprised. Technically there is no love triangle or anything like that, though there are multiple love interests. Gael's girlfriend - ex-girlfriend within the first few chapters - could be considered one, though he never tries to get her back. A new girl that Gael meets is the second, and a girl that Gael has known for years is the third. The new girl, Cara, is the love interest that catches Gael's interest but he's not sure he actually likes her (she represents the Rebound). The true love interest is the third girl, and this is quite evident, in the story. One thing I liked about this book is how raw and emotional it is. We all know the phrase "get hit by the feels"? Or in the feels? Well, this book does that, though in a very subtle way. It's written in a humorous way, but it catches you off-guard with the depth of emotion conveyed in the story. For example, some of my favorite scenes with a lot of emotions were when Gael was feeling angry towards Anika and Mason for cheating behind his back. I LOVE how Gael held on to this anger. I love how he threw this in Anika's face, Mason's face, etc. This is good, typical post-breakup behavior from someone whose been cheated on. Good for Konen for fleshing these emotions out, the hurt and anger and betrayal. On that note, I also liked how while Gael definitely had to work to

get over Anika, he wasn't trying to get her back or anything. He accepted the fact that she cheated, he was very mad about it, and he wasn't trying to get her back (and didn't forgive her immediately). I also liked how Konen doesn't just explore explore romantic love. One could argue that what Gael felt towards Anika was fictitious, fairy-tale love. A significant part of this story was Gael's somewhat broken relationship with his parents. The author shows Gael a different type of love, as Gael works through the issues he has with his father, and then his mother. And then there is Gael's bond with his eight-year-old sister - the sibling love is real and constant and I loved that. The romantic love is solid too. Gael thought he loved Anika, but realizes that he never did, and that what he felt for her was a fantasy. He tries to go out with Cara but realizes that she doesn't hold his interest. The third girl, the one that he's known forever, he doesn't realize that he likes her... until more than halfway through the book. Which was adorable to watch. To sum things up, this wasn't just a cute and hilarious story about Gael finding his soulmate (or thereabout). There were so many fleshed-out relationships that were positive, some that were negative (and deservedly so). I found the authenticity of love and emotions in this book so real. Konen captured them really well! I would love to read a companion novel that follows this one! The end of the book leaves a secondary and unimportant character potentially heartbroken - why not give him a story? I would read it!

**What I Did Not Like:** The only thing that I personally didn't love - and this isn't a fault of the author's - is that Gael eventually forgave Mason. Anika, probably as well, but definitely Mason. I get that it's difficult to throw away a friendship over a girl, but cheating is pretty serious, and a horrendous breach of trust. I wouldn't forgive either of them. BUT. This shows how much Gael grows and develops in this book. Good for him!

**Would I Recommend It:** If you like YA contemporary, this is for you. I was apprehensive about it, because I don't really like YA contemporary, and because I knew there would be ex-girlfriend drama and new-love-interest drama, but I was surprised by how much the drama didn't bother me, and how much I was enjoying it unfold. This book was one that I got rooted in, one that I couldn't help but cheer for Gael, be angry for Gael, clap my hands for Gael in the end.

**Rating:** 4 stars. Worth the read, if you enjoy YA contemporary. I can't speak for the author's other books, but this one was not bad. There were a lot of positive messages that I think the author did a great job of transmitting through this story!

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