

Love Advice for Women (Guide to Love): Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Love from Jane Austen to Virginia Woolf

Nathaniel Jackson

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“This sensation of listlessness, weariness, stupidity, this disinclination to sit down and employ myself, this feeling of everything’s being dull and insipid about this house! I must be in love,” declares Jane Austen’s Emma.

Jackson has assembled a book of quotations on the wisdom and follies of love, charting the various stages of the condition from fantasy through mature love. Quotations from authors and philosophers share the page with engaging illustrations from Jennie Augusta Brownscombe, Pierre Auguste Renoir and Camille Claudel among others. Short biographies are included for many of the writers; Anaïs Nin’s musing “Anxiety is love’s greatest killer, because it is like the stranglehold of the drowning,” is followed by the delectable tidbit that while Nin was married to Hugh Guiler she started an affair with Rupert Pole, a man sixteen years younger than she. Nin eventually married Pole, falsely telling him that she had divorced Guiler. “She maintained a precarious bicoastal relationship with both men for twenty-two years until she died.” Honoré de Balzac reports: “The duration of a couple’s passion is in proportion to the woman’s original resistance or the obstacles that social hazards have placed in the way of her happiness.” A sidebar notes that Balzac’s great love, Eveline Hanksa, a Polish countess married to a very wealthy (and elderly) Ukrainian land baron lasted for years. Once the countess was widowed, they were finally wed, just five months before Balzac’s death.

The first in a proposed series, Love Advice for Women is soon to be followed by Love Advice for Men and Love Advice for Couples. While some readers will purchase this book seeking love advice, the text can also serve as a reference work of quotations for editors and writers.

REBECCA MAKSEL (January / February 2000)

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