



## The Trouble with Love in the Movies

**Rob Harris**

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*The Trouble with Love in the Movies is an engrossing memoir filled with familiar lessons and new and exciting people and places.*

Expert storytelling and social understanding lend a clear direction to the whirlwind world of filmmaking that organizes Rob Harris's memoir, *The Trouble with Love in the Movies*.

This exciting backstage journey is led by the relatable highs and lows of Harris's personal relationships. As a publicist for big budget films, Harris traveled to places including New York, Mexico, and South Africa, also navigating personal challenges such as marriage, divorce, fatherhood, and romance. The prologue details the death of Harris's first wife to breast cancer and the arrival of a musician, Margaret, who became his second wife within months of their meeting. She and Harris raised two children together. But Harris's real story starts when his second marriage began to fall apart and he met Nicola, a journalist who shared his wanderlust and unpredictable lifestyle.

The book's fast pace, multiple locations, and even its name dropping are managed with tact, with descriptions of Harris's fascinating job and internal struggles to balance them out. The tone is conversational, with quips of truth and a solid sense of characterization. Harris employs clever nicknames for people he doesn't feel strong connections to, bringing humor to otherwise ill encounters.

Throughout the book's three parts, the focus stays on love and family. That balance, which seems nearly impossible to achieve in life, feels organic within Harris's story. While he's dating, Harris struggles with loneliness, misunderstanding, and the meshing together of independent lives. Arguments with his girlfriend Nicola are detailed in a real way and feature understandable solutions. As a father, Harris grapples with his son's rare kidney disease and virtual blindness, and with the challenges of being a divorcee; separation brings a new level to his parenting, with Harris assuming the role of a provider from afar, but still helping to guide his children through the possibilities of their lives.

Nicola is another source of chaos in Harris's life, but also brings deeper levels of understanding. Her passion is fueled by human rights issues, through which notions of universalism layer into and enrich Harris's story. The couple is seen aligning their work in order to spend time together, but also letting each other go when careers call; their dynamic leads to admiration. As the book continues, Harris is seen to grow, choosing films with impact over those of convenience, as when, while filming *Blood Diamond*, his crew raised money in Mozambique for the local community. Such additions are clever and enlightening within the overarching love story.

With genuine emotions and continual reflections, *The Trouble with Love in the Movies* is an engrossing memoir filled with familiar lessons and new and exciting people and places.

SAMANTHA ANN EHLE (August 10, 2020)

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