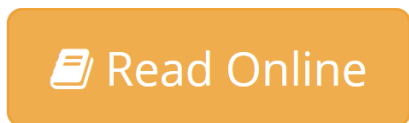


On Love: A Novel

By Alain de Botton



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On Love is globally bestselling novelist-philosopher Alain De Botton's iconic debut—the novel that launched his decorated literary career; and a funny, profound, and searingly true-to-life exploration of love.

A man and a woman meet over casual conversation on a flight from Paris to London, and so begins a love story—from fist kiss to first argument, elation to heartbreak, and everything in between. Each stage of the relationship is illuminated with startling clarity, as de Botton explores emotions often felt but rarely understood. Now, in tandem with the arrival of *The Course of Love*—de Botton's first novel in twenty years and one about mature love—we celebrate the timeless debut about young love that serves as *The Course of Love*'s precursor and companion.

Reissued with a brilliant introduction by the *New York Times* bestselling author of *How Should a Person Be?*, Shelia Heti, *On Love* is a contemporary classic that should be read by anyone who has ever fallen in love.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Two words on the cover ("a novel") are the only hint that this unusual first book is fiction and not autobiography. The unnamed narrator is a London architect who becomes involved with Chloe, a graphic designer. After about a year, Chloe leaves him for an office-mate, and, as a result, the narrator tries (unsuccessfully) to kill himself. Eventually he gets over Chloe and falls in love with someone else. The novel's action is minimal; the balance of the book is given over to the narrator's obsessive analysis of his relationship with Chloe. (There are diagrams--such as the seating chart of the Boeing 767 where they met--that are meant to illustrate various ideas with which the narrator toys.) The book was likely intended as a Barthesian look at that peculiar heart condition called love, but the overblown and pretentious writing obliterates any comparison, peppered as it is with such winking turns-of-phrase as "cartographic fascism." The author is clearly intelligent and well-read; perhaps some day he will put those assets to good literary use.

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From Library Journal

Chloe and Alain meet in a plane flying from Paris to London and fall in love. Their romance lasts only about a year, and after they have parted the narrator/author uses scenes from their time together as illustrations of his philosophical anatomy of romantic love. Chapters are formed of numbered paragraphs so that the book resembles a classical philosophical disquisition, and it's on this level that it reads best. First novelist de Botton writes well--dozens of sentences glisten with aphoristic insight--but neither Chloe nor Alain really engage our interest, and their story seems too slight to support all the heavy philosophizing. Recommended only for sentimental young romantics with a penchant for philosophy, readers who thought Nicholas Baker's *Vox* (LJ 11/15/91) was profound, and writing teachers who need an example of what happens when you write a novel before you have much life experience.

- Charles Michaud, *Turner Free Lib., Randolph, Mass.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

A tour-de-force pleasure of a first novel that takes a conventional love story and textures it with philosophical ruminations, ironic subtitles, and various sorts of playfulness, including pencil drawings. The narrator, on a flight from Paris to London, meets Chloe in the first chapter, "Romantic Fatalism": "The longing for a destiny is nowhere stronger than in our romantic life." In each ironically titled chapter to follow ("Marxism," "Beauty," "Skepticism and Faith," etc.), the paragraphs are numbered, as de Botton develops his disquisition upon love and its limitations. Apothegms abound: "If the fall into love happens so rapidly, it is perhaps because the wish to love has preceded the beloved..." The narrator falls for Chloe, but even at the beginning, dishonesty enters the picture: "What sides of myself should I release?" The narrator, in fact, is a prevaricator, leaving the relationship to speculate upon various matters: "Few things can be as antithetical to sex as thought." Soon enough, disillusionment sets in: Chloe, trying to read *Cosmo*, tells the narrator to turn down the "yodeling." It's Bach. "Understanding Chloe, I was like a doctor, passing hands over a body, trying to intuit the interior." Understandably, Chloe tires of such a creep, and the two practice "romantic terrorism." ("Is there anything wrong?" "No, why, should there be?") Chloe, unfaithful, leaves him to contemplate suicide--and "The Jesus Complex"--before he finds Rachel and the whole thing starts again.... A dissertation/novel on romantic narcissism that's both intellectually stimulating and emotionally touching. A very promising debut. (First printing of 25,000) -- *Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Debra Lovern:

The book On Love: A Novel make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You can utilize to make your capable far more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make reading through a book On Love: A Novel for being your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You are able to know everything if you like start and read a guide On Love: A Novel. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or others. So , how do you think about this guide?

Buddy Stewart:

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Elaine Harvey:

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Cheryl Bullen:

Spent a free the perfect time to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their sparettime with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, gonna beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing ditto every week. Do you feel it? Do you want to something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book may be option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the reserve untitled On Love: A Novel can be fine book to read. May be it can be best activity to you.

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