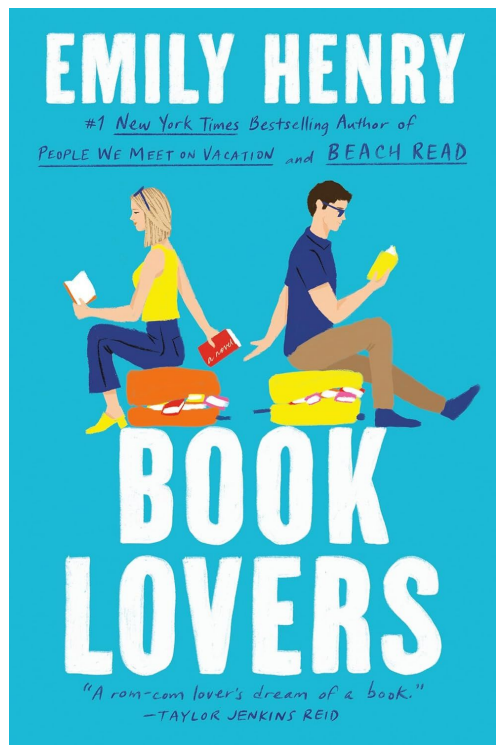


Book Lovers



Book Summary

A literary agent and editor keep running into each other in a small town, and their unlikely friendship starts to unravel the stories they've written about themselves.

Summary of Concerns

This book contains; alcohol, anxiety, bullying, death/grief, derogatory terms, drugs (minor), explicit sexual activities/sexual nudity, lying, potentially prurient content, profanity, and sexual harassment.

Adult

By Emily Henry

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CONTENT WARNING

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Adults Only

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226	<p>A desperate sound twists through me, and he spins us around, pushing me onto the table, hiking my skirt up my thighs so he can step in against me.</p> <p>I pull him to me, arching into his touch. His fingers curl around the back of my neck and knot into my hair, his teeth on my throat.</p> <p>“We can’t do this in a library,” I hiss into his mouth, though my hands are still moving, skimming up his back beneath his shirt, nails scraping his skin and leaving goose bumps.</p> <p>He murmurs, tone chiding, “I thought you didn’t want to worry about the rules.”</p> <p>“When it comes to public indecency, it’s less of a rule and more of a federal law,” I whisper.</p> <p>His lips move down my throat, one hand sliding under me to tilt my hips against his, positioning his length against me. Oh, god. “That only counts,” he says, “if we take our clothes off.”</p> <p>The sound I make couldn’t be much less sexy or more dying-feral-animal. “And to be clear,” I get out, “you’re okay with the fact that we’re working together?”</p> <p>He kisses along my collarbone, his voice all gravel. “We both know you won’t go easier on me for it.”</p>
227	<p>“And what about you?” It’s completely absurd that I’m keeping up the charade of having a totally normal conversation while my palms are flattening on the table behind me and my body is lifting unobtrusively, making it easier for his mouth to brush under the collar of my shirt.</p> <p>“I have no interest in going easy on you, Nora,” he says.</p> <p>My fingers snake into his hair, drag down his neck, his pulse humming under my touch. My mind feels like it went straight through a shredder and into a kaleidoscope. His fingers skim up the inside of my thigh until they can go no higher, his eyes watching the progress with an almost drunken sheen.</p> <p>My knees fall open for him. His jaw tightens as he runs his hand over me, featherlight at first and then with more pressure. His fingers slip under the lace, my hips lifting into the motion, no sound in the room but our ragged breath.</p> <p>“You have the red splotches, Nora,” he teases, drawing his lips over my throat. “Are you mad at me?”</p> <p>“Furious,” I pant as his mouth drags lower, one of his hands working the top buttons of my blouse loose. He tugs my bra down until the cool air meets my skin.</p> <p>“Tell me how I can make it up to you,” he murmurs against my chest.</p> <p>I arch back to give him more of me. “That’s a start.”</p> <p>He draws me between his lips and I try not to cry out when a low groan rumbles through him. His hand is under my skirt again, his breath catching against my chest.</p> <p>“You fucking undo me,” he says.</p>

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227	<p>I pull him closer, needing more of him. We're more or less flat on the table now, the inside of my thigh against his hip. I bury my mouth against his throat to stifle the sounds he's drawing out of me.</p> <p>I feel totally out of control, and what's more, I can see how much he likes seeing me like this, and it's only fanning the flame. I want to be out of control. I want him to see me like this and know he's the reason why. His hand roams down my side until it reaches the spike of my heel, hitching my leg higher, coiling it around his hips as we try to get closer.</p> <p>If we had anywhere more private to go, we'd already be gone.</p>
228	<p>"I want to go down on you so badly," he rasps into my mouth, my heart spiking.</p> <p>"I want to go down on you," I tell him.</p> <p>He gives a low laugh. "Everything's a competition with you."</p> <p>I slip my hands beneath his waistband, all of my focus narrowing to the feeling of him, the sound of his breath turning jagged when my grip tightens, his hips shifting to let me have more of him.</p> <p>I have never enjoyed this so much. I'm not sure I've ever enjoyed this, period, but I've also never seen Charlie so uninhibited and I'm drunk on the power.</p> <p>"God," he says, "I need to be inside you."</p> <p>Everything in me pulls taut. "Okay." I nod furiously, and he laughs again.</p> <p>"No, you're right," he says. "Not here."</p> <p>"We don't have many options," I point out.</p> <p>"When we finally do this, Nora," he says, straightening away from me, his hands slipping my buttons back into buttonholes as easily as he undid them, "it's not going to be on a library table, and it's not going to be on a time crunch." He smooths my hair, tucks my blouse back into my skirt, then takes my hips in his hands and guides me off the table, catching me against him. "We're going to do this right. No shortcuts."</p>
277	<p>HIS FINGERS SNAKE into my hair, his tongue dipping between my lips. A sound rises out of me, and he eases me onto the desk. In the past, our connection has been frantic, mindless, but now he's so careful and tender it makes me ache.</p> <p>His fingers brush one of my dress's shoulder ties, tugging the knot loose before moving to the other one. My hands are under his shirt, feeling his smooth, warm skin until it's alive with goose bumps.</p> <p>He tastes like coffee, with a wintergreen edge. His tongue skates over my bottom lip and his hand trails down my side.</p> <p>I pull him closer, and he jerks me to the edge of the desk, his mouth more urgent now, his teeth sinking and releasing as we pull together and draw apart, each breathy gap making the next kiss more needful. His palm rakes up to my chest, his thumb stroking</p>

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277	<p>over my nipple, and I shiver. His heart hammers against me, and mine matches its pace, two metronomes falling into sync.</p> <p>Lightning screams across the sky, followed by a low boom. The fire gutters, then flares. Little by little, Charlie kisses away the ache of these past three weeks. His lips skim my jaw, my throat, his hands moving back to finish unknitting the ties at my shoulders. The bodice of my dress gapes, and my heart spins like a pinwheel beneath his warm breath as his mouth moves down me.</p> <p>I tip my head back, my lungs catching when his tongue brushes the inner curve of my breast. Charlie pushes the fabric lower until warm air meets my skin. His eyes lift to mine as he drops his lips to me, watching me as he</p>
278	<p>draws my nipple into his mouth. When I start to arch, his tongue and teeth carefully skim across my skin.</p> <p>His name slips out of me. Our mouths collide again, deeper, surer. His hand finds the hem of my dress and slips up the inside of my thigh. I widen my knees, his palm grazing higher until it reaches the lacy band at my hips. His other hand does the same, and I lean back, lifting myself so he can gather the fabric and slip it down my legs. His eyes lock with mine, his grip tightening on the creases of my bare hips, as he kneels and brings his lips to the inside of my knee, kissing higher until his mouth sinks between my thighs. I lean back onto my hands, breath going shallow as the heat of his tongue melts against me.</p> <p>I roll my hips into the pressure and he groans, his hand sliding up over my stomach, pressing me back until I'm lying on the desk.</p> <p>I think about suggesting we move. I think about asking if doing this, here, is disrespectful. But then I'm unable to think at all, because his tongue has found a breaker switch in my body, cutting power to my brain entirely.</p> <p>"Nora," he rasps. A small sound of acknowledgment hums out of me. "We shouldn't have waited. We should have been doing this since we met."</p> <p>My hands tangle in his hair. His are under me, cupping me, angling me up to his mouth. Slow, hungry, purposeful. For once nothing between us is happening by accident. The pressure grows until I'm shuddering under him, my hands twisting into his hair as I arch, crying out. He straightens and pulls me back to the edge of the desk, our mouths sliding together, our hands in each other's clothes. I get his shirt off, undo his pants. He peels off my dress, then lifts me and turns to lay me on the couch, his tongue under my bra.</p> <p>"This is the one," he says, almost reverently, "you wore the night we swam."</p> <p>I rake my hands down his back, taking in every firm curve and hard line: my first chance to have as much of him as I want, and also possibly my last. He kisses the base of my throat. "I remember exactly how you feel, Nora. Like fucking silk."</p>

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279	<p>My mouth softens against the side of his neck, his pulse against my tongue. My hands raze down him, pushing past his loosened pants and briefs, my nails biting into his skin as I rock into him. I reach between us, and when I wrap my fingers around him, a burst of too-bright light flashes through me, turning everything to dark, shimmering spots for a second. “I remember how you feel too.”</p> <p>He groans as he moves himself within my hand. I push his pants below his hips. He goes on moving slowly, heavily against me, getting closer and closer to me. No matter how I shift beneath him, he seems always just barely out of reach.</p> <p>Until he’s not. Until his mouth is running urgently over me, and his hands are tearing my bra straps down my arms, and the whole thing winds up bunched around my waist. Then we’re both half-crazed for each other, his hands on my thighs, my mouth on his shoulder, his tongue in my mouth, his erection moving against me until my insides are violin-string taut.</p> <p>“Birth control?” he asks.</p> <p>“Obviously, but—”</p> <p>“Got it,” he says. Of course he does. He’s just like me: even when we’re both out-of-control obsessed with each other there are still a few (dozen) threads holding reason in place. Charlie moves off me, finds his wallet, and comes back with a condom, no further questions asked, no huffing, no hint at frustration, no implied uptight, nag, or bore. He tucks his hand against my jaw and kisses me with a tenderness I feel all through my body, all these little pockets of warmth nestled between bones and muscle and cartilage: Charlie, diffused into my bloodstream. And then finally, he’s pushing into me.</p> <p>Slowly. Carefully. He draws back before I’ve gotten any relief, and a laugh rattles out of him at the sound I make. “I had no idea it was possible,” he says, “for you to want me as much as I want you.”</p> <p>“More,” I say, too deep into this now to second-guess admitting something like that.</p> <p>“Now, that,” Charlie says, pushing deeper this time, “I know is impossible.” I lift myself up, drawing him closer. His head tips back and a</p>
280	<p>groan rises in his throat. As we move together, the world goes soft and dark, everything shrinking to the points where our bodies meet. His hands massaging me, his mouth unraveling mine, my nails digging into the contours of him to urge him closer than our bodies let us get.</p> <p>I’m already sad at the thought of this ending. If I could make the feeling last for days, I would. If the world was ending in twenty minutes, this is how I’d want to go out. He thrusts deeper, harder.</p> <p>“Fuck, Charlie.”</p> <p>“Too hard?” he asks, slowing.</p>

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280	<p>I shake my head. He understands. No more caution or restraint.</p> <p>“I thought about you everywhere,” he says. “There’s nowhere in this town we haven’t done this.”</p> <p>Half laughing even as I’m wrapped around him, ravenous, I ask, “How was it?”</p> <p>“My imagination’s not as good as I thought.”</p> <p>My brain feels like fireworks across a black sky. Charlie sits up and pulls me into his lap, pushing back into me. I brace my hands on the back of the couch, working myself against him harder, until every tilt and roll of my hips has him swearing into my skin.</p> <p>One of his hands winds into my hair, the other flattens on my back, holding me where he wants me.</p> <p>“I want more of you,” I gasp into his mouth, feeling each beat of his heart surging through me. Harder, faster, more, all.</p> <p>“You’re perfect,” he rasps. “That’s the word, Nora. You’re fucking perfect.”</p> <p>Oh, God. Oh, God. Charlie, on repeat in my mind. “Please,” I say.</p> <p>After that, there is no more talking. I have never been so glad for someone to see straight through me, to read me like a book, as he brings me to the edge again, and again, and—yes, the romance gods would be proud—again.</p>

Profanity & Sexual or Derogatory Terms	Count
Ass / Jackass / Asshole etc.	22
Bitch	5
Breast / Tit	2
Fuck, Fucker, Fucking, etc.	53
Penis	3
Piss	1
Shit / Bullshit etc.	32
Whore	1
Slut	1
Sacrilegious & other offensive language usage	Count
Damn	1
God / God damn etc.	33
Hell	20
Lord	1