



The Kiss Quotient

By Helen Hoang

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Genre and Subject

Romance fiction
Man-women relationships
Asperger's syndrome

Synopsis

Stella Lane thinks math is the only thing that unites the universe. She comes up with algorithms to predict customer purchases—a job that has given her more money than she knows what to do with, and way less experience in the dating department than the average thirty-year-old.

It doesn't help that Stella has Asperger's and French kissing reminds her of a shark getting its teeth cleaned by pilot fish. Her conclusion: she needs lots of practice—with a professional. Which is why she hires escort Michael Phan. The Vietnamese and Swedish stunner can't afford to turn down Stella's offer, and agrees to help her check off all the boxes on her lesson plan—from foreplay to more-than-missionary position...

As Michael and Stella's no-nonsense partnership takes them out of the bedroom and into a fulltime practice relationship, being together starts making a strange kind of sense. And the pattern that emerges will convince Stella that love is the best kind of logic...

Author Biography

Helen Hoang read her first romance novel in eighth grade and has been addicted to love stories ever since. A graduate of Cornell University, she left the snow for Southern California, where she lives with her husband, two kids, pet fish, and Belgian Malinois.

Discussion Starters

1. Prior to reading this book, how would you have imagined an autistic woman? How does Stella compare to this vision?
2. Stella was surprised when she heard her coworker Philip James had been asked out by their new intern. When it comes to heterosexual relationships, do you think men should be the initiators? What does it say about a woman if she asks out a man?
3. Does it surprise you to see an autistic person exploring a sexual relationship? If so, why?
4. With regards to autism, people are divided between using person-first language (i.e. "person with autism") and identity-first language (i.e. "autistic person"). One of the main arguments for person-first language is that it separates a person from their mental disorders. Many autistic people, on the other hand, prefer identity-first language because they believe autism is an intrinsic part of who they are and have no wish for a "cure." Which do you think is right? Do you think it can depend on each person's individual circumstances and preferences? How did you feel when Stella tried to make herself fresh and fantastic? Why did you feel that way?
5. What do you think of a man with Michael's Friday night profession? How does that compare to your impression of a woman with that profession? If gender makes a difference, why is that?
6. How does Michael's daytime profession affect his attractiveness?
7. Throughout the book, Michael worries he's inherited his father's "badness," that it was passed down in his blood. Do you think this is illogical? Are you able to empathize with him? If so, how?
8. Is love alone enough? Can people with different cultures, education levels, and wealth be together in the long run? How can they make it work?

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