



# Normal rules don't apply

By Kate, Atkinson

First published in 2023

## Genre and Subject

*Queens -- Fiction*

*Deals -- Fiction*

*Short stories*

*Linked stories*

*Secretaries -- Fiction*

*Horses -- Fiction*

## Synopsis

A dazzling collection of eleven interconnected stories from the bestselling, award-winning author of *Shrines of Gaiety* and *Life After Life*, with everything that readers love about her novels—the inventiveness, the verbal felicity, the sharp observations on human nature, and the deeply satisfying emotional wallop. In this brilliant volume, nothing is quite as it seems. We meet a queen who makes a bargain she cannot keep; a secretary who watches over the life she has just left; a lost man who bets on a horse that may-or may not-have spoken to him. Everything that readers love about the novels of Kate Atkinson is here—the inventiveness, the verbal felicity, the sharp observations on human nature, and the deeply satisfying emotional wallop. Witty and wise, with subtle connections between the stories, *Normal Rules Don't Apply* is a startling and funny feast for the imagination, stories with the depth and bite to create their own fully-formed worlds.

## Author Biography

Kate Atkinson is one of the world's foremost novelists. She won the Costa Book of the Year prize with her first novel, *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*. Her three critically lauded and prize-winning novels set around the Second World War are *Life After Life*, an acclaimed 2022 BBC TV series starring Thomasin McKenzie, *A God in Ruins* (both winners of the Costa Novel Award) and *Transcription*. Her bestselling literary crime novels featuring former detective Jackson Brodie, *Case Histories*, *One Good Turn*, *When Will There Be Good News?* and *Started Early, Took My Dog*, became a BBC television series starring Jason Isaacs. Jackson Brodie later returned in the novel *Big Sky*. Kate Atkinson was awarded an MBE in 2011 and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

## Discussion Starters

1. What was your favourite part of the book?
2. What was your least favourite?
3. Did you race to the end, or was it more of a slow burn?
4. What did you think of the writing? What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?
5. What surprised you most about the book?
6. How did your opinion of the book change as you read it?
7. Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world? Do you think you'll remember it in a few months or years?
8. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others? How does the book's title work in relation to the book's contents? If you could give the book a new title, what would it be?
9. Is this book overrated or underrated?
10. Did this book remind you of any other books?
11. Would you ever consider re-reading it? Why or why not?
12. Are there lingering questions from the book you're still thinking about?
13. Did the book strike you as original?
14. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?

## If you liked this book, you may also like...

- *Table for two* by Amor, Towles.
- *Hera* by Saint, Jennifer.

Author biography from <https://www.abbey.com.au/book/normal-rules-dont-apply-short-stories-9780857529190.do;jsessionid=4556E3DB94A876054CCE9B912352533C>