

Expiration Dates

by Rebecca Serle



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *IN FIVE YEARS* and *ONE ITALIAN SUMMER* comes a love story that will define a generation.

Being single is like playing the lottery. There's always the chance that with one piece of paper you could win it all.

Daphne Bell believes the universe has a plan for her. Every time she meets a new man, she receives a slip of paper with his name and a number on it --- the exact amount of time they will be together. The papers told her she'd spend three days with Martin in Paris, five weeks with Noah in San Francisco, and three months with Hugo, her ex-boyfriend turned best friend. Daphne has been receiving the numbered papers for over 20 years, always wondering when there might be one without an expiration. Finally, the night of a blind date at her favorite Los Angeles restaurant, there's only a name: Jake.

But as Jake and Daphne's story unfolds, Daphne finds herself doubting the paper's prediction and wrestling with what it means to be both committed and truthful. Because Daphne knows things Jake doesn't, information that --- if he found out --- would break his heart.

Told with her signature warmth and insight into matters of the heart, Rebecca Serle has finally set her sights on romantic love. The result is a gripping, emotional, passionate and (yes) heartbreaking novel about what it means to be single, what it means to find love, and ultimately how we define each of them for ourselves. *EXPIRATION DATES* is the one fans have been waiting for.

Discussion Guide

1. When we first learn about Daphne's slips of paper, she says, "Something else has always called the shots in my life ---

call it the universe, fate, the comedic force of timing.? How does this set up the conversation about destiny versus choice throughout the novel?

2. In chapter 4, Daphne says, ?But I still wanted forever love. I still wanted my perfect mate, my smiling husband. I?d picture the white tulle dress and the lace veil and a man who was kind and attractive and who my parents loved, because why not.? How is Daphne?s description of her perfect man different at the end of the novel?

3. How does Daphne dating Jake differ from the versions of her with previous men? How does she change over the course of their relationship and for what reasons?

4. Hugo is one of the most important people in Daphne?s life. How does their relationship change over the course of the novel, and how does Hugo contribute to Daphne?s understanding of happiness for herself?

5. When Jake asks Daphne to move in with him, what does Daphne?s reaction tell us about what this next step in the relationship means for her? What are the factors that make her want to say yes, or say no?

6. There?s a major twist in the novel regarding Daphne?s health. Why do you think the author decided to introduce the twist where she did, and how does it contribute to the larger message of the novel?

7. Why do you think Daphne felt she had to keep her health condition and her slips of paper a secret? Why does she ultimately decide to divulge that information?

8. In chapter 25, after Hugo, Jake and Daphne have dinner together, Jake says, ?I feel for him, Daphne? It?s not his fault he?s still in love with you.? What was your reaction to that scene?

9. Similarly to Daphne, Jake brings his own history and baggage into their relationship. How does Jake?s past affect his relationship with Daphne?

10. We discover toward the end of the novel that Hugo wrote Jake?s note, starting Daphne and Jake?s relationship. Why do you think Hugo did what he did, and how does it speak to the core question of destiny versus choice at the heart of the novel?

11. Sense of environment is a major theme in many Rebecca Serle novels, and this time she set the novel in Los Angeles. What parts of LA came alive for you, and how was the story enriched by this setting?

12. Were you surprised that Jake and Daphne did not end up together? What do you think this means for Daphne?s journey and her resolution at the end of the book?

13. One of the last lines of the novel reads, ?*Goodbye*, I think, although that is not the right word. What I mean is something else, something that is not possible to convey in a singular expression. Something that is not at all an ending.? What do you think Daphne means by this?

Author Bio

Rebecca Serle is the *New York Times* bestselling author of EXPIRATION DATES, ONE ITALIAN SUMMER, IN FIVE YEARS, THE DINNER LIST, and the young adult novels THE EDGE OF FALLING and WHEN YOU WERE MINE. Serle also developed the hit TV adaptation "Famous in Love," based on her YA series of the same name. She is a graduate of USC and The New School and lives in Los Angeles with her husband.

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