

Read-Your-Own Romance
THE BIG DAY OFF

by Adam Deverell

Read-Your-Own Romance - The Big Day Off!
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Have you ever had to make a decision? Not something really important. Just a simple decision. Like, which jeans to wear out Saturday night. Or what TV show you'll watch tonight.

Insignificant?

Maybe.

But every decision you make can lead you down different paths.

Some paths are golden and syrupy.

Some are rocky and treacherous.

This series is about decisions such as these.

**Are you ready to read
and make your choices?**

1 Dream Lover

'And, ACTION!'

'I love you,' says Kyle, as he cups his hands gently around your face and draws your lips to his.

You're going to kiss Kyle Kissmore! Is there anything in the universe more beautiful, more cosmically delicious, than this?

Ever since you became a famous actor in Spunky Hunks, one of the world's most popular soaps, there has never been a dull moment. You've had glossy photographs in Teen-Zeen Magazine and an economy brand of perfume named after you. And, of course, you get to kiss heart-throbs like Kyle Kissmore.

You have such a wonderful life!

Oh Kyle!' you sigh. But before your eager lips can touch his, he suddenly grasps you by the shoulders and begins to shake you.

'Do I have to drag you out of bed?' he shouts.

Kyle, what are you doing?'

'Getting you out of bed, lazy.'

Why is Kyle treating you this way? 'But I want to kiss you,' you cry.

You open your eyes.

Instead of the smooth adoring face of Kyle, you're staring at . . . your mother.

She shakes her head and mutters, 'I don't think I can cope with much more of this.'

You lie despondently under the covers. It should have been the perfect ending to the greatest dream ever. But now the dream has ended and reality awaits. And that means school!

Worse still it's Monday morning. So it's Calculus and Science. Another day of thinking up reasons for not having done your home-work. Then on to dissect innocent little frogs. Is there anything worse than Mondays?

'Morning, ugly!' yells your brother, barging into your room.

'Get out you little centipede!' you scream diplomatically.

'What're you doing today?' he demands.

Boy, what a totally zero-head question!

Reluctantly you answer him. 'I'm going to school.'

'Why?'

He's getting dumber by the day. 'Because it's Monday and on Mondays I go to school. Weird, isn't it?'

'But it's Curriculum Day.'

Curriculum Day! C-Day is for teachers from your school, Lower Heights College, to sit in their staffrooms, complain, and dream up more tortures for innocent students.

You'd completely forgotten. It's C-Day! There's no school. THERE'S NO SCHOOL!

'I love you!' you cry, giving your shocked brother a kiss. 'THERE'S NO SCHOOL!'

You collapse back into bed feeling almost as happy as if you'd found your special shade of super-brill lipgloss on sale for half price.

You lie in bed feeling great. It's C-Day. What to do with an entire day alone? It doesn't get any better than this. Your mother and father at work, and your brother, as always, playing video games with his zero-head friends.

Right, when your family is gone, the fun begins.

Meantime, your dad's having his usual early morning panic attack. 'Has anyone seen my tie? It's disappeared off the face of the earth!'

'Are you wearing it?' your mother asks helpfully.

'Thanks dear, I'm not that stupid. I'm sure if I was wearing my tie I'd notice . . . ' his voice trails off as he looks down at his tie.

Several hectic minutes later they're ready to leave. As usual, everyone takes turns giving you advice.

'Keep the house tidy and the door locked.'

'Have a constructive day doing homework.'

'If you look in my drawers, I'll kill you.'

Today nothing can spoil your mood. 'See you all tonight,' you chirp.

Now, how to spend a glorious day alone?

What a pity your best friend Petula Silver has the measles, or together you would take C-Day apart.

You're on your own and right now you feel like doing two things, both requiring low levels of brain power and energy – sleep and TV!

If you want to stay in bed and continue your affair with fame, fortune and Kyle Kissmore, slip under the covers on

[11 Dream On](#)

OR

Today is perfect for catching up on TV so grab the remote control and turn to

[16 Switch On](#)

2 Freaky Fallout

Your bedroom cupboard looms ominously over you. You reach out to tug the door open, feeling like an explorer ready to begin a journey of awesome discovery.

But the cupboard door won't move.

You pull a little harder, and then you tug with all your might.

It's no good. The door is stuck fast.

Maybe, if you wedge your metal ruler between the cracks, you could pry it loose. You slide the ruler in and give it a good shake.

You hear the wood screech angrily as it resists. Slowly, very slowly, the door is opening. Your hand shakes nervously. What lies waiting to be found within these dark inner recesses?

You grasp the handle and with several violent jerks the door opens at last.

Clothes, school folders, shoes, sport equipment, dolls and old CDs come tumbling down like a huge wave. It dumps you onto the ground with force and fury.

You scream and flay your arms around trying to keep afloat, but it's no good. This thing is bigger than you.

Beneath the sea of debris it is dark, and you fear you may drown. After a quick bout of hysterics you settle down. You can't move your arms or legs. You can only lie still, hope and wait.

Six desperate hours pass and you have almost lost any hope of rescue.

Where are your parents when you need them? They're probably on a coffee break at work, fighting over triple-layered chocolate cookies.

Finally the door opens and you hear the welcome sound of footsteps.

'Boy, is your sister's room messy!'

It's Ronald, your brother's best friend. You desperately try to cry out, but your voice is just a muffled squeak.

Your brother is with him. 'Yeah, she's a real pig. Wow, this is really messy, even for her. Dad's gonna kill her. C'mon Ronny, let's go look at my basketball cards.'

Your longed-for rescuers hurry away down the hall.

'Get back here you little creeps,' you wheeze.

It's too late, they're gone. An entire C-Day spent under a mound of rubbish. What a waste.

Still, you've learned a valuable lesson. Some things in life are better left unopened.

End

3 Love and Kisses

'No, Dean, stop!'

Dean reluctantly pulls away. You may have ruined your chance of kissing one of the most gorgeous guys on the planet.

'Sorry dude. I drive in the fast lane, looks like you're stuck in first gear.'

'I beg your pardon?'

'You're a babe, don't get me wrong. But you're a ba-by as well. Know what I'm sayin'?'

You know what Dean is saying, and it's absolute rubbish. You're not going to put up with this, even from a Surf-God. 'Are you calling me immature just because I don't want to get with a pizza boy I hardly know?'

'Hey dude,' says Dean, 'sorry for upsetting ya. I'm out of here.'

He jumps from the sofa and makes for the door. Wow, does he have the best set of legs ever. How can you let a pair of legs like his walk out of your life?

'Dean, wait.'

'Yeah dude?'

'Um.' (Think, girl, think. You've got to make Dean see you're not a baby, but you're not one of his beach bimbos either.) 'Have you ever had a girlfriend you really liked?' You're not really sure where you're going with this. At least it stops Dean before he leaves.

He thinks this over. 'You mean really like?'

You nod your head.

'Man, that's a tough one. Um, there've been a few girls I liked a lot, but not really, really liked.'

'So you've never been in love?'

'Yeah, I'm in love right at this moment. I'm in love with my board and my jeep.'

'I meant with a girl.'

'Oh,' says Dean getting your drift, 'right, with a chick. Nope, I haven't. Weird, hey?'

Now you have him. 'Do you know why you've never been in love?'

'Cause I haven't met a supermodel yet?' he replies seriously.

'No,' you sigh. (Dean is as shallow as a rock pool when the tide's out.) 'It's because you go for looks and not the person. And you're too fast. You should get to know the girl first. No one can fall in love with somebody just because they're a great kisser.'

You expect him to say, 'Well, I could.' Instead he shakes his shaggy dog hair. 'Yeah, I see what you're sayin'. Cool idea.'

'Then you can kiss them.' You still haven't forgotten Dean's luscious lips so close to yours.

'Gnarly idea. I'm gonna try it. Thanks dude!'

You're disappointed to see him leave. Still, sorting out Dean's love life gives you a feeling of satisfaction. Maybe you could be a relationship therapist when you're older? Not as good as a surfie-chick, but worth thinking about.

End

4 The Poetry of Love

You can feel the cogs slowly grinding inside your brain. You never thought that it could be so difficult writing about happy and joyful feelings. Why is it you can't think of one good thing in your life?

There must be something!

How about –

- shopping
- shooting three-pointers in basketball
- gossiping about cute boys
- getting full marks in an Algebra test.

Oh sure, how can you possibly write a poem about Algebra?

Question five is driving me up a tree,
What on earth is the answer to $4x-8b$?

No, that's silly.

Real poetry is about love, leaves falling upon wet grass and the rising moon. The only problem is you don't care about trees or the sky. You want to write about something that interests you.

How about puppy dogs? They're so cute and cuddly, you're sure you could write a poem about puppy dogs.

We had a beautiful pup named Jip,
But the back of the sofa he loved to rip.
Also Dad's paper and his shoes,
The morning papers and a computer fuse.
Finally when he smashed our best china dish
We had to settle for a boring goldfish.

You like this poem, though it makes you sad to think about Jip being sent away to Uncle Derick's farm and replaced with a goldfish. Your dad said he'd be happier rolling in cow manure than stuck inside sleeping by your brother's feet. You can't see why. Your brother's feet would be just as smelly.

Oh, what's the use? If the most interesting thing you can write about is Jip, you must lead a boring life. Why can't you write about Hawaii in summer, or travelling down the Nile in a bark canoe?

Because you're just a schoolgirl and only grown-ups get to do anything remotely exciting. But all that's ages away, and you don't want to wait that long.

And why should you?

You can look like a sophisticated woman if you want to! In fact you're going to begin dressing and behaving like one today. Then you'll be able to write truly wonderful poetry.

There's a sale at Sunnyworth Shoppingtown. In search of a more mature wardrobe, turn to
[40 Shop Till You Drop](#)

OR

You've read that a woman's greatest weapon is her cosmetic bag. To check your mother's
artillery, turn to
[10 It's a Cover-Up](#)

5 Pedal to the Metal

'Here goes nothing,' you shout and jam down the accelerator.

Your go-kart surges towards a tight corner.

Vic slows to a crawl as he negotiates the tricky turn giving you your chance. With the engine revving like a chainsaw, your kart nips between Vic and the inside of the track.

You're going to pass him on the curve. What a fantastic manoeuvre, and against the National Champion.

You are too confident. You come out of the corner sharply. The kart spins out of control, hits the barrier at high speed and strikes a safety tyre.

You crash out of the track and soar into the air. All you can do is hold on.

You might be okay, if it wasn't for the concrete wall ahead. You strike it hard and somebody turns off the lights.

'Yes, it's a miracle she's not seriously injured. But what I'm worried about is whose car she'll be learning to drive in.'

'She can't drive my little car. It couldn't take a knock like that go-kart received.'

'Well, she certainly isn't driving mine. It took eleven years of overtime to save for that car. I'm not having her smash it into some great concrete pole.'

'It's your fault she drives like a maniac, she takes after you!'

You struggle to shake off the pile of bricks that seems to be strapped to your head. Where are you? Who are you? And who are these two loud, vulgar people arguing by your bed?

'Go away, I want to get some sleep. My head hurts,' you cry.

'Thank goodness you're okay. We were so worried,' says the woman with a nose like a toucan bird.

'Did you hit your head?' asks the man with a bad hairstyle.

'Of course I hit my head you silly baboon, what do you think this bump is? A mosquito bite?'

'Why you cheeky little . . .' says the baboon crossly.

'Dear, remember she's had a nasty accident. She's not herself.'

'Yeah, listen to what granny is saying, pops.'

'Granny!' the toucan bird screams. 'I'm not even fifty.'

'Calm down,' says the baboon. 'Remember, she's not herself.'

'Of course I'm myself, who else would I be?' you cry. What a ridiculous thing to say. Everybody knows who you are – the most famous racing driver ever who's just about to win your fifth race in a row.

If you could only get back to the race . . .

'Will you two go and check the engine's air pressure and change the oil in the car? Wet slicks would be best for the next big race.'

Now, where are the brakes and steering wheel in this bed?

End

of this story and your chance of learning to drive in your dad's car.

6 Glorious Food!

The kitchen cupboard is like a display centre of the food groups. Sorted in neat rows are apples, wholemeal pasta, muesli, health bread and free-range eggs.

Just the sort of food for a growing girl watching her figure and facial blemishes.

Then why do you have such a craving for gooey, oily hamburgers and a can of Passion-Pop?

Face it, today is the perfect chance to guts out. You're ready to whack together something high in calories and sugar, while incredibly low in nutritional value.

You have the entire day, so why not make a meal of it? But, what to make?

In cooking classes you blitzed with sweet pancakes. Your mouth waters as you imagine a stack of golden pancakes dripping with syrup and melted ice cream.

Then again pancakes means cooking and cooking means work. Slaving over a hotplate surrounded by messy bowls and leftover ingredients tends to spoil things.

Now home-delivered pizza, that's different. There's nothing like a Super Eater Beater from Big Tony's Pizza, especially with extra garlic bread and a free bottle of Passion-Pop.

You have to decide fast. Your stomach tells you to hurry up. It wants food and it wants food now.

If you feel pancakes smothered in syrup are the way to go, turn up the heat on

[46 Stack 'em Up](#)

OR

It's not often you can gorge an entire Super Eater Beater by yourself. If you want to ring Big Tony's, pick up the phone and start ordering on

[41 Extra Cheese, Please](#)

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