



Girl Friend & Other Mysteries of Love

Charles P. Ries

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*“They’re complex,
these things we
build our hearts around.”*

Times change. People change. Places change. The good and the bad comes and goes. We move in circles; we move in lines; we move in slow motion. The more things change, the more they remain the same. But one thing remains constant through all of time and place:

Love.

This book is a meditation on the ebb and flow of love in these changing times. The screw-ups, suck-ups, epiphanies, black holes, celestial awakenings, and confusions of the thing considered mystical to some, and impossible to others. Told from the perspective of a middle-aged lover-in-training, these poems have all the joy, all the pain, and all the wonder, but resonate through eyes that have traveled a few miles down that sometimes-lonesome highway of romance.

A book of meaning, wonder, laughter, and tears that women will adore... but don't be fooled, men, because you'll root for it, too! While the women are smiling in romantic bliss, you men will be wondering where this "guidebook" has been all your lives. Romance is not dead! Knuckleheads still abound! Love, sweet love is still the kindest medicine of them all.

It takes an experienced traveler to understand what to make of love. Charles P. Ries is guide, guru, therapist, participant, and equal-opportunity opportunist, as well as the blind leading the lost. Yet, through it all, his true north remains *love*, and his destination remains this singular realization of what it is to be fully alive and human.

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### Sample:

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Influences of Light

It happens each early summer.
She backs off her anti-depressants,
thinking more UV rays can substitute
for her drugs. She comes out swinging,
determined to reclaim what is
rightfully hers.

For a day or a week, she's a warrior
but quickly fades into a humble,
tumble, pile of bewilderment. (It's
hard to sustain determination on

just sunlight. Warmth alone isn't
enough to help you think straight.)

Following her short freedom flight,
she becomes earthbound, a cloud
that hovers low against a county trunk
road— a vaporous curtain that flattens
and abducts you.

But you drive on, and eventually pass
through it, through her. And bring her to
a small hill where you ask her to look
a great distance and remember tomorrow
or yesterday or her true nature with the ease
of her winter-fresh mind.

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**Readers say:**

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“In this book, Ries successfully turns trope into transcendence. As he debunks the mythology of Cupid with deft humor and insight, Ries simultaneously invokes the nine muses, morphing himself into a modern-day Cyrano de Bergerac, an inimitable inamorato brimming with Bodhisattva wit and Casanova charm. Forget all you know about Venus and Mars! Here, you'll find eros, phileo, and agape kindled in brilliant coalescence, ready for the reverential caress of your mind's naked eye. Make no mistake, these are poems you'll want to know by heart.” —Charles Nevsimal, Editor/Publisher at Centennial Press

“Ries' poems reveal a certain vulnerability as he reflects on his relationships. These poems are written beautifully and have such a unique and quiet voice to them. His search to have the mystery of love answered, is answered. This book is meaningful, sad, witty, intimate, delicate, and extraordinarily good. These poems read like little elegies full of heart. An honesty we all crave.” —Gloria Mindock, Editor/Publisher at Cervena Barva Press

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If you liked this book, please also check out Ries' book, **The Fathers We Find**: amzn.com/B00854K2M4.

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Teresa Sullivan:

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Bernice Capps:

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