



## Not Another Happy Ending

*David Solomons*

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Sometimes love needs a re-write...

Novelisation by David Solomons (BAFTA nominated screenwriter of The Fabulous Bagel Boys, Five Children and It) of the quirky romantic comedy film Not Another Happy Ending, starring Karen Gillan (Amy Pond in Dr Who; Nebula in the forthcoming Marvel movie, Guardians of the Galaxy), French actor Stanley Weber (Therese Desqueyroux, Henry V, Borgia) and Freya Manov (Skins).

With her debut novel, Happy Ending, JANE LOCKHART pulled off that rare double - critical acclaim and mainstream success.

But now, with just the last chapter of the follow-up book to write, she encounters crippling writer's block. She has no idea how her story ends...

This is not good news for her publisher, TOM DUVAL. His company is up against the wall financially and the only thing that will save him is a massive hit, in the form of Jane's next novel.

When he discovers that his most important author is blocked, Tom realises that he has to unblock her or he's finished. Everyone knows that you have to be unhappy to be really creative, so Tom decides that the only way he's going to get her to complete the novel is to make her life a misery...

Set within the Scottish publishing industry, and filmed against a stunning backdrop of both romantic and hip Glasgow locations, Not Another Happy Ending is perfect for fans of One Day

## Not Another Happy Ending Details

Date : Published January 31st 2014 by Mira (first published September 19th 2013)

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Author : David Solomons

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## From Reader Review Not Another Happy Ending for online ebook

### Lucinda says

A fabulously fun rom-com about love, sponge cake and the trouble with happy endings!

\*Out now on DVD\* is '*not another happy ending*' as a movie with Karen Gillan {Doctor Who star}, which I am now excited to see having read David Solomon's book. This Harlequin romance is sassy, sophisticated and full of heartfelt sincerity that will entertain for many hours and leave you feeling warm and fuzzy inside. If you enjoy classic chick-lit and humorous stories, such as Amanda Foreman or Trisha Ashley etc. then you will simply love this! Hugely funny and packed full of melting moments, I was swept away by a dreamy tale that highlights how happiness can be found very unexpectedly.

Short Synopsis ~

*Jane is a bestselling author who encounters 'writers block' after huge success. Her ex and editor Tom is determined to see her write another novel, in the hopes that his publishing house will stay afloat. Ironically Jane's blissful happiness is the key to unlocking her writing...and so Tom sets about making her life a misery if only for his own personal agenda.*

This light read can be read in a single sitting, as the characters and storyline are so convincing and likeable that it's easy to plunge into the book. I would recommend this to fans of the genre who seek a new story to add to their bookshelf that definitely doesn't disappoint! I would like to thank the author and publishers for providing copies on Goodreads, for first-read giveaways.

3.5 Stars

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### BestChickLit.com says

This was not at all the book I was expecting to read from the cover and the blurb, which is actually quite ironic considering the subject matter. I was expecting something a little less substantial and definitely less bleak to start out. Knowing Glasgow, however, the rain was definitely a given. Once I had started to read, I very quickly became utterly engrossed and the book came everywhere with me; reading it walking to work, in my break, etc. We were inseparable, which was a little unfortunate for *Not Another Happy Ending* as I was so involved in the wee Highland cottage whilst walking home from work – I didn't notice how dark it had become until I was unceremoniously pelted with rain from behind and we were both drenched through. My copy is now rather the worse for the experience!

The writing style is extremely gripping and although there may or may not be a happy ending, the journey to the last page is somewhat gothic in its style and this is in part what made it a completely gripping read, with a lot of entertaining subtext and flashes of comedic brilliance, as well as gritty Glaswegian darkness. Each person in the story was depicted true to character from beginning to end and they almost all worked their way into your heart even if they appeared grim or downright angry initially, and you just can't help rooting for them all.

Mr Solomons also kept true to Scottish roots without being too over the top, whilst including a little international flavour. It is a well-rounded and down to earth novel that entertains whilst also stretching the mind of the reader just a little. If I were you I wouldn't be hanging around reading this, I would be buying the real deal!

reviewed by Noemie T Verlan on behalf of BestChapLit.com

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### **Amalia Gavea says**

***"Why is it that the saddest endings always seem the truest? In the stories I told myself I was always the heroine - always reaching for my happy ending."***

This is a delightful, cute, deliciously quirky love story. A story of two young people who are complete opposites. An intelligent and talented writer and an obnoxious, fierce publisher.

It is an engaging light read for a bookish person that doesn't really enjoy romance that much. Jane is a wonderful character, her thoughts and motions mirroring her hometown. Tom is the Riviera bon vivant who, despite his *joie de vivre* lifestyle, means business when it comes to finding and publishing new writers. The story takes place in Glasgow, one of my favourite cities in Europe. A city that is quirky and hip, and incredibly bleak when it wills so. Another element that gives a special "something" to the novel is the presence of none other than Jane Austen. Yes, there are numerous references to her, and Elizabeth Bennet, Anne Elliot and Marianne Dashwood have their own cameos.

I am not sure whether this is an original novel or a novelization of the 2013 British film, starring Karen Gillan as Jane, and the dashing Stanley Weber as Tom. The film is brilliant, by the way, as is the book. Watch the one, read the other. Thank me later.

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### **Ingo says**

As a fan of female Red-Heads, Scotland, and filmed books I had to buy this, but have yet to read it and just ordered the movie on DVD (no Blu-ray yet, which is a shame! - written February 19th, 2017).

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### **Sumati Arora says**

Ironical title....completely but then again....its chick lit!!! I don't understand why is boy meet girl, they fall in love and lived happily every after concept so appealing to the masses???

Why couldn't this genuinely have been a not so happy ending....the book was going in the perfect direction and then the same cliche ending.

Loved the style but not so much the story of this one. The narrative technique the attention to detailed characterization and all is great but still doesn't make up for my disappointment in the ending.

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## **Emma says**

Interesting insights into the publishing industry!

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## **Bree T says**

Jane Lockhart has a whole pile of rejections from publishers. In fact she has them pinned up on the wall and refers to it as her Board of Pain. However she's not giving up – although she's exhausted most of the publishers and agents, she prints yet another copy of her manuscript and takes it to Tristes Books, a local publisher in Glasgow. It's owned and run by a Frenchman named Tom Duval who is famous for falling out with authors he's published. And several that he hasn't.

Despite what he sees is a terrible title, Tom sees potential in Jane's manuscript and he decides to publish it. It's exactly the sort of work he's been looking for and he pushes her hard during edits, ripping apart her work and stitching it back together again. All of that time spent together is getting to the both of them and before the edit is done they're blurring the lines between business and pleasure.

Jane's book is successful for Tristes and Jane has one more book to deliver to them to fulfill her two book contract. However – she's blocked. She can't decide upon the ending. Her and Tom fizzled out not long after he published her first book and now, as per Jane's request, they don't see each other. Tom decides that Jane's problem is that she's just too happy. The success of her first novel has made her much happier, which is why she cannot write. So he resolves to make all aspects of her life miserable. That way she will finish the novel and deliver Tristes Books from the grim fate that awaits them without it. Tom needs this book – without it he will certainly lose his business and livelihood.

But maybe Tom has it wrong about what it is that's causing Jane's block. And maybe he's wrong about what he needs as well.

So I'm a little bit in two minds about this book.

When I started it, I thought I was going to love it. The first 50p flew by and made me laugh. I liked Tom Duval, a Frenchman who has made his way to Glasgow and decided to stay. He's somewhat temperamental and has a habit of making his writers cry and storm out (and that's just the beginning). Jane has had a horrid childhood and she has poured all of that pain into her first manuscript, laughably entitled *The Endless Anguish of my Father*. When Tom first receives it, he pitches it into the bin and it's only because he needs to kill something (a fly I think?) that he retrieves it and ends up reading it. He immediately knows he can publish it, although he has to fix it first. The interactions between Tom and Jane were interesting and crackled off the page. I was surprised, given the blurb, how long it took for the book to reach the part where Tom and Jane part ways and Jane is working on her second book. And that's where it started to slide a bit for me.

Although I kind of understand Tom's reasoning in wanting to hurry Jane along in finishing her second manuscript, because his company is in serious trouble and he needs to publish something with a successful name behind it, some of the stunts he pulled...kind of sat uncomfortably with me. I know it's intended to be

humour and Tom is kind of emotionally underdeveloped as a person but he was intending to hurt Jane quite a bit and make her really miserable. Now if this was written making Tom the publisher from hell, with zero romantic interest, I might've enjoyed it a lot more. But I found it quite weird that Tom was obviously in love with Jane (and she him as well) but he was intending to do these horrible things to her to make her miserable so that she might write. A couple of them were harmless and the one that would've done some severe, severe damage to Jane's mental state and her very fledgling relationship with someone important to her doesn't actually come off but the point is, Tom still tried to destroy things to her that were important.

I enjoyed the portion of the book where Jane and Tom worked together to edit her first novel: their discussions, their unorthodox ways of working together, their tipping over into sexual attraction, that all worked for me. I liked Tom during that section of the book, in all his moody French glory. I didn't like him quite so much in the second half of the book although I did really enjoy his employee/friend Roddy. Roddy wavers between the voice of reason and willing accomplice in some of Tom's more outlandish attempts to make Jane miserable so that she can finish her book. Some of the interactions between Tom and Roddy were quite funny and might even be the highlights of the book. Unfortunately, I found the interactions between Jane and Darsie really difficult to get into. I think that sort of thing in a book is something a reader either really loves or doesn't get at all. I'm in the 'don't really get it' camp.

So....two minds. The first part is a thumbs up but not the second part unfortunately.

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### Namratha says

Self-doubting thomasina, **Jane Lockhart**, is a debut author. And she is facing rejections galore. But finally, her angst-ridden novel seems to have caught the eye of **Tom Duval**, volatile owner of independent (and sinking) publishing house: Tristesse Books. After many long sessions of brutal editing and verbal foreplay, Jane's book is published and she earns the double victory of critical acclaim and mainstream approval. Oh, and she bumped uglies with dashing Tom Duval along the way.

But then Duval had to go and commit (*in Jane's eyes*) a heinous error and they parted ways. Jane still has a two-book contract with Tristesse Books. And Duval's crumbling financial future rests on Jane delivering her second book on time. She, however, has a bad case of Writer's Block; a block brought about by Jane's newfound happiness. Jane is by nature, an *auteur misérable*, who can only allow her pen to metaphorically bleed (or her laptop to sadly clack, as the case may be) when she is filled with misery, despair and melancholy. And so, Duval comes up with a fiendish set of ploys to deliver a sour helping of just that to Jane.

After all,

Miserable Jane = Finished Book = Duval laughing all the way to the bank.

And so, like the best laid plans of rude Frenchmen and ruddy-cheeked Scottish schoolteachers, the plot proceeds with hits and misses.

The book has a broad indie/ hipster vibe running through it, from Jane Lockhart's penchant for bowler hats to Tom Duval's snobbish disdain for mainstream cinema to the selection of literary Glasgow as a setting for the book. I loved Tom Duval's character. A grumpy and erudite Frenchman who gives up the sun and leggy *filles* of St.Tropez for the bleak, rain-soaked romanticism of Glasgow and it's red-headed lasses is a joy to read. As the book is a novelization of the 2013 rom-com movie by the same name, it's easy to place **Stanley Weber's** gorgeous face in the character of Tom Duval.

I wish I could say the same for Jane Lockhart's character. I just didn't "get" Jane Lockhart. Yep, that's the word. Okay yes, for lovers of Zooey Deschanel's *yes-I-rock-a-lot-of-polka-dots* school of thought, Jane may be a quirky and likeable character. But for me, she came across as angst for the sake of being angst without actually redeeming her writer temperament. This is ofcourse no reflection on **Karen Gillan** who plays Jane in the movie. Because, let's face it, the doctor's companion will always be impeccable:

My second favourite character (after Duval) was his cherubic roommate, **Roddy**. Roddy is the perfect sidekick. I had the best laughs when Tom and Ruddy were making a Mission Impossible sized hash of their quest to make Jane miserable.

In all, I was sufficiently hooked to finish the book in a day but not enamored enough to give it a second read.

Hurray for hottie Tom Duval, ofcourse.

Because, erm:

And yes, I will watch the movie, because *hello-ooo*,look at the filtered perfection:

Ending the review with a passage that stayed with me:

**Pg.No.359**

*'You don't have to be miserable to write. See, this is a problem created by male poets standing on cliffs staring into the middle distance and perpetuated by novelists whose emotional intelligence is as pared down as their prose. You don't have to wrestle your inner demons to produce great work, you can just as easily be sitting next to a warm fire with a nice cup of tea.'*

*You write because you have to, because it gnaws away at your insides if you try to ignore it, because if you don't write you might as well be dead. Because nothing else can make you so mad, so frustrated, so happy, and yes, so miserable. Usually all at the same time.*

I can vouch for that.

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### **Tria says**

This fair and honest review was promised in exchange for an eARC from the publisher, Harlequin/Mira. I am receiving no other renumeration for this and have requested none.

3.5 stars (rounded up). First off - I haven't seen the film version with Karen Gillan as Jane, yet, though I still want to, and unusually this is ... not strictly an adaptation of the film so far as I can tell, but the book written after the film was made. Whether or not that makes it a novelisation is, I think, probably an arguable point. Anyway. I came into this book knowing only the cast of the film, and the setting and basic plot of both.

"Not Another Happy Ending" isn't the traditional, slightly-stereotypical "Harlequin romance" one might expect. For one thing, it has a plot which, I believe, would likely still carry it were the amount of romance drastically reduced, which has its own depth. That isn't the case for most of the Harlequin novels I've

encountered.

That aside, it's not difficult to match at least some of the cast to the characters in one's mind. For this, being in the order it is, there's less scope than usual to create your own visual - and auditory - impression of the characters in your head. That isn't necessarily a problem, but it does make for a little dissonance here and there if you can't hear the dialogue spoken in the actors' voices, which I couldn't always, particularly with Jane, being used to hearing Karen Gillan as herself and as Amelia Pond, who are both quite different from Jane in terms of personality. That isn't a failing of the book - I'm sure I'll find out later whether it works better in the film version or not - but I did find it slightly offputting, in an almost subconscious way.

As for the story itself, it's decently paced, and carries itself along at a steady clip that brightens up what might otherwise drag, the flow of writing a novel of course feeling irregular for many authors, even those who make themselves sit down every day to write as Willie does. This novel builds gradually but piece by piece and, while you can certainly see certain scenes coming, you're usually too interested in the present page to mind. It isn't invariably so captivating, however.

I tend to five-star books I don't want to break from before I finish reading them, and I took a couple of considerable breaks while reading this one where I got just a bit fed up, hence the rating. I confess, I'm not a fan of Tom, the main male protagonist. Were I Jane I would have told him where to go in no uncertain terms and left it at that - I don't believe claimed temporary insanity is a fair or reasonable excuse for the way Tom behaves throughout the majority of the novel, and I'm not the bad-boy type (or the boy type at all really, but that's not the point). Also, some of the less central female characters are sketched out so lightly that they don't feel like actual people, and that tends rather to put me off a work, especially when the male analogues are much more strongly written.

I enjoyed the last third of the novel much more than the rest, which is why the rating gets rounded up to 4 instead of down to 3 (that and I'm nice. Really) but I can't say why or I'll spoil it. I do think this book is worth reading, but whether or not you'll like it yourself...well, try it and see. You might be pleasantly surprised.

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### **Saritha says**

Can't believe this was adapted from a screenplay! What a lovely book and such a refreshing change from the chick-lit/romance cliches!

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### **Neve says**

Nothing exceptional but a sweet and very binge-able read

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### **Ellyn → Allonsythornraxx says**

10 October, 2016

You wouldn't know it by the amount of time it took me to get through this novel but I actually loved it. This

was a refreshing change from what I usually read, and I'm so glad I randomly picked it up because Amy Pond and Fitz were on the cover.

rtc... I hope

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### **Kathryn says**

It is not often that a book based on a screenplay turns out to be a winner, but *Not Another Happy Ending* proved itself to be one of those rare gems. Author David Solomon also wrote the screenplay for this quirky, set-in-Scotland, romantic comedy that pokes fun at the publishing industry, so it is no surprise that the story survives the transition from screen to print. The film/novel tells the story of Jane Lockheart, a twenty-something aspiring writer and lover of all things miserable, whose novel goes on to be a surprise literary hit. She also enjoys a brief relationship with her editor, but then all of her success goes on to make her rather happy, which destroys not only her relationship, but leaves her with a terrible case of writers block. Ex-boyfriend Tom is quick to realise that Jane's happiness is getting in the way of her becoming a successful writer so he goes about in a cruel-but-ultimately-disastrous attempt at making her unhappy. There is a couple of twists and turns, but mostly the comedy revolves around Tom's many failed attempts at making Jane miserable, along with his unwillingness to admit that he is still in love with Jane. It's not a plot that is terribly deep and nor is it going to please everyone. I struggled to identify with Jane and feel that the story may have been more interesting had it been told entirely from Tom's perspective--I think the author had a better understanding of this character and his motivations, whereas Jane came across as quite unremarkable despite possessing a number of quirks. There are a few romantic comedy cliches--i.e. kissing in the rain, a leading lady who loves Jane Austen, but these feel delightfully ironic, rather than annoying.

This one could have been a hell of a lot deeper and there are a lot of digs at the publishing industry (I had to laugh when one of Tom's ideas on how he could make Jane unhappy was to show her what bloggers were saying about her book,) but *Not Another Happy Ending* remains fun, light entertainment. This one is recommended for a lazy afternoon or evening.

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### **Janet Emson says**

I received a copy of this book from the publishers via Net Galley in exchange for an honest review.

I have to admit that before I received this book I was not aware of the film on which it is based so came to read it without any preconceptions.

Jane is a struggling writer, receiving rejection letter after rejection letter in response to her first manuscript entitled 'The Endless Anguish of My Father'. Tom is the publisher who is looking for the book that will establish his company amongst the big publishing greats. Initially rejecting Jane's novel he agrees to publish it, so long as she agrees to extensive re-writes. Working together on the re-writes brings the two closer together until Tom changes the title of novel and the two no longer speak.

The book is launched and becomes a best seller, throwing Jane into the limelight, and leaving her with the pressure of writing an equally amazing second novel. However the angst and sadness that drive Jane to write her first novel have apparently disappeared, she has a new boyfriend, Willie, who is adapting her first novel

as a screen play and has reconciled with her father who had walked out on her in her 7th birthday. With the new found contentment in her life she suddenly finds she has writer's block and is unable to finish the second novel.

Meanwhile Tom needs Jane's next book. His company Tristes is nearly broke and he'll have to sell if the book isn't finished and released soon. He finds out Jane is blocked and realises that the only way to get her writing again is to make her miserable. So he starts out on his quest to restore writing order with his flatmate Roddy in a madcap plan that includes kidnapping her umbrella plant and starting a fight on a bus.

I have to say I really enjoyed this book. There were places where I laughed out loud, Roddy in particular had some of the funniest lines and he and Tom made a good comedy duo.

There were some parts where I could guess what was going to happen but this didn't detract from the book, in fact I think I would have been disappointed if my surmises had been wrong!

This book was adapted from the screenplay of the same name. Whilst I can imagine this book as a film it wasn't at the forefront of mind whilst I read it. Having read books that weren't based on screenplays but obviously written in the hope that they would be one day and been distracted by it. Thankfully that wasn't the case here.

This was a thoroughly enjoyable, light-hearted, romantic and funny read.

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### **Littlemissmartina says**

'You write because you have to, because it gnaws away at your insides if you try to ignore it, because if you don't write you might as well be dead. Because nothing else can make you so mad, so frustrated, so happy and yes, so miserable. Usually all at the same time.'

Never have I read a book so perceptive in terms of exploring how writers think. As an aspiring writer myself I found these sorts of little insights, scattered throughout the book so welcome and wonderfully true. Jane's entire characterisation is perfect, her attitude towards writing and her love for it above nearly all else so relatable and such a true portrayal of the agonising love affair writers have with their work. The addition of the almost schizophrenic Darsie appearances added, to me, to its believability- writers do talk to their characters, and once invented, they become entities of their own, who dictate and do whatever they like.

Solomons has delved into the world of both writing and publishing, presenting the ups and downs of the industry in a realistic yet lighthearted and humorous way, and his depictions of Glasgow, both through the voice of the narrator and through Jane's eyes, firmly establish the setting and give it a wonderful curled-up-under-a-blanket-on-a-rainy-day feel. Solomons also sneaks in a brief exploration of the difficulties of adaptation from literature to cinema, opinions on fidelity to the original text and the way translating something into another medium can affect its meaning and overall feel. As an English major currently studying Literature and Cinema and Stam's 'The Dialogics of Adaptation,' this had particular resonance with me, and I enjoyed Solomons' comical take on it.

All the characters are incredibly well-written, bursting into life within reading a few sentences about them or a few lines of dialogue- in particular, Roddy is a wonderful creation, providing refreshing moments of comic relief to break through the more emotional scenes and Tom's more diabolical moments. His deliberate

distortion of English literature, when we see him at work teaching- and the fact that his students actually believe it- provides a wonderful satire of both the frustrations faced in the teaching profession and the obnoxiousness and inattentiveness of high school students everywhere. Each and every character, however, is wonderfully complex- Tom, the Riviera-bred sophisticated Frenchman who has abandoned his life of luxury to struggle as a publisher in Scotland, and prefers cheap sausage rolls to all the fine cuisine of his homeland, Jane, who bakes cupcakes and yet fantasises about bashing her boyfriend's head into a typewriter, Nicola, gorgeous and glamorous, who writes about public transport for some inexplicable reason, and Willie, who fancies himself a top Hollywood screenwriter but just doesn't have the talent.

I bought the edition of this with the movie cover, but on my first reading, I had no idea it had been a film before it was a book, nor was I able to tell. I was amazed to find out later that it was a novelisation, or at least a book that was sold as a film first and then Solomons went back and wrote the book- most novelisations I've read are often filled with unnecessary bits of backstory, weak writing and a very flat way of describing and storytelling, but this book was on par with many brilliantly written novels I've read. The writing style is witty, descriptive without being over-the-top, and this book, to me, was clearly not written by someone who just sat down with a screenplay and tried to transform it into prose, but by a gifted writer who has thought about what is required to make this into a NOVEL, not just a book version of the movie.

In my opinion this book is a must-read for all writers, who will, undoubtedly, find themselves reading something Jane has said and thinking 'that's me!' For those who aren't writers, this is a highly enjoyable romantic comedy brimming with quirky and loveable characters, hilarious plots and a brilliant love-hate chemistry between the two main characters that will have you hooked.

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