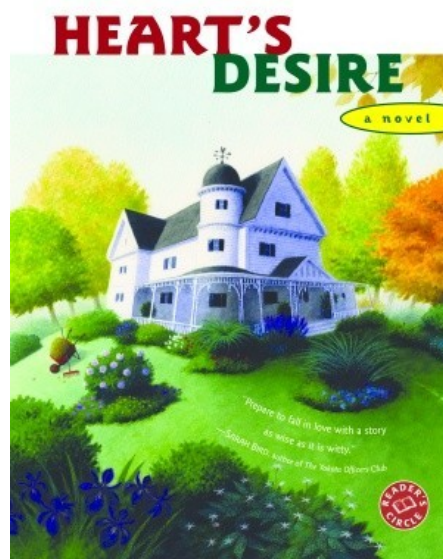


LAURA PEDERSEN

Author of *Beginner's Luck*



Heart's Desire

Laura Pedersen

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Heart's Desire Laura Pedersen

Card sharp and former wild child Hallie Palmer is in college now—and Bernard Stockton, her legal guardian, has suddenly appeared during final exams. He's hysterical about his recent breakup with his longtime boyfriend, Gil, and wants to enlist Hallie in a scheme to win Gil back. So Hallie returns to Cosgrove County, Ohio, for the summer, to her job as live-in yard person for Bernard and his delightfully oddball mother, Olivia. Also present are Ottavio, Olivia's hot-tempered Italian lover, who's desperate for a wedding; Rocky, a chimpanzee who's one Singapore Sling away from an AA meeting for primates; and Hallie's own ever-expanding family, which she fled as soon as she could slide down the drainpipe.

Around town, folks assume that since Hallie isn't in jail, she clearly has no problems of her own and can therefore tackle theirs. But Hallie has plenty of troubles—a looming tuition bill, gambling temptations, and an ex-boyfriend who's back in town for the summer to upset any potential if highly unlikely (a girl can dream!) romantic flings.

Yet as Hallie and company navigate life's unexpected paths of games lost and love found, the real truth begins to emerge: With friends, family, and a place to call home, your heart's desire is always within reach.

Heart's Desire Details

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From Reader Review Heart's Desire for online ebook

Pam says

02/09 rec via bookmooch

oliviasbooks says

2008: Hallie Palmer rules! "Heart's Desire" is not as good as "Beginner's Luck". The storyline is not as fresh and unpredictable and the inner monologue is not as amusing, but I still like Hallie and Hallie's process in growing up with the help of the extraordinary Stocktons very well. The subject of Hallie's "first time" is also tackled. And I was very grateful, that Ms Pedersen uses the opportunity to show a different - but multi-layered - view (through the eyes of unconventional Olivia Stockton) than most of the US-YA-novels obsessed with virginity or some other superfluous message.

2014: After re-reading the second volume I have to take back my initial assessment. I liked "Heart's Desire" as much as "Beginner's Luck" this time. The series - aoart from the final volume - is such a favorite. I am so grateful to Mrs. Pedersen for creating Hallie, her family and the Stocktons.

Holli W says

This is the sequel to Beginner's Luck, which I liked better. Still, I enjoyed this book too. It's a fun easy read.

Liz B says

Another fun read. In this book, Hallie is not really the main character...nothing much important happens to her. But she tells the story, and her voice is fun and funny. This book was at its best when focusing on either Bernard or Hallie's poker games, and at its worst when Hallie is hanging out with her teenage friends. Her two friends are flat, flat, flat, and the teenage dialogue rings so false that I wonder how long it's been since Pedersen has spent any time around teenagers. Fortunately, the focus of the book is on Hallie and the Stocktons, not Hallie and whatever her friends' names are--and as a result, I'm really looking forward to reading the next one.

Kevin Connery says

Hallie 2

Martha says

Pretty darned funny! Entertaining and witty....I loved it...What a crazy household....a chimp who mixes drinks, a gay bon vivant and his broken heart, his mother who is trying to save the world through her pen. I laughed and that doesn't happen much while I am reading!

Muff says

Hallie is maturing nicely. The Stocktons are as wacky as ever. Entertaining middle book of the series.

Book Concierge says

I like these novels starring Hallie Palmer, poker player and coming-of-age teen

Tami says

Heart's Desire is the coming of age story of Hallie Palmer. Hallie has just finished her first year in college and now she's ready to spend the summer back home. Her first year at college has gone a little differently than she had expected. Despite her greatest efforts to keep good grades and keep her finances in order, Hallie has learned that the first year of college is all about partying and finding a boyfriend. Hallie is hoping that during the school break she can figure out her finances and that boyfriend situation but everyone else seems to have decided that Hallie is the go to girl for help in all of their latest problems and schemes.

Heart's Desire is a great story illustrating all of the bumps, bruises, laughs, and tears of growing up. The characters are wonderfully charming, realistically flawed, and often hilarious. Who wouldn't want Bernard Stockton as their loving and dramatically flamboyant adopted Mom? This is a great book for college students and other twenty somethings starting their new lives away from home.

Arminzerella says

I began reading this and thought it was a rather weak sequel to the first book, but things got better. In *Heart's Desire*, Hallie's in college – just about to finish up and come home to the Stockton's for the summer. She's broke, she's exhausted, and she's dying to lose her virginity (except the big question is to who?). Bernard, her legal guardian, has just broken up with his boyfriend, Gil, and both men are miserable. Olivia, Bernard's mother, is up to her usual antics (except there's more poking fun at her being a Unitarian).

Everything and everyone is falling apart when Hallie gets back into town, and it seems like it's going to be up to her to fix it all. And she does. She gets her wayward sister back in line (who's the juvenile delinquent now? Huh?), solves some of her financial woes, brings Bernard and Gil back together, helps a friend out who lost his job, and manages to help the local law enforcement solve a pot hole mystery (which leads to a \$5000 reward!). All in all an exciting summer. She and Craig, at the very end, finally experience what she's been

wanting from someone for months – a truly romantic first sexual experience. It comes right on the heels of her supposed boyfriend leaving in a huff and telling her that she's not as special as she thinks, which is awful and sad. In contrast, the way that Craig treats her – gently and with humor – is so lovely. It's everything a first in-love and awkward experience should be. *sigh*

Even though there's a lot going on in this story, there isn't a real strong plot. The characters are fantastic, though, and there's some incredibly funny dialogue. One thing that was particularly strange was Bernard and Gil's reconciliation, which is a secret even from us, the readers. It was odd because Hallie knows what's happening and stages an elaborate act to bring them back together, but she doesn't let on to us – and she tells us everything else. In fact, there are deliberately misleading passages that throw us off the scent. Strange. Still, this was enjoyable. Many laugh out loud and touching moments.

Barbara says

A little too cutesy for me but mildly amusing tale of a teenager with a penchant for gambling and a set of eccentric friends. Reads almost like young adult fiction. Midwestern and a little tinge of religious. I won't read any others in this series.
