



## Love, Hypothetically

*Anne Tenino*

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*Hypothetical love can be a real pain in the ass.....*

Paul's been called many things—graduate student, humanities tutor, jock-hater, even broke—but "forgiving" isn't one of them. When the new women's softball coach at Calapooya College specifically requests Paul to tutor his athletes, Paul's forced to put aside his strict "no athletes" policy for the sake of his paycheck.

Enter Trevor Gardiner, former Major League Baseball player and Paul's high school boyfriend. Yeah, that one—the guy who sacrificed Paul for the safety of his closet and his future career. But Trevor's come out and retired from baseball, and now he's looking for forgiveness and a second chance.

There's no earthly reason Paul should give him one, but he keeps letting the man state his case. And touch him. And take him sailing. The waters are far from smooth, though, and Paul says awful things to Trevor he isn't sure he means. Now Paul has to decide: apologize and forgive Trevor for everything, or chalk it up as revenge and move on.

## Love, Hypothetically Details

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# From Reader Review Love, Hypothetically for online ebook

## Aiko says

Been waiting for this story since I finished reading Brad and Sebastian's story, seeing that we get introduced to this prickly douchebag, Paul, in that book. And prickly douchebags are one of life's more fascinating things.

The blurb pretty much sums up the way the story goes nice and tidy. The plot line isn't a particularly strong one. Or maybe I should call it predictable instead of weak.

Boy falls in love with jock, jock hurts boy, jock tries to make amends, boy hurts jock, kiss and make up. And that's it. But in between there's the absurdly entertaining dialogues between Toby (the somewhat reluctant friend) and Paul, Trevor's (the jock) sweetly rushed romantic gestures, a nappie wielding friend with a parasite baby, and a nice reunion with my favorite Frat boy and his Toppy.

Compared to book 1 in this series, this one has a pretty different flavor to it. Where book 1 made me laugh til my stomach hurts at points, this made me give my Kindle acidic grins and quiet chuckles. Paul isn't a particularly funny guy, he's bitter, wounded, keeping everyone at an arms length, and with no brain to mouth filter. He's not a likeable guy. But he knows all this. And the fact that he knows exactly who he is, makes him likeable. On the other hand, Trevor is almost a little too good to be true, and I can't say I connected with the guy all that much. But Paul likes him, so hey..

All in all, it's an enjoyable, easy read from one of my favorite authors. Now gimme gimme Toby's story :D

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## Kelly\_Instalove says

### Grade: B+

Once again, I am forced to abandon my beloved and lazy One-Quote Review format because there were just too many good ones to choose from. One hundred pages, sixty "damn, that's good" highlights - you do the math.

*"How does one go about about changing one's life?" he asked. Toby seemed to know a lot of useless crap, maybe he'd know the answer to this question.*

It takes a lot of skill to turn a villain into a worthy hero. Yes, Paul was an evil little worm in the first book. But he freely admits his worminess (I just made that up) and he does something about it.

*"I'm a prick. A prickly, bitter volatile prick, destined to splat on the floor of life."*

*"...So stop being one."*

*"...What, you think it's that easy? I just decide to stop, and bam! No more prickliness? It takes*

*action, man. I have to do things, take positive steps. I have to apologize and obtain forgiveness."*

For a relatively new author, Tenino is remarkably good at the elusive art of *showing* instead of *telling*. She avoids cheesy angstifying and lets Paul stumble through his anger and confusion and guilt with his usual dark humor:

*Just.... How in the hell did one prepare oneself for apologizing? Was there some kind of training program? Had Tony Horton produced an exercise video about it?*

Paul eventually figures it out, and - with reluctant forgiveness and help from Brad and Sebastian - finally gets the guy:

*"All those years without you, I never had anything happen worth remembering. You came back and that all changed in a few days."*

So by the time we get to that hard-won HEA, it's easy to share Frat Boy Brad's protective stance:

*"...I don't have to threaten to kick your ass if you're a dick to Paul, right, dude? Because up until yesterday, I didn't even really like him, but you know, I'd do what needs to be done."*

The only issue that kept Love, Hypothetically from being an A grade was a formatting annoyance with the titular "well, hypothetically speaking" scene in the bar. The long monologue paragraphs were difficult to read on my Kindle Touch - which means it would be even more of a struggle on a smaller device. I had to page back to read a few of Paul's charmingly convoluted explanations a second time because I missed an important bit of self-discovery on the first pass.

But that won't stop me from reading it again.

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## **Heather C says**

### **3.5 Stars**

I really hated Paul in Frat Boy and Toppy and I wasn't sure if I was ever going to like him once I figured out this was his story. But I was wrong. I really felt bad for him once I found out why he *really* hated/mistrusted jocks: his high school *boyfriend* Trevor badly betrayed him...9 years ago. I was ok with Paul forgiving Trevor...it *had* been 9 years! But I didn't like how they were instantly back in love after like...A DAY!! It

*had* been 9 years!!

Eh, but the **sex was HOT!!** I just didn't love this book as much as I did the previous one.

Author, can we please get Toby's story next?

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### **Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says**

**\*\*4.5 stars\*\***

I've said it before and I'll say it 1,000 times over, Anne Tenino just writes stuff that I love to read. She writes these little hot, funny, light books that push all of my buttons in the best way. I rate for enjoyment level and I enjoy the **HECK** out of her books. This one was no exception.

"Love, Hypothetically" was an adorable story about reunited lovers. I disliked Paul from Frat Boy and Toppy, but Anne did a fab job of placing me inside his head here and making me root for him. In only 94 pages, I got a complete story with some hot scenes and great chemistry. Keep 'um coming Ms. Tenino!!

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### **.Lili. says**

**I love this book!**

**Are you in the mood for a great short read? Then look no further! This was an awesome shorty! It had it all. It was sweet, funny, angsty, emotional, and smutty.**

**This is the story second story in the Theta Alpha Gamma series by Anne Tenino. Although technically it can be read as a standalone, I would recommend reading the first story first just so you can experience what a great writer Anne Tenino is. Paul was such a bitch in the first book- I wasn't sure if I'd like him- ever. Well, not only did I like him- now I love him.**

**Me during the reading of this book:**

**I've been conflicted on how to rate it to be honest. Because I wanted it to be longer, my heart says 4. I do want to mention I wanted more- not because the story is lacking but because I didn't want it to end. Then again, it's not meant to be a full length book, and in my opinion, this is 5 star quality writing. I'll be going with 4.5 stars rounded up. Any book than can make me shed a tear on one page and have me giggling on the next deserves the round up not down.**

**Definitely recommend not only this book but the author- she's great!**

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## Monika says

### 4.5 Stars

OMG! How stupid am I that I didn't realize this was a sequel to Frat Boy and Topy when I started reading it. I thought Paul seemed familiar and the feel of the book reminded me of something that I just couldn't put my finger on until the light bulb finally went off when I hit the halfway mark. \*head hits desk\*

Did it matter? Not really, but things did click when I realized it. Like the fact I could now remember why it seemed so familiar...Paul... I remember Paul being an ass in Frat Boy and Topy, is still an ass in this book and even though I should really dislike him, I couldn't, I liked him even when I wanted to cuff him upside the head for how he treats Trevor and poor Trevor made me cry. That beautiful thing he does for Paul I had tears running down my cheeks it was so romantic and tears because I kind of figured what was coming and I could feel the hurt Trevor was going to feel before he did, this is the place I wanted to cuff Paul upside his head or better yet kick him in the ass. Well needless to say it all works out in the end I got my all important HEA!

I love the way Anne Tenino writes, no one does "snark" better, so the book worked for me from the start. It's sweet, sexy and funny it had me laughing out loud, with nothing that I would call angst, just a really good "feel good" book. My one niggle that seems to be a theme with books lately....too short! There was a sense of the story being rushed as I neared the end.

I highly recommend this book and while it works as a standalone you should read Frat Boy and Topy first. :-D

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## Mandapanda says

OK novella about a gay teacher who gives his former jock boyfriend one more chance. I liked this better than Frat Boy and Topy but I still much prefer this author's other two series, Whitetail Rock and Task Force Iota. This college series seems more formulaic and forgettable, and the characters less appealing. But it's a nice quick read and no doubt many people will enjoy.

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## Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

\*Re-read in audio format\*

Original review found [here](#).

**\*\*New audiobook rating: 4.5 stars\*\***

I'm a HUGE fan of the Theta Alpha Gamma series by Anne Tenino, and I had nothing but good memories of this book, which I read originally over three years ago.

Love, Hypothetically features one of my FAVORITE tropes in romance EVER, which is the enemies-to-lovers theme, but more specifically, the **former-betrayer-to-lover** theme. This is a cousin to the former-bully-to-lover trope, which... gah, gets me every time! I love when someone has to truly **grovel** after formally wronging a love interest. It sparks deep emotions inside of me, and it usually leads to me really loving a book.

It is always interesting how my opinions change about a certain book over the years and as my reading tastes change with time. On re-read, I found myself wanting **MORE** from the plot. This book is novella length, and I realized that I really needed about 100 more pages to feel fully satisfied. I wasn't really ready to fully forgive Trevor, the jock who strung along, outed, and then ditched Paul. I could have used pages upon pages of Paul crying and torturing Trevor. (I'm really sick, huh??)

I still loved how light this book was and how unexpectedly **SEXY** it was. I love Anne Tenino for that. I even really enjoyed Paul of the prickly personality, whose snarky attitude I found to be really enticing. **This book is truly happy, comfort reading for me, as is this whole series.**

If I had to rate this book on content alone, I would probably give it **4 stars**, which means that I really liked it. However, the audiobook narration by Nick J. Russo **EASILY** bumped it up 1/2 a star. **Nick J. Russo is fast becoming one of my favorite narrators, and he KILLED it again with another amazing performance.** His voices for both MCs were perfection, and his work on this book made it on to my coveted narrator-amazing list.

I hope and pray that Anne Tenino continues on with this series because it holds a special place in my heart. There are few books that I'll re-read, and Love, Hypothetically is one of them, especially now that Nick J. Russo is part of the picture.

**\*\*Copy provided in exchange for an honest review\*\***

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### **Christina says**

I never really liked Paul but he was an interesting character. I was hoping for more development in this book, but it fell flat. We were told what happens to Paul when he was in high school but we weren't given enough time to feel his pain. Everything got back to the present day and worked itself out far too quickly. I'm glad I understand him more and it was fun seeing Sebastian, Brad, and Toby again but other than that it I had very little connection to Paul or even Trevor for that matter.

Also, the humor was toned down a lot in this book and that's what I absolutely love the most in Tenino's books.

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### **Heller says**

I did not like Paul in Frat Boy and Toppo I thought he was an ass and treated Brad horribly so I love when an author can turn a character around and have me rooting for them instead.

I actually ended up feeling quite sorry for Paul. He held onto his anger for too long though. Even if things hadn't worked out with him and Trevor I'd like to think that Paul would have been able to let go of some of his bitterness after Trevor apologized. I hope anyway.

I thought Trevor had a lot of guts to approach Paul and try to work things out. We all do things we regret but it takes a level of bravery that few people possess to try and make things right.

I really enjoyed the boating elements in this one, so much so, that I'm going to go looking for other M/M books with that type of theme.

I loved the idea that forgiveness is possible if you work for it and happiness can be achieved if you open yourself to it. This was a good read for me and I'm looking forward to the next in the series.

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### **Rachel Haimowitz says**

As hilariously adorable and sweet as you'd expect any Anne Tenino story to be. She gets better and better with each piece she writes. If you're looking for a feel-good, laugh-out-loud contemporary romance you can read on a single sunny afternoon, this is a perfect choice.

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### **Nichole (DirrtyH) says**

I was really loving this, and then it just sort of turned on a dime and had its nice sappy ending and I felt like there was a huge chunk missing from the middle. Not to say that I didn't like the ending, I just had a hard time following the leap. This needed about 20 more pages.

5/17 re-read: I liked this better the second time, I think. Gave me lots of warm fuzzies, though I do see what I was talking about before. There could have been a little more communication before the HEA. Both characters needed to earn it just a *bit* more but it didn't bother me too much this time around. 4 stars.

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### **Heather the Queen of (Smut)Books says**

Really disliked Paul in the last one but he grew on me. Love this writer's style.

Plus face fucking in the first 20%. Woohooo.

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### **Cole Riann says**

Review posted at The Armchair Reader.

I was very eager to read this follow up to *Frat Boy and Tippy* when I saw that the author was carrying on into a series. Not simply because I liked that book so much, because I really did, but also because I was really eager to see how Anne Tenino would redeem Paul. In *Frat Boy*, Paul was the bastard friend of



Sebastian, who was livid that his friend was falling for a brainless jock and frat boy. No matter where their relationship led, every time Paul found himself around Brad (the frat boy jock Sebastian was falling in love with), he couldn't keep his mouth shut. It was obvious that there was more to Paul, other than being stuck up, snobbish, elitist. You could tell that there was a real aversion to jocks, just that he's too proud to say why. *Love, Hypothetically* gives us that story, plunked straight into the middle of Paul's neuroses, and showing the way he looks at the world around him.

Paul uses dark humor, elitism, and arrogance to cover the depth of the hurt that his one real relationship caused him. His first love, Trevor, chose his promising baseball career over their relationship in the most humiliating and sacrificial way -- a pain he never dealt with, and consequently altered him into the jaded and untrusting graduate student he currently is. Now, Trevor is back and Paul doesn't know what to do about it. He can't face his own feelings honestly, and the friends he once had who could have done it for him he has pushed away. Trevor is asking for forgiveness and a chance to see if they can rekindle their old relationship, but Paul doesn't know if he can trust him again.

Though shorter, this story definitely lived up to my hopes, having really enjoyed the first book about Brad and Sebastian. Paul is an interesting character himself, and I think that the reason he's compelling is that we get to know him first through Brad's POV, in the first book. Paul doesn't treat him well, and for most of the book comes off as a bitter bastard. Now, sinking into Paul's own point of view gives us a chance to understand him better. I expected a different character, honestly. I thought Paul would be a little more lost, but what we see here is a character who, while he might have a skewed perception about some things, is very frankly real about his own shortcomings. He knows that he's bitter, that he keeps his friends at an arm's length. The real problem is that he doesn't know if he can change that, or even if he wants to. Getting close to people is what got him in trouble in the first place.

For the most part, I'm not a fan of flashbacks, and I was worried when Chapter 2 went back to Paul's high school days with Trevor. That doesn't last, for those of you who, like me, aren't fans of going back and forth in time. It's a personal choice that, unless done supremely well, seems to aggravate me endlessly, so I was happy to see that that wasn't the case here. I liked Trevor. He comes off as a stock romance character at first. He's almost perfect (well, at least in the present time). He's making up for misdeeds and comes in to try to sweep Paul off his feet. In fact, this plot line isn't that original. But still, it becomes its own story. Paul and Trevor push past the usual plot of relationship failing in the past, to meeting again, to getting to know each other, to having a small problem to work out, to HEA. When they actually get down to talking about how they feel, the author allows Paul to be Paul. In doing so, Paul uses those old defense mechanisms like he really means them. Allowing the character not to hold their punches, to be realistic and not always perfectly understanding gave the story what it needed to come to a successful resolution.

Recommended.

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### **\*J\* Too Many Books Too Little Time says**

3.5-- *Dammitall* --Stars!!!

Was it just me or was "dammitall" used a bit excessively??

Aside from that, I enjoyed this one. I don't think quite as much as Frat Boy and Topy. But it was still funny, and sweet and sexy.

Apparently we met Paul, one of the MCs, in Frat Boy...I don't remember him at all.

Paul has a thing against jocks. As in he hates them. All thanks to baseball playing Trevor.

Paul fell in love with Trevor in high school. But Trevor being the jock he was, kept his sexuality in the closet. All it took was one locker room incident for Trevor to throw Paul and his sexuality under the bus.

Paul hasn't really gotten over the betrayal. He and Trevor go their separate ways. Paul's pretty bitter about everything that went down. I actually really liked bitter Paul, he was funny.

Flash Forward 9 years and Trevor is back. Turns out he hasn't gotten over Paul, despite the way he treated him in high school. And he wants another chance.

Seeing Trevor brings back a lot of old feelings for Paul. Can Paul forgive Trevor and give things another shot??

This was a quick read....with a little bit of steam and some laugh out loud moments.

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