


Let's Talk About Love



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Claire Kann.


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Quotes from the book: <https://www.pavementeducationproject.com/about-4-39>




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Alice believes she is asexual, after breaking up with her girlfriend, and has sworn off dating but ends up having feelings for her co-worker Takumi.


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Let's Talk About Love's main character is struggling to understand and cope with being asexual. She seeks understanding from a group of friends and eventually a doctor. Contains sexual interactions, masturbation, and confusing topics.

Excerpt from page 2-3

"We had sex this morning," Alice replied. Dread pumped through her veins, making her voice sound as skinned as she felt. "Twice."

"That's not the kind of sex I want to have," Margot said. She tucked one of her wild blond curls behind her ear.

That monster flared white-hot inside Alice. The only reason why Alice bothered to have sex was to make her girlfriend happy. If Margot didn't want it, what in the hell was the point?

"Sure fooled me. If I recall, which I do, there was a lot of happy screaming involved."

"Because you're good at it!" Margot stood, walking toward Alice, hands outstretched. "You know exactly what I like. I can't say the same about you." Margot sighed. "I want to touch you, Alice."

"You touch me all the time." Alice's limp hands dangled while Margot held her wrists. "You're touching me now."

"I want to lie in bed and kiss you everywhere for hours. I want to be able to show you how happy you make me."

"We do that, too. You *know* me: I need cuddles or I will die."

"And that's something I love about you, but when it's time to get serious, it's like you turn into a different person. I want to have passionate sex with you. It's weird that I can't reciprocate anything."

"It is not *weird*," Alice snatched herself away.

"It makes me feel weird," Margot clarified, her voice pleading. "It's like you don't like me as much as you say you do. When we have sex,

Sex mattered to Margot.

And it didn't matter to Alice.

"I trust you," Alice said. Not a lie, but not the truth either. "It's just hard to talk about."

"I'm asking you to try. If you care about me, you will."

The words *I'm asexual* knocked around inside Alice's head. She knew she was, had known it for some time. She had also hoped she could wiggle her life around that truth like it didn't matter or would never come up. High school had been hell, but college was a whole new beast dimension. Everyone seemed to be trying to have sex with everyone else.

And Alice was caught dead in the center of bloodied, shark-infested waters. It had gotten so bad, she had begun to give the disasters names: *The Great Freshman Letdown: Robert Almanac Edition*, followed closely by its sequel, *Turns Out She Was Pansexual (And Totally Coming Onto Me)*, which then turned into an unexpected trilogy, *Boys Like Girls Who Like Girls*, and now it had become a quartet, *The Hazards of Sex and Other Unwanted Lessons*.

When it came to accepting that she was asexual, it was about an

giving her pitying looks, calling her “innocent” and excluding her from sleepovers because she had nothing romantic to gossip about.

Fast-forward six months, she’s dumped with a new nickname. The Corpse. Because kissing him had been an ordeal to overcome. Because she never seemed interested in touching him (see: jacking him off). Because she had just lay there while Sam had sex with her, and he had told everyone.

Whenever Alice thought about that time, two things stuck out:

One—Francine Loren’s mock whisper in the locker room: “I heard she didn’t moan. Not even when he went down on her.”

Two—the curiously soft sound of Feenie’s fist connecting with Francine’s face layered with the instantaneous crunch of bone cracking.

Alice had stood there covering her mouth like all the other girls, except not in shock. She had tried to hide her smile. Cute girls were not supposed to be violent. Seeing Feenie, fists clenched at her sides silently daring Francine to get up, fierce and seething with unchecked rage, was kind of . . . liberating. Even if it was in a secondhand sort of way.

Excerpt from page 81

BOOKS AND I-Y AND THE WORLD HAS PROMISED ME. IT'S NOT FAIR THAT I SHOULD have to want sex to have it."

Dr. Burris passed her a tissue box. "It would seem we've gotten to the root of the stuff."

"Well, I like to take the scenic route." Alice sniffled, wiping her eyes. "It's cuter."

"Not to mention far more informative. Have you come out to anyone, either before or after your discovery?"

"My best friends know. That's it."

"I'm afraid I don't have the kind of answer you're looking for." He folded his hands, placing them in his lap. Calm. Serene. "This isn't something where I can tell you to go read a book and it will methodically list the steps of how to come out. It is a personal and individualized experience. My advice to you is to be prepared to educate. It may feel unfair that the onus of that responsibility will fall on you, but when most people think the *A* stands for Ally, you will have to speak louder, with bravery and dignity, to be heard. You will have to be willing to inform and to educate. And you will have to know when it is time to remove yourself from situations and disconnect from those who either do not understand or are unwilling to. You have to do what is right for you."

Alice knew he had spoken the truth. Everything would boil down to her having to speak up.