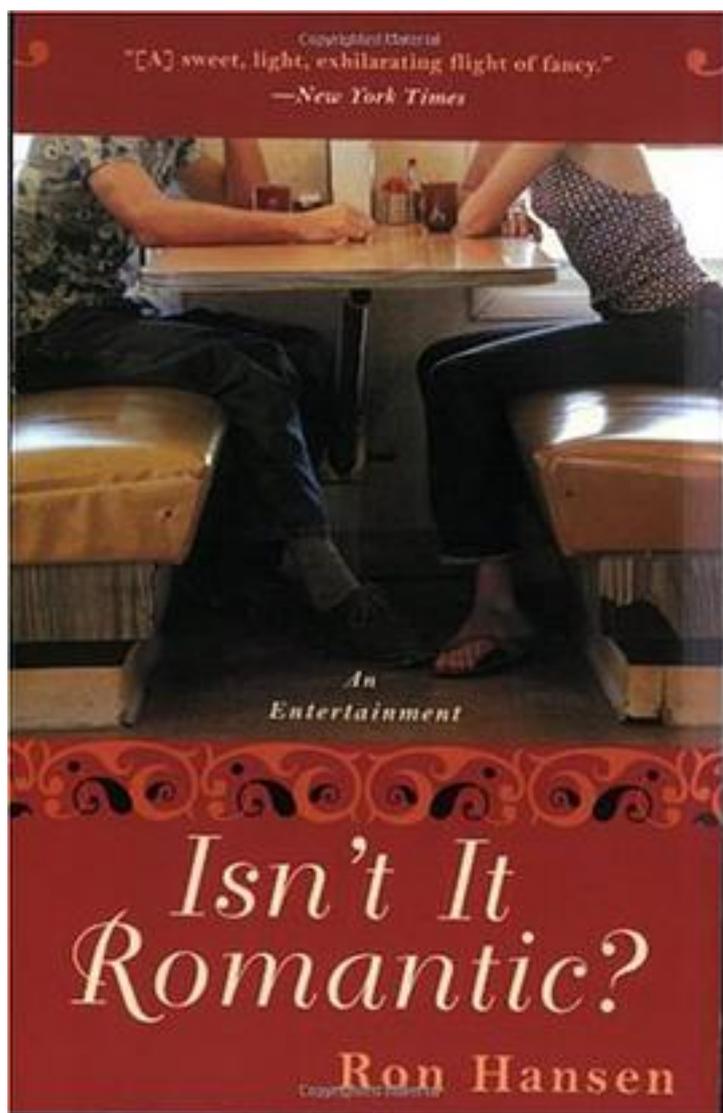


Isn't It Romantic?



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著者:Ron Hansen

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Book Description

Touring America was Natalie's idea. But she had not planned on being accompanied on a cross-country bus by her playboy fiancé, Pierre. Nor had they anticipated being stranded in Seldom, Nebraska, population 395.

But that is exactly what happens to this French couple, and they quickly find themselves being taken in by the obliging citizens of Seldom: Natalie by Mrs. Christiansen, a retired high school teacher who runs a rooming house for women, and Pierre by Owen, a gas station owner and ambitious winemaker in an unlikely part of the world.

And here, also, the separated couple becomes enchanted by the locals. Natalie is soon being wooed by Dick Tupper, a handsome and honest rancher. Pierre falls quickly for Iona, a beautiful, no-nonsense waitress at the local diner.

In this charming entertainment, mistaken identities, botched schemes, and hilarious misunderstandings abound as Parisian sophistication collides with the affability and simple pleasures of the Great Plains.

From Publishers Weekly

Ersatz French culture and aw-shucks Americana collide in this corny romantic comedy, a flat-footed departure from form by National Book Award finalist Hansen (Mariette in Ecstasy, etc.). Natalie Clairvaux, a Paris librarian specializing in Americana at the Bibliotheque Nationale, embarks on a grassroots See America bus tour of out-of-the-way U.S. landmarks in an effort to escape the unwanted attentions of her philandering fiance, Pierre Smith, scion of a family of French wine sellers. Maddened by her unexplained disappearance, Pierre tracks her down and catches up with her tour group in Omaha. The quarreling couple abandons the tour at a tiny crossroads outside of Seldom, Neb. (pop. 395), on Wednesday, agreeing that Natalie will reach a decision about their wedding by noon Saturday. In Seldom, the couple is immediately elected king and queen of an annual local festival honoring a Frenchman who founded the town, and all manner of rather predictable fun and games begins. Pierre is quartered with Owen Nelson, whose penchant for wine making is second only to his obsession with Cornhusker football. Disillusioned Natalie is soon captivated by handsome Dick Tupper, a 50-year-old rancher. And, true to form, womanizing Pierre starts hitting on Iona Christiansen, a comely waitress at the local cafe. A wine tasting for hayseeds, a bachelor party (and bridal shower) and a brace of bungled trysts are a few of the stale devices driving this perfunctory farce. The subtitle suggests that Hansen knows this is a lesser effort, and readers will concur with the analysis.

From Library Journal

Literary luminary Hansen (Hitler's Niece) has written a short, funny novel not unlike what's available nowadays from good romance writers—except that it's by a man and it costs a whole lot more than a mass market or trade paperback would. (And note that it's novella size, with large margins.) In love with all things American, young Frenchwoman Natalie Clairvaux eschews an August holiday in the south of France and heads for the United States, where she journeys by bus to see la vraie Am rique ("the

real America"). Boyfriend Pierre thinks that she's folle ("insane") but nonetheless follows her. An impulsive moment strands them in Seldom, NE, where a cast of zany characters reminiscent of television shows like *Ed* or *Northern Exposure* takes center stage. This entourage is led by a sexy waitress named Iona, who falls for Pierre, and Iona's heartthrob, Dick Tupper, who falls for Natalie. That staple of romance, the misunderstanding, leads to the town's preparing for Natalie's marriage to Pierre or is it Dick? Suffice it to say that true love triumphs, and all ends very well indeed. This light, charming, and humorous romp will bring a smile to the face of even the most love-jaded reader. Highly recommended for all collections.

Jo Manning, Barry Univ., Miami Shores, FL

From Booklist

Fans of the serious literary novelist (*Atticus*, 1995; *Hitler's Niece*, 1999) are in for a delightful surprise here. Beautiful, self-possessed Parisian Natalie Clairvaux, a lover of all things American, decides to assuage her hurt feelings over her fiance's latest infidelity by taking a trip to the U.S. Appalled at Natalie's destination choice, the local travel agent grudgingly books her on a Greyhound See America tour, whose highlights include the world's largest buffet. When her fiance, Pierre, comes after her, they end up stranded by a flat tire in Seldom, Nebraska, and are lovingly embraced by the town's eccentric citizens. Pierre is introduced to the home brew of a local wine aficionado, whose product is labeled with the complete Husker football scores for that vintage. Natalie is courted by an affable rancher, while Pierre is seduced by a very sexy waitress. Amid much door-slamming and a whirl of cultural confusion, the true romantic partners are eventually sorted out. All's well that ends well in this antic pastoral, which actually owes more to Preston Sturges' screwball films than to Shakespeare's comedies. Hansen shows the true reach of his talent, displaying a rare deft touch in an inspired comedy that will have readers laughing out loud. Completely charming.

Joanne Wilkinson

About Author

Ron Hansen is the author, most recently, of *A Stay Against Confusion: Essays on Faith and Fiction* and of the novel *Hitler's Niece*. His previous novel, *Atticus* was a National Book Award finalist. Other highly praised works of fiction include *Mariette in Ecstasy*, *The Assassination Of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, *Desperadoes* and the story collection *Nebraska With Jim Shepard*, he edited the anthology *You've Got to Read This: Contemporary American Writers Introduce Stories That Held Them in Awe*. Ron Hansen is married to the novelist Bo Caldwell and lives in northern California, where he teaches fiction writing and literature at Santa Clara University.

Book Dimension:

length: (cm)20.3 width:(cm)13.3

作者介绍:

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