



ROMANCECLASS BOOKS 2023

romanceclassbooks.com

About Mina V. Esguerra



- romance author/publisher
- 27 books
- Founded #RomanceClass in 2013
- Recent speaking engagements:
 - Korea Publishers Society: Asian Publishers Fellowship Program 2022
 - Brisbane Writers Festival
 - Toronto Romance Writers 2021 Northern Hearts



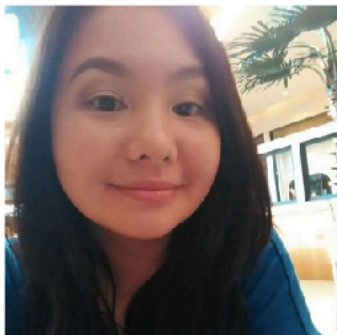
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Brisbane Writers Festival 10-14 May 2023

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PROGRAM / MAY 2022 / ROMANCE FROM MANILA



Romance from Manila

Sat 7 May 2022

Kat Mayo + Jodi McIlister + Mina V Esquerra

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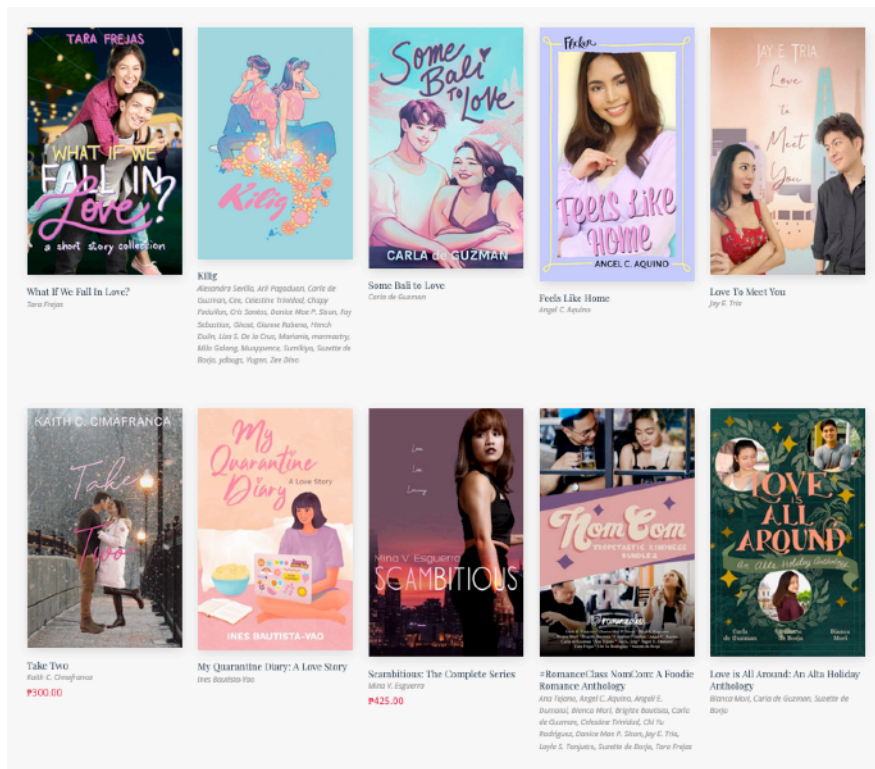
REGULAR



- is a worldwide community of Filipino authors of romance in English + readers of the books + the actors and artists involved in events and publishing of the books
- 100+ authors and their books
- We care about:
 - inclusion
 - representation
 - Who deserves love? Who is beautiful?
 - What is missing in the landscape of romance storytelling?
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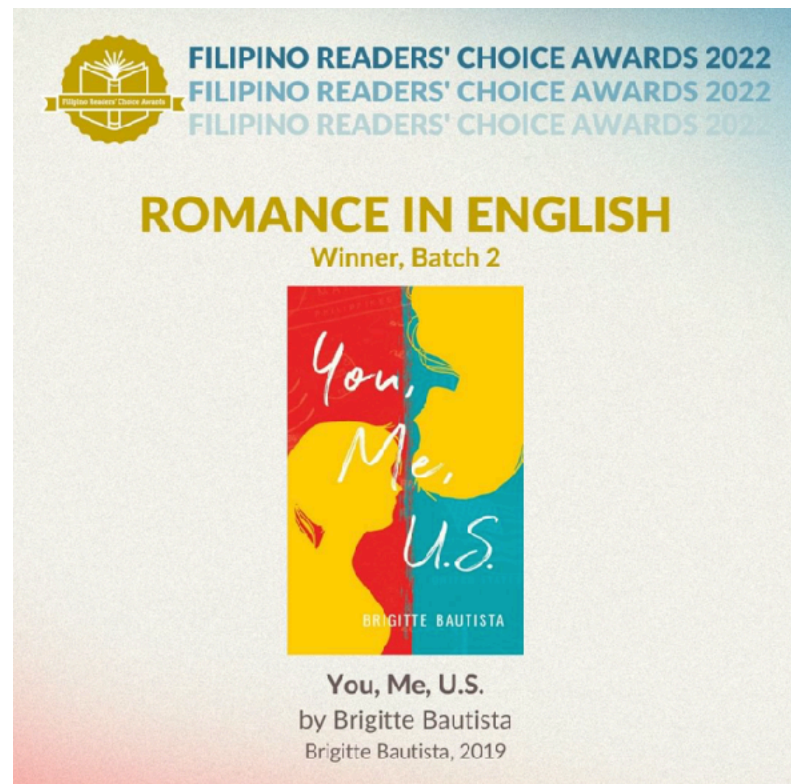
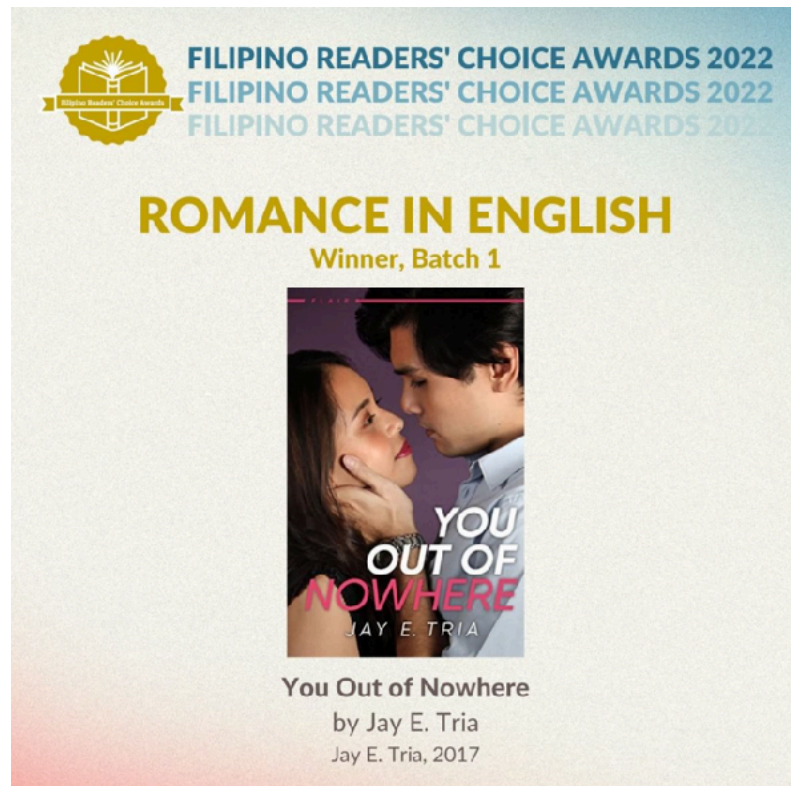
Our readers [37 countries!]



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LIFESTYLE

Editor
Rachelle V. Mora

Love lessons I've learned as a romance writer

Romance—the genre—requires a happy ending and this focus makes my work so rich in love lessons, because we get to explore what happiness, justice, and developing character means

By Mina V. Esguerra
@minavesguerra

As a romance author, I have definitely been asked if my books are "based on my life."

By now, I've written and published 27 books, and the ideas haven't run out because I know I'm writing fiction, not just versions of my life. Exploring the lives of others does require the equivalent of imagining their thoughts and walking in their shoes—and that has taught me some valuable lessons in love.

Romance (the genre) requires a happy ending. That is, the main character and love interest decide to be together at the end. If your favorite "romance" has a tragic ending, your fave is most likely a drama, a tragedy or general fiction with romance elements, and not actually a romance. I don't see the happy ending as a limitation of the genre. This focus makes my work so rich in love lessons, because we get to explore what happiness, justice and developing character means, and how all of that is given and earned.

1. **There are many starting points to happily ever after.** Yes, many books/movies/series with romance elements involve main characters in their teens and 20s, and it perpetuates the (wrong) idea that we find love that lasts at a very young age. It does happen for some, but not for all.

It can be very rewarding to spend those years discovering yourself as a person, and forming lasting friend relationships instead of romances. It's just as exciting and in some cases better when romance happens to someone who has lived life a bit more, already knows what they want, and has figured out what they want out of life.

2. **My *kilig* is not necessarily your *kilig* so we have to learn new *kilig*.** We know there are different ways to show love. As a romance author I get reminded of this through reactions from my readers. Sometimes, a thing I consider simple and not that romantic is a favorite *kilig* moment for a reader—and that makes me sit back and think about what makes us feel loved. It's not at all standard and translatable to another person!

A relationship is work but worth doing when the people in it care to learn what makes the other feel loved, supported and safe. That could be an entirely new set of actions, words and experiences. It would be awesome if we were ready for this and make room for new *kilig*.

3. **Difficult conversations are necessary.** Look, I know that romance gets flak for being way too dramatic at times. The arguments, the conflict, the constant miscommunication that could be solved by honest conversation. And what I've learned from reading and watching all of that is we need to learn to have difficult, honest conversations with our significant others.

I don't recommend the drama and screaming, but being able to have open and difficult conversations (when people are ready for it) and then deciding what happens next, does move us along to the next and better stage of a relationship. It helps us authors with the plot, and does help us too in life.

4. **The happy ending means you are both fulfilled.** I don't just write books, I give editorial comments

The 10th anniversary edition of Mina V. Esguerra's "The Interim Goddess of Love"

The image shows the book cover for 'Interim Goddess of Love' by Mina V. Esguerra. The cover features a golden background with a large, stylized white flower and a pink flower. The title 'INTERIM GODDESS OF LOVE' is written in large, bold, white letters, and 'MINA V. ESGUERRA' is written below it in smaller white letters.

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REVIEW BOOK REVIEWS

For March, 3 Romances That Fight For Love

March 19, 2019 - 10:01 AM ET

MAYA RODALE

True love meets food trucks, ice skates and medieval knife throwing — oh, it's just another month in Romancelandia! These three romance novels span the globe and the centuries, but they share a relentless focus on two characters fighting to live their truths and find love.

A gold medal figure skater and hockey superstar get a second chance at love in *Kiss and Cry* by Mina V. Esquerro. Ten years ago, Calinda and Ramirez met at the rink in Manila where they both trained. They hit it



5 Queer Romance Titles to Get Excited About

By PrincessWeekes | May 14th, 2019, 5:40 pm

3 comments

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REVIEW BOOK NEWS & FEATURES

Women Who Count: 3 Smart STEM Romances

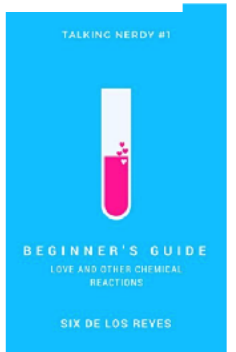
January 1, 2017 - 7:00 AM ET

MAYA RODALE

In *Beginner's Guide: Love and Other Chemical Reactions* by Six de los Reyes, Kaya Rubio is happy being all brain: she lives and breathes her work as a molecular biologist and has optimized her life so she can focus on it completely. While the plot of her story is familiar — single girl seeks date for family wedding — the approach she takes is novel. When it comes to finding love, Kaya devises "The Boyfriend Experiment" which draws on scientific principles and peer reviewed papers.

Her hero is her negative control, a man so wrong he can't possibly be right. He introduces her to romance — spontaneous, messy, emotional, pleasurable, utterly confounding logic and reason — and to another side of her herself, showing that needn't sacrifice her heart for her brain.

Being romance novels, these stories do end happily: The heroines get to be brilliant and beautiful. They can be smart and sexy and loved for it. It's a message repeated in so many romances, whether these titles or my own historical novel, *Lady Claire Is All That*, which features a heroine based on Ada Lovelace, the first computer programmer. Professional success doesn't have to come at the expense of personal happiness.



Beginner's Guide
Love And Other Chemical Reactions
by Six de los Reyes
Digital Download
Purchase



READ HARDER: A FAT-POSITIVE ROMANCE

Jessica Pryde | Dec 16, 2020



IF THE DRESS FITS BY CARLA DE GUZMAN

Start with the dedication and go on from there. (After you've wiped your tears.) Martha is a fat, capable woman with professional goals and the perfect wardrobe. But when her cousin announces her engagement to the man Martha has always loved, her best friend Max steps in to defend her—and is suddenly her fake boyfriend (LOL). The two are great together, but there's always the issue of silly people in love. We continue to love them anyway.

bitchmedia

Rebekah Weatherspoon Is the Queen of Erotic Romance

by Nichole Perkins

Published on July 14, 2020 at 9:00am

You also operate the site WOC in Romance, where you curate recently published romance books by women of color. What made you decide to do that and how much work goes into it?

Right now we have the book club, we have a Patreon, and we do the new releases. In 2013, I was hearing a lot of people say that Black women don't write romance, which was weird because a lot of Black women were writing romance at that time. So for Black History Month, I just decided to feature a different Black woman on my Twitter every day who writes romance. When I was doing the research, I [realized that I] had so many authors that I could [feature] five a day. I didn't know who a lot of these people were, but it took me two minutes of Googling. I didn't have to dig that deep for these people and for their books. So the next month I was like, "I have all of these books that I still haven't talked about. What's something I can do to keep spreading the word?" Then Asian Pacific American Heritage Month came up, and I was like, "Let me just do women of color across the board." We've shared more than 3,000 books. I'm glad that people are paying attention to it and trying out new authors, because I've found so many great ones through it. [Romance Class](#) out of the Philippines is putting out really great romances. I wouldn't have found them if it hadn't been for Women of Color in Romance. There are women in Nigeria and Kenya writing really great romances. So it's just been fun, being able to find people this way.

Talking about sex is important for everyone.

BuzzFeed

Books · Posted on Jan 3, 2022

18 Romance Books That Contain The Fake Dating Trope

I swear that if a guy approaches me in order to ask me to become his faux date for a wedding, I will say yes on the spot.



by Silvana Reyes
BuzzFeed Contributor

9. Totally Engaged by Mina V. Esquerro



Why you should read it: What if you need to fake date someone because your family thinks you are dating someone, but actually you are not dating anyone? Huh. You know that if a story starts that way, it's going to be "chaf kiss." Rose Alban is happy living alone. She's single, and her life is just perfectly simple. But her mom still thinks she has to move all the way to the US with them. The only way Rose sees her mom cropping that idea is if she sees Rose living happily with her fiancé. But the problem is...she has no fiancé. The good thing is the hot professor next door might be able to help her out!

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sil @thebookvoyagers

@ netflix adapt interim goddess of love book series by mina v. esguerra we want a college-set filipino mythology adaptation with a new goddess of love trying to give love advice to classmates and NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO but also wanting to fall in love herself



12:35 PM · Jul 4, 2019



maxi !? @yorlvr

convincing y'all to read beginner's guide: love and other chemical reactions by six de los reyes with pics from my board of nerokaya



11:17 PM · Jul 24, 2022



Arvee @ahjummavee

As promised, I bought Tara's book (a nod to my first #romanceclass print book Scandalized). Hello again book boyfriend number ????

Kiligbong and photo by @kOnsuella hih



12:21 PM · Oct 23, 2022



- GO FROM GOOD TO GREAT**
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The fourth in a series of articles exploring romance fiction around the world

The Philippines is a Southeast Asian country made up of over 7,000 small islands. The island nation has a rich and fascinating history, with a vibrant literary heritage. In this month's "Romancing the Globe," I talk to Filipino romance authors Marian Tee, Mina V. Esguerra, Inez Bautista-Yao, and Bianca Mori. While reviewing their responses, I couldn't help but notice the sense of connection and support that permeates the Filipino romance community and their heartfelt love of the genre. If I've learned anything from doing this column thus far, it's that romance readers and writers around the world really are the same, despite the geographical and cultural differences. Read on to learn more about these fabulous writers, their works, the evolution of Filipino romance, and how they cater to both Filipino readers and readers abroad.

Alyssa Cole: What type(s) of romance do you write, and why?

Marian Tee: I write contemporary and paranormal romance. I started out writing for YA readers eventually focused on new adult and adult romance. Although I'm from the Philippines, my target audience is PH. I'd say 95 percent of them are in speaking countries, primarily the United States. I enjoy writing steamy, angsty non-coms with powerful alpha heroes and innocent, quirky heroines.

Mina V. Esguerra: Most of what I write is contemporary romance in English. I have a series in the Philippines, another that's set mostly in the US. I also did a co-artistic suspense series and a fantasy YA mythology romance trilogy.

Inez Bautista-Yao: I write sweet, contemporary, and YA romance set in the Philippines. I've loved reading romance since I was a teenager, but when I came across stories with Filipino characters set in my country, the experience was totally different. It blew my mind. I was so used to reading about American or British characters that reading about Filipino was such an amazing experience, and I wanted to duplicate that for other Filipino readers.

literature (both high-brow and genre fiction), PH readers are automatically part of my target market as well. Regarding reader preference, it's actually dependent on income classes. Readers from lower-income classes typically prefer books written in Filipino because it's what they're more comfortable reading. Those from middle to upper-income classes, on the other hand, prefer English romances in general because it's also what they're more comfortable reading. That's why books such as Sylvia Day's Crossfire series still had to be translated in Filipino, even though English is our second language.

Esguerra: I write and publish in English, and I think my readers would prefer that I continue doing it this way. But I'm experimenting with a crowdsourced Tagalog translation of one of my books, and I've been posting that chapter by chapter on Wattpad. I speak Tagalog and write a publishing advice column on Wattpad in a mix of Tagalog and English, but the readers who follow that won't necessarily buy my English books. Some readers just prefer reading a certain language, and I'm fine with that.

Bautista-Yao: Sadly, I can only write in English. I wish I could write as fluently in Tagalog as well, but I can't. I'd be able to reach a wider audience if I could write in both.

Mori: My books are in English. I'm not confident about my written Tagalog!



Mori: This is totally unscientific, but I think it's NA/contemporary. But I may be biased because those are the genres I read!

Bautista-Yao: Right now, I believe it's young and new adult and paranormal.

Cole: In your experience, is the romance genre received well, in general, in the Philippines, or is it treated as less than other forms of literature?

Tee: Romance has always sold well here, and even more so because of the Wattpad phenomenon.

started writing steamy, Tessa Bailey was a huge influence. I can never pull off her brand of brash and sexy, but just having that as a touchstone, that you can push boundaries in romance, is great to know.

Cole: Can you tell us a bit about the romance community in the Philippines? For example, is it large or small? How do you interact with readers? Are there conferences or book groups, or are most interactions online?

Tee: Most of my readers are outside PH, as I mentioned earlier, and as such I only communicate with them online. I've always been open about the fact that I'm from the Philippines and that I'm not even a native English speaker.

"There's always been an active and large community of romance writers who release books in Filipino. The community that's been releasing and writing romance in English is a relatively new phenomenon."

— Bianca Mori



Literary Festival where I conducted a workshop of sorts (a really short one) on writing YA fiction. We also have Facebook parties. It's such a fun, loving, and supportive community, and I feel so blessed to be part of it.

Mori: There's always been an active and large community of romance writers who release books in Filipino. The community that's been releasing and writing romance in English is a relatively new phenomenon. We're mostly independent and not that many (last check, our Facebook group has around 143 members, though I am sure there are many more!), and I think innovations like self-publishing, Wattpad, and the free advice/classes of mentors like Mina

The *Impact* of Our Books and Authors

Hello, Ever After

#RomanceClass and Online-Only Live Literature in the Philippines in 2020

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University of Melbourne

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Andrea Anne Trinidad

Ateneo de Manila University

Jodi McAlister

Deakin University

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4529-9205>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5204/mcj.2769>

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Finding a Family: The Genre World of #RomanceClass

Jodi McAlister, Deakin University, Australia

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Start Date

22-4-2020 9:00 AM

End Date

22-4-2020 10:00 AM

Proposal Type

Individual Presentation

Abstract

#RomanceClass is a biblio-community of authors, artists, actors, and readers involved in the creation, production, and reception of independently published English-language contemporary romance novels in the Philippines. To be a #RomanceClass book, a novel must not only uphold textual conventions of the romance genre (eg. a central love story and a happy ending), but must also have involved the #RomanceClass community in its publishing process, whether through beta reading, sensitivity reading, or editing. For #RomanceClass, genre is established not just through text but by the means of producing the text.



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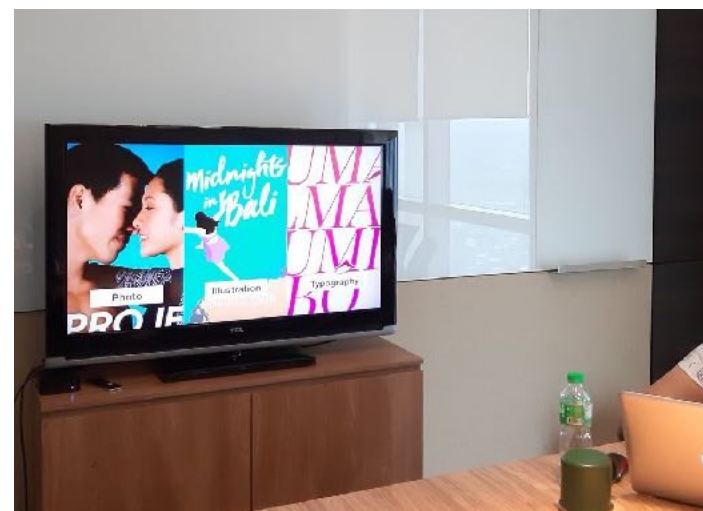
Live literature in the Philippines: an ethnographic study of #RomanceClass and reading as performance

Claire Parnell  , **Andrea Anne Trinidad** , & **Jodi McAlister** 

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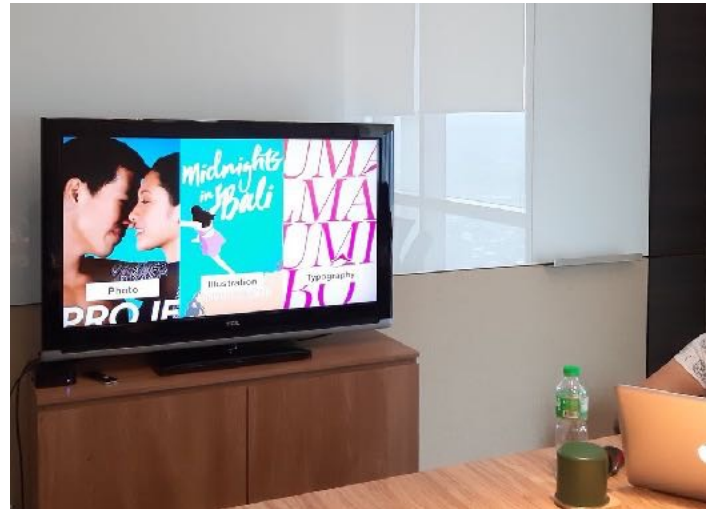


- Classes
- Events
- Selling
- Photo shoots
- Media collabs





- Classes





- Events



#AprilFeelsDay2017



#romanceclass





- Selling



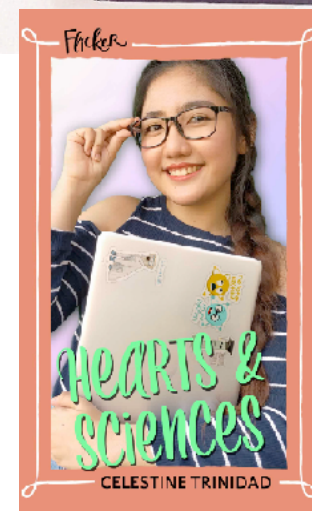
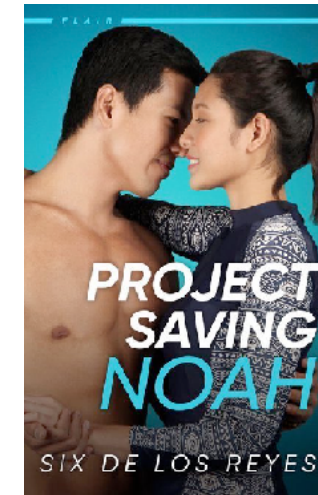


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- Flair: adult romance
- Flicker: young adult
- KILIG: comics collab with KOMIKET PHILIPPINES





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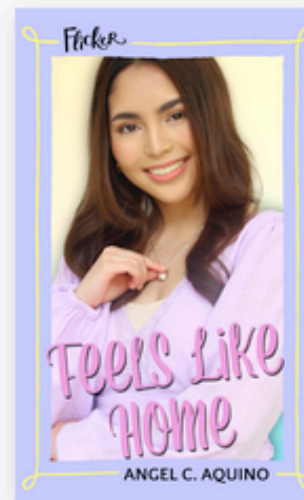
What If We Fall In Love?
Tara Frejas



Kilig
Alexandra Sevilla, Arli Pagaduan, Carla de Guzman, Cee, Celestine Trinidad, Chapy Faduñan, Cris Santos, Danice Mae P. Sison, Fay Sebastian, Ghost, Glanre Rabena, Hench Dulin, Liza S. De la Cruz, Marlonie, marmastry, Milo Galang, Munppence, Sumikyo, Suzette de Borja, ydbugs, Yugen, Zee Dina



Some Bali to Love
Carla de Guzman



Feels Like Home
Angel C. Aquino



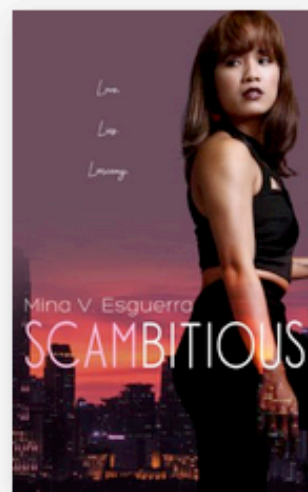
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Ines Bautista-Yao



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Mina V. Esquerro
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Love is All Around: An Alta Holiday Anthology
Blanca Mori, Carla de Guzman, Suzette de Borja



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