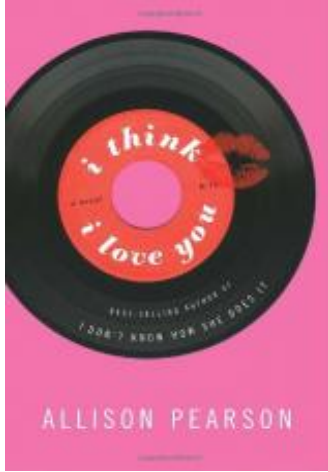


# I Think I Love You

by Allison Pearson

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## About the Book

The new novel from the bestselling author of **I Don't Know How She Does It** takes us on an unforgettable journey into first love, and --- with the emotional intensity and penetrating wit that have made her beloved among readers all over the world --- reminds us of how the ardor of our youth can ignite our adult lives.

Wales, 1974. Petra and Sharon, two thirteen-year-old girls, are obsessed with David Cassidy. His fan magazine is their Bible, and some days his letters are the only things that keep them going as they struggle through the humiliating daily rituals of adolescence --- confronting their bewildering new bodies, fighting with mothers who don't understand them at all. Together they tackle the Ultimate David Cassidy Quiz, a contest whose winners will be flown to America to meet Cassidy in person.

London, 1998. Petra is pushing 40, on the brink of divorce, and fighting with her own 13-year-old daughter when she discovers a dusty letter in her mother's closet declaring her the winner of the contest she and Sharon had labored over with such hope and determination. More than 20 years later, 20 pounds heavier, bruised by grief and the disappointments of middle age, Petra reunites with Sharon for an all-expenses-paid trip to Las Vegas to meet their teen idol at last, and finds her life utterly transformed.

Funny, moving, full of beautiful observations about the awakenings of both youth and middle age, Allison Pearson's long-awaited new novel will speak across generations to mothers and daughters and women of all ages.

## Discussion Guide

1. What do you think this novel is about --- love, illusion, friendship?
2. On page 21, Zelda says to Bill, "Fantasy is an important part of growing up." How does this prove true for Petra? And

for Bill?

3. Why does the author include articles from The Essential David Cassidy Magazine? What point is Pearson making?
4. "Honestly, it's amazing the things you can know about someone you don't know" (page 31). Bill knows facts about David Cassidy because it's his job. Why do the girls study David so closely?
5. The girls lie to each other out of adolescent fear. Why does Bill lie to Ruth?
6. "You chose the kind of friends you wanted because you hoped you could be like them and not like you." Reread the last paragraph on page 136. How does it compare to Carrie's thoughts on friendship at the top of page 200?
7. What does Petra learn about her friends at White City? What does she learn from her mother's response?
8. Discuss the pair of epigraphs on the opening page of Part Two, page 167. What impression do you get from their juxtaposition?
9. On page 197, Petra thinks about "hiraeth," the yearning for home. How does this relate to what ultimately happens with Sharon? With Bill?
10. What has Petra learned about motherhood from her own mother? In what ways is she like Greta?
11. How does Sharon help Petra get over Marcus?
12. "Never underestimate the wish not to know," Bill says to Petra on page 235. What does he mean? How does this apply to both Bill and Petra?
13. What is the significance of Petra's work with Ashley, the Girl That Nobody Loves? How does music heal Petra?
14. What did Bill get out of "being" David Cassidy? How did it benefit him, and how did it harm him?
15. On page 280, Sharon likens her faith in The Essential David Cassidy Magazine to belief in the Bible. What does she mean? Were the girls choosing to believe?
16. Why does Petra take Bill's revelation about his work as a betrayal? Why doesn't Sharon?
17. On page 304, Petra realizes her feelings about Greta have changed. What brings about this shift?
18. Why doesn't Pearson take us inside the women's meeting with David?
19. How does Pearson's afterword affect your feelings toward the novel as a whole?

## Author Bio

Allison Pearson is the author of the hugely bestselling *I DON'T KNOW HOW SHE DOES IT*, which became a major motion picture starring Sarah Jessica Parker, and *I THINK I LOVE YOU*. Pearson was named Newcomer of the Year at the British Book Awards for her first book. She has written for *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times* (UK), *The Daily Mail*, *Time*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Observer* and countless other publications. Pearson has won many awards including Columnist of the Year, Critic of the Year and Interviewer of the Year. She lives in Cambridge, England, with the *New Yorker* film critic Anthony Lane, and their two children.

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