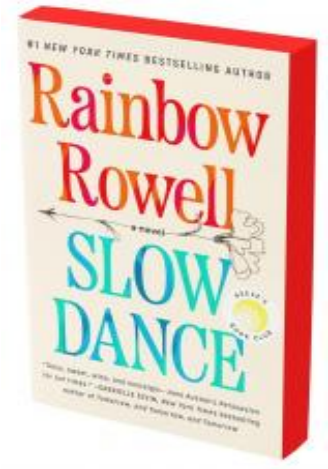
Slow Dance

by Rainbow Rowell



About the Book

From the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of ELEANOR & PARK and ATTACHMENTS comes SLOW DANCE --- a novel of true love and friendship.

Back in high school, everybody thought Shiloh and Cary would end up together...everybody but Shiloh and Cary.

They were just friends. *Best friends*. Allies. They spent entire summers sitting on Shiloh?s porch steps, dreaming about the future. They were both going to get out of north Omaha --- Shiloh would go to college and become an actress, and Cary would join the Navy. They promised each other that their friendship would never change.

Well, Shiloh did go to college, and Cary did join the Navy. And yet, somehow, *everything* changed.

Now Shiloh is 33, and it?s been 14 years since she talked to Cary. She?s been married and divorced. She has two kids. And she?s back living in the same house she grew up in. Her life is nothing like she planned.

When she?s invited to an old friend?s wedding, all Shiloh can think about is if Cary will be there --- and if she hopes he will be. Would Cary even want to talk to her? After *everything*?

The answer is yes. And yes. And *yes*.

SLOW DANCE is the story of two kids who fell in love before they knew enough about love to recognize it. Two friends who lost everything. Two adults who just feel lost.

It?s the story of Shiloh and Cary, who everyone thought would end up together, trying to find their way back to the start.

Discussion Guide

1. The novel starts with Shiloh and Cary slow dancing at a friend?s wedding, but the book?s title, SLOW DANCE, goes deeper than just one dance. How did you interpret the title as the story unfolded?

2. Do you think Shiloh and Cary?s relationship would have lasted if they dated in high school? How would it have been the same or different?

3. In what ways do the financial realities of Shiloh?s and Cary?s lives play a role in their relationship?

4. Shiloh and Cary understand each other better than anyone else does. However, this often leads to each assuming the other knows how they feel, when it isn?t always the case. How did you react to this? Did it frustrate you? Did it feel relatable?

5. Dating after divorce, especially with kids, is obviously complicated. What did you notice about how Shiloh and Cary navigated that situation?

6. Shiloh and her ex-husband agreed to split time with their kids 50-50. During the divorce, Shiloh fought for a greater share of time but thought ?the kids were better off having a dad who would fight for them.? What did you make of this situation and Shiloh?s assessment, especially considering how Ryan treated Shiloh during their relationship?

7. Cary grew up witnessing his mother make poor dating choices and being unable to rely on other family members. How does this affect the trajectory of his life? How did you feel about Cary?s mother in the end?

8. Did Shiloh and Cary?s relationship remind you of anyone from your past or any other paths not taken?

9. How did you interpret the difference between Shiloh?s perception of herself in high school and others? perception of her?

10. Being around Cary as an adult made Shiloh feel reconnected to her teenage self. What are the pieces of *your* teenage self that you?d like to reconnect with now?

11. What did you think of the relationship between Shiloh and her mother? What about between Shiloh and her children?

12. Shiloh says of her kids: ?Somebody should tell you beforehand that it?s more like being mind-captured than falling in love --- they take over your whole head, and that?s that. You don?t ever want anything as much as you want to make them happy.? What were some of the similarities --- and differences --- in the ways Shiloh loves different people: Cary, her children, her mother, herself?

13. There is a recurring conversational theme between Shiloh and Cary in the novel: that the brain makes note of novelty and forgets sameness. In the end, Shiloh promises that she?ll obliterate his memory, creating so many good days that they all blur together. What does this make you feel about the role of memories and nostalgia in your life?

Author Bio

Rainbow Rowell is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of CHERRY BABY, SLOW DANCE, ELEANOR & PARK and the Simon Snow trilogy, as well as several other award-winning novels, short stories and comics. She lives with her family in Omaha, Nebraska.

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