

How Could You

Ren Strapp

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A college student and her friends navigate a complicated web of relationships in the graphic novel *How Could You*, a fond, realistic view of early adulthood.

Molly is depressed after a breakup email from Olene, who's away in Europe for a semester. Molly's friend Lou is fresh from a split with Yona, who's rooming with Olene in France. Molly and Lou comfort each other while searching for "rebound girlfriends." Meanwhile, in France, Olene and Yona grow closer. It's a swirl of emotions, attractions, and questions of love—romantic, platonic, or otherwise. Realizations about sexual identity, friendship, trust, and betrayal all play a role as Molly and the others resolve their feelings about each other and look toward the future, growing toward maturity and self-realization.

The cast is diverse and engaging in this story full of romantic tension, drama, and humor. When Molly decides to cut her hair short after hurt feelings and personal growth, Yona assures her that it, and her heart, will "grow back healthier for sure." And the art is lively and appealing, with inspired use of color: ribbons of yellow flow along with musical notes to show the reach and impact of a song. Key moments are exaggerated for heightened emotional or comedic effect, as with the huge eyes of two curious friends awaiting someone's reaction to a biting comment.

How Could You is an entertaining graphic novel about the pleasures and perils of college romances.

PETER DABBENE (November / December 2024)

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