

Come join the Rom-Com adventure of Denise and Rowan, who meet in a chatroom using each other's best friends' photographs. Will they meet and how?

Catfished

By Jackie Adams

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An interesting Rom-Com

Jackie Adams

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Chapter 1

Have you ever felt overweight, ugly, and lonely? That's how I felt when I borrowed a picture of my friend and used it on a chatgroup I signed up to be in. I was in a dark place at the time. I was clinically depressed with no family and one friend, while I was living on an inheritance I got from my dead grandfather. I was basically living a life as a recluse. Finding this chat room was a real catch! Every day I would log in and see familiar names that I'd enjoy conversations with, sometimes even one on one. I have to confess the photograph didn't really look anything like me unless I lost seventy-five pounds, had a better complexion, and seemed surrounded by people who love me.

It's strange how in time I'd soon regret the pictures I had invented for myself. I look taller in some of them than I actually am, with a bikini body, full luscious lips, and silky long curly brown hair. I guess you could say I favor a model. When in reality I'm short, plump, thin lipped, and have dirty blonde hair.

I look at my photo and start to feel depressed wishing I actually looked like her. Maybe my life would be completely different right now? I feel a deep ache and decide to hurriedly take my mind off of it. I log into the chat room and everyone greets me. I see some familiar names and photos. One stands out to me the most, Rowan.

Rowan and I have been chatting a lot one on one and getting closer by the night. I'd say day, but he works most of it. He logs on the chat group in the evenings, unless it's his days off. Rowan is an Architect. He designs businesses and homes. He's very creative, too. Lately, he has shared a few of his blueprints with me. I find him exciting and fun to chat with.

Before Rowan, I've chatted with other online men, too. Usually when the other men get too close, I cut them off and ghost them. What do I mean by too close? When they want to meet in person or go on an actual date. Rowan, however, is different. He doesn't rush me, and lets me explore him and his life. Which is such a nice escape from my reality!

The chat I belong to is called Kirtsies. It's for people who are interested in making new friends with others who may have the same interests. I joined it about a year ago. Yes, I've gotten several new photos of myself that aren't really me in a folder I named portraits. There must be at least twenty of them.

Rowan messages me and starts chatting about how great his day went. He's excited, because he has landed a new business proposition that wants him to design their building. Apparently, it's a huge law firm there where he lives. Of course, Rowan lives across the country from me, so I'm not familiar with the name, Lange and Lane. The way he talks about them, it must be a pretty serious law firm.

He said it's hard for him to find a relationship where he lives, because the ladies he did try to date stopped talking to

him. He's too busy to have a relationship. He said the good thing about this chat group is that he can get on when it's convenient for him. He knows it's rather narcissistic, but it's part of being a busy Architect.

As close as we've been getting, I dread when he decides he'll want to meet me. It always happens, so I know this time it will. I can't seem to ghost him. I think I'm too attached. Also, I'm tired of starting all over with men. I want there to be a man.

I take diet supplements, I try to take care of myself daily, fatness is just in the genes. My father, my mother, my brother. All of them were or are fat. Rowan likes his women fit. He's never been too egotistical to mention this arrogant fact, but I've seen pictures on his space book page that shows me what his past ladies have looked like. In my fake photos, I'm fit, too.

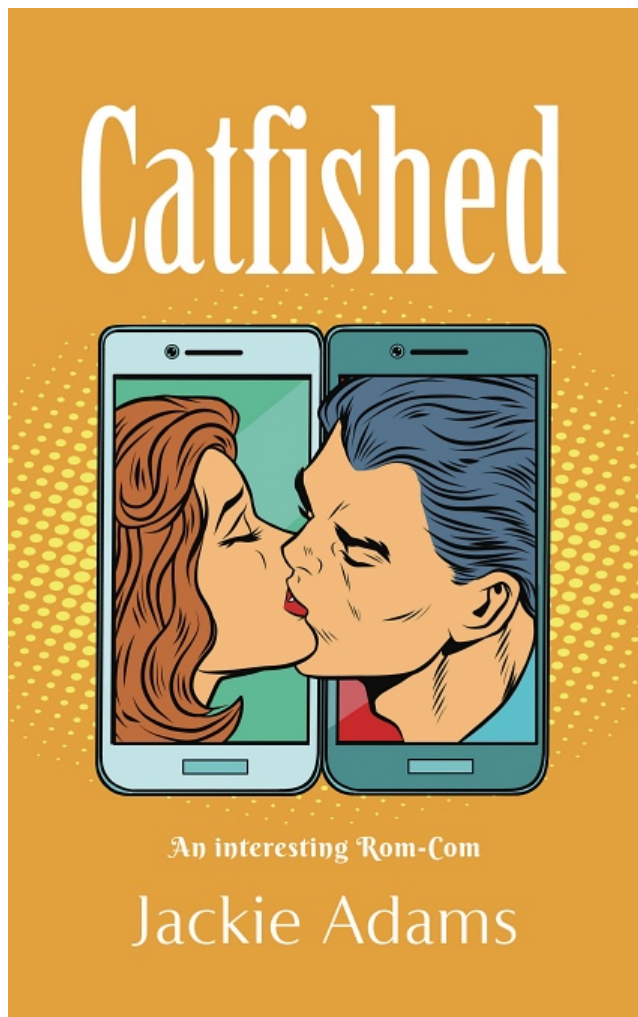
He keeps telling me he doesn't know how I'm still single. I have excuses for the three men I've dated that supposedly live near me. The first one was violent, the second one ended up gay, and the third one cheated on me with a friend of mine. I feel really bad for lying to Rowan, but he keeps coming back for more. When he's not coming back to me, I find myself lured to text him. It's a no-win situation. I've spent more time with Rowan than any of the other men I've chatted with. Rowan and I met almost a year ago. I guess about two weeks after I joined Kirtsies chat group. I was online dating Harry from the chat group. Which is funny, because Rowan would always type in comments about Harry and me. Like, hey

you're Harry's Sally. Like from *When Harry Met Sally*, the movie. My name isn't Sally. It's Denise.

I hear my phone ding again. Of course, it's Rowan. He's letting me know he got off work early and is enjoying a glass of lemonade out on his balcony. Geez, that sounds so divine. I imagine being out on the balcony with him. If only I were so lucky! God, why couldn't you have made me beautiful?! I bet I would have flown to be with Rowan right now.

My looks just weren't stacked in the cards. They say it's important to love yourself. Well, I've come to accept who I am a long time ago and do love myself. That doesn't stop the loneliness, though. One can only love oneself so much.

It's kind of strange, because overweight men are with thin, beautiful chicks all the time. Yet, I rarely see an overweight woman with a thin, handsome man. My grief counselor says I'm too hard on myself. I don't think I am. I just see things with myself exactly as they are. I don't make it better or worse.



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