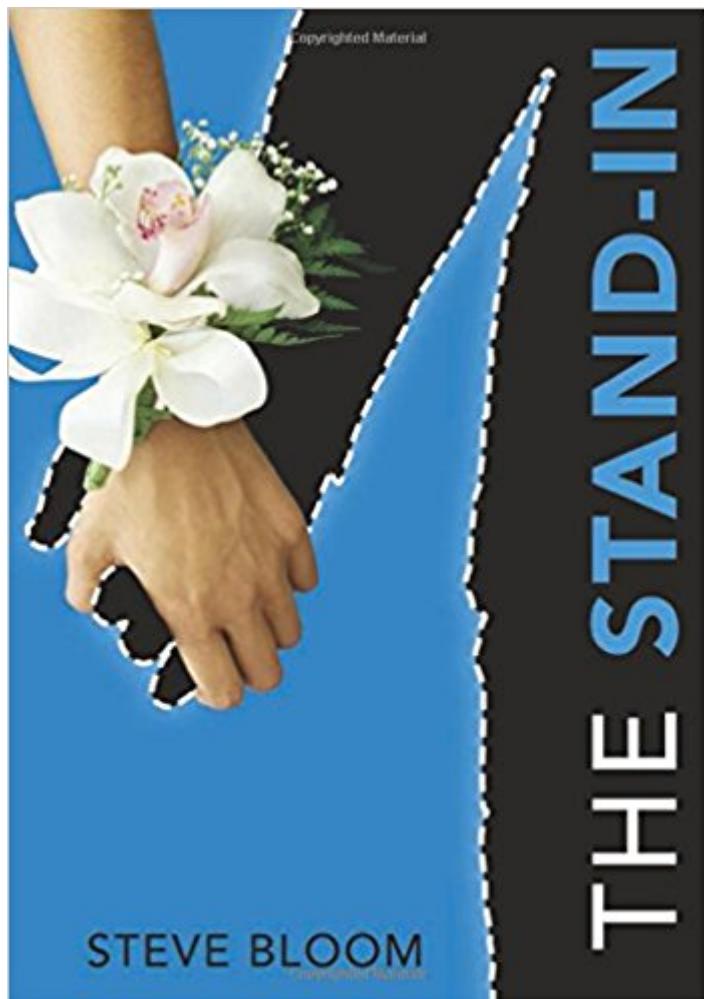


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## The Stand-In



## Synopsis

When Brooks volunteered to be a stand-in for Burdette's cousin who got stood up for Homecoming, it was with the noblest of intentions helping a fellow human being, free of charge. But when he gets a tip of more than three hundred bucks, word spreads quickly and Brooks seizes the opportunity to offer his impeccable escort services to super-wealthy parents who want their daughters to experience those big social events of senior year. Besides, Brooks could use the cash to hire a tutor to get admitted to Columbia University. So what if along the way he goes along with a few minor deceptions and cuts a few moral corners? What could be the harm?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 10 Up  Brooks Rattigan has a plan: do everything in his power to get into Columbia University and out of Pritchard, NJ. When Brooks overhears a classmate trying to find a date for his cousin to homecoming, he offers to take her and becomes The Stand-In. He quits his job at the local sub shop, and what started out as a onetime gesture of goodwill becomes a lucrative business. The teen spends his weekends taking girls to their dances and parties in an attempt to make them feel special and build his college fund. Will Brooks be able to handle college applications, a stoner dad, a slacker best friend, difficult clients, and the girl of his dreams? This tale will resonate with young adults looking for a unique coming-of-age story. The interactions between Brooks and his dates provide humor, hope, and a bit of romance. Plotlines about relationships with parents and friends offer additional depth to the narrative. Some of the threads are resolved a little too neatly and easily. Frequent drug use, language, and sexual content make this a book more suited for older teens.

VERDICT A purchase for libraries where realistic fiction and coming-of-age titles are in demand. *•Ashley Leffel, Griffin Middle School, Frisco, TX*

"This tale will resonate with young adults looking for a unique coming-of-age story. . . . A purchase for libraries where realistic fiction . . . titles are in demand." *School Library Journal*"The breakneck pace and snappy writing keeps this humorous caper moving . . . and the sometimes crass but good-hearted hero at its center is worth rooting for." *--Booklist*"In his debut novel, screenwriter Bloom gives Brooks a strikingly irreverent narrative voice, weaving a tale built around standard rom-com moments." *--Publishers Weekly*"A fun read with which upper high school teens can relate, *The Stand-In* has a John Hughes-esque feel and several positive, subtle themes woven throughout that will leave teen and adult YA readers with the good vibes of story satisfaction at the end." *--USA Today's Happily Ever After*

This book is by turns funny ('Quick! Pretend you like me!') and poignant ('I tag after them like a mutt which, let's face it, is what I am'). It manages to combine teenage angst -- trying to save face above all else, embarrassed about the entire state of New Jersey, painfully aware of his loser father's shortcomings -- with teenage desire and hope and ambition and ingenuity. The kid is hard on himself, but he's also a survivor, an entrepreneur. He's a lot of contradictory things: a pretender, big-hearted and generous, courageous when he needs to be in spite of everything, and keenly aware of the humiliation of having less than the rich families around him. Yet he survives and thrives and even manages to grow through the course of this book. Which is to say: he's a real, full-blown, imagined human being. If it isn't already in the works as a movie, it ought to be. Great read.

Great read, really brings back high school memories in a way I haven't experienced in many years. I was never a stand-in (not even close), but I can relate to Brooks's conflicted self-reflection: "I'm a jerk. No, I'm not. Yes, I am. No, I'm not...". It also (embarrassingly) brings back memories of my teenage inability to exercise decent judgement whenever hormones or humiliation struck. Plus, it's just a fun story, with a nice mix/battle of typical suburban high schooler meets higher society - and interestingly, the two groups in Bloom's novel were not so disparate as in, say, "Breaking Away". Read it - you'll probably see parts of lots of people you know or knew.

The Stand-In is a hilarious romp of a book. It will resonate with teens and tweens with its witty, knowing dialog and sharply-drawn scenes of angst, embarrassment,

friendship, and desire. The likeable, quasi-desperate hero is surrounded by a motley and hugely entertaining crew of friends and enemies, all of whom have to deal with adults displaying various degrees of dysfunction or battiness. It's a great read simply for the well-paced action and intrigue, but it's also layered with keen-eyed observations about the pretensions and delusions of 21st-century upper-crust society.

Steve has a facility with language and storytelling that probably comes from his work as a screenwriter and creates a nimble, artful, hilarious narrative that carries you unstoppably with it. Several times I found myself needing to stifle my own chortles so as not to disturb people around me. If you're okay with over-the-top moments and scenes that challenge the limits of human decency (in the funniest way) then read this book.

I laughed so hard, I cried (even in public because I couldn't stop myself). While promoted as a YA book, this is such a great read for all.

Extremely engaging and a fun read. Very much in the literary neighborhood of *About A Boy*. Highly recommended.

"The Stand-In" is that rare novel that dudes and girls can both enjoy. It has tons of laughs and great observations on the high school class system. The characters feel real. Will the stand-in turn into a stand-up guy as he runs the gauntlets of dating and getting into college? The plot is so well-paced it's no wonder they're making this book into a movie.

A great read for any age, *The Stand-in* is storytelling at its best. Brooks Rattigan takes us on a journey through his high school senior year that is edgy and deeply biting at the same time that it is warm, uplifting, very accessible and often hilarious. Very relatable to anyone who has ever applied to college (and their parents). Hollywood should take note -- I want to see this one on the screen!

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