



Alternatives to Sex: A Novel

Stephen McCauley

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The bestselling author of *The Object of My Affection* and *True Enough* delivers his most compelling and richly observed novel to date with this portrait of one man's search for the holy trinity of modern life -- true love, good sex, and great real estate.

Stephen McCauley's new novel is a moving and hilarious chronicle of life in post-traumatic, morally ambiguous America where the desire to do good is constantly being tripped up by the need to feel good. Right now.

William Collins is a real estate agent working near Boston. Despite a boom market, his sales figures aren't what they should be, due mostly to the distractions of compulsive ironing and housecleaning binges and his penchant for nightly online cruising for hookups -- "less impersonal than old-fashioned anonymous sex because you exchanged fake names with the person."

There's also his struggle to collect the rent from Kumiko Rothberg, his passive-aggressive tenant, and his worries about his best friend, Edward, a flight attendant he's certainly *not* in love with.

William has known for some time that his habits are slipping out of control. But he figures that "as long as I acknowledged my behavior was a problem, it wasn't one."

When he finally decides to do something about his life, he needs a role model of calm stability. Enter Charlotte O'Malley and Samuel Thompson, wealthy suburbanites looking for the perfect city apartment. "Happy couple," William writes in his notes. "Maybe I can learn something from them." But what he learns challenges his own assumptions about real estate, love, and desire. And what they learn from him might unravel a budding friendship, not to mention a very promising sale.

Full of crackling dialogue delivered by a stellar ensemble of players, *Alternatives to Sex* is social satire at its very best: A smart, sophisticated, and astonishingly funny look at the way we live now.

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