

'A tender story of learning how to live and how to love. Emily Lighezzolo writes with her whole heart on the page.' Allee Richards

An award-winning and provocative novel about women's bodies, sex, autonomy – and the power of the image.

Hypothetically, would you want to live forever but invisible, or a short life seen?

Hypothetically, would you give up wine forever or sex for ten years?

Hypothetically, would you show a friend someone else's nude?

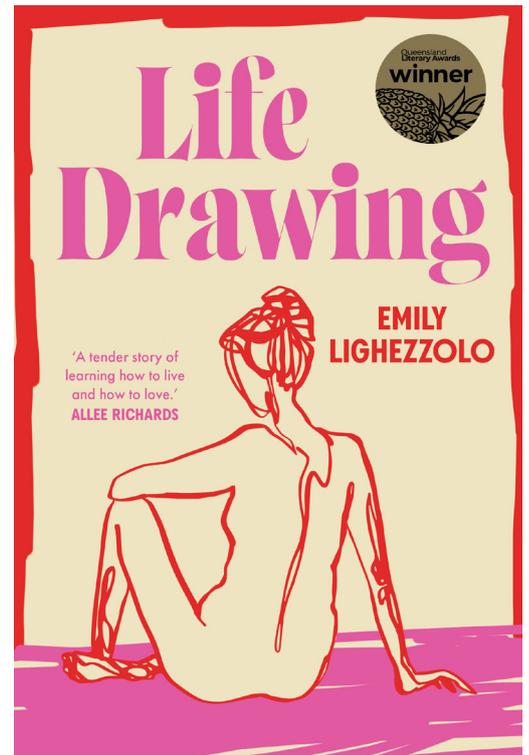
Maisie and Charlie meet at a life-drawing session as undergraduates: she's the model, he's an artist. Their immediate connection carries them across two decades as they navigate the slippery dynamics of friendship, estrangement and family.

Maisie's story is every woman's, and Emily Lighezzolo's bold debut interrogates the collision of art and gaze, desire and consent, muse and meaning. This is a love story. At its core: a woman's body – seen, touched, loved, hated, commodified and reclaimed. *Life Drawing* is an award-winning and unflinching novel for our times.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emily Lighezzolo has worked in Australian publishing for nearly a decade. *Life Drawing* won the Glendower Award for an Emerging Queensland Writer at the Queensland Literary Awards and is her first book. She lives in Meanjin/Brisbane.



BOOK DETAILS

C-format paperback | 978 0 7022 7098 7
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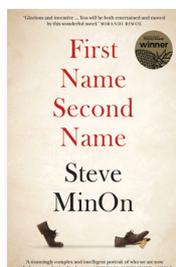
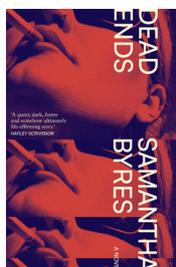
'I loved this smart, compassionate and sexy story about the irresistible forces that bring people together and tear them apart.'

Toni Jordan

'A strikingly bold debut novel that turns an unflinching gaze towards love and women's bodies. Written with both compassion and evocative prose, Emily Lighezzolo's book tackles contemporary issues head-on through the eyes of her two expertly drawn main characters.'

Natasha Lester

FURTHER READING



QUESTIONS OVER PAGE

Questions

- Throughout the novel, art intersects with how the female body is represented. What commentary does it give? Does it change over time?
- In the opening chapter, Maisie is positioned as Charlie's muse in the life drawing session. How does that affect their relationship over time? What are the connotations, as a woman, of being perceived as a 'muse'?
- The novel is broken into three acts, each represented by a part of the female body. How do these body parts influence the characters in each act? What larger social commentary is being made by the references to these parts of the body?
- Throughout *Life Drawing*, Maisie attempts to redirect the male gaze. How does she do this? Do you think she achieves her aims? How does social media play into it?
- There is social commentary made by the characters on how women are represented in pop culture (Emily Ratajkowski in Robin Thicke's 'Blurred Lines' and Miley Cyrus in 'Wrecking Ball', for instance). What do you think the author is trying to say with these scenes? Do you think how women are represented in pop culture has changed over time? Can you think of any recent examples from pop culture?
- Maisie's values and perspective on life develop through the three acts. In what ways is she altered from her younger self? In what ways does she stay the same?
- Maisie's relationship with her body is very dependent on how other people perceive it. Do you think your relationship with your body is influenced by others and by society's standards on how that body should be presented? Is there a way to overcome this? What change can we see in the Maisie of the epilogue?
- Would you describe Maisie and Charlie's relationship as healthy? How does their communication style affect their relationship? Does it evolve over time?

Questions

- Some of Maisie's and Charlie's actions in the book can be seen as immoral or unethical. Can you describe the difference? Do you think some of their actions make them the villains of the story? When are they the victims of the story?
- What types of masculinity are represented in *Life Drawing*? Look at Toby, Jake, Charlie and Thomas. How do they differ? What relationships affect their masculinity? How does their environment affect their masculinity?
- How does Maisie's relationship with her body expose the tension between sexual agency and the patriarchy? How does this tension relate to the sexual politics of feminism?
- *Life Drawing* is described as a 'literary love story' as it doesn't follow the usual conventions of a romance novel. Can you think of other literary love stories? What narrative functions in *Life Drawing* might also be found in a romance? What do you notice that is different in this novel?