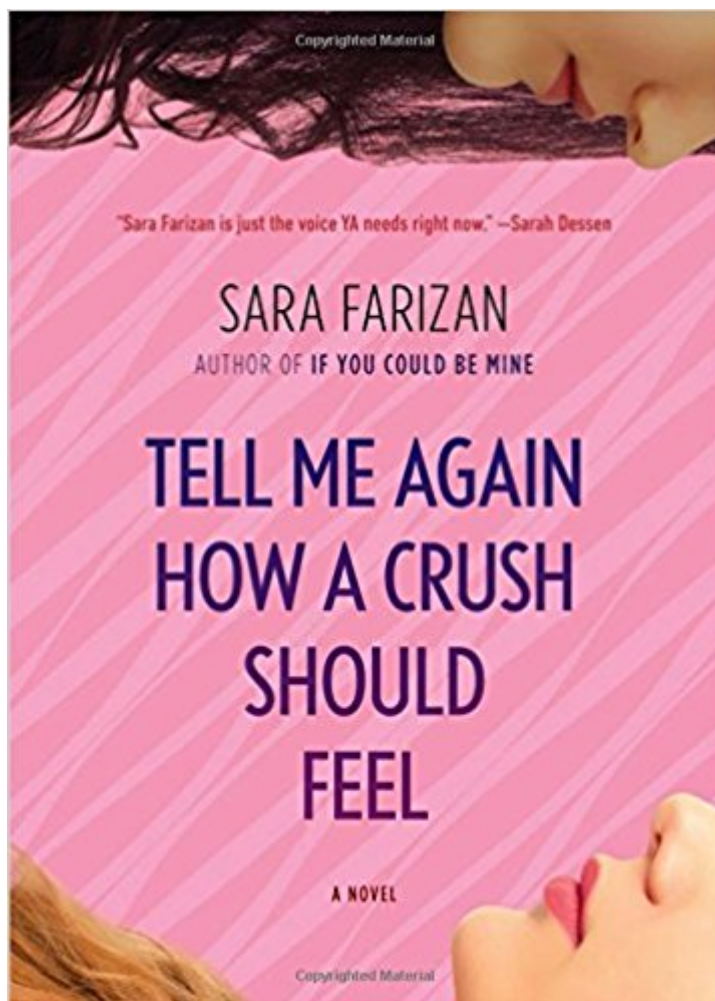


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# Tell Me Again How A Crush Should Feel: A Novel



## Synopsis

At Armstead Academy, everyone knows everything about everyone. Well, everyone thinks they know everything . . . Leila has made it most of the way through Armstead Academy without having a crush on anyone, which is a relief. As an Iranian American, she's different enough; if word got out that Leila liked girls, life would be twice as hard. But when beautiful new girl Saskia shows up, Leila starts to take risks she never thought she would. As she carefully confides in trusted friends about Saskia's confusing signals, Leila begins to figure out that all her classmates are more complicated than they first appear to be, and some are keeping surprising secrets of their own.

“An empowering romance featuring a lovable, awkward protagonist who just needs a little nudge of confidence to totally claim her multifaceted identity.”

• Booklist, starred review

“Farizan exceeds the high expectations she set with her debut, *If You Could Be Mine*, in this fresh, humorous, and poignant exploration of friendship and love.”

• Publishers Weekly, starred review

“Funny, heartwarming, and wise.”

• Kirkus Reviews

A 2015 ALA Top Ten Rainbow List Title

A 2015 YALSA Quick Pick for Reluctant Young Adult Readers

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up

Farizan creates a unique and memorable cast of characters in this romantic coming-of-age story. Leila is from a wealthy, loving Persian family, goes to an exclusive private school, gets decent grades, and manages to stay in the middle of the popularity pool. However, she has secret she is sure will destroy her delicately balanced world

she likes girls. Narrator

Negin Farsad has just the right mix of youth and maturity to make Leila seem a bit sharper than the average high schooler. Farsad does an excellent job with the accents for Leila's parents and new student Saskia. As Leila finally confronts who she is, Farsad takes her voices up and down the range to match her roller coaster of emotions. This story will ring true for any listener in search of their own identity and is also sure to spark lively discussion. —Shari Fesko, Southfield Public Library, MI --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

"Deftly balancing Leila's unique cultural background and experience with more universal coming-of-age struggles, Farizan fashions an empowering romance featuring a lovable, awkward protagonist who just needs a little nudge of confidence to totally claim her multifaceted identity." —Booklist, starred review "Farizan exceeds the high expectations she set with her debut, *If You Could Be Mine*, in this fresh, humorous, and poignant exploration of friendship and love, a welcome addition to the coming-out/coming-of-age genre." —Publishers Weekly, starred review

I'm not sure how to review this book. I was so excited to read TELL ME AGAIN HOW A CRUSH SHOULD FEEL, but sadly, this one really missed the mark for me. The premise was promising enough, and I think the love story between two of the characters was sweet, but didn't deliver quite the emotional punch that it could have. We also saw no closure with the villain, which made me feel like my Kindle version might be missing half the book. I kept scrolling after the last scene and was shocked to find myself at the end. I wish there'd been more of an actual story arc, as well as more detailed character arcs for Leila and Lisa. There was a LOT of room for emotional depth which was quite lacking from all characters, leaving them all a bit flat, and me a bit detached. TELL ME AGAIN HOW A CRUSH SHOULD FEEL had a great premise, and I enjoyed the cultural references, the awkwardness of first love and finding oneself, but as a whole, this story fell short for me. Not having to do with the author or the storyline itself, I am really disappointed in the lack of editing in this traditionally published book. Telling vs showing, short sentence structure usually reserved for building tension but used constantly in this book, miscellaneous punctuation mistakes, lack of character development, etc.; these are all things that a good editor should have caught. Ms. Farizan was done a disservice in this aspect of the process. My Rating: PG

Tell me again how a crush should feel I loved this story - the writing is REALLY good, it's funny and even made me laugh out loud in parts (which rarely happens when I read). Mostly this is because

Leila, the main character is funny and so likeable. The portrait of her as a first gen. Iranian-American is really good, and she expresses well the tensions and fears she has about coming out, within her family and beyond (and the author demonstrates well that no culture has a monopoly of sexual conservatism). She also portrays this Iranian-American family as more culturally diverse within the family than might otherwise be thought of (even if they are in the economic elite). There are also some really lovely moments where a relationship changes or turns, and Farizan really captures the excitement, the nervousness, and the wonder of some of these moments, told through Leila's perspective. And her writing can be direct and sweet. And this is not just a coming out romance either, it's about being young, finding (or rediscovering) someone, and falling in love. All universal human themes, regardless of gender and orientation. I'd like to read more by her.

This is my introduction to Sara Farizan's writing as part of the #ReadProud challenge for the Authors of Color category. First of all, can I say this is one of the best titles I've seen ever? It's clever. It's deep. It sets the tone for the entire piece. This is also one of my first true teen romances that I've read, where romance really is the main plot. I suspect my few, personal, microscopic critiques in regards to this book are due to my lack of knowledge about the genre. This was a fast read, and the audiobook was pretty enthusiastic. We follow Layla through the course of her school and her crush on an extremely toxic girl who was bad news from the get-go. I'm being cautious of names due to potential spoilers. I suspect some people fell for that girl's charm and then felt a huge plot twist when Layla puts together just how horrible this girl actually is. Although predictable with the eventual love interest (a much better choice though gross, smoking), we see justice. We see Iranian-immigrant parents struggle with their daughter's sexuality. We have an uplifting ending. We have people who want to come into their own. We have some moments where things are just charming. IMO, Tomas needs to be punched in the face. Repeatedly. He was the biggest flaw in the book and although he was created to capture the really catty, bitchy gay theatre men, it felt a bit on the extreme side. THAT SAID, although that was my opinion (him being the biggest flaw in the book), I'm new to romance. It's entirely possible that for a teen romance he's actually exactly what was/is necessary for success. The middle school play section seemed unnecessary and like it was designed for word count, however again, this is something that could be wrong. I'm giving this a 4-star. My personal opinions on some of the flaws aside, I think it's a very important book and I think it'd delight a lot of younger teenagers.

A really cute coming of age, and coming out story about an Iranian American girl in high school trying to navigate who she is. She comes from a really traditional family so she's afraid they won't accept her as a lesbian so she won't come out to anyone in her life. Then a new girl comes and stirs up nonsense. I love the adorable relationship which started out as a friendship between Leila our MC and Lisa. I love that she had so many accepting friends even if they had to work through some things together. Over all it was really sweet and a fun read!

This book is absolutely amazing. As a lesbian around the same age as the main character, this story really spoke to me. The "villain" of the story was a complex, scarily realistic individual. I won't get into the details of who the "villain" is in order to avoid spoilers, but it was one of the most fascinating villains I'd ever had the pleasure of reading about. This is particularly due to the situation the character is in. It was amazing to read a realistic teenage lesbian character struggling with her sexuality. It actually ends happy, unlike so many LGBT stories. The main character is awkward, questioning, and utterly human. I felt as though I was inside the mind of a real person. I've been trying to get into reading more books with LGBT characters (particularly lesbian characters) and this certainly got me hooked. I don't know if I'll be able to find another book as amazing as this one.

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