

## *Gathering Roses* by Ellen Weisberg

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**L**ori Solomon is confused. Her adoring, stable, boyfriend Paul dotes on her, but she feels empty inside. She wants the stability of the relationship but would also like some excitement. Lori attends college. She is talented and driven but also very insecure, always questioning her self worth. She takes on a summer job at a local radio station and is immediately attracted to one of the DJ's. Nick is aloof, rebellious, and constantly fighting his mood swings. There is sexual attraction between Lori and Nick from the start and she soon breaks up with Paul.

**S**o begins an on again off again relationship. For weeks Nick e-mails Lori, calls her and sets up dates. She finds herself smothered by his attention. Then, out of the blue, she hears nothing. He backs off completely and talks of dating other women. This crushes Lori and fuels her inadequacies, and she pursues him in earnest. Lori's two best friends have their own problems. Angela is overweight and constantly searching for a lasting, meaningful relationship. She is very cynical, and gives advice freely to Lori. Rutherford has a drug problem, always moving from one girl to the next, and involving Lori in his endeavors.

**T**he story unfolds in e-mails, instant messages and phone calls between the friends and lovers. Each character has an addiction. For Lori it is her relationship with Nick. No matter how badly he treats her, she hangs in there hoping for a crumb of approval. Nick is addicted to drugs, drinking, and pleasing women. Angela is addicted to food and suffers from low self esteem. Rutherford is also on drugs, and has commitment issues. As we read their mail we come to understand the characters, their flaws, and what has brought them together. You will be turning the pages until the very end, as you are taken on their journey of self discovery.