

The new novel by the number one  
bestselling author of **ONE DAY**

# David Nicholls

'Gorgeously witty  
and joyful'

**KATHERINE  
RUNDELL**

'Nicholls' best  
book ever'

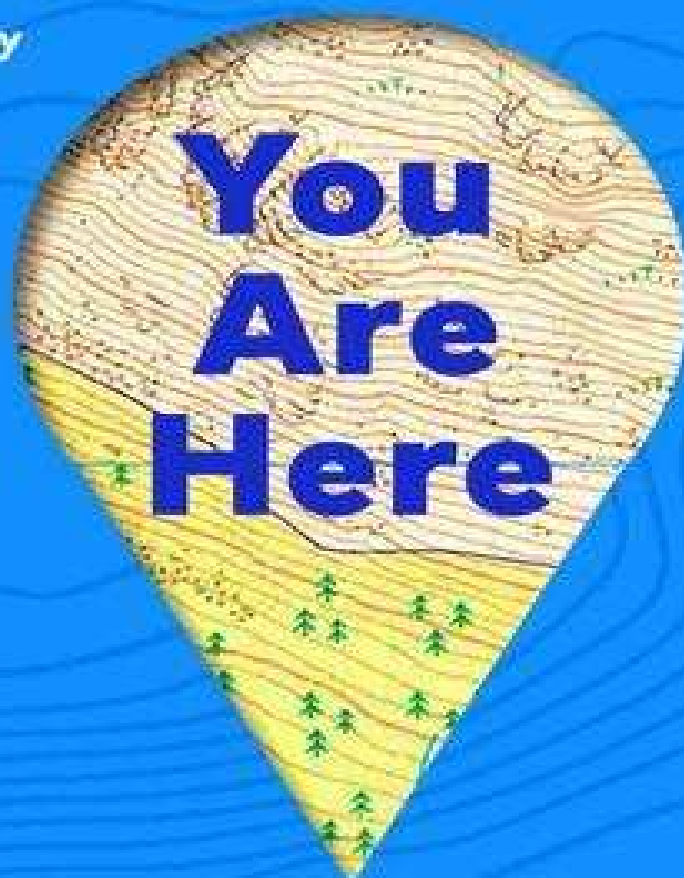
**CAITLIN  
MORAN**

'Magnificent'

**MARIAN  
KEYES**

'Such a  
lovely book!'

**NIGELLA  
LAWSON**



**You  
Are  
Here**



'No one does the minutiae of love as well as Nicholls'  
**OBSERVER**

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Acknowledgements

Buy *One Day* now

Discover more by David Nicholls

## ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *YOU ARE HERE*

**One of the most anticipated books of 2024 for the *Sunday Times*,  
*Guardian*, *Independent*, *New Statesman*, *i*, *Observer*, *Grazia*, *GQ*, *Harper's  
Bazaar*, *Irish Times*, *Sunday Independent*, *Prima*, *Good Housekeeping*,  
*Daily Record***

‘No one does the minutiae of love as well as Nicholls’  
*Observer*, Fiction to look out for in 2024

‘A poignant love story of first encounters’  
*Sunday Times*, 40 best books of 2024

‘It’s Nicholls’ best since the Booker-longlisted *Us*, and I’m already dream-  
casting the adaptation’  
*Independent*, Best fiction books to read in 2024

‘Witty and moving at the same time, it’s a figurative and literal journey that  
might even have you hunting for your walking boots’  
*GQ*, The best books of 2024

‘Few contemporary writers make characters feel as human as David Nicholls  
does ... he has a knack for finding the magical in the everyday’  
BBC.com, 45 of 2024’s most anticipated books

‘Witty and warm’  
*Grazia*, Novels to look out for in 2024

‘A book with such acute observations on life and relationships, on getting  
older, on not being in a relationship and being wary of taking a chance on  
love because you are happy enough. It also made me laugh out loud’  
*Prima*

‘Such a lovely book!’  
Nigella Lawson

‘A witty, touching love story. The writing is magnificent: taut and vivid. I was so happy while I was reading it and now I’m bereft. Gorgeous’  
Marian Keyes, author of *Again, Rachel*

‘What a rare find this is! Beautiful writing and authentic characters supported by a dry and honest wit. I loved it’  
Bonnie Garmus, author of *Lessons in Chemistry*

‘The genius who gave us *One Day* has written another classic and funny love story, set on a ten-day hike. You breeze along and get caught up in it like a leaf in the wind. Joyous’  
Matt Haig, author of *The Midnight Library*

‘Any love story by David Nicholls is a treat, but this one is especially tender, wise and joyful. I inhaled it’  
Jojo Moyes, author of *Me Before You*

‘David Nicholls wears his formidable intelligence so generously and so lightly that you scarcely notice the skill it takes to write a book like this: a story at once passionately funny and richly human. *You Are Here* is gorgeously witty and joyful, kind and sad: a book you do not want to be away from’  
Katherine Rundell, author of *Super-Infinite*

‘*You Are Here* is everything I hope for from a David Nicholls novel: beautifully observed, very funny, a little heartbreaking, and at its core, full of hope about people and love’  
Monica Heisey, author of *Really Good, Actually*

‘His funniest, warmest and most addictive novel yet. Perfect’  
Clare Chambers, author of *Small Pleasures*

‘I loved this book. A story about loneliness and the beginnings of love, with the backdrop of England’s lakes and fells and relentlessly changeable weather. As a read it is warm, unsentimental, hilarious and SO acutely observed. Nicholls has given us a masterclass in writing. I want to buy it for all my friends’  
Annie Macmanus, author of *The Mess We’re In*



‘*You Are Here* encompasses all of David Nicholls’ characteristic warmth, humour and observational insight. But it also asks fundamental questions of life, love and loneliness in such a beautifully delicate way that you don’t even realise it’s happening or that the fundamental truth of human happiness has been staring you in the face all along. I don’t know how he does it, but he does and he’s the only person who can’  
Elizabeth Day, author of *Friendaholic*

‘I think it might be Nicholls’ best book ever. He’s somehow managed to remember exactly how people talk when they’re falling in love, which is virtually impossible to do properly’  
Caitlin Moran, author of *What About Men?*

‘A beautiful book. Nicholls perfectly judges the balance between humour and pathos. I was often on the verge of tears even when I was laughing’  
Tracy Chevalier, author of *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

‘David Nicholls is a wonderfully gifted writer. His trademark wit and sensitivity bring light and life to his characters, allowing him to explore difficult subject matter with an admirable lightness of touch’  
Okechukwu Nzelu, author of *Here Again Now*

‘Every page is a delight’  
Jill Mansell, author of *Promise Me*

‘One of the best writers at chronicling the way annoyance and resentment are often irretrievably mixed with love and empathy. This is a love story but never predictable – Nicholls stays one step ahead of the reader in the sharpest, funniest way’  
Katherine Heiny, author of *Games and Rituals*

‘I finished this novel in two breathless sittings, as invested in its outcome as I would be in the happiness of a friend. This is the magic of *You Are Here*: warm, generous and funny, it invites readers into the world of Marnie and Michael with the promise that everyone is welcome, and that choosing happiness and being courageous in any small way we can is always possible. I loved this book’  
Kaliane Bradley, author of *The Ministry of Time*

‘A stunning, funny, frank and beautiful look at loneliness, friendship, and the risks taken to love and be loved. In a career of standout books, *You Are Here* takes its place at the top. David Nicholls is my favourite writer’

Chris Whitaker, author of *We Begin at the End*

‘David is the laureate of the modern love novel, and this is his best yet’

John Niven, author of *O Brother*

‘For anyone who has pounded a pavement or even climbed a mountain, wrangling with the stuff of life, love, loss, loneliness, betrayal and failure, or simply destiny’s strange peculiarities that can upend life, this book is both journey and destination. It will make your heart soar with the climb. It’s so tender and wise that I found myself walking every step of the way with Marnie and Michael ... It does what David Nicholls does best: cracks open your heart, to show love in all its infinite beautiful chaos, imperfect, funny yet always true. I loved it’

Abi Morgan, author of *This Is Not a Pity Memoir*

‘David Nicholls is at the peak of his considerable powers – *You Are Here* is not only packed with the delicious observations, profound truths and moving encounters we expect of him, it’s the funniest thing he has written. Even if it was twice the length, it would have finished too soon’

Sathnam Sanghera, author of *Empireland*

‘What a beautiful, beautiful novel: sensitive, witty, and brilliantly insightful and kind about us messy, stupid humans. I loved every single step of it. I will miss it now that I’m finished and I know that it will be one of those rare novels that will dwell in my memory and my heart’

Donal Ryan, author of *From a Low and Quiet Sea*

‘A gorgeous, grown-up love story. I fell for Marnie and Michael hard and fast – this book is honest, raw, yet profoundly hopeful. This is the work of a writer at the peak of his enormous powers – it’s one of the saddest stories I’ve ever read, and one of the funniest. A future classic’

Daisy Buchanan, author of *Insatiable*

‘Marnie and Michael are two characters who I will carry in my heart for a long time. This is a love story for all ages, an epic journey, a moving tale of

second chances. I don't know how David does it but his characters are real to me, and I know I will want to go back to them, to re-read *You Are Here*, the way I have his other novels'

Georgina Moore, author of *The Garnett Girls*

## About the Author

David Nicholls is the bestselling author of *Starter for Ten*, *The Understudy*, *One Day*, *Us* and *Sweet Sorrow*. *One Day* was published in 2009 to extraordinary critical acclaim: translated into 40 languages, it became a global bestseller, selling millions of copies worldwide. His fourth novel, *Us*, was longlisted for the Booker Prize for Fiction.

On screen, David has written adaptations of *Far from the Madding Crowd*, *When Did You Last See Your Father?* and *Great Expectations*, as well as of his own novels, *Starter for Ten*, *One Day* and *Us*. His adaptation of Edward St Aubyn's *Patrick Melrose*, starring Benedict Cumberbatch, was nominated for an Emmy and won him a BAFTA for best writer. The Netflix adaptation of *One Day* was executive-produced by David.

*Also by David Nicholls*

Starter for Ten

The Understudy

One Day

Us

Sweet Sorrow

# YOU ARE HERE

David Nicholls



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Maps designed by Barking Dog Art

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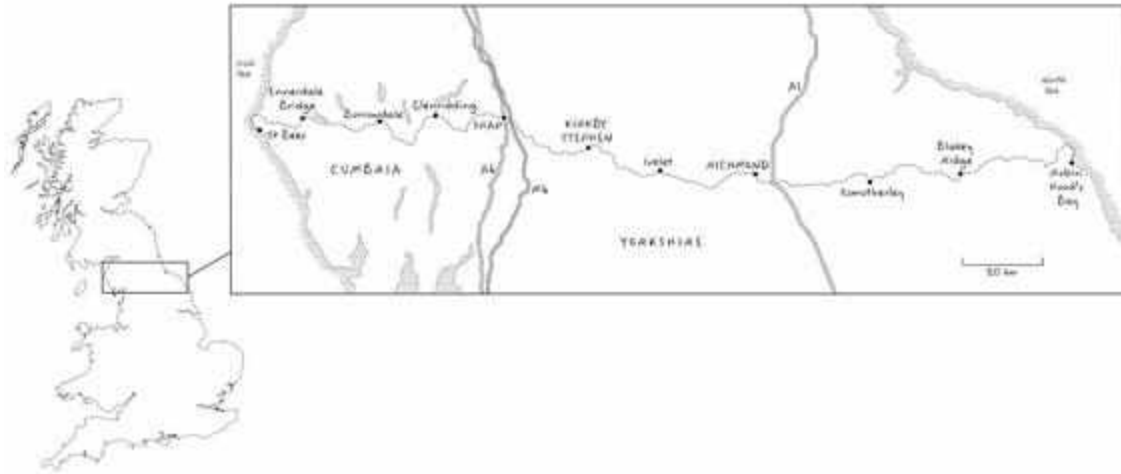
To Hannah, Max and Romy,  
for all the walks



*She was sure of his having asked his partner whether Miss Elliot never danced? The answer was 'Oh, no, never; she has quite given up dancing. She had rather play. She is never tired of playing.'*

Jane Austen, *Persuasion*

# THE COAST TO COAST WALK



## Part One

### HOME

—

*To what purpose, April, do you return again?  
Beauty is not enough.  
You can no longer quiet me with the redness  
Of little leaves opening stickily.  
I know what I know ...*

Edna St Vincent Millay, 'Spring'

## Imaginary Photographs

In all her youthful visions of the future, of the job she might have, the city and home she might live in, the friends and family around her, Marnie had never thought that she'd be lonely.

In her adolescence, she'd pictured the future as a series of imaginary photographs, densely populated, her friends' arms draped around each other, eyes red from the flash of the camera in the taverna or lit by the flames of a driftwood fire on the beach and there, right in the centre, her own smiling face. The later photos were harder to pin down, the faces less defined, but perhaps there'd be a partner, even children among the friends she would surely know and love all her life.

But she hadn't taken a photograph of another person for six years. The last time she'd had her picture taken was at Passport Control, where she'd been instructed not to smile. Where had everyone gone? Now thirty-eight, she had grown up in the golden age of friendship, when having a supportive, loving community around you was a far greater priority than the vexed business of family, the strained performance of romance or the sulky obligations of work. The late-night phone-calls, the texts, the outings and board games, it had all been so much more exciting and fulfilling than her erratic love life, and hadn't she once been good at it? A nice addition to the group if not the core, well liked if never adored or idolised. She was not one of those girls who hired a nightclub for her birthday but she'd easily filled a room above a pub for her twenty-first, a long table in an Italian restaurant for her thirtieth. For her fortieth she thought she might go for a walk in the park with a friend or two, a once popular band obliged to play ever smaller venues.

Year by year, friends were lost to marriage and parenthood with partners she didn't care for or who didn't care for her, retreating to new, spacious, ordered lives in Hastings or Stevenage, Cardiff or York while she fought on in London. Others were lost to apathy or carelessness, friendship like a thank-you letter she kept meaning to write until too much time had passed and it