With heart, humor, and the right dose of drama, Sarahlyn Bruck brings her characteristic insight and literary precision to this story of braving the world outside your comfort zone. Loved every minute.

—JENNIFER KLEPPER, USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHO...
ABOUT DAYTIME DRAMA

Soap opera star by day, harried, single mom by night, Calliope Hart’s life is a delicate balancing act. When the network cancels her show, Callie’s world crumbles and she must decide whether it’s more important to fight to save the show or take a risk and start over from scratch.

By day, for 25 years, soap opera fans have known actress Calliope Hart as Napa Valley’s resident diva, Jessica Sinclair. By night, Callie is a flustered breadwinner, scrambling to provide for her 12-year-old son and her mother. So when the network announces that her show will be canceled, Callie is beyond shocked—she doesn’t know who she is anymore.

At first, driven by financial concerns for her family that include blackmail payments to her son’s biological father, she rallies fans to save the show. But is that what she really wants? When she learns that her mother has been driving her son to auditions she’s strictly forbidden—and worse, that he’s been offered opportunities—Callie sees her own child’s youth and drive in competition with her age and experience. Set in modern-day Hollywood, Daytime Drama is a story about having the guts to reach for the sky. Callie must decide whether to play it safe or summon the courage her son displays to risk her lucky meal ticket and reinvent her career—and, for the first time, test her mettle as an actress and a mom.

SIMILAR TITLES

- How Hard Can It Be? by Allison Pearson
- A Window Opens by Elisabeth Egan
- When Life Gives you Lululemons by Lauren Weisburger

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ABOUT SARAHLYN

Sarahlyn Bruck is the author of Daytime Drama (2021) and Designer You (2018). Her debut novel, Designer You won the 2019 Indie Star Book Award and was included on the 2018 “35 Over 35” list.

Sarahlyn grew up in the Bay Area and spent a great deal of time in Southern California, where she attended college before moving to West Hollywood. The years of living and working in L.A. gave Sarahlyn a taste for the fun, fast, ambitious, and creative people involved in the entertainment industry.

When Sarahlyn and her family moved to Philadelphia in the summer of 2007, she fell in love with the east coast feeling of being close to the center of politics and culture, but she never forgot or lost her affection for the buzz of the entertainment industry. Her latest novel, Daytime Drama, was born of that love and the cold Philadelphia winter. When she’s not writing novels, Sarahlyn teaches writing and literature at a local community college. She still lives in Philadelphia with her husband, daughter, and cockapoo.

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"With heart, humor, and the right dose of drama, Sarahlyn Bruck brings her characteristic insight and literary precision to this story of braving the world outside your comfort zone. Loved every minute."

-Jennifer Klepper, USA Today Bestselling Author of Unbroken Threads

"From the first page of Daytime Drama by Sarahlyn Bruck, readers are drawn into the fascinating world of Callie Hart, the star of a long-running soap opera whose carefully constructed world begins to fall apart... You will love this book—women’s fiction at its best!"

—Diane Byington, Multi-award-winning Author of Who She Is and If She Had Stayed

"Prepare yourself for a compelling journey as Bruck’s characters plunge into the depths of self-discovery when love and trust are brought into question by circumstance... Bruck’s deft approach and keen eye for nuance is both clever and ultra-relatable, creating a story and characters that stay with the reader long after the book is done."

—Maureen Joyce Connolly, Author of Little Lovely Things

"Bruck expertly navigates five different points of view, lending further depth to the plot and authenticity to her characters. Daytime Drama is a highly enjoyable and memorable read, guaranteed to stay in readers’ hearts long after the final page. Highly recommend!"

—Leanne Treese, Author of Their Last Chance

"Sarahlyn Bruck weaves her magical storytelling into a brilliant page-turner. Brava!"

— Carol Van Den Hende, Award-winning Author of Goodbye, Orchid

"Aptly titled, Daytime Drama plunges you instantly into the world of Calliope Hart: actress by day, single mother at night, keeper of one great big secret and a whole bunch of insecurities. Sarahlyn Bruck deftly manipulates her characters’ strengths and weaknesses and keeps you guessing right to the last page."

—Barbara Conrey, USA Today Bestselling Author of Nowhere Near Goodbye
I came up with the idea for Daytime Drama the winter of 2017. I'm a California native but have lived in Philadelphia since 2007. You think I would get used to the winters, but I never do. From November through March, I'm always freezing. During this particular winter, I just wanted to be back in L.A., which can often hit degrees in the mid-70s in January, so I decided to write about it. I wasn't feeling any warmer, but it sure was fun to "live" in Hollywood in my head for a little while!

Readers can expect a fun, fast-paced beach or pool read that explores how aging actresses are often treated in modern-day Hollywood. It also examines the realities of single parenthood. As the stretched breadwinner, our heroine is forced to figure out whether to fight for the status quo or venture beyond her comfort zone.

When I'm in the middle of a project, I tend to write or edit almost every day. However, I also have a full-time job as a community college writing professor. Balancing my writing with my day job can be challenging. I'm a morning person, so I do my best work before noon--my ideal writing time. But sometimes grading and lesson planning get in the way, so I have to work around it. I've gotten up really early--like 5 am--to get an hour or two of writing in. I've spent a lot of time writing in parking lots, while my daughter is at soccer practice. As long as the writing gets done, I'm happy.

My advice for aspiring writers is to keep at it, don't give up. Sometimes we need a break--that's totally ok!--but it's impossible to reach our goals, whatever they are, if we quit. Stick-with-it-ness is usually what makes the biggest difference for writers hoping to reach the next level.
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“Daytime Drama” is a Stirring Journey of Self-Discovery Where a Soap Opera Star Struggles to Reinvent Her Career and Personal Identity

Philadelphia, PA – March 2, 2021 – “Daytime Drama,” Sarahlyn Bruck’s exciting new novel slated for a March 2 release, is a fun glimpse into the world of daytime soap operas, and a fascinating inside view of how Hollywood treats aging female stars. This delightful journey of self-discovery expertly combines masterful writing skills with various points of view, well-developed characters, and down to earth complications. As a result, the narrative becomes so distinctly authentic, that readers will feel as though they themselves are experiencing the challenges the main character is facing. And Hollywood, a world that’s fueled a lot of fantasy, will be seen as it truly is. A place filled with people who are just as normal and real as the readers themselves.

“Daytime Drama” is a compelling narrative focused on Callie Hart, a famous daytime soap star, as she navigates a potential career change, an interfering mother, and a stalled relationship. This journey of self-discovery will not only greatly appeal to female readers in general, but because it is a fun, fast-paced beach read, those who enjoy Hollywood stories, soap operas, and stories about families and relationships will eagerly flip through the novel’s pages with hearty abandon. Maureen Joyce Connolly, author of “Little Lovely Things” explains, “With her sophomore novel, “Daytime Drama,” Sarahlyn Bruck builds on her reputation as a master craftsman of relationships. Prepare yourself for a compelling journey as Bruck’s characters plunge into the depths of self-discovery when love and trust are brought into question by circumstance…Bruck’s deft approach and keen eye for nuance is both clever and ultra-relatable, creating a story and characters that stay with the reader long after the book is done.”

The enthralling tale of “Daytime Drama” follows actress Calliope Hart who, for 25 years, has been known to soap opera fans as Napa Valley’s resident diva, Jessica Sinclair. Once work is done for the day, however, Callie takes on the mantle of a flustered and harried single mother, scrambling to provide for her 12-year-old son and her own mother. As such, when the network announces that her show will be cancelled, Callie is beyond shocked, and finds herself contending with an identity crisis. Driven by financial concerns for her family that includes blackmail payments to her son’s biological father, she quickly rallies fans to save the show. However, when she learns that her mother has been driving her son to auditions Callie’s strictly forbidden – and worse, that he’s been offered opportunities – Callie sees her own son’s youth and drive in competition with her age and experience. Callie must, in the end, decide whether to play
it safe and continue fighting to keep her show alive and kicking, or summon the courage to take a risk and start over from scratch – and, for the first time, test her mettle as an actress and a mom.

**About the author**
Sarahlyn Bruck is the author of two novels, “Daytime Drama” (TouchPoint Press, 2021) and “Designer You” (Crooked Cat Books, 2018). “Designer You” won the Indie Star Book Award for 2019 and was included on the 2018 “35 Over 35” list. When she’s not writing novels, Sarahlyn moonlights as a full-time writing and literature professor at a local community college. A California native, she now lives in Philadelphia with her husband, daughter, and cockapoo. For the latest book news, events, and announcements, check out her website: sarahlynbruck.com.

**About the Publisher**
TouchPoint Press is a traditional publisher of fiction and nonfiction. Our staff is comprised of professionals whose collective experience in publishing, editing, journalism, design, and marketing set the stage behind our growing list of published titles. We are proud to work with talented authors and strive to be as innovative and energetic as possible from acquisitions to promotion before and after publication.

For interview and review requests, contact Chelsea Pieper at media@touchpointpress.com.

###
Callie Hart needed to erase all traces of Jessica Sinclair from her face. Already changed into yoga pants and a t-shirt, she dropped off today's costume at wardrobe and made a beeline for her dressing room. She'd make her son's school talent show tonight after all—knock on wood—but first, off with her makeup.

At the start of each workday, a makeup artist coated foundation onto Callie's freckled skin from hairline to collarbone. Dark brown pencil created a dramatic arch to her eyebrows; liquid liner made her blue eyes pop. A bit of rouge to her cheeks, a smudge of berry lipstick, and voila! Under the studio's bright lights, the makeup and shading accentuated every angle on her face, changing its very shape. With this mask, she was no longer Calliope Hart. She was Jessica Sinclair.

But Callie couldn't be the daytime soap opera, *Napa Valley*'s most glamorous resident—a fiery, independent, and, in the current storyline, fabulous and wealthy investor—for Jonah's middle-school talent show. She had to be Mom.

This was easier said than done.

For more than two decades, Callie had played the soap opera's reigning queen, beginning as an adorable high school student in the early 1990s, aging into a tempestuous college coed, and then trying on hats as a hard-boiled detective, husband stealer, stay-at-home mother, rich wife, richer divorcee, rabble rouser, sophisticated sommelier, raging alcoholic, recovering addict, and anything else that called upon her character's propensity for high drama. Jessica Sinclair was someone who knew what she wanted and went for it.

For five days of the week, Callie got a little thrill knowing that makeup and wardrobe would transform her into a character—a diva, no less—far removed from herself. And each evening, she retreated from the studio in Hollywood to her sane, quiet, and controlled world in the San Fernando Valley. Just the way she liked it.

Callie sat on a chair in front of a large, lighted mirror, peeling the delicate fake lashes from her eyelids and popping them into their plastic case. She grasped a jar of coconut oil, unscrewed the lid, and dug out two fingers' full. Just as she readied to apply the goop to her face, Callie heard her cell phone buzz from her purse, which hung on a hook behind her dressing-room door. She got up and rooted around the bag with her
free hand, knowing it'd be her mom or Jonah asking her to pick something up from Target on the way, or reminding her that she'd volunteered for backstage duty, or suggesting they meet in the lobby before the talent show so they could sit together. It was always something.

Her hand located the buzzing phone, and Callie glanced at the screen and recognized the Mexico City area code. *Alan Karpowicz.* AKA, “Dirty Al.” AKA Jonah’s biological father, who only called when he needed her to open her wallet.

Her eyes narrowed at the phone. *What does he want?*

“Yes, Alan?” It’d been years since their last conversation, but Callie didn’t feel the need to open with idle chit-chat.

“Callie,” he said, his voice deep and raspy. “How are you? It’s been a long time.”

She stared at the glop of coconut oil on her fingers.

“What do you want? I know you didn't call to catch up.” Callie held the phone with her shoulder, grabbed a tissue from the box in front of the mirror, and wiped off her hand. She hated that he could stall her on such an important night.

He let out a light laugh. “Right to the point. OK. I need you to up my quarterly payments. My landlord just raised my rent and less work’s been coming my way. What work I do get doesn't pay like it used to.” He sighed. “I put off this phone call as long as possible, but I’m stuck. Fewer and fewer bands these days appreciate what I bring to the table musically. I don’t have any options right now.”

Callie wanted to reach through the phone and strangle him. He did too have options. He had options he didn't find attractive, like teaching guitar to supplement playing guitar. Or maybe finding a cheaper apartment in Mexico City, which he’d called home for as long as she'd known him. But why bring up past conversations that could lead to threats of him taking Jonah away from her?

“I also know your contract is up for renewal,” he said, his voice sounding confident and assured. “And I think the network is ready to give you a nice bump this year.”

The smug jerk was right. Her agent had been preparing to renegotiate her contract, which was up for renewal in about a month. With her raise, Callie had dreamed of starting some expensive home improvements she’d put off—landscaping her backyard and installing solar panels on the roof, maybe giving her late 1990s-era kitchen a refresh.

“I’d hate for anyone to find out you coerced me into giving up my parental rights.
I’m sure the public would love to learn that America’s sweetheart used her power and money to buy off paternal rights so that she could raise her son on her own—like the selfish, entitled diva that she is.” He laughed again, this time with more force. “That agreement would be made null and void so fast, it’d make your head spin.”

A deep finger of fear pressed into her gut. There was always a chance a court could decide that Jonah would spend half the year almost two thousand miles away from her with a man who had no interest in being a father.

She would never take that risk. And Alan Karpowicz knew it.

“How much do you want this time?” Callie made no effort to hide her disdain.

“Another ten thousand per quarter should cover it.”

She sucked in a breath. Forty thousand more per year, just to keep him quiet. For the forty-thousandth time, she silently cursed her mom, who made this extortion even possible in the first place.

“Fine,” she said through gritted teeth.

“Thanks, babe. I really appreciate it.” The phone clicked off.

At least she could be grateful she had a raise coming to her. She could putoff the solar panels and kitchen upgrade for a little while.

Callie applied the coconut oil to her face, just as Paul Kinder, the show’s head writer and Callie’s longtime boyfriend, knocked on her dressing room door and let himself in. Paul was a welcome sight after her unpleasant phone call.

“Hey,” he said, kissing the top of her head.

“Hi,” she said, keeping an eye on the open door. Even after all this time, she shied from public displays of affection.

He settled into an adjacent chair, his eyes meeting hers in the mirror.

Callie raised her eyebrows. “What’s up?”

“You rushed off set so fast, I didn’t have a chance to say goodbye.”

Callie returned her focus to the mirror and smeared eyeliner, mascara, blush, and base into a greasy, coconut-scented blur.

“This week’s been endless,” she said. “I just wanted to get out of here before traffic comes to a standstill on the 101.” Eyes closed, Callie searched the counter with her hands for the damp towel she’d had ready. She smiled at the sound of Paul springing from his chair, and held out her hand as he pressed the cloth into her waiting palm.

“Thanks.” Callie wiped the towel over her face, taking most of the day’s makeup with
it. She opened her eyes to her real self—the near bare-faced, near drama-free woman staring back at her. She went to work on her eyelids as Paul sat slumped in his chair. He had a propensity toward melodrama, which she found both endearing and annoying.

“What?” she asked again, her tone sharper than intended.

He leaned forward. “I don’t know. I thought we might spend some time together tonight. We’ve both been working so hard lately, we haven’t seen each other much.” He shrugged. “I miss you.”

“You’ve seen me every day this week.” She gave him a teasing smile in the mirror. “I don’t understand how you’re missing me.”

“You know how I’ve been missing you.”

Callie did know.

She sighed. “I’m sorry. Jonah’s performing in his school’s talent show tonight. I have to go. I gave him my word.”

Paul straightened. “Is he doing his stand-up act?”

“Maybe.” Callie wasn’t sure what to call her 12-year-old son’s act. A one-man improv show? In the latest iteration, he’d been practicing taking a one-word suggestion from an audience member—often one of his friends, or sometimes Callie or her mother—and then building a monologue or scene from there. Watching the skits could be excruciating, but sometimes Jonah’s inventiveness made her explode with laughter.

Jonah had shown signs he loved the stage early on—playtime puppet shows in preschool, living room magic acts starting in third grade—but as he got older, his attention landed on comedy, and his focus had intensified over the last year. Comedy, he’d learned the hard way, was always a gamble, yet Jonah seemed determined. To Callie’s frustration, he now refused to limit his ambitions to stand-up at his school talent show and sketches shot on his iPhone, uploaded to YouTube for a handful of viewers. Was he born with an itch to perform? Following in her footsteps? Just the thought of her twelve-year-old trying to make it in the entertainment industry gave her a stomach-ache.

“I could go with you.”

Callie sensed the hopeful note in Paul’s voice.

“Paul.” She kept her voice gentle, hoping not to trigger the same old argument about when would be the right time to introduce him as her boyfriend to her mother and Jonah. A sign, she knew for Paul, that meant their relationship was edging toward permanence. But for Callie there would never be a good time. “You don’t want to go to
some school talent show. The acts are tedious. The kids go on far too long. Believe me, I'm saving you here.”

He clapped his hands. “No, I'm good with that—kids and stuff. I know the deal.”

“I just—I just can’t spring you on them like this,” Callie said, knowing her words would crush him. She also knew that after three years together, she was pushing it. “I need more warning.”

“C’mon, it’s a perfect time.” Paul rolled his chair closer to Callie as she wiped the last traces of her makeup off with a disposable cleansing cloth. “I’d love to meet your family. I want them to meet me. I want them to see us together.”

Callie stared at her gaping makeup case, panic gripping her chest. She struggled to keep her voice quiet and controlled. “Not tonight, okay?”

“Okay, if not tonight, then when? Let's figure it out. Together. Baby steps.”

Callie couldn't look at him. “I'm protective of my private life, Paul.” She unscrewed a tub of face cream and dabbed a small amount under her eyes, her cheeks, her forehead.

“Callie, what is it about me that you're protecting your son from? Are you afraid that I'd be an awful influence on him?”

Callie wasn't afraid of that at all. At thirty-four, Paul was a nice guy, who was also gorgeous, creative, ambitious, caring, and generous—both in bed and out. He’d survived one marriage—without kids—a “practice marriage” of sorts, as he’d called it. Plenty of women would have seen him as a total catch, and he was. But as Napa Valley's head writer, he also lived off the entertainment industry—and it was the industry she didn’t trust. Callie wanted Jonah to be exposed to a variety of successful men and women outside of this business. And she needed to work harder to do that. Her own success as an actress had been the equivalent of winning the lottery. If Jonah headed down the same road, he might not end up so lucky.

No, Jonah didn't need to be surrounded by lucky people, he needed to understand what hard work and a college diploma could do.

She knew how to end this conversation. Callie turned toward Paul and took his hands in hers. Their knees touched. Callie leaned in and gave him a soft kiss. “You know what? I miss our long lunches at the Roosevelt. Let's make a reservation for one day next week.”

Paul dropped her hands and leaned back, considering, as a smile spread over his face. “You’re cute—and I will take you up on the Roosevelt this week—but you’re stalling
the inevitable.”


Paul’s smile faded. “I don’t know. But I think you need to figure out how much you want to be with me.”

Mary Garcia, the assistant to the head of the network’s daytime programming, appeared in the doorway, panting like she’d just completed a sprint up and down the long hallway of dressing rooms. She gaped at Callie and then Paul.

“Good, you’re both still here. Dennis wants to see you in the conference room. Now.”

Callie sat up. “Dennis is in town?”

“What for?” Paul asked.

“Emergency meeting,” Mary said.

Callie’s stomach fluttered. “Emergency meeting” could go multiple ways. Maybe the show had been picked up by the network for another year? Or two? Or maybe Jessica Sinclair was due to be killed off. She certainly hoped not, since her contract was up for renegotiation. She caught a brief look at her reflection and zeroed in on the creases and fine lines that had gathered around the corners of her eyes. At forty-one, she had a right to them, but this was Hollywood. Dennis couldn’t just fire her, could he? The self-congratulatory part of Callie—a part of her she didn’t like and tried to keep hidden deep within her—thought that Jessica Sinclair was what kept Napa Valley afloat.

“Just us?” Callie asked, turning away from the mirror and returning her gaze toward Mary.

“No.” Mary tapped the door frame. “Five minutes.”

When she was gone, Paul’s eyes widened.

“Do you know what’s going on?” she asked.

He shook his head. His face was stricken.

“Oh, no,” she said, realizing this day was not over. A pang of guilt welled up in her. She’d be lucky if she got out of there before dinner tonight. “Looks like I’m not going to Jonah’s talent show tonight, either.”