Plot Twist: India's Gen Z is Looking For Their "Book Boyfriend" on Tinder

New Delhi, August 18, 2025 – Gen Z in India isn't just reading about romance — they're matching for it. Tinder data shows a growing obsession with the elusive 'Book Boyfriend'. Inspired by green-flag heroes from their favourite novels, young daters are weaving literary love into their bios and bringing main-character energy to real-life dates.

India's love affair with books is more than a chapter, it's a plotline. Mentions of "bookstore" in Tinder bios in India have doubled from 2024 to 2025. Fanning the flames of this literary love affair, Tinder's global data reveals mentions of "Book Boyfriend" soared 58% in 2024 – with a plot-twist-worthy 77% surge in January 2025 alone.

And the bios? Reading like the opening line of your next possibility.3

- "Books > Boys (but I'm willing to negotiate)"
- "The best way to my heart is a date at the bookstore."
- "(I) Love the scent of old books and rain."

Book Boyfriends > Mixed Signals: Why Gen Z is Crushing on Main Characters Since Chapter One

According to Dr. Chandni Tugnait, Relationship Expert at Tinder in India, Gen Z is drawn to the idea of a 'Book Boyfriend' because it offers a safe, emotionally expansive space to explore love without real-world risk. These fictional characters embody qualities this generation craves - emotional intelligence, vulnerability, devotion, and depth, setting a new standard for romance rooted in presence and emotional fluency.

Today's daters aren't chasing perfection, they're craving presence. They want to feel understood, seen, and deeply cared for.

Crush on Fictional Character = Emotional Code

"I need someone who can go with me to the mountain, mandir and book store" or "Books and music, hit me up if you're into reading and brainstorming" -- these aren't just cute lines, they're love codes. For Gen Z on Tinder, literary references are like romantic filters: they signal depth, emotional fluency, and main-character energy.

In fact, "Looking for..." was Tinder's top bio phrase in 2024, and with Interest tags like Reading and Literature, matching with a fellow book lover is easier than ever. As Dr. Chandni Tugnait says, it's identity curation and a vibe check in one --- a way of saying, "I speak romance in fiction and in life. Do you?" For Gen Z, it's also a shortcut past small talk. Referencing a shared fictional world works like a pre-screening for deeper connection — just as sharing playlists or meme codes can. After all, the emotional worlds we fall for in books often mirror the ones we dream of living out in real life.

What Gen Z is Learning from Their Favourite Fictional Characters:

Tinder's Modern Dating Report shows that 53% of Gen Z in India want an equal partnership, with half (50%)⁵ saying mutual support and commitment are key to making it work. Yet 37% admit they struggle with emotional intimacy --- proof that while the desire for deeper connection is strong, the skills to build it are still a work in progress.

This generation values rituals of love --- the small, consistent acts that feel safe and intentional. Dr. Chandni Tugnait explains: "Gen Z responds to romance that's safe, thoughtful, and emotionally textured. Book Boyfriends often embody love languages like words of affirmation, quality time, and acts of service. It's not about chasing a fantasy; it's about finding someone who loves like they've read the whole book, not just the blurb. The Book Boyfriend is their blueprint: 1) Present in the hard moments, not just the highs 2) Soft without losing strength, and 3) Devoted in actions, not just words. Fictional green-flag heroes are teaching young daters that real romance is about presence, not perfection — and they're no longer afraid to demand it."

Additional assets available online: Photos (1)

¹ India Data from Tinder Bios, Descriptors, and Interests from January to June 2025 and 2024

² UK data taken from Tinder bios from January 2024 to January 2025

³ India Data from Tinder Bios, Descriptors, and Interests from January to June 2025

⁴ Global Data from Tinder Bios, Descriptors, and Interests from 1 Jan to 1 Oct 2024

⁵ A OnePoll Survey among Tinder users aged 18-25 in IN who are single and use dating apps. Data was collected between 15/7/2024 - 23/7/2024