

LIMITED EDITION



POUR RELATIONSHIP CHOICES

By Renee Ventrice

*Every sip tells a story
beyond the glass!*



Pour Relationship Choices

Every Sip Tells a Story
Beyond the Glass

Renee Ventrice

Pour Relationship Choices: Every Sip Tells a Story Beyond the Glass

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Foreword

As the older (and admittedly more conservative) sister, I've often found myself marveling at my sister's fearless spirit. She is adventurous, whimsical, and never afraid to explore the edges - whether in business, in life, or, as this book reveals, in our "people lessons".

I don't drink wine, but I do understand that the stories we tell ourselves - and each other - about relationships are often best understood when we let them breathe, swirl them around a little, and look honestly at what they reveal.

Renee has chosen to share personal moments and reflections that invite each of us to examine the quality of our own relationships. Her transparency is a gift - one that encourages us to live with greater courage, honesty, and openness.

In these pages, my sister has artfully uncorked the truth about connection, heartbreak, joy, and growth through the lens of wine characteristics. It's insightful, brave, sometimes hilarious, and always deeply human. I may not share her taste for Merlot or Malbec, but I do share her reverence for the lessons at the bottom of the glass.

It is an honor to be included in this beautiful expression of who she is, and I cherish her for the wild, wise, and wonderful soul she continues to be.

~Forever proud to call you my sister, lovingly, *Patrice!*

Preface:

Just a Few Pour Choices

Hey, you!

*Yes, **you** - the fabulous human holding this Limited Edition featuring a few chapters of my debut book and #1 Amazon best seller... thank you for opening this ePub!*

I'm sharing a few beloved chapters with you, but reserved my warmest heart, ugliest cry chapters for the full book... it's just smart marketing y'all! If you don't feel compelled to order a signed copy of the full book after this tasting, then either I failed as a writer, or you ARE the Tin Man, bless the hole where your heart should be...

In all seriousness- this book is not for everyone and that's by design- I can be A LOT. But I hope you will share your feedback either way. A few things you should know:

1.Starred * items are explained in the glossary. I don't know what you know, you know? So if you didn't know "that thing", well now we know that now you know.

2.This edition is a tasting, the full version is the bottle. If you received this limited edition copy, it means I value your opinion on whether or not it leave you wanting more, and if it's now a fancy coaster instead of stories worth sharing. .

3. It's just the first vintage! I'm the vineyard. The seeds for this series have officially been planted, and soon- new books will be harvested, bottled, and poured just for you!

So please! Email your comments, bookmark your favorite passages, and shoot me a text that says “Chapter 4 ruined me in all the right ways.” OR- join me in the 2020s and scan the QR code to easily share your good, bad and ugly opinions. I’m here for it all.

Thank you from the bottom of my glass for being part of this beautiful, messy first crush that will only get better with time through ageless stories and POUR Choices.

With gratitude and questionable judgment,

♥ Renee V.



*SHARE FEEDBACK WITH RENEE
& ORDER BOOKS*

Chapter 1: Dump Bucket

My Toxic Ex



We went through some rough nights together. We knew we weren't good for each other, yet night after night we got together, and at dawn, I realized I'd made the same mistake again.

Sure, I would make it four, even five days without you, vowing each Sunday morning that *this* Saturday was our last rendezvous - I meant it every time. But come Friday night, I found myself excitedly slipping into our old routine. It felt so good to hold you. I'd pull my comfortable, college hoodie over my head- you remember, the one I was wearing the night we met?

Back then, we'd snuggle into the couch and binge on bad TV, worse microwaved snacks, and then... I'd wake up angry that you'd dragged me into another all-nighter that left me sick with guilt and completely exhausted - while you carried on without looking back at the mess. Me. *I* was the mess you left behind.

The next weekend, I went back for more, even though I knew it wouldn't end well. It never *did* with us. We always started with long, hard laughter as we pieced together shenanigans that straddled the thin line between having fun and committing a felony. Yes, those were nights made of

reckless dreams - until they became mornings made of nightmarish pour choices...

I'm talking to you, **Box Wine**. I bet you knew this song was about you. The sugar-filled headaches and vomit-filled toilets are no longer fun rites of passage into adulthood - they're reminders that "if it feels good, do it" is a shitty life strategy. I slapped the bag* again and again, and I was the only one who paid the price. I struggled to leave you behind, but I pulled on that old, stained hoodie one too many times as you glamourised me back into a blackout abyss.

I don't wear hoodies anymore. Especially not *that* one - it still reeks of regurgitated Cheetos.

I've changed. I've grown. I pour wine out of bottles and into glasses now, instead of opening a spigot and chugging to a chant. You're still living in your frat house glory days, playing video games in your mom's basement.

You belong to someone else now, and I don't judge her for loving you. I hope you bring her the pleasure that we both shared - without the pain of regret that only *I* suffered. You'll do what you always do: move on to intoxicate and toxify the next co-ed in a hoodie, and leave her body on the bathroom floor while her friends hold her hair back and say, "*We told* you not to see him again - when will you learn?"

My greatest years are ahead of me. Yours are... well, you'll always be where you were when we met. I wish you all the best in your life - just not in my glass.

Refill & Reflect



POURsonality Diagnosis:

Box Wine, it doesn't get much worse than you. Ok it DOES, but you are *my* rock bottom.

If you enjoy box wine, you can stop here-
or, read on for an extra way to love it!

Sip Tip:

If you MUST drink box wine - I mean, there are no absolutely no other options... *at all*. Here's what you do:

- Add ice, fruit and club soda- make it a spritzer!
- If you find brandy, that spritzer becomes sangria.
- Don't overdo it and you might avoid the headache from all the added sugars and additives beyond the vineyard.



Journal about your own toxic ex.

[illegible]

Which wine pairs with your story: _____

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Chapter 5: Wine Fridge

Lost In Translation

There was that time I tried to remember how to say “cheers” in Estonian. You’d think it wouldn’t be that hard - Google Translate exists, there are language apps galore, and our neighbor is *literally* from Estonia. But no. I managed to make a toast that insulted someone’s ancestors.

Let me set the scene.

Don and I were heading across the driveway to have dinner with our new neighbors, Marci and Steve. We brought a Virginia Viognier to pair with baked cheesy appetizers and a Chianti Classico for the smoked pork with tomato gravy. It was going to be a culinary coup: wine, food, and guiding our new friends through our little slice of suburban heaven.

By bottle four, the wine was flowing and so was the conversation. And, as I always do when meeting someone from another country, I got curious. Marci shared stories of her homeland and I was enthralled, missing my years stationed in Germany.

ME: *“Wait - before we drink, how do you say ‘cheers’ in Estonian?”*

MARCI: *“It’s kind of tricky, but it sounds like a dirty word. That’ll help you remember!”*

She raised her glass, said it, we all repeated it, wine down the hatch and then butts to their deck. Steve played “Hotel California” on guitar while Marci and I drunkenly rewrote the lyrics in what I still believe is the superior version:

“Mirrors on the ceiling, Closets full of mice -

We are all just prisoners here - You should roll the dice...”

Glorious.

A few months later, they invited us to a dinner party with extended family and friends. I was READY. I rehearsed my Estonian “cheers” line over and over while selecting the perfect wines: a crisp Sicilian Grillo and a bold Oregon Pinot Noir.

As we headed across the driveway, I felt a gentle hand on my arm.

DON (kindly): *“NeNe, please don’t try to say cheers in Estonian again. You don’t remember it right, and I think you might be calling someone’s grandmother a goat.”*

ME (confidently): *“Puh-lease. I GOT this.”*
But... I didn’t GOT that.



At dinner, everything went beautifully. Laughter. Warm vibes. Plates passed, wine poured. I stood up, glass in hand, and declared: *"I'd like to thank our hosts for a beautiful evening - by saying cheers in Estonian!"*

Marci smiled, expecting the best. Don looked down, expecting the worst. And I, with full conviction, raised my glass and declared: *"Sook-a-DEEK!"*

Silence.

Marci, (sweetly confused): *"I'm sorry... what did you say?"*

I cleared my throat and tried again, shifting the emphasis: *"SOOK-a-deek!"*

Marci blinked. *"No, no, Renee. It's Terviseks. Sounds like 'dirty sex!' Not whatever that was."*

Without missing a beat, Steve chimed in: "I like Renee's version better. Sook-a-DEEK, y'all!"

We *died* laughing. Even Steve's mom, bless her soul, was in stitches. I had unintentionally propositioned everyone at the table to have an orgy - and it became an instant classic.

To this day, we're still close friends and neighbors. Even after I accidentally told Steve's mom to "sook-a-deek" the first time I met her... and it's how we toast evenings on the deck with raised glasses and bad karaoke.



Refill & Reflect



POURsonality Disorder:

Chardonnay presents a commonly misunderstood flavor in wine: **butter**.

Many people assume the buttery taste in Chardonnay comes from oak, but that couldn't be further from true.

Oak adds body, baking spices, and richness.

Buttery flavor and texture comes from a process called **Malolactic Fermentation** (MLF or “malo”), where tart malic acid (think green apples) is converted into creamy lactic acid (think yogurt or milk). Nearly all red wines go through MLF, but tannins overpower the buttery flavor, and the creaminess is more noticeable in white wines - notably Chardonnay.

The result? Silky texture. Buttery notes. A smooth, almost oily mouthfeel. But stop blaming- or crediting- oak, you're barking up the wrong tree.

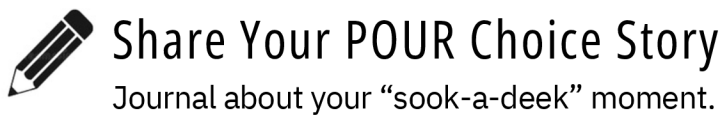
Sip Tip:

That butter you love? It's science, baby, and it pairs beautifully with popcorn! But don't expect it in every Chardonnay...



- The only region where every Chardonnay goes through MLF in Burgundy
 - Even unoaked stainless steel Chards can go through or skip MLF
 - Look for words like crisp and bright to describe Chards with light or no MLF
 - Silky and creamy are descriptors that indicate MLF in many wines- not just Chardonnay





Journal about your “sook-a-deek” moment.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Time To Wine About It!

Which wine pairs with your story: _____

Chapter 6: The Cellar

Ride Or Die

You never judge me. You just show up with bail money, clean underwear, and absolutely no questions.

You get me in a way no one else does. You're the first one to pile on unsolicited praise, reminding me of my brilliance even as I'm pulling a lint-covered Jolly Rancher from the bottom of my purse, contemplating the risk vs reward of popping it into my mouth.

You get me in a way no one else does. You're the first one to pile on unsolicited praise, reminding me of my brilliance even as I'm pulling a lint-covered Jolly Rancher from the bottom of my purse, contemplating the risk vs reward of popping it into my mouth.

At parties, you always shine the light in my direction:

YOU *"I'm hosting a cocktail party and have no clue what to serve with the champagne. Renee, any ideas?"*

ME: *"Ohhh, YES. A best-kept secret: fried chicken. Trust me. The salt and fat in the chicken are a natural fit for Champagne or Cava."*

If you're serving Prosecco or sparkling Viognier - try popcorn popped in bacon grease. Instant hero status."

YOU: *"That's brilliant!"*

ME (blushing, slightly): *"Thank you, friend - brilliance recognizes brilliance."*

But I don't love you just because you boost my ego. You are the real deal. You make everyone around you feel like they matter. You never fake a compliment. You don't play games. You're that rare mix of popular *and* grounded.

Even with all your star power, you're happy to be the backup singer if it makes the whole performance better. You don't need to hog the spotlight - but you damn well *deserve* it.

You are my **Ride or Die**.

You show up in sneakers and a hoodie one day, and a ballgown the next. You're that friend who's equally comfortable singing karaoke in a dive bar or walking a red carpet - and you make *both* look good.

That kind of loyalty is old school, predates pokes, likes, emojis and sliding into DMs. It doesn't need to hear your voice every day- it knows how you would handle a challenge. It doesn't need to see you all the time- it memorizes your face. And it never, ever asks you to compromise your principles because it loves the piece of you that has them.

Sometimes the bond is by blood, sometimes it's by choice. It could be next door, or continents may separate you. But the only thing that's for sure: I feel the same way about you.





Refill & Reflect

POURsonality Trait:

Cheers to Cabernet Sauvignon, for your old world charm and new world glamour, for your humble confidence despite your obvious talent. You're poured for presidents then sipped at backyard BBQs.

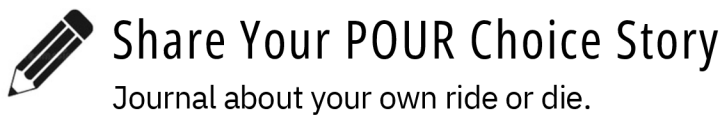
You're iconic yet approachable, and never feel out of place. You don't need backup- yet you harmonize with the best of them. You're the heart that beats in Bordeaux blends, Super Tuscans, and California reds.
That's Ride or Die, Big Sip Energy.

Sip Tip:

Many wine regions allow a bottle to be labeled as a single varietal if that grape makes up at least 75–85% of the wine. That means your “Merlot” or “Malbec” may still have a solid dose of Cab Sauv inside, adding structure, body, and longevity.

If you ever find yourself stranded on a desert island and can only choose one grape to sip forever?

Choose Cab Sauv. It's always got your back.



Journal about your own ride or die.

Journal about your own ride or die.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it is resting on a surface.

Time To Wine About It!

Which wine pairs with your story: _____

Chapter 7: Dump Bucket

Fear Is a Factor

Fear is funny- not in a haha way, but in how it can either devour us like turkey vultures on roadkill, or it can drive us to do hard things, like writing a book in less than 90 days.

A single moment in 1990 gave fear full control over my logical brain. A loud BANG at 5:36am jolted me awake gasping for air- I dreamed I had died in water. The fear stuck to me like stink on a turd and became an irrational albatross around my neck.

I knew how to swim. Hell, I was already in the Navy and had passed the swim test. But I confronted it- white water rafting, tubing, cruises- you name it, but its barbed claws simply sank in deeper, dragging me to Davy Jones Locker* every time I was near anything bigger than a jacuzzi..

More nightmares. Constant tug of jumping overboard on cruises or pulling a Thelma and Louise off of a bridge and into the ocean. The siren song is a real thing y'all and it was winning the battle for my life, stealing away moments and chipping away at my confidence.

I was sick of being controlled by it, making excuses to skip boat trips with friends, and feeling suicidal just driving over

bridges or along coastlines. After 32 years I'd finally had enough.

For Don's 31st birthday, I got him the greatest gift EVER- swim lessons (for ME)! Yes, I'm the best wife ever.

I didn't know it when I booked her, but my swim coach ended up being a mindset coach as well.

I jumped in the pool covered in goggles, fins and sheer terror.

I froze the wall for ten minutes, my only movement was emptying tears from my goggles as six year olds doggie paddled around the weird old lady crying in 4 feet of water.

I finally let go of the wall and let the floaty board thingy do its job to keep my head above water.

Even though I survived- obviously- every class, I still had panic attacks each time I was back on land.

ME: *"I'm just prolonging the inevitable, I should just let the water win."*

COACH: *"Not on my watch."*

I refused to quit even though I cried before, during and after every class, heart racing like the rec center pool was filled with sharks and I was bloody bait.

But my coach kept turning the perspective around and around until something clicked.



COACH: *"You are in control, Renee- 99% of you knows what to do and how to do it. That 1% is a f**king liar that doesn't even belong in your world. Visualize it- give it a face. Now PUNCH it **dead** in the mouth with your right hand, fill your lungs with life, push off of the wall and meet me at the other end of the pool. **NOW.**"*

And I did. Over and over. And in June 2022, I WON. I jump into whatever body of water I am near just to lift a middle finger at Percy- that's what I call that 1% flea before I flick it away. I float, swim to the edge, then get back to my poolside wine. But there's more.

I subconsciously stopped freaking out with other fears that weighed me down. Flying bugs. Horses. Bees. Okay- spiders still send me into a high pitched panic, baby steps y'all.

Rejection. Judgement. Ridicule. Without hesitation, now I walk into every room with a lighter step and confidence that a "no" just made room for the right YES. Instead of being afraid of not fitting in, I decide which rooms deserve me. It's not arrogance, it's recognition of what others see, that I finally believe.

I relaxed into a life that was no longer ruled by fear.



Refill & Reflect

POURsonality Trait:

Hello darkness my old friend- you are the dreaded, intimidating Restaurant Wine List.

You used to make me feel like I was playing Russian Roulette with my meals and money. I was afraid to look foolish in front of my friends who said “YOU own a wine tour company- you pick the wine!”

I just *knew* that if I mispronounced Assyrtiko, the wait staff was pointing and laughing at our table behind my back. Just the thought of ordering a wine that tasted bitter with food because it wasn’t a proper pairing brought bile to my throat. Which, fun fact, is ALSO bitter.

So with a deep breath, no goggles or fins, I wrestled you into submission. I OWN you, wine list.

ME (smiling at the waiter):

“We’re ordering the chicken parmesan and short rib risotto, which two wines would you suggest?”

WAITER: *“Uhhh, let me get the Sommelier, I’m not sure!”*

Look who’s laughing now... NO ONE. You don’t need a wine certification to beat the list- you just need the ovarian audacity and testicular fortitude to ask questions, and these three tips:

Sip Tip:

Most people know exactly as much about wine as you do unless they study it with a manic obsession. It's not a rich, old, white, boys club anymore- although they are welcome to stay and expand the table!

We **all** get to enjoy the beauty that comes with a well-chosen wine and food pairing. And we are all welcome to learn one meal at a time.

- Look at the wine priced in the middle. Sometimes they are just as well made as the more expensive wines and the margins are better for the restaurant.
- Don't be afraid to request a taste before purchasing a bottle. Any wine available by the glass should be an option to try first.
- Don't like it? Don't buy it. The waiter didn't make the damn wine- he won't be offended.
- What grows together goes together. Choose a wine from the region of your cuisine.



Journal about your own fear conquering experience.

[illegible]

Time To Wine About It!

Which wine pairs with your story: _____

Chapter 9: The Cellar

S-motherly Love

It's the warm, endless hug after a heartbreak.

It's the kind of love that smells like Sunday pot roast and sounds like soap operas blaring in the background while she has you on speakerphone.

It's not always graceful, and definitely not always subtle - but it's real. It's deep. It's permanent.

It's S-motherly Love.

The kind of love that comforts and protects. That nags, meddles, and inserts itself into conversations where it maybe (okay, definitely) wasn't invited. Not because it wants to control you - but because it *remembers what it was like to be you*.

It wants to shield you from every bruise, mistake, and regret. And sure, sometimes it suffocates you in the process. But it comes from the softest center of the heart.

When it's overbearing, s-mothering you with unsolicited advice? - It's just trying to save you from the same mistakes it made.

When it's intrusive, jumping in to solve problems you didn't ask it to fix? - It just wants you to be happy.

When it seems aloof, hanging back when you *really* wish it would swoop in and fix everything? - It's trying not to be called s-mothering and intrusive again.

This love is complicated - but it never leaves. Even when it's quiet, it's still there.

This love turns meals into memories.

It sneaks secret ingredients into your favorite dishes and seasons every meal with the stories you'll tell your own kids one day.

It's chili with cornbread and melted honey butter on snow days, thawing your cheeks after snowball fights.

It's the kind of love that never needs to say, "Remember me?" - because it's woven into who you are.

Sometimes, S-motherly love plays the silent supporting actress role. She doesn't mind letting you take the praise for an idea she made you think was your own.

But even then - she's leading the chants, holding up the signs, and cheering the loudest from the stands.

When athletes win a championship, who do they thank first? That's right - **MOM**. Because we hold it down so they can rise up.

Refill & Reflect



POURsonality Trait:

Thank you, **Merlot**, for being the Somm of moms.

The one who gets overlooked and under appreciated (looking at you, *Sideways*.) and yet...

You're always there, smoothing the rough edges, softening the sting, rounding out the blend.

Cabernet might steal the spotlight, but it's your steady presence that makes the magic happen.

You're the warmth behind the boldness. The nurture behind the structure.

You're the one we turn to when we're tired, heart-worn, and in need of something familiar.

You don't need constant praise - but you damn sure *deserve* it.

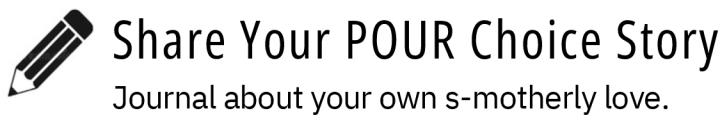
Sip Tip:

If you've sworn off Merlot, don't listen to Miles- (yeah *Sideways*, still talking to you) give it another chance. And chances are it's in many Cab Sauv's you drink without being listed on the label.

- Right-bank Bordeaux if you want to go straight to the top

- Washington State Merlot from the Walla Walla AVA
- Ease in with a Cab Sauv / Merlot blend from California or a Super Tuscan from Italy

OH! and PS: Call your mom and tell her you love her. No, not a text... call her! (She's gonna call as soon as she sees a text from you anyway.)



Journal about your own s-motherly love.

Time To Wine About It!

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Note From The Author

Dear Reader,

Thank you for reading this advanced copy of my upcoming book. In today's world, everyone is fighting for your attention and I am truly honored you spent time with me & my book today. I hope reading it was as fun for you as writing it has been for me!

You know how a wine tasting is a few ounces of each wine so you can decide whether or not you want to buy a bottle, or join the club...?

Think of this limited edition copy of POUR Relationship Choices as a tasting: each chapter is a sample, adding a copy of the full book to your collection is buying the bottle, sharing it with others is joining the club.

This book was written for YOU!

I am so excited to learn where you saw yourself in its pages and how you uncorked your own POURsonality as we explored wine through different perspectives, and reflected on past relationships in a new light.

There is even more to discover in the full version! You'll find longer chapters, more chapters, & deeper layers. Think of the final version as the barrel tasting of all the library wines!

Cheers to you for sipping along with me as We Get Though This Thing Called Life. I Adore each of you, for allowing me to be your Lady Cab Driver.

While some chapters may cause Controversy, there is something to Adore about every Strange Relationship, especially the Beautiful Ones. And now, Let's Go Crazy. (IYKYK)

Scan to answer a few questions, share your feedback & to help make the final copy an even stronger reflection of your POUR Relationship Choices.

Cheers Y'all!
- Renee

