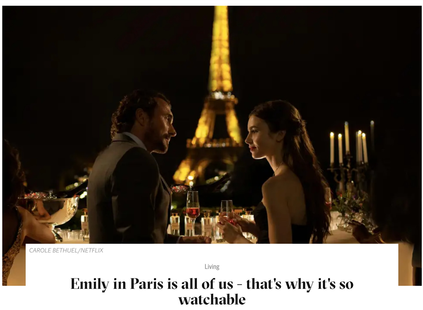

CAROLE BETHUEL/NETFLIX

Living

Emily in Paris is all of us - that's why it's so watchable

The Netflix rom-com is the 'insert yourself' fanfiction we all need right now

by Sara Feigin • New York • 7 minutes ago

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Netflix's latest romantic comedy is the polarizing Emily in Paris series, starring Lily Collins as the titular Emily.

The series lets viewers escape to Parisian life pre-coronavirus, where Fashion Week isn't virtual and sitting in a cramped restaurant drinking copious amounts of wine isn't a finable offense.

A popular sentiment on Twitter is that Emily in Paris is a bad TV show, enjoyable and a proud guilty pleasure but too ridiculously over the top to be taken seriously. The show is full of American stereotypes about Parisians, as well as ridiculous outfits no normal person could afford. Despite the issues, a huge portion of the tweets that call the show "bad" also praise how easy it is to watch.

(CAROLE BETHUEL/NETFLIX)

Every episode of Emily in Paris is less than 30 minutes long and has the ability to transport viewers into her world with it's quick and witty storylines, each episode ends with the viewer counting down the seconds until the next one starts so they can get an extra dose of serotonin by putting themselves in Emily's designer shoes.

Since viewers don't know much about Emily, other than her penchant for wildly impractical designer bags and her cheery personality, it's easy to imagine themselves as Emily Cooper.

Emily in Paris was created by Darren Star, who's also the mind behind Sex and the City and Younger, which both have strong female protagonists. Emily isn't the typical strong female lead that fans of Star's show are used to. She's certainly not as memorable as his previous female leads, who were (for the most part) fully fleshed-out characters that women emulated for decades.

(STEPHANIE BRANCHU/NETFLIX)

Emily is cheerful, easy to get along with, and a steadfast friend who's somehow incredibly good at her job, despite never using a single hashtag.

When women of all ages turn on Emily in Paris, they get to become Emily for a blissful 30 minutes.

Being the main character of a story like the one told in Emily in Paris is a popular fantasy for women of all ages, hence why self-insert fanfiction has become so popular over the years.

(STEPHANIE BRANCHU/NETFLIX)

These fanfictions give the reader the opportunity to very literally insert themselves in the story, whether it' about meeting Harry Styles at a bar in Kensington or stealing Edward Cullen's affection from Bella Swan.

These stories give their main character barely any description and some even omit a name completely and instead put "y/n" (shorthand for your name) in all instances where the reader is being addressed by fellow characters in the story.

Self-insert fanfiction has taken many forms over the years and Emily being a beautiful and engaging blank slate of a woman makes Emily in Paris the epitome of this style of storytelling.

(CAROLE BETHUEL/NETFLIX)

Teen girls and adult women have written self-insert fanfiction for over a decade now, writing stories with a very desirable plotline, like a girl who speaks no French being whisked away to Paris for her dream job, becoming a social media influencer by sheer luck and every handsome man they meet falling in love with them.

Emily in Paris is self-insert fanfiction at its best. Many viewers have enough in common with Emily that her ridiculously expensive designer outfits don't make her feel fully unrelatable because the viewer feels like they could be frolicking through Paris with a $600 designer bag on one arm and a handsome French man on the other.

Emily in Paris | Lily Collins | fanfiction

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