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“I don’t know if you’ve ever noticed this, but first impressions are often entirely wrong.”
—Lemony Snicket, *The Bad Beginning*

An Easy Insomnia Cure: *Solve a Mystery!*

Like most working moms, Trynka Shieneman, chief marketing officer for VistaPrint North America, has lots of stress—on and off the job, and it was beginning to affect her sleep until she found a way to unwind. “I love curling up with a mystery—especially a good Harlan Coben story,” she said. And it’s no *mystery* why this works: Engaging your higher brain skills to “solve” a crime short-circuits lower brain functions such as fear and anxiety!

meet the
AUTHOR
Nicholas Sparks

Nicholas Charles Sparks was born in Omaha, NE on December 31, 1965. As a child, he lived in Minnesota and Los Angeles, finally settling in California at the age of eight. His father was a professor and his mother an optometrist’s assistant. He graduated from high school valedictorian and received a scholarship to the University of Notre Dame in 1984. After breaking the Notre Dame school record as part of a relay team as a freshman (a record which still stands), he was injured and spent the summer recovering. During that summer, he wrote his first novel, which was never published. He majored in Business Finance and graduated with high honors in 1988.



He and his wife Catherine met on spring break in 1988 and married the next year. While living in Sacramento, he wrote his second novel, again not published. Over the next three years, he worked a variety of jobs, including waiting tables, real estate appraising, and selling dental products by phone. In 1990, he collaborated on a book with Billy Mills, the Olympic Gold Medalist, which was published. Though it received scant publicity, sales topped 50,000 in the first year.

Sparks began selling pharmaceuticals and moved to North Carolina in 1992. At the age of 28 in 1994, he wrote *The Notebook* over six months. It was published, and he followed that with *Message in a Bottle*, *A Walk to Remember*, and many others. All were domestic and international bestsellers that were translated into more than 35 languages. The movie versions of *Message in a Bottle*, *A Walk to Remember*, *The Notebook*, and *Nights in Rodanthe* were released, making the novels by Nicholas Sparks one of the most successful franchises in Hollywood.

He has five children and lives in North Carolina with his wife and children.

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