

# By the Time You Read This

by Lola Jaye

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## About the Book

Lola Jaye's unforgettable debut novel **By the Time You Read This** follows the life of Lois Bates from age twelve to thirty, as she grows up in the company of her father Kevin, who passed away when Lois was just five-years-old. With a *P.S. I Love You* feel? (*The Bookseller*) **By the Time You Read This** addresses such questions as: What would you do as a parent if you found out you only had a few months to live? How could you help your child mature from a child to an adult? And what words of wisdom would you leave behind? A life affirming read, **By the Time You Read This** proves that family bonds never fade, and that anyone can leave their mark on this world for future generations to come.

## Discussion Guide

1. By the end of the novel Lois has gone through some big changes, not least in her attitude to relationships. What were her beliefs about romantic love? And what was the biggest lesson learned in regards to her view of men? Especially after it is revealed that Kevin was not as perfect as she thought him to be.
2. Why do you think Lois insisted on calling her sister Abbi "The Sprog"? And what shifted in Lois in order for her to finally call little Abbi by her rightful name?
3. Lois and Carla remained friends throughout childhood and right through to adulthood, but they were so very different. How did such a friendship survive? Do you think that Lois got more out of this relationship than she would perhaps let on? Are you friends with any of your own "besties" from childhood? Why or why not?
4. Did Lois' mother deserve the anger that Lois held towards her during the early part of the book? How might she have made Lois feel better about her new family/circumstances while she was growing up?
5. Kevin loved the "Superman" movie so much that he called his only daughter Lois. She in turn saw Kevin as perfect

and a kind of superman. But he was only human and sometimes got things wrong. Are there any bits of advice you think Kevin missed out on or was wrong about?

6. Do you think that Lois sometimes pushed away the men she was dating because she in some ways already had the perfect man in Kevin? Or do you think she and Corey were simply meant to be, and that their timing just had to finally be right?

7. If you were to receive a magical letter through time full of wisdom for the teen years, college years, or for adulthood at what age would you most like to have advice to grow on (from a parent, a grandparent, or even from a future version of yourself) and why?

8. What did you learn from *By the Time You Read This* about the kind of parent you might like to be someday? Was there anything that Kevin knew that you wish your own parents had told you? Do you think that you would have listened?

9. Lola Jaye imagined Will Smith in the part of Kevin as she wrote the book, who do you imagine and why?

10. Did you go to youtube to search out the song "With Stars On?" Lola wrote the song lyrics especially for the book as song permissions are so costly but did the song feel real to you? Did it suit the story?

11. As Lois neared the end of "The Manual" how did the emotion in Kevin's voice change? Did it impact you as a reader?

12. How would this story have been different if it was her mother that Lois had lost as a young girl?

## Author Bio

Lola Jaye was born and raised in London, England, where she still makes her home; she has also lived briefly in Nigeria. **By the Time You Read This** --- Lola's first U.S. novel --- was published by HarperCollins in 2009. Her inspirational essay "Reaching for the Stars: How You Can Make Your Dreams Come True," in which she charted her journey from foster child to author, was released in 2009 as part of the U.K.'s wildly popular Quick Reads program.

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