Everything's Fine

by Cecilia Rabess



About the Book

On Jess? first day at Goldman Sachs, she?s less than thrilled to learn she?ll be on the same team as Josh, her white, conservative sparring partner from college. Josh loves playing the devil?s advocate and is just?the worst.

But when Jess finds herself the sole Black woman on the floor, overlooked and underestimated, it?s Josh who shows up for her in surprising --- if imperfect --- ways. Before long, an unlikely friendship --- one tinged with undeniable chemistry --- forms between the two. A friendship that gradually, and then suddenly, turns into an electrifying romance that shocks them both.

Despite their differences, the force of their attraction propels the relationship forward, and Jess begins to question if it?s more important to be happy than right. But then it?s 2016, and the cultural and political landscape shifts underneath them. And Jess, who is just beginning to discover who she is and who she has the right to be, is forced to ask herself what she?s willing to compromise for love and if, in fact, everything?s fine.

A stunning debut that introduces Cecilia Rabess as a blazing new talent, EVERYTHING'S FINE is a poignant and sharp novel that doesn?t just ask will they, but?should they?

Discussion Guide

1. What was your initial impression of Jess? Of Josh? How did your impression of the characters change over the course of the book?

2. How does the relationship between the two main characters evolve over time?

3. Jess and Josh have very different relationships with money. How do their relationships with money affect each of their

choices at work, in relationships (with family, friends, romantically), and in other areas of their lives?

4. Jess struggles with defining what it means to be successful. How does her definition of success change over the course of the book? How would the different people in her life --- Josh, her father, her friends --- define success?

5. The novel is set partially in the world of investment banking and finance. How does this setting contribute to the themes and conflicts in the book?

6. Are the characters? political identities portrayed in a realistic way?

7. Jess is a Black character who moves through the world in predominantly white spaces. She grew up in Nebraska, has mainly white friends, and then, after graduating, works at companies that aren?t very diverse. As Jess evolves and matures over the course of the book, how do you think her relationship with her Blackness changes?

8. Jess was never fully open with her father about the details of her life in New York. If her father had lived to see Jess at the end of the book --- and if Jess had filled him in on her life --- what do you think he?d have made of various aspects of her life? Do you think his assessment would have aligned with Jess? expectation of said assessment?

9. EVERYTHING'S FINE is not a traditional ?will they, won?t they? narrative, but more a ?should they, shouldn?t they? story. Do you think the author takes a clear position on whether Jess and Josh should or shouldn?t be together? Do you think they should or shouldn?t be together?

10. Do you think Jess and Josh?s relationship will survive? Where do you see them --- as individuals or as a couple --- in the years after the book ends?

11. After finishing the book, how would you categorize it? Did the book --- and the love story within it --- align with your expectations? In which ways, if any, did the book subvert your expectations?

Author Bio

Cecilia Rabess previously worked as a data scientist at Google and as an associate at Goldman Sachs. Her nonfiction has been featured in *McSweeneys*, *FiveThirtyEight*, *Fast Company* and *FlowingData*, among other places. EVERYTHING'S FINE is her debut novel.

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