

Helpless

by Jessica Knoll



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *LUCKIEST GIRL ALIVE* and *BRIGHT YOUNG WOMEN* comes a smoldering erotic thriller with a singular, mind-bending ending.

It's been 12 years since Faye Heron broke Henry Spalding's heart. Henry was her college boyfriend, her first love, but Faye was in danger of being subsumed by him and the intensity of their connection --- a connection that took her beyond boundaries she'd only dreamed of crossing.

Now, Faye is one-half of a power-producing duo with her Hollywood husband. Henry is a married father running the family business. On the surface, both of their lives have essentially gone to plan.

When a former and beloved college professor suddenly passes away, Faye and Henry find themselves back on campus for the funeral, circling something old and dangerous. Something, if Faye is honest with herself, she has been trying to duplicate for years. But Henry is one of a kind.

The kind who delivers a hypnotic apology for the way things ended. The kind who suggests they go back to the hotel for a drink. The kind who drugs and kidnaps her.

When Faye comes to Henry's remote mountain cabin, she's beside herself. Has Henry brought her here to punish her? She did, after all, write and star in a lauded episode of television based on their indelicate appetites and vicious breakup. As her week of captivity unfolds, Henry's wanton demands intensify, and Faye finds herself pulled back into his irresistible gravity. But as Faye and Henry spiral into their old dynamic, a sprawling, years-old mystery begins to take shape --- one that will rewrite history as Faye remembers it and reveal an astounding, cataclysmic truth.

Discussion Guide

1. How has Faye and Henry's relationship evolved over time? How is their relationship now different from how it was in college?
2. Despite their time apart, Henry and Faye quickly fall back into their old dynamics, even though they are married to other people. What do their relationships with their current spouses tell us about their characters?
3. When PT picks up Faye to take her to the airport after Henry breaks down, he tells her, "Don't be afraid to write about this one day" (page 144). How did his mentorship shape her career? In what ways did it impact her relationship with Henry?
4. Faye is extremely successful and driven in her career. How does her success impact her relationships? How does it shape her interactions with Emma?
5. On page 129, Faye stabs Campbell in order to escape. How does this impact your perception of her character?
6. Do Henry and Faye's power dynamics ever flip? Where do you see this happen?
7. There are a lot of twists and turns in this story. Which was the most surprising, and why?
8. We learn that Henry struggles with anxiety and panic attacks. How does this affect your view of him? Does it excuse or explain any of his behavior? Why or why not?
9. What was your understanding of the ending? Did Faye's experiences in the book happen as written, or were they all part of her script?

Author Bio

Jessica Knoll is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *HELPLESS*, *BRIGHT YOUNG WOMEN*, *THE FAVORITE SISTER* and *LUCKIEST GIRL ALIVE* --- now a major motion picture from Netflix starring Mila Kunis. She has been a senior editor at *Cosmopolitan* and the articles editor at *Self*. She lives in New York City with her family.

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