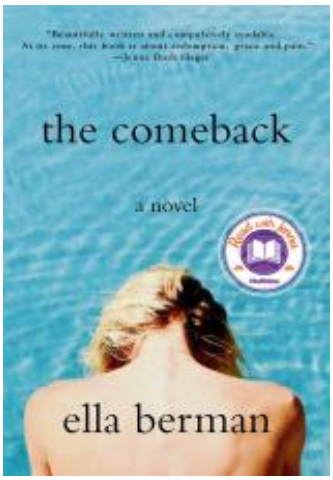
The Comeback

by Ella Berman



About the Book

THE COMEBACK is a deep dive into the psyche of a young actress raised in the spotlight under the influence of a charming, manipulative film director and the moment when she decides his time is up.

At the height of her career and on the eve of her first Golden Globe nomination, teen star Grace Turner disappeared.

Now, tentatively sober and surprisingly numb, Grace is back in Los Angeles after her year of self-imposed exile. She knows the new private life she wants isn?t going to be easy as she tries to be a better person and reconnect with the people she left behind.

But when Grace is asked to present a lifetime achievement award to director Able Yorke --- the man who controlled her every move for eight years --- she realizes that she can?t run from the secret behind her spectacular crash and burn for much longer. And she?s the only one with nothing left to lose.

Alternating between past and present, THE COMEBACK tackles power dynamics and the uncertainty of young adulthood, the types of secrets that become part of our sense of self, and the moments when we learn that, though there are many ways to get hurt, we can still choose to fight back.

Discussion Guide

1. THE COMEBACK has female relationships at its core. Do you agree that Grace fails all the women in her life (her mom, Esme, Camila, Wren, Emilia and Laurel) at various points in the book? And in what ways does she redeem herself? What do others see in Grace?

2. At one point, Grace says of Esme: ?I understand that I?m letting her down, and that I have a chance to fix something

in her that is already broken in me.? Do you think Grace succeeds in this? In what ways do Grace and Esme differ?

3. What do you think motivated Emilia to spend so much time with Grace? Do you believe that her affection was genuine? And vice versa for Grace with Emilia.

4. What do you think of Grace?s feeling that she ?owes? the public for making her famous? Do you believe that we are owed something by the celebrities we admire?

5. Grace refuses to explore the motivation behind Able?s actions, including his childhood. Do you agree with this decision, or do you think it can be helpful to look to the past when examining the cycle of abuse?

6. Shame is a recurring theme in Grace?s journey, and she often questions her own complicity in her abuse. Why do you think she does this?

7. Has the cultural shift around the Me Too movement forced you to look at any of your own experiences in a new light? Do you think that it?s been helpful?

8. What did you think about the author?s decision not to reveal ?the line?? What is ?the line? for you?

9. How did the flashback scenes help you to better understand Grace in the present?

10. ?This whole generation is screwed.? Do you agree with Esme?s statement on the impact of social media on her generation?

11. Did the book reveal anything about the aftermath of trauma that you hadn?t considered? Did you ever feel frustrated with the way Grace coped?

12. ?Look, you may not know this yet, but there are some bad people in the world, and while some of them get exactly what they deserve, others just don?t.? Do you think Grace?s opinion on this has changed by the end of the book? What do you think finally compels her to stand up to Able?

Author Bio

Ella Berman grew up in both Los Angeles and London, where she studied psychology before working at Sony Music. Her debut novel, THE COMBACK, was selected as a "Read with Jenna" Book Club pick, and her follow-up, BEFORE WE WERE INNOCENT, was a Reese?s Book Club pick. Raised by two former hippies on the music and art of the 1960s and 70s, she lives in London with her husband, their senior dog, and their daughter. Her third novel is L.A. WOMEN.

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