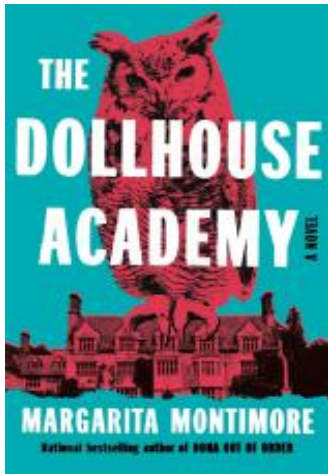


# The Dollhouse Academy

by Margarita Montimore

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## About the Book

**From the nationally bestselling author of the "GMA" Book Club pick OONA OUT OF ORDER, a novel about two best friends and aspiring actresses who join the Dollhouse Academy, where stars are made and dangerous secrets are hidden.**

Ivy Gordon is living on borrowed time. For the past 18 years, she has been the most famous star at the Dollhouse Academy, the elite boarding school and talent incubator that every aspiring performer dreams of attending. But now, at age 34, she is tired of pretending everything is fine. In secret diary entries, Ivy begins to reveal the truth of her life at the Dollhouse: strange medical exams, mysterious supplements, and something unspeakable that has left Ivy terrified and feeling like a prisoner.

Ramona Halloway and her best friend, Grace Ludlow, grew up idolizing Ivy. Now both 22, neither has made much headway in showbiz until a lucky break grants them entry to the Dollhouse. They're enchanted by the picturesque campus and the chance to perform alongside their idols. When Ramona begins to receive threatening anonymous messages, it's easy to dismiss them as a prank from a rival. Her bigger concern is Grace's skyrocketing success, while Ramona struggles to keep up with the fierce competition. As the messages grow more unsettling, so does life at the Dollhouse. Can Ramona overcome her jealousy and resentment to figure out what's really going on? Will Ivy finally find her voice, before another young performer follows her catastrophic path?

With dark academia twists and enormous heart, THE DOLLHOUSE ACADEMY is a novel about the complexities of friendship, our desire to be seen and understood, and the true cost of making our dreams a reality.

## Discussion Guide

1. What secrets did you suspect the Dollhouse Academy was hiding? Were you surprised when the sinister truth was

revealed?

2. At one point, Ivy says, "It's more interesting when you don't know who the good guys and the bad guys are because everyone's a little good *and* a little bad" (p. 44). Do you agree? What characters in the novel does this apply to, and in what ways?
3. How did Ramona's, Grace's and Ivy's early lives inform their decisions to become performers?
4. Interspersed with Ramona's first-person narration are excerpts from Ivy's diary. What is the effect of reading Ivy's story in her own words? Do you think Ivy should have told her story sooner, especially to Ramona?
5. Who did you suspect was sending Ramona the anonymous notes and why? Were you surprised by the reveal?
6. How does Ramona's experience at the Dollhouse echo Ivy's early years, and how does it differ? Why do you think Ramona is so drawn to Ivy's story long before meeting her at the Dollhouse?
7. Discuss the following quote and how it relates to the story: "A granted wish doesn't always look like you expect it will" (p. 259).
8. How do the live-action movie trailers Grace and Ramona perform (*The Godfather*, *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Jaws*, *Taxi Driver*, *The Shining*) serve to foreshadow or echo themes in the story?
9. Do you think Genevieve truly has the trainees' best intentions at heart? Why or why not? In what ways are Genevieve and the Dollhouse Academy/Dahlen Entertainment progressive?
10. Which *Wizard of Oz* references did you pick up on? Discuss the significance of the other Judy Garland and Liza Minnelli references throughout the book.
11. How does the novel's theme of replacing people extend from Project Understudy to other aspects of Ramona's life?
12. Discuss the varying opinions in the story around plastic surgery. Whose stance do you agree with the most and why?
13. What do you believe actually happened to Timothy? What about Ivy?
14. What do you think the future holds for Tia, Jude and Dion? Why do you think they decided to stay at the Dollhouse knowing what they do about the Dollhouse's darker side?
15. Do you think Ramona and Grace will be able to get Ivy's story out to the wider world? How?

## Author Bio

Margarita Montimore is the author of *THE DOLLHOUSE ACADEMY*, *ACTS OF VIOLET*, *ASLEEP FROM DAY* and

OONA OUT OF ORDER, a *USA Today* bestseller and "Good Morning America" Book Club pick. After receiving a BFA in Creative Writing from Emerson College, she worked for over a decade in publishing and social media before deciding to focus on the writing dream full-time. Born in Soviet Ukraine and raised in Brooklyn, she currently lives in New Jersey with her husband and dog.

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## **The Dollhouse Academy**

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