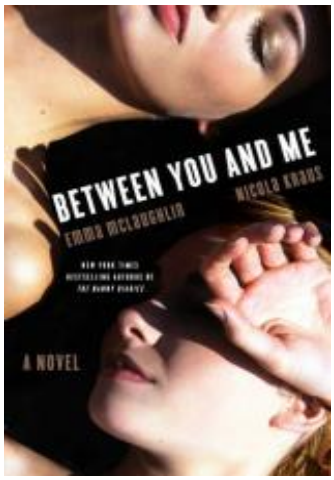
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Between You and Me

by Emma McLaughlin and Nicola Kraus



About the Book

Twenty-seven-year-old Logan Wade is trying to build a life for herself far from her unhappy childhood in Oklahoma. Until she gets the call that her famous cousin needs a new assistant --- an offer she can?t refuse.

Logan hasn?t seen Kelsey in person since their parents separated them as kids; in the meantime, Kelsey Wade has grown into *Fortune Magazine*?s most powerful celebrity. But their reunion is quickly overshadowed by the toxic dynamic between Kelsey and her parents as Logan discovers that, beneath the glossy façade, the wounds that caused them to be wrenched apart so many years ago have insidiously warped into a show-stopping family business.

As Kelsey tries desperately to break away and grasp at a ?real? life, beyond the influence of her parents and managers, she makes one catastrophic misstep after another, and Logan must question if their childhood has left them both too broken to succeed. Logan risks everything to hold on, but when Kelsey unravels in the most horribly public way, Logan finds that she will ultimately have to choose between rescuing the girl she has always protected...and saving herself.

Discussion Guide

1.Why do you think Logan agrees to become Kelsey?s assistant? When things begin to fall apart, why does she stay?

2. Reflecting on her childhood with Kelsey, Logan remembers, ?We used to imagine we were secretly really not just cousins but sisters, never actually saying which parents we?d erase from the equation if we could.? (p. 66) As children, which parents do you think the two girls would have chosen to keep? Would their choice be different in the present-day?

3. Early on in the tour, Logan says to Kelsey, ?You really don?t have to?endear me, entertain me, engage me. If it starts with an ?e,? you don?t have to do it. I?m here. I?m in. It?s not your responsibility to make this a good time for me. Consider my presence an off switch.? (p. 80) Is Logan true to her word? To what extent does Kelsey take her up on this?

You might refer to their conversation on page 155 as a point of comparison.

4. Michelle is an especially complex character?though less outwardly volatile than her husband, Andy, she is far from straightforward and rarely says what she truly thinks. How does she express her emotions, both positive and negative? How does she get her way, and what happens when she doesn?t?

5. Consider Kelsey?s love for the classic children?s story, *The Velveteen Rabbit*, which is a recurring motif in the novel. Why do you think it is so important to her? Knowing what you know about the story, why do you think McLaughlin and Kraus chose it to be Kelsey?s favorite?

6. What do you think goes wrong in Kelsey and Aaron?s relationship? Was it doomed to fail, or was there ever hope for them?

7. Consider Logan and Finn?s conversation on page 137 about their respective employers. What is this novel saying about the relationship between fantasy and reality? How does that relationship change when you are a celebrity?

8. In *Rolling Stone*?s February 2008 issue, Vanessa Gregoriadis wrote, ?More than any other star today, Britney [Spears] epitomizes the crucible of fame for the famous: loving it, hating it and never quite being able to stop it from destroying you.?Do you agree with this assessment? To what extent is this true of other young stars in Hollywood? How does this apply to Kelsey in *Between You and Me*?

9. Could you empathize with Michelle and Andy?s involvement in Aaron?s life, after he and Kelsey filed for divorce? Or did your sympathies lie with Kelsey, who clearly felt betrayed?

10. After years of suppressing the memory, Logan suddenly flashes back to the last night that she and Kelsey were together as children, the night that her parents had always said she was in a car accident. Did this scene surprise you? How did it affect your view of Andy?

11. Logan tells Finn, ?We?re both making our living as crutches to the weird and wounded,? to which he replies, ?You?ll give that twisted family enough rope to hang you. But you don?t give me even an inch to figure this out with you.? How are Logan and Finn?s respective approaches to their jobs similar?and how do they differ?

12. Of pressing for conservatorship status, Andy says, ?I am making things right.? Logan retorts, ?This is the single most selfish thing you could have done to her.? Can you see both points of view, or do you take sides with either Andy or Logan here?

13. Michelle claims that Kelsey began performing as a child because she loved it?while Kelsey claims she did so because it got them both away from Andy. What do you think? At the end of the novel, Kelsey seems to be gearing up to return to performing after her very public breakdown. Again, do you think this is because she can?t bear to live without music?or because of the influence of her parents?

Author Bio

McLaughlin graduated from New York University's Gallatin School of Individualized Study. She met Nicola Kraus while both were attending New York University, and working as nannies.

Emma McLaughlin, with Nicola Kraus, is the *New York Times* bestselling authors of THE NANNY DIARIES, CITIZEN GIRL, DEDICATION, NANNY RETURNS, and their young adult novels, THE REAL REAL and OVER YOU.

They work together in New York City.

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Publication Date: June 12, 2012
Genres: Fiction, Women's Fiction
Hardcover: 288 pages
Publisher: Atria Books
ISBN-10: 1439188181
ISBN-13: 9781439188187