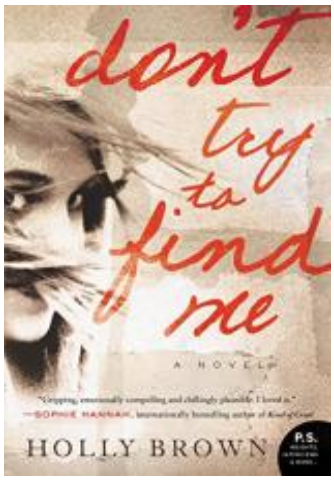
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Don't Try To Find Me

by Holly Brown



About the Book

When a 14-year-old runs away, her parents turn to social media to find her --- launching a public campaign that will expose their darkest secrets and change their family forever, in this suspenseful and gripping debut for fans of RECONSTRUCTING AMELIA and GONE GIRL.

Don?t try to find me. Though the message on the kitchen white board is written in Marley?s hand, her mother Rachel knows there has to be some other explanation. Marley would never run away.

As the days pass and it sinks in that the impossible has occurred, Rachel and her husband Paul are informed that the police have ?limited resources.? If they want their 14-year-old daughter back, they will have to find her themselves. Desperation becomes determination when Paul turns to Facebook and Twitter, and launches FindMarley.com.

But Marley isn?t the only one with secrets.

With public exposure comes scrutiny, and when Rachel blows a television interview, the dirty speculation begins. Now, the blogosphere is convinced Rachel is hiding something. It?s not what they think; Rachel would never hurt Marley. Not intentionally, anyway. But when it?s discovered that she?s lied, even to the police, the devoted mother becomes a suspect in Marley?s disappearance.

Is Marley out there somewhere, watching it all happen, or is the truth something far worse?

Discussion Guide

1.We first meet Rachel when she's discovered her daughter is missing. What were your initial impressions of her? How did your perspective evolve?

2. "She's a normal teenager, i.e., moody maybe, but not depressed." These are Rachel's thoughts upon reading Marley's goodbye note on the white board. Does this characterize the Marley you come to know over the course of the book? Is she depressed? If she ordinary, or exceptional? Is Rachel out of touch with who her daughter truly is?

3. "Normal teenagers don't run away. Ergo, she didn't run away," Rachel goes on to think. This exposes the first of many of Rachel's blind spots. If you're a parent yourself, what do you think your blind spots might be? Are we all prone to some forms of denial?

4. What kind of wife is Rachel? What kind of husband is Paul? How do you imagine their marital dynamics shaped Marley and her view of relationships?

5. If Rachel had monitored Marley more closely --- including her social media --- would their story have been different? How do you think social media impacts teens and their ability to connect with each other, their parents, and the world around them?

6. What do you think Marley was really looking for in her relationship with B.? What does it say about her that she chose to be involved with him? Did B. lure Marley or was she looking for a way out, or both?

7. When a teenager runs away, do you think that the parents are always responsible, on some level?

8. What's the significance of the Teen Angst playlist in the novel? What does it mean to Marley, to Rachel and to their connection with one another?

9. Is there a victim in the novel? More than one? Who gives up their power and control? In what ways, and for what reasons?

10. Have you ever kept secrets? What would you do if you knew that a social media campaign had the potential bring your runaway child home but could also expose those secrets to an unforgiving public?

11. A theme in the novel is visibility. In this social media-saturated world, is it more important to be seen than to be known? To be "liked" (i.e. on Facebook) as opposed to truly liked?

12. "Opposite-speak is different from lying, because when you use it, you always know. You're never trying to fool yourself," Marley writes in her journal, as a way to contrast herself and her mother. "The worst thing you can be is a liar to yourself." Do you agree?

13. Dr. Michael is very important to both Marley and Rachel. Is he a destructive or a constructive force? What do you imagine his intentions to be?

14. If you were Paul, would you forgive Rachel? If you were Rachel, would you want to salvage the marriage?

15. Were you surprised to discover Rachel's prescription drug abuse? Did it cause you to reexamine her behavior

throughout the novel?

16. Rachel and Marley both ultimately tap into their individual strength, resilience and authenticity. But it's at a cost. Is this a novel about empowerment, or something else? What have they learned about themselves, each other and their relationship? What comes next for them?

Author Bio

Holly Brown is (in no particular order): a novelist, wife, mother, marriage and family therapist, poker enthusiast, resident of the San Francisco Bay Area, member of the SF Writers Grotto, lover of some incredibly shameful reality TV, devotee of NPR (she owes a debt of gratitude for inspiring more than one novel), and a believer that people should always be willing to make mistakes and always be the first to apologize for them.

As a writer, she tends to be inspired by contemporary events and phenomena. With her first novel, DON'T TRY TO FIND ME, she was intrigued by a real-life story about how a parent?s use of social media helped find a runaway daughter. In A NECESSARY END, she was compelled by all the maddening hoops that people have to jump through in order to adopt a newborn and what this does to their psychologies and their relationships. THIS IS NOT OVER is an escalating cat-and-mouse between two women after a house rental goes wrong. She likes to take an emotionally charged situation and then imagine the people within it. That?s where her background in human dynamics comes into play, and where the fun begins.

Photo Credit: Yanina Gotsulsky

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