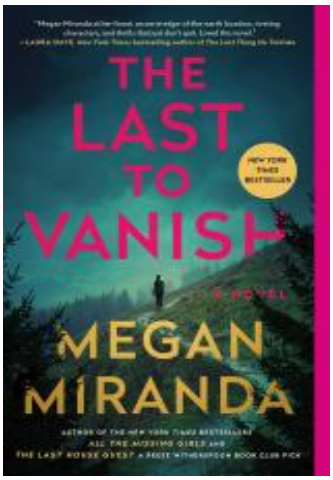
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The Last to Vanish

by Megan Miranda



About the Book

***New York Times* bestselling author Megan Miranda returns with a gripping and propulsive thriller that opens with the disappearance of a journalist who is investigating a string of vanishings in the resort town of Cutter?s Pass. Will its dark secrets finally be revealed?**

Ten years ago, Abigail Lovett fell into a job she loves, managing The Passage Inn, a cozy, upscale resort nestled in the North Carolina mountain town of Cutter?s Pass. Cutter?s Pass is best known for its outdoor offerings --- rafting and hiking, with access to the Appalachian trail by way of a gorgeous waterfall --- and its mysterious history. As the book begins, the string of unsolved disappearances that has haunted the town is once again thrust into the spotlight when journalist Landon West, who was staying at the inn to investigate the story of the vanishing trail, then disappears himself.

Abby has sometimes felt like an outsider within the community, but she?s come to view Cutter?s Pass as her home. When Landon?s brother Trey shows up looking for answers, Abby can?t help but feel the town closing ranks. And she?s still on the outside. When she finds incriminating evidence that may bring them closer to the truth, Abby soon discovers how little she knows about her coworkers, neighbors and even those closest to her.

Megan Miranda brings her best writing to THE LAST TO VANISH, a riveting thriller filled with taut suspense and shocking twists that will keep you guessing until the very end.

Discussion Guide

1. Despite its appearance as a cozy resort town, Cutter?s Pass is portrayed --- to the reader --- as a cold, isolated and moody place. Considering the fact that Abby is the book?s sole narrator, how might you read this characterization, and what implications does it have regarding her presence within Cutter?s Pass?

2. Is Abby a reliable narrator? Why or why not? How do her interactions with other characters embody one of the novel?s central concerns: that is, the inability to truly ?know? another person?

3. Many different forms of ?reality? appear in THE LAST TO VANISH. Characters divulge rumors, talk about myths, and share practical (as well as comforting) explanations for the vanishings of past visitors. What does the novel suggest about truth and its relationship to myth?

4. What does the novel say about the secrets we hide? Are those secrets ultimately more ?real? than what we?re willing to reveal to our friends, our coworkers, ourselves? Consider the truths Cory is able to tell visitors on his ghost tours and the secrets he keeps locked within his chest. Are there ?truths? that we can?t even reveal to ourselves?

5. How would you characterize the relationships that Abby has with other characters? Are her relationships with the town?s longtime residents different from her relationships with semi-outsiders like Georgia? What about with Trey?

6. What does it mean to be part of a community, and what does it mean to be an outsider? Consider the fact that Abby has lived in Cutter?s Pass for 10 years but still feels (at times) like a stranger. Do you think she?d be more accepted as a member of the community if she didn?t start seeking out the truth with Trey? Why or why not?

7. Why do you think the novel opens with a page from Landon West?s journal? How did this choice affect your interpretation of the story?

8. Explore the role that ?outsiders? play in THE LAST TO VANISH, as well as in real life. Are they, like Landon and Trey West, able to pierce through the secrets that close-knit communities hide? Consider, in your evaluation, the role that Abby (who is both an outsider and not) plays in this novel. What kinds of revelations is she privy to as someone who occupies this unique position?

9. Evaluate the theme of morality in this novel. Are you able to tell who is a ?good? character and who is not? Explain how and why. Additionally, do you think that we are biased toward Abby because she is the book?s narrator?

10. Even though THE LAST TO VANISH focuses on events that occur in the past, the main story actually takes place in our COVID present. How do you think this narrative decision affects the reader?s experience of the novel? And do you see semblances of our daily life represented within the book?s pages?

11. What role does technology play in this novel? Consider how it?s used by characters as it relates to the truth (both the uncovering and the obscuring of it). Additionally, you might explore the difference between the author?s descriptions of nature and the author?s descriptions of manmade objects. Do they vary in any significant way? Discuss.

12. Another theme in THE LAST TO VANISH is that of appearance versus reality. In the beginning of the book, Abby describes the Passage Inn as a place that cultivates a false sense of ?authenticity? by keeping logs in a gas fireplace. What, in your opinion, is the author?s intention in revealing this detail to the reader? Can you think of real world examples of places (or people) that work to cultivate a certain, perhaps false, image?

13. What does ?haunting? mean in the context of Trey?s role in the novel, and what does the word mean for the inhabitants of Cutter?s Pass at large? Are the longtime residents, like Celeste and Cory, haunted by different things than

Georgia or Abby are? Discuss.

Author Bio

Megan Miranda is the *New York Times* bestselling author of ALL THE MISSING GIRLS; THE PERFECT STRANGER; THE LAST HOUSE GUEST, a Reese Witherspoon Book Club pick; THE GIRL FROM WIDOW HILLS; SUCH A QUIET PLACE; THE LAST TO VANISH; THE ONLY SURVIVORS; DAUGHTER OF MINE; and YOU BELONG HERE. She has also written several books for young adults. She grew up in New Jersey, graduated from MIT, and lives in North Carolina with her husband and two children.

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