The Silver Linings Playbook

by Matthew Quick



About the Book

A heartwarming debut novel, soon to be a major movie by David O. Russell

?Aawww shucks!? NPR's Nancy Pearl said. ?I know that?s hardly a usual way to begin a book review, but it was my immediate response to finishing Matthew Quick?s heartwarming, humorous and soul-satisfying first novel . . . This book makes me smile.?

Meet Pat Peoples. Pat has a theory: his life is a movie produced by God. And his God-given mission is to become physically fit and emotionally literate, whereupon God will ensure him a happy ending?the return of his estranged wife, Nikki. (It might not come as a surprise to learn that Pat has spent several years in a mental health facility.) The problem is, Pat?s now home, and everything feels off. No one will talk to him about Nikki; his beloved Philadelphia Eagles keep losing; he?s being pursued by the deeply odd Tiffany; his new therapist seems to recommend adultery as a form of therapy. Plus, he?s being haunted by Kenny G!

David O. Russell, the Oscar-nominated director of *The Fighter*, is helming his own adaptation of *The Silver Linings Playbook*. Due in theaters this Thanksgiving, the movie features Bradley Cooper (*People* magazine?s Sexiest Man Alive) in the role of Pat, alongside Jennifer Lawrence, Robert De Niro, Julia Stiles, Chris Tucker, and Jacki Weaver. As the award-winning novelist Justin Cronin put it: ?Tender, soulful, hilarious, and true, **The Silver Linings Playbook** is a wonderful debut.?

Discussion Guide

1. How does the book redefine happy endings? What makes Pat so determined to believe that every cloud has a silver lining?

2. As Pat heals from his brain injuries and trauma, in what ways is he sometimes more mentally stable than his family and friends? Is his optimism?combined with his belief that God is a filmmaker? a sign of his sanity? How was your reading affected by the fact that the ?bad place? was a neural health facility rather than a psychiatric hospital?

3. Discuss the relationships Pat and Jake have with their father, Patrick Senior. What does their father teach them about being a man? Why is it so hard for him to show emotion?

4. How does Cliff use the Eagles? playbook to teach Pat about the real world? How do the Eagles bring unity to Pat?s family? What makes Hank Baskett the ideal rookie to serve as Pat?s inspiration?

5. In ?A Hive Full of Green Bees,? what does Pat discover about himself during the violent incident with the Giants fan (Steve)? How did you feel about Jake while he was taunting Steve?

6. What keeps Pat?s obsession with Nikki alive? What does Cliff ultimately help him understand about the nature of love and attraction?

7. Tiffany and Pat?s mother, Jeanie, have different approaches to his recovery. Tiffany believes that direct confrontation is best; Jeanie wants to protect Pat from anything that might upset him, including his brother?s marriage to Caitlin. Which approach is better?

8. How did your impressions of Nikki and Tiffany shift throughout the novel?

9. Did Dance Away Depression have any healing effect on Pat? What did Tiffany want him to hear when she chose ?Total Eclipse of the Heart? as their song?

10. What role does Danny play, along with Aunt Jasmine, in rescuing Pat emotionally on Christmas Day? When have you had a similar encounter with a friend who appeared at exactly the right moment?

11. How did you react when Pat finally remembers why Kenny G pushes him over the edge? What does his trauma have in common with Tiffany?s?

12. Discuss Pat?s take on literature, particularly **The Scarlet Letter**, **The Bell Jar, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,** and **The Catcher in the Rye**. How does his approach to literature change as his worldview changes? What would it be like to have Pat as a member of your book club?

13. In ?An Acceptable Form of Coping,? Cliff and Pat disagree about whether sad books should be required reading for students. Pat says that such books teach kids to be pessimistic. Cliff says, ?Life is hard, Pat, and children have to be told how hard life can be . . . so they will be sympathetic to others.? What?s your opinion? What books were you drawn to when you were younger?

14. Discuss the book?s closing scene. How has **The Silver Linings Playbook** inspired you in your life?

Author Bio

Matthew Quick is the *New York Times* bestselling author of THE SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK --- which was made into an Oscar-winning film --- and eight other novels, including WE ARE THE LIGHT, a main selection of the Book of the Month Club.

His work has been translated into more than 30 languages, received a PEN/Hemingway Award Honorable Mention, was a *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize finalist, a *New York Times Book Review* Editors? Choice, a #1 bestseller in Brazil, a Deutscher Jugendliteratur Preis 2016 (German Youth Literature Prize) nominee, and selected by Nancy Pearl as one of Summer?s Best Books for NPR. *The Hollywood Reporter* has named him one of Hollywood?s 25 Most Powerful Authors.

Matthew lives with his wife, the novelist Alicia Bessette, in Beaufort, South Carolina.

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