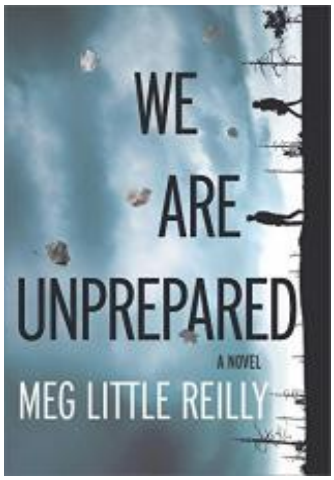
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We Are Unprepared

by Meg Little Reilly



About the Book

WE ARE UNPREPARED?

This is a novel about the superstorm that threatens to destroy a marriage, a town and the entire Eastern seaboard. But the destruction begins early, when fear infects people's lives and spreads like the plague.

Ash and Pia move from hipster Brooklyn to rustic Vermont in search of a more authentic life. But just months after settling in, the forecast of a superstorm disrupts their dream. Fear of an impending disaster splits their tight-knit community and exposes the cracks in their marriage. Where Isole was once a place of old farm families, rednecks and transplants, it now divides into paranoid preppers, religious fanatics and government tools, each at odds about what course to take.

WE ARE UNPREPARED is an emotional journey, a terrifying glimpse into the human costs of our changing earth and, ultimately, a cautionary tale of survival and the human spirit.

Discussion Guide

1. Ash and Pia are chasing a romanticized idea of a more simple and sustainable life. Is this relatable to you, or do you consider it a misguided or perhaps even a privileged fantasy?

2. Do you think Ash and Pia would have made it as a couple in Vermont even if the superstorm had not happened? Why?

3. Which of the characters in We Are Unprepared do you consider to be ?normal,? and which do you think of as ?crazy?? Can extreme circumstances make sane people insane?

4. Which of the characters in the novel would you most behave like in these circumstances?

5. If you were facing the same weather disaster, would you align with the civic-minded mayor and Ash, or the prepper group and Pia?

6. Once the storm hits, civil society falls apart quickly, and the death toll begins to mount. Does this seem like hyperbole to you? Do you think local, state and federal governments are this unprepared for a superstorm?

7. Is it noble or selfish for Ash to want to adopt August? Does the lack of choices in a rural, devastated place change this calculation?

8. Fear drives characters in this story to religion, alcohol and guns. What other vices and comforts do we all turn to in anxious times?

9. Does the superstorm seem plausible here? Do you consider it science fiction or an inevitability in our future?

10. No explicit assertion is made in the novel that the changing weather patterns are caused by human behavior, though it?s certainly implied. Do you perceive this story to be about man-made climate change or about chance? How might those different positions affect your opinion of the book?

11. In your own life, what aspect of the natural world do you feel most protective of? Is there a place or an experience that you want to shield from the effects of climate change?

12. Do you believe successive generations will have a different relationship to the natural world?

13. Do you believe fiction and art can influence public attitudes about climate change?

Author Bio

Meg Little Reilly is the author of the novels THE MISFORTUNES OF FAMILY, EVERYTHING THAT FOLLOWS and WE ARE UNPREPARED. She?s a public radio commentator, essayist and outdoors enthusiast. Prior to writing novels, Meg worked in national politics and the White House. She holds a BA from the University of Vermont and an MA from the George Washington University. These days, she lives in rural Vermont with her husband and two daughters.

Critical Praise

?Timely and terrifying.?

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