When the Men Were Gone

by Marjorie Herrera Lewis



About the Book

In Marjorie Herrera Lewis? debut historical novel, the inspiring true story of high school teacher Tylene Wilson --- a woman who surprises everyone as she breaks with tradition to become the first high school football coach in Texas --- comes to life.

Football is the heartbeat of Brownwood, Texas. Every Friday night for as long as assistant principal Tylene Wilson can remember, the entire town has gathered in the stands, cheering their boys on. Each September brings with it the hope of a good season and a sense of unity and optimism.

Now, the war has changed everything. Most of the Brownwood men over 18 and under 45 are off fighting, and in a small town the possibilities are limited. Could this mean a season without football? But no one counted on Tylene, who learned the game at her daddy?s knee. She knows more about it than most men, so she does the unthinkable, convincing the school to let her take on the job of coach.

Faced with extreme opposition --- by the press, the community, rival coaches and referees, and even the players themselves --- Tylene remains resolute. And when her boys rally around her, she leads the team --- and the town --- to a Friday night and a subsequent season they will never forget.

Based on a true story, WHEN THE MEN WERE GONE is a powerful and vibrant novel of perseverance and personal courage.

Discussion Guide

While no guide is available at this time, be sure to check out our historical fiction discussion questions, which may help you in your group's discussion of the book.

Author Bio

Marjorie Herrera Lewis knew early on she wanted a career related to sports. After several years at small newspapers, at age 27 she began working at the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*. Soon after, she was named a beat writer for the Dallas Cowboys and eventually joined the *Dallas Morning News* sportswriting staff. While writing WHEN THE MEN WERE GONE, she became inspired to try her hand at coaching football and was added to the Texas Wesleyan University football coaching staff. She presently teaches media ethics at the University of North Texas.

Critical Praise

"A wonderfully touching and beautiful story... Tylene makes me laugh, cry, and cheer for her in ways I have not done in a long time."

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