With My Little Eye

by Joshilyn Jackson



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of NEVER HAVE I EVER comes the hair-raising story of a mother who moves herself and her daughter across the country to lose a dangerous stalker --- only to discover that it will take more than distance to escape him.

HIS GAME.

HIS RULES.

HER LIFE.

It started with the letters?

For actress Meribel Mills, disturbing fan mail is part of the price of fame. So when she starts getting creepy letters written in fruit-scented marker, she is mostly unphased and diligently files them along with her other messages from unhinged fans. After all, she?s a single mom approaching 40, not the kind of hot young celeb who sparks dangerous obsessions. But there?s something different about Marker Man.

He?s been in her home?

Meribel?s sheets smell of unfamiliar cologne, and objects have gone missing around the house. Plus, the letters have become more perverse, with drawings of a naked Meribel tied up or chopped into pieces. While the police insist that stalkers hardly ever escalate to violence, Meribel has played the dead girl one too many times on TV to risk becoming her in real life. She and her daughter move from Los Angeles to Atlanta for a fresh start --- but no distance is great enough.

He?s watching her?

Years of being in front of a camera have given Meribel a superpower --- she can feel eyes on her, a creeping sensation like bees inside her skin. And someone definitely has her in their sights. Could Marker Man have followed her all the way across the country?

Who else might be watching? Her ex-husband? The lover she left behind in LA? Her new neighbor? Suddenly, every man in her life is a suspect, but she can?t keep herself and her daughter safe from a monster she can?t identify. When the paths of all of these men collide, Meribel will find herself alone in the fight of her life, desperate to protect those she loves as danger closes in from all sides.

If he can't have her, no one can.

Discussion Guide

1. In the book's opening line, Meribel confesses that she never thought she was "famous enough to get murdered." Did you read this as naiveté, irony or a joke? How did your interpretation of this line change as the story delved into issues of privacy and consent in a social media-fueled world?

2. Meribel's stalker always writes his letters with colorful scented markers. Did this childish affectation make him feel more or less creepy to you? How did it shape your expectations and suspicions?

3. Meribel fled Georgia because of a personal tragedy, but circumstances force her back in a moment of crisis. Is there a place that you would never, ever want to move or revisit?
What would it take to make you relocate there?

4. At various points, Meribel suspects each of the important men in her life of being Marker Man. Were you suspicious of any of these men? How did your opinions change throughout the book?

5. Marker Man is clearly invading Meribel's privacy, but Meribel herself is spending a significant amount of time looking at James' wife's Instagram. Where is the line between curiosity and stalking? Does Meribel cross it or come close to crossing it? Is there a different standard for public figures?

6. Along these lines, it's common to be connected with people on social media who you are no longer in touch with or have only a passing acquaintance. Have you ever spent time on social media checking out people from your past, and have you ever felt you crossed a line? When teenagers look at multiple posts in a person's feed, they matter-of-factly call it "stalking." Is this stalking, and what do you think this says about social media culture?

7. Meribel is juggling priorities --- she's a parent, a professional, an ex-wife, a girlfriend. If she had to pick one as her primary identity, which do you think she would choose, and why? Do you think of this as a female struggle or a universal human problem?

8. This story is told through multiple POVs, including Honor Mills, an adolescent on the autism spectrum. How did her perspectives, coping strategies and ways of processing sensory input differ from the neurotypical narrators in the book?

9. Meribel is also facing the same challenges that plague all modern parents --- managing screen time, food and sensory issues, helping their kid navigate interpersonal relationships and school. What's more important --- fostering freedom and confidence, or creating and preserving safety?

10. As an actress, Meribel is under a great deal of overt pressure to stay thin and young- looking. Her neighbor, Addie, seems to feel these same pressures, even though she has an office job, and both women worry about the effect of beauty standards on their adolescent daughters. Are there unreasonable beauty standards placed on women? Is this a function of biology or culture?

11. WITH MY LITTLE EYE explores the fine line between love and obsession. What do you think delineates the two? Is obsession always dangerous?

12. The last words of the book draw sharp attention to the fact that the story takes place in the fall of 2017, a few weeks before the *New York Times* broke the Harvey Weinstein story and the #metoo movement began. Why do you think Jackson chose to set this book in these weeks? Has #metoo solved or significantly altered the problems Meribel faces as a woman in the work force?

Author Bio

Joshilyn Jackson is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of numerous novels, including GODS IN ALABAMA and NEVER HAVE I EVER. Her books have been translated into more than a dozen languages. A former actor, Jackson is also an award-winning audiobook narrator. A recent expat from the American South, she and her family have settled in upstate New York.

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