



Leave Me: A Novel

By Gayle Forman

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A #1 September LibraryReads Selection

A September Indie Next Pick

An Amazon Best Book of the Month

A People Pick

Every woman who has ever fantasized about driving past her exit on the highway instead of going home to make dinner, and every woman who has ever dreamed of boarding a train to a place where no one needs constant attention--meet Maribeth Klein. A harried working mother who's so busy taking care of her husband and twins, she doesn't even realize she's had a heart attack.

Surprised to discover that her recuperation seems to be an imposition on those who rely on her, Maribeth does the unthinkable: she packs a bag and leaves. But, as is often the case, once we get where we're going we see our lives from a different perspective. Far from the demands of family and career and with the help of liberating new friendships, Maribeth is able to own up to secrets she has been keeping from herself and those she loves.

With bighearted characters--husbands, wives, friends, and lovers--who stumble and trip, grow and forgive, *Leave Me* is about facing the fears we're all running from. Gayle Forman is a dazzling observer of human nature. She has written an irresistible novel that confronts the ambivalence of modern motherhood head on and asks, what happens when a grown woman runs away from home?

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Leave Me: A Novel By Gayle Forman Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

“In an enthralling novel reminiscent of Anne Tyler’s *Ladder of Years*, a woman who recently suffered a heart attack runs away to recover her equilibrium.”

—*O, The Oprah Magazine*

“This surprising, compassionate story brings to life the secret, guilty fantasy of many overworked moms.”

—*People*

“Gayle Forman is known for her dreamy but hard-hitting young adult novels, including the best-selling *If I Stay*. With her first foray into grown-up fiction, *Leave Me*, she doesn’t shy away from the tough questions in this deep-diving and highly entertaining read. It’s hard not to relate to—and root for—Maribeth even as she does the unthinkable: abandons her children.”

—*Family Circle*

“entertaining... Forman's novel is a gritty fairy tale. But as in every fairy tale, she taps into people's fears and dreams, and she imparts a little wisdom along the way.”

—*Minneapolis Star-Tribune*

“Popular teen author Forman’s adult debut examines just what it means to be a working mother—beholden to everyone, seemingly obligated to forget who you really are. Maribeth’s search for her birth mother and the way she settles into her new—albeit temporary—life away from home will strike a chord with readers, especially those who enjoy Jennifer Weiner and Meg Wolitzer.”

—*Booklist, starred review*

“You may already know Gayle Forman from her incredible YA novels, such as the classic *If I Stay*. [*Leave Me*] is her first adult novel, and it's (unsurprisingly) fantastic.”

—*Bustle.com*

“Absorbing...LEAVE ME deftly explores the domestic struggles of 21st-century bourgeois life. This is an insightful ode to – and cautionary tale for – the overburdened working mother.”

—*BookPage*

“Forman, known for bestselling YA drama *If I Stay*, shines in this exploration of some very grownup angst in her adult fiction debut. A nuanced take on the idea of wanting to “have it all”—and knowing when to give it all up.”

—*B&NReads.com*

“Poignant, thoughtful and often hilarious, *Leave Me* is a fast-paced and heartwarming read about a woman needing to give up everything in order to have it all. In this thoughtful and funny novel, after suffering a heart attack, a harried young mother leaves home to regain health and balance while seeking out her birth mother.”

—*Shelf Awareness for Readers*

“*Leave Me* is popular YA author Gayle Forman’s first novel aimed at adult readers, and here’s hoping it

won't be her last."

—**Bookreporter.com**

"As a first foray into adult novel writing, Gayle Foreman's *Leave Me* is successful.... It will be interesting to see what she does next."

—**NY Journal of Books**

"YA author Forman's successful foray into adult fiction... With humor and pathos, Forman depicts Maribeth's complicated situation and her thoroughly satisfying arc, leaving readers feeling as though they've really accompanied Maribeth on her journey."

—**Publishers Weekly**

"Award-winning teen author Forman's (*I Was Here*, 2015, etc.) adult debut nails the frustrations of working motherhood.... An appealing fairy tale for the exhausted and underappreciated."

—**Kirkus Reviews**

"Subplots involving a hint of romance and a search for her biological mother, as well as a group of entertaining supporting characters, keep the plot moving.... All in all, *Leave Me* will leave readers introspective about their own lives and the compromises they make with themselves to stay with those they love."

—**Nashville Scene**

"At times funny, at times heartbreaking, *Leave Me* is a promising entrance into adult genres for the already-bestselling author."

—**Foreword Reviews**

"How do we reinvent ourselves when we can't even recognize the body we are in? Can you know where you're headed if you don't know where you came from? These are the questions faced by the prickly Maribeth, the complex and fascinating character at the center of *Leave Me*. In her first novel for adults, Forman reminds the reader that the answer to both questions involves getting to the heart of the matter."

—**Jodi Picoult, author of *Leaving Time***

"Told with humor and heart, *Leave Me* reveals that sometimes you have to leave everything you treasure in order to find your way back home. A moving testament to the persistence of love and the healing power of forgiveness."

—**Tayari Jones, author of *Silver Sparrow***

"Here's to complicated women and the authors who write them! Whatever the age of her characters, Gayle Forman is a compassionate, gifted observer of women's lives."

—**Gabrielle Zevin, author of *The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry***

"Forman's stinging portrayal of Maribeth's recovery process had me cringing with sympathy for her: her husband lets the housework pile up, refusing to take responsibility while she is sick, instead calling in Maribeth's own mother as reinforcement. *Leave Me*'s real strength is in the development of its characters, and the web Forman weaves is complex and riveting, as each relationship thread is pulled taut."

—**B&NReads.com**

"Forman is a gifted storyteller whose characters are flawed and engaging."

—**Charleston Post & Courier**

About the Author

Gayle Forman is a bestselling, award-winning author of young adult novels. *Leave Me* is her first novel for adults. Her novel *If I Stay* won the 2009 NAIBA Book of the Year Award and was a 2010 Indie Choice Honor Award winner. The film adaptation of *If I Stay* was released in 2014. Forman is also a journalist whose articles have appeared in numerous publications, including *Seventeen*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Elle*. She has visited more than forty countries and wrote a nonfiction book about her travels titled *You Can't Get There from Here: A Year on the Fringes of a Shrinking World*. Forman lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband and two daughters.

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Maribeth examined the monitor on her finger. A pulse ox. She recalled her father wearing one after his stroke. The monitors taped to her chest itched; she suspected it would take a good scrubbing tonight to get the glue off. “Excuse me,” she called to one of the ER residents, a stylish young woman who wore expensive shoes and spoke with a Valley Girl lilt. “Do you know when I might get out of here?”

“I think they, like, ordered another blood draw,” the doctor said.

“Another one. Why? I thought my EKG was normal.”

“It’s procedure.”

More like covering their asses or padding the bill. Maribeth had once edited an exposé about profit-driven hospitals.

With that she remembered the piece Finoula had sent. She might as well cross something off her list. She pulled it up on her phone. It was an interesting premise—about celebrities who were harnessing social media for philanthropic purposes; Maribeth vaguely recalled suggesting it in a pitch meeting—but it was terribly executed. Usually, Maribeth could read an article and immediately see the problems in structure or logic or voice and know how to fix them. But she read the piece a second time, then a third, and couldn’t see the forest for the trees, couldn’t see how to make it right.

It was the hospital. Hardly a conducive workplace. She needed to get home. It was almost dinnertime. Jason would probably be back with the kids by now. He might even start to, if not worry, then wonder. She closed the article and saw several missed calls from the landline. She called and Jason answered almost right away. “Maribeth,” he said. “Where are you?”

The sound of Jason’s steady, sonorous voice shook something loose in her. Maybe because his phone voice resembled his radio voice, it had the power to ricochet her back twenty-five years in time, to those nights when Maribeth and her friends would listen to his Demo-Gogue show from their dorm and muse over who he really was (his on-air name was Jinx) and what he was really like. “I’ll bet he’s ugly as sin,” her roommate Courtney had said. “Hot voice, hideous face.” Maribeth, who worked for the college newspaper, had no opinions as to his looks, but she was certain that he would be an unbearable snob, like all the art and music writers on staff were. “You should interview him and find out,” Courtney had dared.

“Where are you?” Jason repeated. Now she heard the irritation in his voice. And then she heard why. In the background was the clatter of adults and children. Many, many children.

The potluck. Tonight. Shit!

“I thought you wanted me to make the chicken, but we don’t have any in the house and now people are here,” Jason said. “Are you getting food?”

“No. I’m sorry. I forgot.”

“You *forgot*?” Now Jason sounded pissed. Which she supposed she understood, but it still made her chest clench again. Because, really: How many times had Jason spaced on something, leaving her to mop up the mess?

“Yes, I forgot,” she said, her voice snappish. “I had other things on my mind, what with being stuck in the ER all afternoon.”

“Wait? What? Why?”

“I was having chest pains, so Dr. Cray sent me just to get checked out,” she explained.

“What the fuck?” Now Jason sounded angry, truly angry, but in a different way from before. Like he was sticking up for her against a bully.

“It’s probably nothing, just stress,” she said, feeling foolish for having told him, and more foolish for having told him out of spite. “They’ve had me under observation for hours.”

“Why didn’t you call me?”

“I tried, but you didn’t answer, and anyway, I thought I’d be out of here by now.”

“Where are you?”

“Roosevelt.”

“Should I come up?”

“Not with everyone in the house. Just tell them I had work late and then order some pizza. They’re letting me out soon.” She pounded her chest with her fist, hoping that might make the resurgent pain go away.

“Shouldn’t I be with you?”

“By the time you got up here, I’d be discharged. It was just an overblown case of heartburn.” In the background, she heard Oscar begin to cry. “What’s going on?”

“Looks like Mo took Creepy Lovey.”

Creepy Lovey was a defaced teddy bear that Oscar couldn’t sleep without. “Better get it back,” she told Jason. “And can I talk to him? Or Liv?”

As Jason tried to corral the children, her phone made that mournful sound, down to its last 10 percent, and then, a few seconds later, made another sad sound, and died.

"I'll be home soon," she called. But they could no longer hear her.

*

LATER A GRANDFATHERLY doctor wearing a polka-dot bow tie showed up. He introduced himself as Dr. Sterling and told Maribeth he was the on-call cardiologist. "There was an abnormality on one of your EKGs so we ordered that second blood test and this one showed elevated levels of troponin," he explained.

"But the earlier EKG was normal."

"That's not atypical," he replied. "My guess is that you've had what we sometimes call a stuttering infarct."

"A what?" Maribeth asked.

"Ischemia, probably ongoing for the past twenty-four hours or so, which is why you've had intermittent pain, and now your blood work suggests complete occlusion of one of the arteries."

"Oh," Maribeth said, struggling to take it in. "I see."

"So, we're going to send you to the cardiac cath lab to look for any underlying blockages in your coronary arteries, and if we determine a blockage, we'll place a stent right then and there."

"When is all this happening?"

"Lickety-split. As soon as we can get you upstairs."

"Now?" She looked at the clock. It was past seven. "It's Friday night."

"You have plans to go out dancing?" He was amused by his joke.

"No. I just wondered if we could we do this, this stent thing next week?"

"Oh, no. We need to get in there before any more damage is done."

Damage. She didn't like the sound of that. "Okay. How long does it take? I mean, when can I expect to get out of here?"

"My, my, are you always in such a hurry?" he asked. He chuckled again, but this time there was the slap to it, as if the underlying message was *I see how you got yourself here*.

But at this very moment twelve four-year-olds were rampaging around her apartment. Someone was going to have to clean up after them, to find the Goldfish crackers that Mo always stashed away in the closet, or the soiled diapers that Tashi always left in the kitchen garbage (because Ellery still would only crap in Pampers). Someone was going to have to make chocolate chip pancakes for Saturday morning breakfast and to make sure the pantry was stocked with all the ingredients.

And that was just tonight. In the coming days, someone had to get the kids to their ballet classes, their soccer clinics, their speech therapy sessions, their playdates, their birthday parties. To take them shopping for their Halloween costumes, to the pediatrician for their flu shots, to the dentist for their cleanings. Someone had to

plan the meals, buy the food, pay the bills, balance the checkbook. Someone had to get it all done, while still getting all the work-work done.

Maribeth sighed. "It's just I have a house full of four-year-olds and a very busy weekend."

He stared at her for a long moment, frowning. Maribeth looked back, disliking him already, and that was before he said, "You do realize you've had a heart attack?"

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Nicholas Hess:

Now a day people who Living in the era wherever everything reachable by connect with the internet and the resources inside can be true or not need people to be aware of each information they get. How many people to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Studying a book can help people out of this uncertainty Information particularly this Leave Me: A Novel book since this book offers you rich information and knowledge. Of course the data in this book hundred per cent guarantees there is no doubt in it as you know.

Steven Huckins:

Spent a free a chance to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your current free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book may be option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the reserve untitled Leave Me: A Novel can be fine book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Tim Travers:

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Anthony Moss:

That book can make you to feel relax. This kind of book Leave Me: A Novel was colorful and of course has pictures on there. As we know that book Leave Me: A Novel has many kinds or category. Start from kids until adolescents. For example Naruto or Investigation company Conan you can read and think you are the

character on there. Therefore not at all of book are usually make you bored, any it can make you feel happy, fun and loosen up. Try to choose the best book in your case and try to like reading which.

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