

**"An inventive thrill ride that keeps you guessing."**

—Kelly Simmons, author of *One More Day* and *The Fifth of July*

THE  
LAST  
DAY  
OF  
EMILY  
LINDSEY

*a novel*

*Nic Joseph*



## *Reading Group Guide*

1. Why does Steve try to hide the nightmares and visions from everyone he loves?
2. How does hiding them both help and hurt him?
3. What rhetoric did Frank use to justify the annual sacrifice to the other adults? What was his real reason for the sacrifices?
4. Jack, Brat, Gumball, Shy Perry, and Lill all have very different personalities. How do the children each show leadership in their own way?
5. What was each child's biggest weakness?
6. What role does *Carmen Street Confessions* play in Emily's life?
7. Why was Lill drawn to Emily? Why was she so disappointed when she learned Emily's true intentions?

8. Why does Emily continue to pursue the story about Friends of Frank, even when it becomes dangerous?
9. Steve is finally working to address his nightmares. Do you think Lara will change her mind about his involvement in Kit's life?

## *A Conversation with the Author*

**How did you come up with the idea for *The Last Day of Emily Lindsey*?**

It started with the idea of a woman who sits down on her couch and just completely shuts off. I had the idea one day when I was pretty much doing exactly that—I'd had a long day at work, I was tired, and I did the thing where you just sink down on the couch and shut down for the night. I started thinking about a story where that shut-down period lasts the entire night, and then the next day, and the one after that. Granted, when I did it, I wasn't covered in blood; that idea came later.

**Your first novel, *Boy, 9, Missing*, also contained two distinct story lines set during two different time periods. What's your process for creating stories with this structure? Do you write them separately or together?**

Together. I generally know the arc for each story line in advance. But I still write the book in a linear fashion. I'll often scribble notes for later chapters if I'm writing one section and don't want to forget something. But I like to write these types of stories in the order and way that they'll be read; it just works better that way for me.

**What do you want readers to learn from Steve's journey?**

Steve thinks that he's protecting the people he loves—his parents, his wife, his partner—from himself by hiding his problems from them. But, of course, he's not doing as good of a job hiding them as he thinks he is, which only serves to hurt his family even more. By the end of the novel, he starts to learn that they're all with him for the long haul—even his ex-wife's new husband!—and that the best thing he can do is start to address his very serious issues with them by his side.

**Do you ever write characters based on real people?**

I haven't based a character completely on someone I know, but there are elements of friends and family in most of them. For example, Brat and Gumball definitely resemble myself and my older sister. Growing up, she was always the responsible one, while I was the type to run around with a bucket on my head until I toppled over.

**When deciding on an idea for your next novel, how do you filter the good ideas from the bad?**

I keep a running list of story ideas on my iPhone. I check it on a regular basis. The bad ones tend to linger there for months or even years until they get erased (either accidentally, or on purpose). The good ones keep bubbling to the top until I finally take a stab at outlining them or writing a first chapter. You never really know which ones are good ideas, only that some stay with you for a long time and at least deserve a shot at becoming something more.

**Do you write every day?**

Yes and no. When I get into a groove, I'll sit down to write every day—several times a day, if I can find the time. When I'm *not* in a groove, my writing habits are a lot more spotty.

**For your own reading, do you prefer ebooks or traditional paper/hardback books?**

About a year ago, I would've said traditional printed books, for sure! But I've had to travel a lot in the past year and have gotten pretty close with my e-reader. So, I'd say it doesn't really matter at this point—I'll take a good story any way I can get it!