

**REESE
WITHERSPOON**

**GONE
BEFORE**

**BOOK CLUB
KIT**

GOODBYE

HARLAN COBEN



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DEAR READER,

In our careers, we have shared stories through many roles—as actor, author, film producer, director, literary champion, mentor—and in many formats, whether visual, audible, or tangible. But at the end of the day, what we love is to explore how everyday people will respond in extraordinary situations. Ultimately, our stories have high stakes; for our characters, the challenges are many and the choices difficult and dangerous—and getting to the end is twisty, suspenseful, and riveting.

Our careers have taken different paths, but our shared passion for storytelling has drawn us into closer circles and, about a year ago, that put us in the right place at the right time. From a kernel of an idea to a tentative conversation between friends to an inspired vision of a story, we were somewhat shocked and absolutely thrilled to have had this collaboration turn from a “what if” possibility to a “game on” reality. And running full steam ahead has been an absolute blast!

To collaborate for the first time on *GONE BEFORE GOODBYE* has been an incredible experience. Through our near daily conversations and—best of all!—in person meetings, Maggie McCabe stepped from the pages of this book and took us on a globe-spanning adventure. We think the journey will surprise you—and we can’t wait for you to join her.

ENJOY THE RIDE!

Reese Witherspoon

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

contains spoilers

1. The novel starts with Marc performing surgery right before his death. Why do you think the authors chose to start the book there?
2. Would you have accepted Ivan Brovski's offer to perform the surgery if you were Maggie? Why or why not?
3. There are both moral and social implications surrounding the creation of the GriefBot app. How do you feel about this technology? When do we take innovation too far? Is the desire to help eclipsed by the risk of harm?
4. Maggie and Marc's marriage and relationship to surgery was described as "The operating room is her temple, her church, her sanctuary. Marc was home for her. She was home for Marc. But she and Marc both knew that here, the cathedral they called an OR, was where they felt their most whole, their most complete." What/who is your home, and what is your cathedral?
5. Maggie trusts very few people in her life. How do you think her life circumstances have impacted her willingness to trust others? Who are the key people you trust in your life?
6. Examine how various female characters in the novel that seem not to have positions of power (Nadia, Alena, Maggie, Sharon) use their situations/status to shift dynamics in their favor.
7. Though Maggie was mainly unaware of WorldCures' finances and sketchy investors, Trace and Marc tended to look the other way because, to them, "the ends justified the means." Should lines be crossed if the end justifies the means? If so, how far do you think is too far?

8. Examine the various ways Maggie can be viewed as refusing to accept the truth about Marc's death regardless of what she ultimately knew was true deep down.
9. The real Oleg Ragoravich spoke to Maggie about how investing in science and expanding upon it (regardless of ethical and medical roadblocks) is better than sticking to "natural immunities", since modern medicine has increased human life expectancy dramatically over time. Charles later says that Oleg "never kept the best scientists and researchers in the end. The best scientists and researchers may complain about the rules and protocols, but they understand why they're there. They want to work in the sunlight, not cut corners in the dark." Do you think that potential medical advancement should supersede traditional regulations? Is there a level of regulation where you would think cutting corners is OK?
10. Analyze the similarities and differences between Maggie and Nadia in their searches for their partner.
11. When leaving the hidden medical facility in Bordeaux, Maggie runs after a man wearing a baseball cap leaving the compound in a vehicle. Do you think he was anyone that she knew?