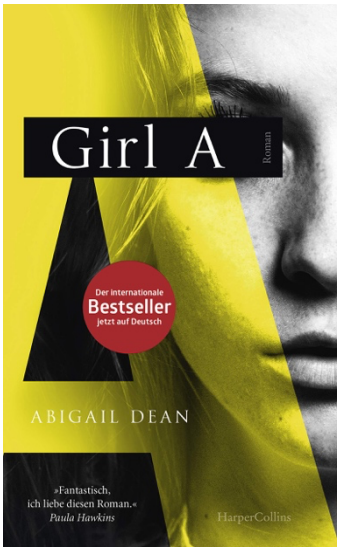
Prison Reading Groups

Girl A

By Abigail Dean



Lex Gracie doesn't want to think about her family. And she doesn't want to think about her identity as Girl A: the girl who escaped. When her mother dies in prison and leaves Lex and her siblings the family home, she can't run from her past any longer. Together with her sister, Evie, Lex intends to turn the House of Horrors into a force for good. But first she must come to terms with her six siblings – and with the childhood they shared. Beautifully written and incredibly powerful, *Girl A* is a story of redemption, of horror, and of love.

About the author

Abigail Dean was born in Manchester and grew up in the Peak District. She graduated from Cambridge with a Double First in English. Formerly a Waterstones bookseller, she spent five years as a lawyer in London, and took summer 2018 off to work on her debut novel, Girl A, ahead of her thirtieth birthday.

Discussion Questions

1. First sentences are important; what do you think of these opening ones?

   You don't know me, but you'll have seen my face. In the earlier pictures, they bludgeoned our features with pixels, right down to our waists; even our hair was too distinctive to disclose. But the story and its protectors grew weary, and in the danker corners of the Internet we became easy to find.

2. '*Girl A' she said. 'The girl who escaped. If anyone was going to make it, it was going to be you.'* In what ways does Lex make it? Does your attitude to her change as you find out more about her?

3. This is a book about victims and survivors. We are gradually introduced to Lex's brothers and sisters. What did you think about their different ways of dealing with the past?

4. And how about Lex's mother? 'Your father,' Bill [the mother's solicitor] said. 'Did you ever think about what he did to her?' 'You know,' I said, 'there was always so much else to think about.' But what do we think?

5. What do you think about the community centre idea?

6. What about Lex's relationship to Evie? What did you make of the very last page?

7. Would you recommend this book to a friend?

Thank you to Jenny for choosing this title and creating this resource.