



Hidden Bodies: A Novel

By Caroline Kepnes

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“There’s something deeply insidious about the storytelling of Caroline Kepnes. As satire of a self-absorbed society, Kepnes hits the mark, cuts deep, and twists the knife.” —*Entertainment Weekly*

“Obsessed.” —Jessica Knoll, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Luckiest Girl Alive*

“Delicious and insane...The plot may be twisty and scintillating, but its Kepnes' wit and style that keep you coming back.” —Lena Dunham

“Hypnotic and scary.” —Stephen King

In the compulsively readable follow-up to her widely acclaimed debut novel, *You*, Caroline Kepnes weaves a tale that *Booklist* calls “the love child of Holden Caulfield and Patrick Bateman.”

Joe Goldberg is no stranger to hiding bodies. In the past ten years, this thirty-something has buried four of them, collateral damage in his quest for love. Now he’s heading west to Los Angeles, the city of second chances, determined to put his past behind him.

In Hollywood, Joe blends in effortlessly with the other young upstarts. He eats guac, works in a bookstore, and flirts with a journalist neighbor. But while others seem fixated on their own reflections, Joe can’t stop looking over his shoulder. The problem with hidden bodies is that they don’t always stay that way. They re-emerge, like dark thoughts, multiplying and threatening to destroy what Joe wants most: true love. And when he finds it in a darkened room in Soho House, he’s more desperate than ever to keep his secrets buried. He doesn’t want to hurt his new girlfriend—he wants to be with her forever. But if she ever finds out what he’s done, he may not have a choice...

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Editorial Review

Review

"There's something deeply insidious about the storytelling of Caroline Kepnes. As satire of a self absorbed society, Kepnes hits the mark, cuts deep, and twists the knife." (Entertainment Weekly)

"Delicious and insane as its predecessor....The plot may be twisty and scintillating, but its Kepnes' wit and style that keep you coming back." (Lena Dunham)

"Obsessed." (Jessica Knoll, New York Times bestselling author)

"With *Hidden Bodies* (out today), Caroline Kepnes delivers a more riveting, more chilling, more fascinating sophomore novel as our favorite sociopath Joe Goldberg takes on Hollywood... suspenseful, charming and unexpectedly poetic...With her singular style, endearing antihero and captivating social satire, Kepnes will leave you entirely satisfied and ready for more." (USA Today: Happy Ever After)

"[A] clever, canny and creepy tale that's every bit as delectable as *YOU*. Caroline Kepnes is my latest obsession." (Mary Kubica)

"The next *Gone Girl* is a title that's been tossed around considerably in literary circles, but Kepnes' sophomore effort is worthy of the comparison." (Instyle)

"You will need this book. Caroline Kepnes just became my new favorite writer." (Colleen Hoover, #1 New York Times Bestselling Author)

"A dark, fun and frightening character study that deeply (and I do mean deeply) explores the hypocrisy of the trendsetters of the moment and those who follow them." (bookreporter.com)

"With its scathing social satire and loathsome yet strangely charming leading man, Kepnes' sophomore effort is well worth the read." (Kirkus)

"The story reads like the love child of Holden Caulfield and Patrick Bateman but without the gore and misogyny, which means nothing stands in the way of the reader enjoying Joe's cynical, murderous charm. Though it is a sequel to *You* (2014), *Hidden Bodies* may be even better on its own." (Booklist)

"His running commentary on life in L.A. brings to mind the *American Psycho* narrator's cynical views, and Joe's twisted attempts at relationships will appeal to fans of *Dexter*." (Library Journal)

"Remarkably, the author convinces the reader to empathize with her killer protagonist." (Publishers Weekly)

"[Kepnes] shows us our essential vulnerability, and how easy it is to fall in love with someone not because of who they are but because they reflect back to us our most cherished ideals and secret points of pride." (Literary Hub)

"Compulsively readable." (BookBub)

"What's truly killer about this book is Kepnes' verbal pyrotechnics." (New York Daily News)

“Both a tense story of a monster and a fascinating psychological study, the book dares you to empathize with a killer while keeping you guessing as to what will happen next.” (Barnes & Noble)

“For a tale as dark as a winter day, tuck into Caroline Kepnes’ psychological thriller *Hidden Bodies*, the sequel to Kepnes’ lauded *You*.” (Watch! Magazine)

“Chilling...[Kepnes' YOU] will have readers looking over their shoulders.” (Publisher's Weekly)

"An impending sense of dread hangs over Kepnes' cleverly claustrophobic debut, in which love takes on a whole new meaning...Kepnes keeps the reader guessing." (Kirkus Reviews)

"Chilling...unrelenting." (USAToday.com)

“A deeply dark yet mesmerizing first novel of two people caught in a romantic tangle with an ever tightening knot.” (Booklist)

"This beautifully crafted thriller... will give you chills." (People)

"Ominous." (Us Weekly)

"Both original and compelling. If you only read one new thriller this year, make it this one. It will stay with you long after you have put it down." (Geoffrey Wansell Daily Mail (UK))

"You think you know the story: girl meets boy, boy turns out to be a murderous stalker. US journalist Kepnes' debut is a fantastically creepy thriller...the kind of book you put your life on hold for." (Glamour)

"A page turner...clever and chilling." (Elle (UK))

"A brilliant tale of obsessive love...it's GONE GIRL meets a sinister version of GIRLS." (Marie Claire (UK))

"Compelling." (Entertainment Weekly)

"Is Caroline Kepnes’ 'You' the next GONE GIRL? It'll take you inside a psychopath’s head... and might even make you like him. A mad and macabre love story." (TimeOut Australia)

"Could be the next GONE GIRL...a perverse suspense romance about obsession, sex, and secrets." (PopSugar.com)

“If you liked GONE GIRL’S portrayal of a marriage in decline, the demented love story at the heart of YOU will have you gripped....This book will give you Stockholm syndrome.” (Harpers Bazaar (UK))

"YOU is superb. So funny, apart from anything else, and properly clever. It is: different, hot." (Sophie Hannah, New York Times bestselling author of *The Monogram Murders* and *The Other Woman's House*)

“[I] devoured every page and enthusiastically recommended others do the same...I’m going to scoop up everything Kepnes writes... Probing, visionary and intricate, [*You*] makes me excited to read whatever she comes up with next.” (The Joplin Globe)

"Seductive." (Curled Up with a Good Book)

“Joe is a horribly funny, strangely seductive narrator to spend time with—bitingly intelligent and simultaneously misanthropic and desperate for love. . . It's hard not to end up rooting for him.” (The Observer)

About the Author

Caroline Kepnes is a native of Cape Cod and the author of many published short stories. After graduating from Brown University, Caroline moved to New York where she covered pop culture for *Entertainment Weekly* and *Tiger Beat*. She also worked as a staff writer on the first season of ABC Family's *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*. Caroline's second novel, *Hidden Bodies*, is the follow-up to her debut novel, *You*, which was optioned by Showtime. Caroline now lives in Los Angeles, where she writes fiction, drinks artificially sweetened caffeinated beverages, and avoids freeways. Follow @CarolineKepnes on Twitter or visit CarolineKepnes.com.

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Hidden Bodies

1

I buy violets for Amy. Not roses. Roses are for people who did something wrong. I have done everything right this time around. I'm a good boyfriend. I chose well. Amy Adam lives in the moment, not in the computer.

“Violets are the state flower of Rhode Island,” I tell the guy wrapping up my flowers. His careless, dirty hands graze the petals, my petals. New Fucking York.

“Is that so?” He chuckles. “You learn something new every day.”

I pay cash and carry my violets outside to East Seventh Street. It's hot for May and I smell the flowers. Rhode Island. I've been to Rhode Island. I went to Little Compton last winter. I was lovesick, petrified that my girlfriend—R.I.P. Guinevere Beck—was in jeopardy because of her emotionally unstable friend—R.I.P. Peach Salinger.

Someone honks at me and I apologize. I know when something is my fault, and when you walk into a blinking crosswalk, it's your fault.

Just like it was my fault last winter. I go over the mistake in my head a dozen times a day. How I was hiding in a closet upstairs at the Salinger house. How I had to pee but couldn't leave. So I pissed in a mug—a ceramic mug—and I put the mug down on the hardwood floor of the closet. I ran when I had the chance, and there is no way around it: I forgot the mug.

I'm a changed man because of that day. You can't go back and alter the past, but you can go forward, become a person who remembers. Now, I'm committed to the details. For example, I recall with total precision the moment that Amy Kendall Adam returned to Mooney Rare and Used, to my life. I see her smile, her untamed hair (blond), and her résumé (lies). That was five months ago and she claimed she was looking for a job but you and I both know she was looking for me. I hired her, and she showed up on time for

her first day with a spiral notebook and a list of rare books that she wanted to see. She had a glass container of superfruits and she told me they help you live forever. I told her that nobody gets to live forever and she laughed. She had a nice laugh, easy. She also had latex gloves.

I picked one up. “What are these?”

“So I don’t hurt the books,” she explained.

“I want you up front,” I countered. “This is just a basic job, mostly stocking shelves, manning the register.”

“Okay,” she said. “But did you know that there are copies of Alice in Wonderland that are worth over a million dollars?”

I laughed. “I hate to break your heart, but we don’t have Alice downstairs.”

“Downstairs?” she asked. “Is that where you keep the special books?”

I wanted to place my hand on the small of her back and lead her down to the cage, where the special books are preserved, boxed, saved. I wanted to strip her down and lock us inside and have her. But I was patient. I gave her a W-9 and a pen.

“You know, I could help you go yard-sale-ing for old books,” she said. “You never know what you’re going to find at yard sales.”

I smiled. “Only if you promise not to call it yard-sale-ing.”

Amy smiled. The way she saw it, if she was going to work here, she was going to make a dent. She wanted us to travel uptown to estate sales and hunt library clearances and jam our hands into empty boxes on the street. She wanted to work together and this is how you get to know someone so well, so fast. You descend into musty vacated rooms together and you rush outside together to gulp the fresh air and laugh and agree that the only thing to do now is get a drink. We became a team.

An old woman pushing a walker looks up at me. I smile. She points at the violets. “You’re a good boy.”

I am. I thank her and keep walking.

Amy and I started dating a few months ago while we were on the Upper East Side in a dead man’s parlor. She tugged on the lapel of the navy blazer she had bought for me—five bucks—at a tag sale. She pleaded with me to drop seven hundred on a signed, wrinkled edition of *The Easter Parade*.

“Amy,” I whispered. “Yates isn’t big right now and I don’t see a resurgence on the horizon.”

“But I love him,” she begged. “This book means everything to me.”

This is women; they are emotional. You can’t do business like this but you also can’t look at Amy with her big blue eyes and her long blond hair out of a Guns N’ Roses song and say no to her.

“What can I do to change your mind?” she wheedled.

An hour later, I was the owner of an overpriced Easter Parade and Amy was sucking my dick in a Starbucks bathroom in Midtown and this was more romantic than it sounds because we liked each other. This was not a blowjob; this was fellatio, my friends. She stood and I pulled her boyfriend jeans to the floor and I stopped short. I knew she didn't like to shave; her legs were often bristly and she's all about water conservation. But I did not expect a bush. She kissed me. "Welcome to the jungle."

This is why I smile as I walk and this is how you get happy. Amy and I, we are sexier than Bob Dylan and Suze Rotolo on the cover of *The Freewheelin'* and we are smarter than Tom Cruise and Penélope Cruz in *Vanilla Sky*. We have a project: We are amassing copies of Portnoy's Complaint. It's one of our favorite books and we reread it together. She underlined her favorite parts with a Sharpie and I told her to use a more delicate pen.

"I'm not delicate," she said. "I hate delicate."

Amy is a Sharpie; she's passionate. She fucking loves Portnoy's Complaint and I want to possess all the dark yellow copies ever made and keep them in the basement so that only Amy and I can touch them. I'm not supposed to overstock a title, but I like fucking Amy near our yellow wall of books. Philip Roth would approve. She laughed when I told her that and said we should write him a letter. She has an imagination, a heart.

My phone rings. It's Gleason Brothers Electricians about the humidifier but it can wait. I have an e-mail from BuzzFeed about some list of cool indie bookstores and that can wait too. Everything can wait when you have love in your life. When you can just walk down the street and picture the girl you love naked on a mound of yellow Complaints.

I reach Mooney Books and the bell chimes as I open the door. Amy crosses her arms and glares at me and maybe she's allergic to flowers. Maybe violets suck.

"What's wrong?" I ask, and I hope this isn't it, the beginning of the end, when the girl becomes a cunt, when the new car smell evaporates.

"Flowers?" she asks. "You know what I want more than flowers?"

I shake my head.

"Keys," she says. "A guy was just here and I could have sold him the Yates but I couldn't show it because I don't have keys."

I toss the flowers on the counter. "Slow down. Did you get a number?"

"Joe," she says, tapping her foot. "I love this business. And I know I'm being a dumb girl and I shouldn't tell you how into this I am. But please. I want keys."

I don't say anything. I need to memorize it all, lock it away for safekeeping, the low hum of the music—the Rolling Stones' "Sweet Virginia," one of my favorites—and the way the light is right now. I don't lock the door. I don't flip the OPEN sign over. I walk to the other side of the counter and I take her in my arms and I dip her and I kiss her and she kisses me back.

I'VE never given anyone a key. But this is what's supposed to happen. Your life is supposed to expand.

Your bed is supposed to have enough room for someone else and when that someone comes along, it's your job to let her in. I seize my future. I pay extra to get ridiculous theme keys, pink and flowery. And when I place these pink metallic things in the palm of Amy's hand, she kisses them.

"I know this is huge," she says. "Thank you, Joe. I will guard these with my life."

That night, she comes over and we watch one of her stupid movies—Cocktail, nobody is perfect—and we have sex and order a pizza and my air-conditioning breaks.

"Should we call someone?" she asks.

"Fuck it," I say. "It's Memorial Day coming up."

I smile and pin her down and her unshaven legs scratch against mine and I'm used to it now. I like it. She licks her lips. "What are you up to, Joe?"

"You go home and pack a bag," I say. "And I'm gonna rent us a little red Corvette and we're gonna get out of here."

"You're insane," she says. "Where are we going in this little red Corvette?"

I bite her neck. "You'll see."

"You're kidnapping me?" she asks.

And if this is what she wants, then yes. "You have two hours. Go pack."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Catherine Gates:

What is your hobby? Have you heard that will question when you got pupils? We believe that that problem was given by teacher to the students. Many kinds of hobby, All people has different hobby. Therefore you know that little person such as reading or as studying become their hobby. You must know that reading is very important along with book as to be the issue. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your personal teacher or lecturer. You discover good news or update with regards to something by book. Numerous books that can you take to be your object. One of them is Hidden Bodies: A Novel.

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