The Last Thing He Told Me

Author: Laura Dave

Laura Dave was born in New York City and grew up in Scarsdale, New York. Her interest in writing began when she was in elementary school. Dave graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1999, where she received a B.A. in English. She has an MFA from the University of Virginia's creative writing program. She received several awards for her writing including the AWP Intro Award in Short Fiction. Following graduate school, Dave worked as a freelance journalist for ESPN.

Dave's fiction and essays have been published in *The New York Times, The New York Observer*, ESPN, *Redbook*, and *The Huffington Post*. She most often writes about relationships, family, infidelity, and marriage. She has appeared on CBS's *The Early Show*, Fox News Channel's *Fox & Friends* and NPR's *All Things Considered*. In 2008, *Cosmopolitan* named her a "Fun and Fearless Phenom of the Year".

Dave's 8th novel, *The First Time I Saw Him*, will be published in January 2026. It is the sequel to *The Last Thing He Told Me*.

Dave is married to screenwriter Josh Singer. They reside in Los Angeles.

Learn more about Laura Dave

Interview with Laura Dave: interview.

Laura Dave talks about the book: book interview

Interview with Laura Dave about the sequel: sequel

Other Books by Author

- *London Is The Best City In America* (2006)
- *The Divorce Party* (2008)
- *The First Husband* (2011)
- *Eight Hundred Grapes* (2015)
- *Hello, Sunshine* (2017)
- *The Last Thing He Told Me* (2021)
- *The Night We Lost Him* (2024)

Learn more about Silicon Valley

- *Palo Alto: A History of California, Capitalism, and the World* by Malcom Harris
- *Uncanny Valley: a memoir* by Anna Wiener
- *The Entire History of Silicon Valley* by John Coogan
- YouTube Silicon Valley

Other books recommended by Burbank Public Library staff:

Mysteries with unreliable spouses or family secrets:

- *Gone Girl* by Gillian Glynn. Nick's wife Amy suddenly disappears. The police immediately suspect Nick. Amy's friends reveal that she was afraid of him, that she kept secrets from him. He swears it isn't true. A police examination of his computer shows strange searches. He says they aren't his. And then there are the persistent calls on his mobile phone. So what really did happen to Nick's beautiful wife?
- *Never Have I Ever* by Joshilyn Jackson. Amy's sweet, uncomplicated life begins to unravel when a newcomer lures Amy's bookclub into a game of spilling secrets. Everyone thinks it's naughty, harmless fun. Only Amy knows better.
- *The Soulmate* by Sally Hepworth. Gabe and Pippa's dream home is set above tall cliffs have become a popular spot for people to end their lives. Night after night Gabe comes to their rescue, literally talking them off the ledge. Until he doesn't. When Pippa discovers Gabe knew the victim, the questions spiral.
- *The Dry: a novel* by Jane Harper. After getting a note demanding his presence, Federal Agent Aaron Falk arrives in his hometown for the first time in decades to attend the funeral of his best friend, Luke. Twenty years ago, when Falk was accused of murder, Luke was his alibi. But now more than one person knows they didn't tell the truth back then, and Luke is dead.

Discussion Questions for *The Last Thing He Told Me*:

1. Consider the quotes that open each part of the book. What connects them? What relation do they have to each part of the story?
2. Consider the choice of narrator. How does the narrator shape our understanding of the contours of this story? How might the book be different if the narration switched off between Bailey and Hannah? Or even added in chapters from Owen?
3. In the prologue of the book, Hannah recalls that on their second date, Owen grilled her about the "could-have-been boys" of her past, "the men I'd left behind, the men who had left me." (1) In what ways is Owen one of those "could-have-been boys"?
4. Discuss the message that Owen sends to Hannah before he disappears. What does Owen mean by "Protect her"? How does Hannah interpret Owen's request? How would a different message have changed Owen's intent and Hannah's actions?
5. We learn early on that Hannah's mother left her when she was young. How is this similar to and different from the absence of Bailey's mother? How does it compare to the way Owen leaves Hannah and Bailey?
6. When Hannah picks Bailey up from school the day Owen disappears, Bailey comes out with "a needy look on her face that I don't recognize." (22) This is the first of the small but pivotal moments that transform Hannah and Bailey's relationship. What are some of the other small moments in which they rely on each other?
7. In Austin, Hannah tells Bailey that she's trying to protect her, to which Bailey responds, "But you can't. That's the thing. No one can protect me from this. So how about you agree to be the person who tells me the truth?" (112) What's the relationship between the truth and protecting those we love? Can we do both or are they mutually exclusive?
8. Hannah realizes that Owen isn't running for just any reason, but that "he's running from something he's terrified of." (150) Did you have any theories about what Owen was running from, and did the real answer surprise you? What are some things that might make you drop everything and run the same way Owen did?
9. How would you feel if you were asked to take care of someone else's child? In what circumstances might you say yes, or no? Owen placed immense trust in Hannah's making a specific decision—was it, ultimately, warranted? Was it fair to even ask her?
10. Toward the end of the book, Hannah thinks, "This is the thing about good and evil. They aren't so far apart—and they often start from the same valiant place of wanting something to be different." (266) As a group, discuss. Do you agree or disagree? Can you think of any historical examples of good and evil being closer than we would think?