

Evil Eye

Harper Perennial

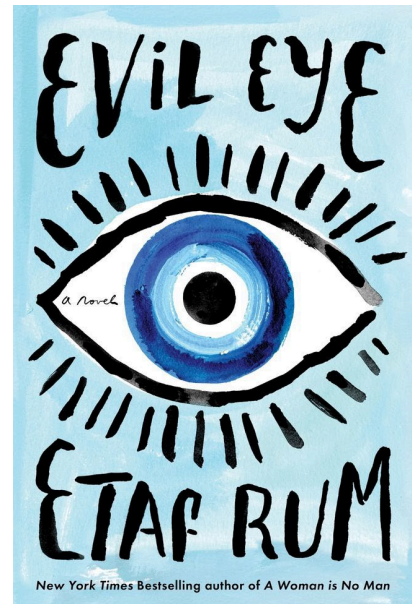
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ISBN: 9780062987914

Introduction

The acclaimed *New York Times* bestselling author of *A Woman Is No Man* returns with a striking exploration of the expectations of a Palestinian-American woman, the meaning of a fulfilling life, and the ways our unresolved pasts affect our presents.

"After Yara is placed on probation at work for fighting with a racist coworker, her Palestinian mother claims the provocation and all that's come after were the result of a family curse. While Yara doesn't believe in old superstitions, she finds herself unpacking her strict, often volatile childhood growing up in Brooklyn, looking for clues as to why she feels so unfulfilled in a life her mother could only dream of. Etaf Rum's follow-up to her 2019 debut, *A Woman Is No Man*, is a complicated mother-daughter drama that looks at the lasting effects of intergenerational trauma and what it takes to break the cycle of abuse." —*Time* magazine, "The Most Anticipated Books of the Year"



Questions for Discussion

1. How do Yara's relationships with her family members (especially Fadi and Baba) shape her actions and emotional state throughout the novel?
2. In what ways do the generational differences between Yara and her parents influence their interactions and understanding of each other?
3. How does immigration play a role in shaping the characters' lives and their perceptions of freedom and constraint?
4. Yara states "I wanted to be an individual, but was always seen through the prism of my family." In what ways does Yara struggle with establishing her own identity within her family and culture?
5. How do Yara's memories of her childhood in Palestine affect her present-day life in the United States? How does Yara's emotional journey and growth parallel her physical journey to Palestine?
6. In what ways does Yara struggle with traditional gender roles, and how does this affect her pursuit of autonomy and fulfillment? How are the different female characters in the novel portrayed in terms of their strength, resilience, and agency?

7. What are your thoughts on Fadi's character arc? Does he experience any significant change by the end of the novel? How does Fadi's attitude and behavior contribute to the strain in his marriage with Yara?
8. Discuss the significance of Silas's friendship with Yara. How does it impact her views on her own life and choices? How does the introspective narrative style enhance our understanding of Yara's character and her struggles?
9. Discuss the significance of food in the novel, particularly in scenes involving Yara's interactions with her family and friends. How does food serve as a symbol of cultural identity and connection?
10. The author uses art as a means for Yara to express her emotions and assert her individuality. How does this creative outlet help Yara in her journey towards autonomy and self-discovery? What other moments or actions demonstrate Yara's desire for independence and control over her own life?
11. The author explores themes of mental health and therapy through William's character as well. Compare and contrast his experiences with Yara's, and discuss their impact on each other. How does William's approach to counseling differ from traditional Arab cultural norms? Do you think his methods are effective for Yara?