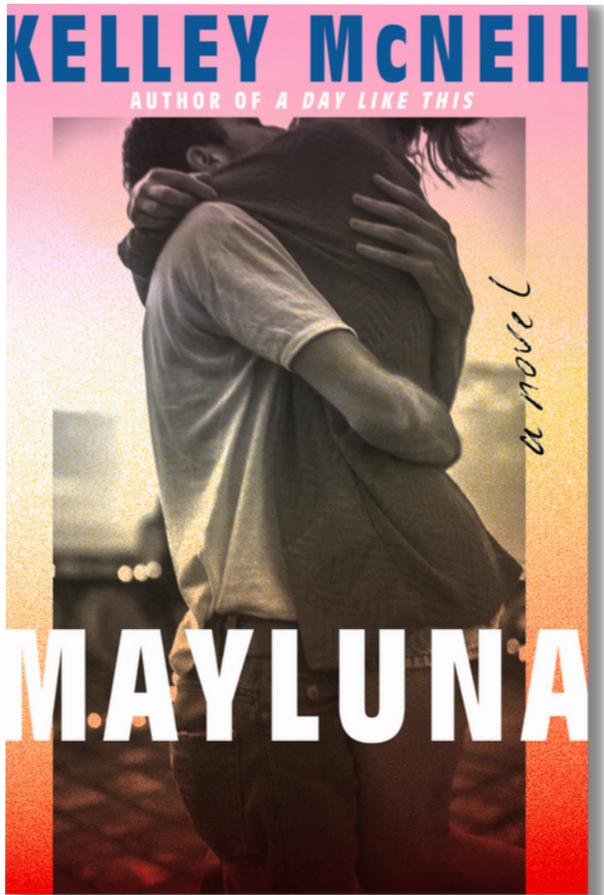


MAYLUNA

Backstage Pass
Book Club Kit



A legendary band, an iconic lead singer, and their mysterious connection to a woman whose love helped create the music of a generation.



TO INVITE KELLEY TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR BOOK CLUB (IN-PERSON OR ZOOM) PLEASE SUBMIT A REQUEST WITH DETAILS VIA THE CONTACT FORM ON KELLEY'S WEBSITE

KELLEY McNEIL

A LETTER FROM KELLEY



Dear Book Club Readers,

About a decade ago, I was on a long afternoon drive when a song popped on the radio. In the span of those four minutes, words and characters and a complete story began to flow into my mind from the mysterious place where these things come from. I immediately went home, started writing, and a few months later, Carter and Evie's epic love story was born. In the years that followed, I often set their story aside, working on other projects, including *A Day Like This*, the book that became my debut. But Carter, Evie, and the band, never left my brain or my heart, and I didn't want to let it go. And so now here we are... *Mayluna*. Timing, as always, is a magical thing.

Music has been a major part of my life since childhood, and (much like writing) I often used it as a sort of escapism. I became fascinated by live music during my teen years, and knew I wanted to work in the music industry, and more specifically, in the concert industry, which is what I went on to do for a about a decade. I'd be working backstage at these massive concerts and it felt like the electricity of an impending thunderstorm; just this incredible amount of energy from thousands of fans excited to see the musicians they love. I also remember the musicians themselves, existing and living in their own kind of universe, in ways that felt like two different people - offstage and on.

I WANTED TO CAPTURE THOSE FEELINGS WHILE ALSO WRITING A LOVE STORY THAT FELT LIKE A SONG... THE KIND THAT MAKES YOU FEEL ELATION AND SADNESS ALL IN ONE, TRANSPORTING YOU TO A MAGICAL TIME IN YOUR LIFE.

I read a lot of nonfiction in my world, always curious, and I once came upon the true story of a strange astronomical event that took place in the 1700s, which inspired Carter and Evie's unusual connection, centuries later, weaving together the life of a 1990s English alternative rock band, alongside 17th century mathematic and astronomical philosophies, and the works of Pythagoras and Kepler. I studied books about fate and our connection to the universe. I also returned to the music film documentaries I loved, liked Radiohead's *Meeting People is Easy* and others, placing Evie in that role alongside the band that becomes her family.

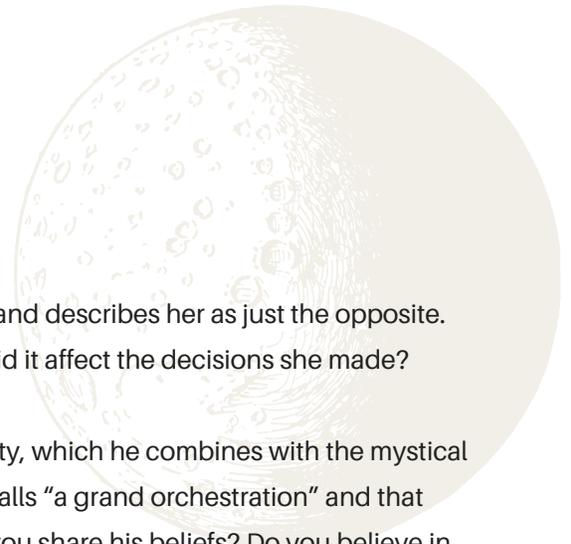
The result is a mysterious story of heartache and healing, the interwoven topics of fate, magic, science, and an epic love story that crosses time and years - all set in the backstage world of music. A most unusual combination, I know. But I hope you love it as much as I have loved the journey of writing it. »♡~

Wishing you many happy moons,

Kelley



Topics for Discussion



Evie frequently describes herself as “invisible” and “forgettable,” while the band describes her as just the opposite. How do you think Evie’s childhood affected the way she saw herself? How did it affect the decisions she made?

Carter studied philosophy and mathematics and astronomy while at university, which he combines with the mystical beliefs that everything and everyone is interconnected and part of what he calls “a grand orchestration” and that “there are things at work in this universe we can’t begin to understand.” Do you share his beliefs? Do you believe in coincidence?

The author has stated in interviews that in an earlier draft of the book, the story was told entirely through Evie’s perspective, and that she later decided to revise the book to include Carter and band’s point of view, as well. How did this change affect the story?

Music is woven into this story, much like it is through our memories and experiences in life. What role has music played in your life? Is there a particular song or artist that allows you to “time travel” to another age?

Evie says: “Sometimes you have to take the thing that makes you the saddest and learn to turn it into a superpower.” What do you think she means by this?

Kate and Evie...Carter, Tommy, and Alex...the childhood friendship of Evie and Steve...The idea of powerful friendships and “found family” is one of the themes of this book. What impact do these friendships have on the characters?

Carter comes to peace with the decisions Evie made and for the secret she kept, believing that it was ultimately for the betterment of all. Meant to be. What did you think about Evie’s initial decision to keep the pregnancy a secret? Do you believe she deserved this forgiveness and understanding?

This book is told using an unconventional structure that includes a dual-timeline and a combination of oral history, memories, and journalistic writing. Why do you think the author chose to structure the story this way? How did it affect your reading experience?

*An ancient road down we'll go
You and I
The moon that to the water led
A dance along the razor's edge
With tangled hands in secret lands
You and I*

KELLEY MCNEIL

MAY LUNA

Topics for Discussion

One of the themes of the story is that children never fully know who their parents are, which is something that haunts Evie. By the end, she begins to wonder if perhaps it's better for children to see their parents for who they really are, instead of working so hard to set a perfect example. What do you think?

Carter had a strained and troubled childhood that affected his views on being a parent. How do you think his relationships with his mother and father affected the kind of man he became and his approach to his relationship with Evie?

Alex and Carter have a complicated past that is illustrated in the argument they have at the beach house. Given Carter's history, do you think Alex was right to be concerned? How did you feel about Alex and Evie's connection by the end?

Evie and Carter believe that "simply repeating one day after the next is the enemy of a fulfilling life," and that new experiences act as a "Bookmark. A highlighted section in the pages of your life." What do you think they mean by this?

Evie says that she had "The mating of souls with one man, and a lifetime of companionship with another." What do you think about her idea that there are different types of romantic love?

In the aftermath, Steve and Evie decide that it would be better to continue keeping the secret from Lainey to spare her unnecessary heartache. Do you agree with their decision?

The book includes a story about the moon appearing translucent instead of solid, with a star shining behind it. This was based on true accounts reported to the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England in the 1700s. What do you think about this? Any possible explanations?

How did you react to the ending? Did you begin to suspect at any point? Were you surprised when you realized Carter and Evie were telling the stories in different times and that everything in the story wasn't quite how it seemed?

KELLEY MCNEIL

*There was at once
an appearance of light
Above the cloud with its shadow
beyond the pale of night
You and i*

MAY LUNA

KELLEY MCNEIL

THE PLAYLIST

available on Spotify

THE MUSIC OF THEIR FANS - INSPIRED BY THEIR STORY

Forever Young	<i>Lily Kershaw</i>	Go Your Own Way	<i>Lissie</i>
The Ghost In You	<i>The Psychedelic Furs</i>	Story of My Life	<i>Social Distortion</i>
It's Alright, It's OK	<i>Primal Scream</i>	Ordinary World	<i>Joy Williams</i>
Got You (Where I Want You)	<i>The Flys</i>	Into Dust	<i>Mazzy Star</i>
The Scientist	<i>Coldplay</i>	There's A Place	<i>Roo Panes</i>
I Wanna Get Lost With You	<i>Stereophonics</i>	Teardrop	<i>Massive Attack</i>
American Girl	<i>Tom Petty</i>	Rewind	<i>Stereophonics</i>
Fallingforyou	<i>The 1975</i>	Bitter Sweet Symphony	<i>The Verve</i>
Underwater Love	<i>Smoke City</i>	With or Without You	<i>Seawaves</i>
Lucky Man	<i>The Verve</i>	In This Life	<i>Chantal Kreviazuk</i>
Fake Plastic Trees	<i>Radiohead</i>	Run	<i>Snow Patrol</i>
Fix You	<i>Canyon City</i>	Gravity	<i>Coldplay</i>
London Calling	<i>The Clash</i>	Soft Dark Nothing	<i>Lily Kershaw</i>
Just Like Honey	<i>The Jesus and Mary Chain</i>	Fields of Gold	<i>Eva Cassidy</i>
Chasing Cars	<i>Tommy Profitt, Fleurie</i>	By My Side	<i>The Paper Kites</i>

