



BOOK CLUB NOTES

Just Watch Me by Lior Torenberg

Introduction

Dell Danvers is at the end of her rope. She's unemployed and living in a cramped studio apartment with debilitating stomach pain and no way to pay for her comatose sister's care. Impulsively, she creates an internet persona and begins to livestream every moment of her life. Her fame skyrockets when she discovers a knack for eating spicy peppers on camera. As her online community grows, so does her bank account, and all the solutions to her problems seem to be within reach. But when an internet troll starts digging into her real life, Dell is forced to reckon with her actions and confront the gap between her online presence and who she really is.

Topics & Questions for Discussion

1. Dell decides to livestream herself for a week straight. Do you use social media? How do you feel about sharing your life online?
2. How is Dell's living situation a metaphor for her mental state? Have you lived in a truly horrendous apartment?
3. Discuss Lee and Dell's relationship. Does Lee enable Dell? Does Dell take advantage of Lee?
4. Along her livestream journey, Dell stumbles into many online communities, like the hot sauce community and the plant propagation community. Are you a member of any niche communities? How do these forums allow you to learn more about a topic?
5. Dell's first challenge is to eat five jalapeño peppers. Eating spicy food becomes her brand as a streamer, and soon she's entering a world record contest! Do you eat spicy food? Would you ever try a habanero? What about a Carolina Reaper?

6. At what point did you realize Dell might not be telling the truth about her sister?
7. Humor and grief work in tandem throughout the novel. To what effect? Choose a scene where this occurs and discuss.
8. Revisit Dell's trip to the hospital on Friday. Did her actions cross a line for you, or do you think her hospital visit was part of her healing process? What did you think of her interaction with Dr. Dole?
9. Do you think Casper is the villain in the story or is he doing what he thinks is morally correct?
10. Discuss how you felt when you learned what happened to Daisy. Do you think Dell was to blame?
11. Dell's recurring stomach issues are an ongoing source of discomfort for her. They culminate in a perforated ulcer, emergency surgery, and a reunion with her mother. Does this feel like the natural, inevitable conclusion to Dell's story?
12. We get glimpses of Dell's relationship with her mother through flashbacks, clipped text messages, emotional voicemails, and a coffee meetup. What did you think about the dynamic between Dell and her mom?
13. Early in the novel Dell believes she has a pepper seed stuck in her ear. As the book progresses, the seed grows into a marigold and Dell is finally able to remove it from her ear. What do you think this symbolizes?
14. Discuss the title of the novel, *Just Watch Me*. Is it a plea or a threat? Did the meaning evolve as you read the book?

Enhance Your Book Club:

1. Chilli peppers are a big part of *Just Watch Me*. Consider including hot peppers, hot sauce, or salsa at your book club to spice up your discussions!
2. Choose a livestream on a topic you enjoy and join the conversation in the comments section. Share your experience with the group!
3. Discuss other books with unreliable narrators and how they affect the structure of the story.

