



Book Club Set

# The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo

By Taylor Jenkins Reid

## About the Author

Taylor Jenkins Reid is the author of the New York Times Bestselling novels *Carrie Soto Is Back*, *Malibu Rising*, *Daisy Jones and The Six* and *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, as well as *One True Loves*, *Maybe in Another Life*, *After I Do*, and *Forever, Interrupted*. Her books have been chosen by Reese's Book Club, Read with Jenna, Indie Next, Best of Amazon, and Book of the Month. Her novel, *Daisy Jones and The Six*, is now a limited series on Amazon Prime. She lives in Los Angeles.



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## About the Book



Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life.

When she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one in the journalism community is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now? Monique is not exactly on top of the world. Her husband, David, has left her, and her career has stagnated. Regardless of why Evelyn has chosen her to write her biography, Monique is determined to use this opportunity to jump start her career. Summoned to Evelyn's Upper East Side apartment, Monique listens as Evelyn unfurls her story: from making her way to Los Angeles in the 1950s to her decision to leave business in the late 80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way. As Evelyn's life unfolds - revealing a ruthless ambition, an unexpected friendship, and a great forbidden love - Monique begins to feel a very real connection to the actress. But as Evelyn's story catches up with the present, it becomes clear that her life intersects with Monique's own in a tragic and irreversible way.

Written with Reid's signature talent for "creating complex, likable characters" (*Real simple*), this is a fascinating journey through the splendor of Old Hollywood into the harsh realities of the present day as two women struggle with what it means - and what it takes - to face the truth.

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## Discussion Questions



1. Of the seven husbands, who was your favorite, and why? Who surprised you the most?
2. Monique notes that hearing Evelyn Hugo's life story has inspired her to carry herself differently than she would have before. In what ways does Monique grow over the course of the novel? Discuss whether Evelyn also changes by the end of her time with Monique, and if so, what spurs this evolution.
3. On page 147, Monique says, "I have to 'Evelyn Hugo' Evelyn Hugo." What does it mean to "Evelyn Hugo"? Can you think of a time when you might be tempted to "Evelyn Hugo"?
4. Did you trust Evelyn to be a reliable narrator as you were reading? Why, or why not? Did your opinion on this change at all by the conclusion, and if so, why?
5. If you could meet and interview one celebrity at the end of their life, who would it be? What would you ask them?
6. Evelyn offers some firm words of wisdom throughout her recounting of her life, such as "Be wary of men with something to prove" (p. 77), "Never let anyone make you feel ordinary" (p. 208), and "It is OK to grovel for something you really want" (p.192). What is your favorite piece of advice from Evelyn? Were there any assertions you strongly disagreed with?
7. What role do the news, tabloid, and blog articles interspersed throughout the book serve in the narrative? What, if anything, do we learn about Evelyn's relationship to the outside world from them?
8. Several times, Evelyn mentions having cosmetic surgery. What was your reaction to this? How do these decisions jibe with the value system and ethical code that she seems to live by? Why do you think Evelyn continues to dye her hair at the end of her life?

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from: <https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Seven-Husbands-of-Evelyn-Hugo/Taylor-Jenkins-Reid/9781501161933#reading-group-guide-content>

## Author Interview



**The strength of your novel is the insider's view of Hollywood. What did you do to cultivate the background knowledge?**

You know, it's funny. I did a lot of research before I started writing, including reading a lot of Hollywood biographies. But I really didn't have a hard time creating the world. And it wasn't until I was done with the first draft that it hit me that my film degree might have helped. That's how entrenched in Hollywood lore I've always been, that I *forgot I have a degree in it*.

I was obsessed with Hollywood from the time I was a kid. I always knew I wanted to live in Los Angeles. I worked in feature film casting right out of college and spent a lot of time working with actors, directors, and producers. And then I realized my true heart was in literature, and I shifted course. But all of that Hollywood love went into this book.

**Many readers could draw parallels to Elizabeth Taylor. Did she play a role in this?**

You can't write about an iconic Hollywood star of the sixties without bumping up against Elizabeth Taylor. And, obviously, the many marriages is a very striking thing Evelyn and Liz have in common. I tried to craft a realistic portrayal of a deeply glamorous and scandalous woman. And when you do that, you're bound to hit some of the same beats as the great Elizabeth Taylor.

**Which of the husbands did you enjoy writing about the most and why?**

I loved writing Evelyn's elopement with crooner Mick Riva. It was the most satisfying work of my life this far. It reveals a great deal of Evelyn and her inner life. But that doesn't mean he's the one I actually cared for the most. The husband Evelyn loves the most is the one I love the most, too.

**What price would you pay for fame?**

Oh, geez. I think you'd have to pay me. When I was a kid, all I ever wanted was to be famous. Now, I shudder at the idea of having to always look good in case someone snaps a photo. I much prefer to go to Target in my sweatpants anonymously, thank you very much. That's why writing about famous people is so satisfying for me. It allows me to indulge in all of the glamour without having to be glamorous myself.

**What message do you hope the reader takes away from this book?**

There are so many different things going on in this book that it's hard for me to choose. But if I have to boil it all down, I think it's this: Ladies, go on, get yours

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[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-seven-husbands-of-evelyn-hugo-a-q-a-with-taylor\\_b\\_59232576e4b07617ae4cbe61](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-seven-husbands-of-evelyn-hugo-a-q-a-with-taylor_b_59232576e4b07617ae4cbe61)

## Other Links and Resources



- The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo Movie: All About the Highly Anticipated Adaptation:  
<https://people.com/seven-husbands-of-evelyn-hugo-movie-everything-to-know-7488958>
- Everything You Need to Know About 'The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo' The bestselling novel by Taylor Jenkins Reid is getting a film adaptation.  
<https://www.netflix.com/tudum/articles/the-seven-husbands-of-evelyn-hugo-movie-adaptation>
- Other books by the author: <https://taylorjenkinsreid.com/books/>
- Daisy Jones & The Six by Taylor Jenkins Reid:  
<https://taylorjenkinsreid.com/books/daisy-jones-and-the-six/>
- 
- Daisy Jones & The Six TV show: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8749198/>

## Share your thoughts with other readers!



DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOOK CLUB: \_\_\_\_\_

BOOK TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

As a group we rated this book:

1	2	3	4	5
Ugh!		It was OK...		Loved it!

Would we recommend this book to other book clubs?

Yes      No      Undecided

Why/why not?

Our discussion: