



## Plan B: A Novel

By Jonathan Tropper

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### Plan B: A Novel By Jonathan Tropper

The heartwarming debut novel by the New York Times bestselling author of *This is Where I Leave You* and *One Last Thing Before I Go*.

Turning thirty was never supposed to be like this. Ten years ago, Ben, Lindsey, Chuck, Alison, and Jack graduated from New York University and went out into the world, fresh-faced and full of dreams for the future. But now Ben's getting a divorce; Lindsey's unemployed; Alison and Chuck seem stuck in ruts of their own making; and Jack is getting more publicity for his cocaine addiction than his multimillion-dollar Hollywood successes.

Suddenly, turning thirty-- past the age their parents were when they were born, older than every current star athlete or pop music sensation-- seems to be both more meaningful and less than they'd imagined ten years ago.

*Plan B*, Jonathan Tropper's wonderful debut novel, is about more than friendship, love, celebrity, addiction, kidnapping, or even turning thirty-- it's a heartfelt comic riff on what it means to be an adult against your will, to be single when you thought you'd have a family, to discover you are not, in fact, immortal, and to learn that *Star Wars* is as good a life lesson today as it was when you were six years old.

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

The title of Tropper's debut novel refers to the madcap plot at its center, and also to one of the book's primary themes--that life rarely works according to plan. Nobody knows this better than Ben, the narrator, who wants to be a novelist, but finds himself at age 30 stuck in a low-level publishing job in New York City, on the cusp of a sad and bloodless divorce, and envious of his closest college friends: Lindsey, the spirited ex-girlfriend who's always followed her heart; attorney Alison; surgeon Chuck; and movie star Jack Shaw, who earns \$13 million a picture. But Jack, it turns out, is also a cocaine addict whose drug-fueled escapades are increasingly finding their way into the tabloids. When an intervention attempt fails, his friends turn to Plan B: they kidnap Jack and keep him captive in the Catskills until he shakes his habit for good. Of course, holding a mega-celebrity against his will is no simple matter, and complications abound. Jack turns violent, then vanishes, the local-yokel sheriff's department starts poking around and soon enough the FBI and the media are involved. Meanwhile, the remaining friends are forging new bonds (platonic and otherwise) and confronting encroaching fears of aging. Despite Ben's exaggerated Gen-X voice--by turns jaded and facile, glib and bleak--the picaresque plot is diverting in a sitcom kind of way. The characters are unlikely as friends but entertaining as Friends, and Tropper keeps the story moving at a brisk pace with crackling TV dialogue.

Agent, Simon Lipskar.

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#### From Library Journal

The background music is decidedly not Marvin Gaye but the tone is definitely *The Big Chill*. Four college friends launch an unusual reunion in New York City when they kidnap a drug-addicted friend. The plan, resorted to when Plan A failed, is to get their good friend and now movie star Jack Shaw to come clean long enough to get his life back on track. Given that life is not exactly on track for any of them, it is no surprise when things go awry. Coming together--and almost falling apart--give each of them a chance to recapture or let go of dreams and move on. There is Chuck, comic relief and surgeon-to-be; Alison, bright young lawyer trapped in unrequited love; Lindsey, former teacher, now queen of the temps; and Ben, the narrator, a would-be-writer without a story. Funny, sweet, and sometimes bitter, this first novel should be a popular read among twentysomethings about to turn 30. Recommended for public libraries.

-Jan Blodgett, Davidson Coll. Lib., NC

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#### From Booklist

If *The Big Chill* had Gen X angst, you would probably have something like *Plan B*. It is the story of five friends from college who are turning 30 and struggling with what it means to be an adult. Ben, the narrator, is a frustrated writer and recent divorcee; Lindsey, unemployed and afraid of commitment; Chuck, a doctor and unapologetic womanizer; and Alison, a lawyer and unrequitedly in love with Jack, a major movie star and cocaine addict. Afraid that Jack has hit bottom with his drug habit, Ben and his friends decide to help. Plan A is an intervention, and when that fails, they go to Plan B--kidnap Jack and hole up in a cabin in the woods until he goes through withdrawal. Everything goes as planned until Jack escapes. However, Jack's addiction is just a vehicle for Tropper in this debut novel to explore the group's personal demons, failings, and relationships. Moreover, he does it with wit, insight, and a lot of fun cultural references to the '80s.

Carolyn Kubisz

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

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#### **Crystal Sanchez:**

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