



The Deepest Lake

Andromeda Romano-Lax

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A mother meant to be in mourning chases her daughter's shadow to Guatemala, determined to uncover the truth, in Andromeda Romano-Lax's electrifying thriller *The Deepest Lake*.

Jules, just out of college and unsure of her perfect next step, has a habit of misunderstanding her mother, Rose. Rose doesn't seem to get angry, and Jules presumes that this translates to no passion. What Jules knows for certain is that she doesn't want to be like that. Thus, she becomes a wanderer, traveling Central America in search of her story, eschewing comforts and pursuing adventures.

But sometimes our mothers are right. Jules realizes this too late at her favorite writer, Eva's, lakeside writing retreat. Designed to lure wealthy aspiring memoirists, it ensnares Jules with its promise too. But while working as Eva's assistant, she becomes suspicious of the workshop's methods and curious about where the money goes. By the time Eva makes an impossible request of Jules, she's ready to shake the illusion off: "I want out of this tuk-tuk." Instead, she's reported missing and is presumed lost in the fathomless depths of the volcano-encircled lake.

Rose, disbelieving, jumps past the official report, signing up for Eva's workshop herself under a pseudonym. Instead of nurturing, she finds the retreat to be cultish, draining, and fearsome. And she does not meet her daughter's favorite writer—a genius worth emulating—so much as she meets the true Eva: a woman who's secured her fortune via deception, who knows the high cost of maintaining a glittering public image, and who will do anything to protect the improbable next act that she's writing for herself.

In the harrowing thriller *The Deepest Lake*, a strained but powerful mother-daughter bond may be the only force strong enough to defeat an opportunistic writer's dark schemes.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (May / June 2024)

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