



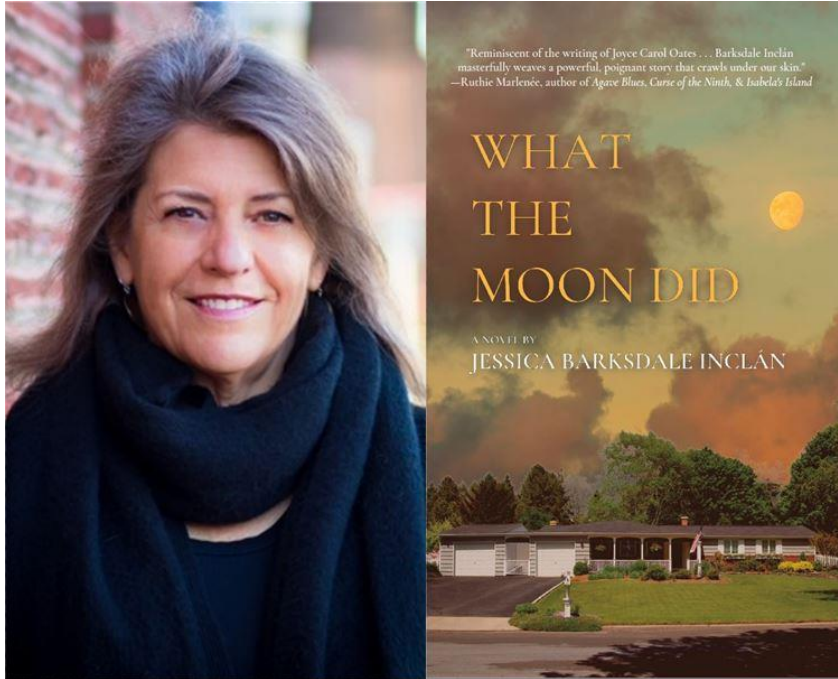
PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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WHAT THE MOON DID

A novel by Jessica Barksdale Inclán

Flexible Press

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\$18, 326 pages

“What the Moon Did is a beautiful piece of writing, from start to finish. ... [Jessica Barksdale Inclán] masterfully weaves compassion and strength into characters we know to be monsters, sows weakness and fear into those we so deeply want to love.”—Jenny Neves, author of Chainsaws and Cherry Burls and Freedom Farm

No matter how we try to hide our past, truth finds its way to the surface, sometimes in devastating ways.

Mary Jo Johnson has a secret.

In the summer of 1949, twelve-year-old Mary Jo is changed forever. Not understanding why, she suddenly has the attention of one of her parents’ friends, Roger Bradfield, who notices things about Mary Jo no one else ever has. In Roger’s gaze, she is special, wonderful, perfect.

But for a twelve-year-old girl, “consent” is a foreign concept, especially when it comes to a much older and more powerful man. When Mary Jo becomes pregnant, her parents protect Roger, not to mention their status in the town, and—they hope—Mary Jo’s future. Mary Jo is sent away to live with her grandmother for a time as they spin a story that will blanket all their lives with a lie.

That summer reaches into the decades as Mary Jo moves forward into her own life. Mary Jo gets married, has more children, and obtains the country club membership, nice house, and upper-middle-class trappings promised by her upbringing. But the lie never goes away, affecting not only her but generations to come. At the end, will the truth come out, or will Mary Jo take her trauma to the grave?

Told in alternating points-of view, *What the Moon Did* reveals the wounds that never heal and the effects on Mary Jo, her parents, her siblings, and her children, as well as the others who were shattered by the events of those hot summer months.

A portion of the proceeds from *What the Moon Did* goes to Planned Parenthood, delivering vital reproductive health care, sex education, and information to millions of people worldwide.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jessica Barksdale Inclán is the author of the poetry collection, *Grim Honey*, and the novel *The Play’s the Thing*, both published in 2021. Her other work includes the novels *Her Daughter’s Eyes*, *The Burning Hour*, and *When You Believe*. She teaches novel writing online for UCLA Extension and in the online MFA program for Southern New Hampshire University. She lives in the Pacific Northwest with her husband.

ADVANCE PRAISE FOR WHAT THE MOON DID

“Emotionally gripping and unputdownable, *What the Moon Did* is a sweeping family saga, we’ll not soon forget. At times heart-breaking, at times so infuriating we want to reach in and strangle a few of the characters, but by the end, we’re sobbing and wanting to reach in to hug a couple of them.”

—**Ruthie Marlenée**, author of *Agave Blues*, *Curse of the Ninth* and *Isabela’s Island*

“Jessica Barksdale Inclán’s *What the Moon Did* pulls the reader into a story that ripples outward from a single trauma, exploring each character’s perspective to show how one person’s actions can touch multiple generations and families. Barksdale Inclán’s light touch lets the characters speak—and think—for themselves, showing how social and cultural norms shape our responses to tragedy, and the corrosive effects of shame and secrecy on boys and girls, men and women.”

—**Christina Lynch**, author of *The Italian Party*

“*What the Moon Did* is a masterful telling of a family’s hidden tragedy and the unhealed wounds that long ripple throughout their lives. Inclán reveals each character’s journey with clear-eyed wisdom and empathy, weaving a powerfully real and intimate drama that haunted me after I finished the last page.”

—**Lynn Sheene**, author of *The Last Time I Saw Paris*

Advance copies are available upon request, and Jessica Barksdale Inclán is available for interviews. Contact Flexible Press for more information, or visit <https://www.flexiblepub.com/what-the-moon-did>