



A guide to survival according to horror movies

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Horror movies are created with intentions greater than petrifying you of entering the bathroom solo for weeks, or providing an excuse to play hero as your girlfriend grasps on to you in terror. They aim to convey momentous teachings that your life and death dangerously dangle upon.

Bathrooms

An important take away from horror movies - practicing good hygiene is how you end up dead. Don't shower; you don't know what's waiting inside the shower, you don't know what's waiting when you come out. In fact avoid bathrooms in general. The bathtub inhabits the ghost of some girl whose mother drowned her and the foggy mirror will most definitely threaten to murder you. And if you repeat any phrase multiple times before the mirror, you're just asking for it. Be smart, avoid bathrooms.

Dolls

Don't buy the doll. Don't buy your daughter the doll. If you discover a doll in the closet of your newly purchased house, scorch the doll. Don't accept the ancient doll your grandmother passed onto you. Don't listen to the doll. Don't befriend the doll. Steer clear of dolls.

Camping

There is without question no good reason why anyone should ever go camping. Campfire stories aren't all that amusing when you hear eerie voices outside your tent. It's not a very idyllic date when the faceless man lacerates your girlfriend's finger nails one by one. Even after watching "Friday the 13th," or "Blair Witch Project", if your insides are still tingling for some alfresco experience, pack some holy water and a salt gun along with the muffins in your picnic basket.

The douche

Never belittle the ghost - respect your otherworldly

murderer. The cocky douche always dies the worst death. Resist saying things such as "Cemeteries don't scare me" or "Don't be a chicken, it's just the wind". It's never just the wind. It's your great grandmother's tormented twin seeking vengeance.

Basements and attics

An abandoned eerie locked door isn't an invitation to walk in. Never go looking for your dad's old journal in the attic alone. When the power goes out, always call the electrician. Don't go down the spooky basement or attic holding nothing but a flashlight. That's exactly what the demon wants you to do.

Weapons

The aerosol, your left sandal or your mother's porcelain vase may be apt to exterminate the roach. It's more like salt, holy water and iron rods when you're in company of the paranormal.

Escape route

Learn how to run without falling down at really inappropriate times. It's no time to trip over the chair leg when you're being chased by Jason Voorhees. When being chased, go out the front door and not upstairs. If the ghost doesn't get to you, you'll break a limb falling out the window while fleeing. Then the ghost will definitely get to you.

Kill it twice

In haunted situations, overkilling is never bad. Don't assume it's over. Just when the bloodied beaten protagonist escapes the haunted house and sighs in relief - BAM! Screaming, cursing, crying, blood, death. So kill it twice, or thrice - empty the whole barrel. It's never over at one go, you're not that good.

Horror movies teach you a lot about survival alongside the supernatural. So while you're watching Dabbe 7 in some near future, don't ridicule the protagonist's idiocy. Take notes.

FINALLY A ROAD TRIP WORTH REMEMBERING

BOOK REVIEW

SARAH ANJUM BARI

Travel stories have become a failsafe story-writing hack in recent times - the second cheesiest plot structure next to the main character suffering from cancer. Having been disappointed with *An Abundance of Katherines* after reading *Paper Towns*, or *Hector and the Search for Happiness* after watching *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, I was getting thoroughly sick of the premise. Jojo Moyes' book, *The One Plus One*, was a refreshing exception.

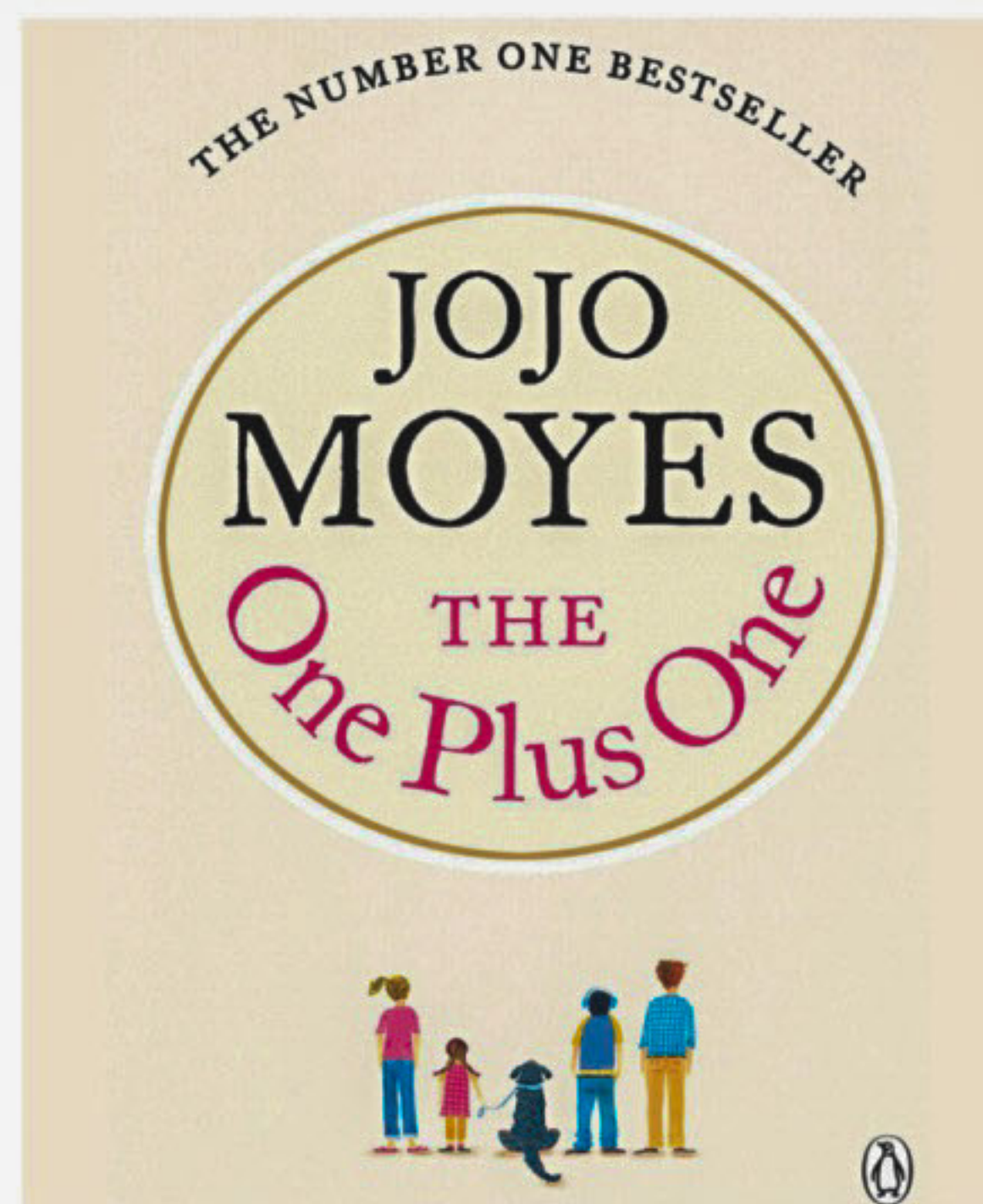
Bringing together an entertaining mix of characters including a 12 year-old math genius with motion sickness, a teenage boy with a flair for writing and eye-makeup, and an affection-craving dog who smells as madly as he jumps around, the book tells the story of struggling divorcee Jess Thomas and knee-deep in professional fiasco Ed Nicholls.

Abandoned by her husband, Jess is left to raise Nicky, the product of her husband's affair, who she comes to love as dearly as her own daughter Tanzie. They

are knee-deep in every kind of financial struggle imaginable and desperate for a way to reach a Math Olympiad taking place in Scotland with no means of transport. Enter Ed Nicholls, the until-recently successful tech-expert with his own sea of troubles and a very comfortable Audi. The characters unite in an intense road trip from London to Scotland. Naturally, love happens.

It may sound cheesy on paper, but fans of *Me Before You* are familiar with Jojo Moyes' knack for taking a cliché and painting it in colours of optimism. She reminds us that some problems, such as an illness in *Me Before You*, or financial struggles, difficult teenagers, and disappointing relationships in this case, are clichéd for a reason - because they plague so many lives so often.

It was fun to watch two families obviously meant to be together finding their way to each other - like witnessing the most satisfying game of Tetris. But this book felt especially alive, even more so than *Me Before You* at times, because it so



realistically portrayed flawed, relatable characters, and their inner battles between principles versus life's hurdles. It shows how an intricate web of very minor choices, made against one's better judgment in truly desperate circumstances, can

coalesce to form disasters in the most unexpected of ways. Even more jarring were the depictions of two eccentric yet innocent children being bullied to the points of extreme, and the intense emotional and physical pain it causes.

Road trips are often thought of as a form of escapism, and these characters certainly followed in that route. But seldom did the book get boring, courtesy of the unexpected twists in events and the emotional roller coaster ride they entailed. Unlike most other stories that use larger-than-life incidents as the catalyst for climax in characters' psychological journeys, *The One Plus One* shows how optimism, forgiveness, and sense of humour are sometimes all it takes to battle the worst of circumstances. That, and wearing flip-flops in winter in anticipation of spring.

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