

Daring and Vulnerable Debut Novel

Dedicated to any woman who has left behind who she used to be...

Izzy in El Mareo by Danielle Ledezma

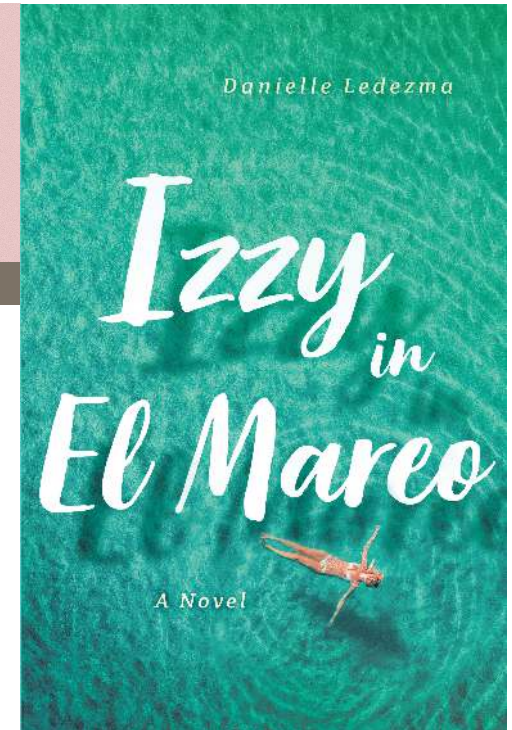
Izzy's trying to cope with life, love, and loneliness, but her fast life in Houston is rapidly spinning out of control.

So when the twenty-three-year-old American takes a job at an international resort in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, she hopes her old life is behind her at last—and with it, all the self-doubts and insecurities that have plagued her since young adulthood. She's wondering if she'll be able to survive in a new job in a strange country, but for now, the city's breathtaking ocean views by day and sexy club scenes by night look like paradise.

Happy and energized by the unfamiliar sights and sounds of her surroundings, Izzy sets out to prove herself in the Spanish-speaking office. Soon she's making strides at work, hanging with new acquaintances, and all the while gaining confidence as she successfully navigates the local culture (and the sexy Latin men in it).

But soon the lines start to blur in paradise. Izzy misses her family and her boyfriend back home; she senses her new friends may be ignoring her; and when she returns from travels for work, she feels insecure and out of place. Her self-esteem takes a hit. Confusion and disorientation set in. Returning to old habits—drinking, partying hard, and looking for love with strangers—Izzy is feeling more alone than ever. When an office gaffe threatens to ruin her much-anticipated trip home for Christmas, Izzy is forced to take stock: Was the whole move to Mexico a mistake? Can she find a way to get her career—and her *life*—back on track?

This poignant, funny, and edgy coming-of-age story shows us that there's strength in being vulnerable, it's all right not to be perfect, and most of all, we have to learn to love ourselves before we can truly love anyone else.



BOOK DETAILS

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About the Author

Danielle Ledezma grew up in San Antonio, Texas, and later moved to Austin where she attended and graduated from The University of Texas with a BS in Public Relations and a concentration in Spanish. After graduation, she moved to Houston for a job in the hospitality industry. When an opportunity arose for an exciting new career move to tropical Mexico, she jumped on it. As a young woman in a new world, Danielle realized that moving away from her personal problems did not solve them. As this reality sank in, Danielle's eyes were opened to the fact that she was surrounded by paradise, and alone. With time and introspection, she was inspired to journal about her experiences and began to learn and grow, and subsequently her journal entries became the basis of the story in her debut novel, Izzy in El Mareo. After her time working in Mexico, an opportunity arose for her to eventually move back home to San Antonio where she met her husband, who encouraged her to write Izzy's story and has supported her through the years it has taken to bring the ideas, struggles, and often awkward or difficult topics to bookshelves everywhere. Danielle embraces any opportunity to discuss her own shortcomings, her choices, and expose herself in order to help others strengthen their self image and self-confidence. She currently lives in San Antonio with her husband and works in sales at a beautiful Hill Country resort.

Talking Points

- Does relocating as a way of starting over help solve problems or just create a new set?
- Izzy got stuck in a certain role with her parents, her boyfriends, and with her supervisor at work. 3 ways to stop being a people pleaser
- Sometimes making friends feels tough. What are some ways to connect with new girlfriends, or stay connected to your old ones?
- 5 ways to explore your new city/country when you move somewhere new for work
- Tips to keep your long distance love relationship strong and how to know when it's just not going to work
- 3 steps women need to take to get what THEY need from a relationship
- How to have friendships full of love and trust when you don't love and trust yourself? Why do some women respond to male attention over protecting female relationships?
- 3 ways to find strength in admitting fear and shame
- Tips to stay creative and follow your dreams while still paying the bills

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