

When Ash spots an ad for Retro during a depressing Instagram scroll—she’s in debt and unemployed; everyone else is evidently thriving—she’s surprised the algorithm sent it her way. She’s heard of recreational time travel, but it’s way out of her budget. Then she sees the caption: *Come away with us! We’re hiring.*

So begins Ash’s life as a Time Travel Agent, leading wealthy tourists on vacations to historical hotspots. She takes bachelorette parties to live out their cowboy-romance fantasies in the Old West; she chaperones “’20s for your twenties” birthday excursions to speakeasies; she smiles politely as rich Wall Street guys give prospecting a shot during the Gold Rush. It’s all thrilling, outrageous, and totally surreal. Bygone America is just a Retro Metro ride away.

Despite Ash’s tendency toward cynicism, she finds herself swept up in her dazzling new job. Sure, Ash isn’t the actress she’d always dreamed she’d be. But isn’t this so much better? It’s like Ash’s life is a movie, complete with an impossible love triangle. How is she supposed to choose between her mysterious office crush and the handsome private eye pursuing her in 1937?

For the first time in years, Ash’s life feels enviable—so she’d really rather not pay attention to the strange things happening to her memory and relationships outside Retro. But as her trips threaten to unravel her real life, she confronts an unsettling truth: “Escaping” into the past was never really an escape at all.

Jessica M. Goldstein is a journalist and humorist whose work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Vulture*, *Marie Claire*, *McSweeney’s*, and more. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, she was born and raised in New Jersey and currently lives in Washington, D.C. *Retro* is her first novel.

Read by Allyson Ryan



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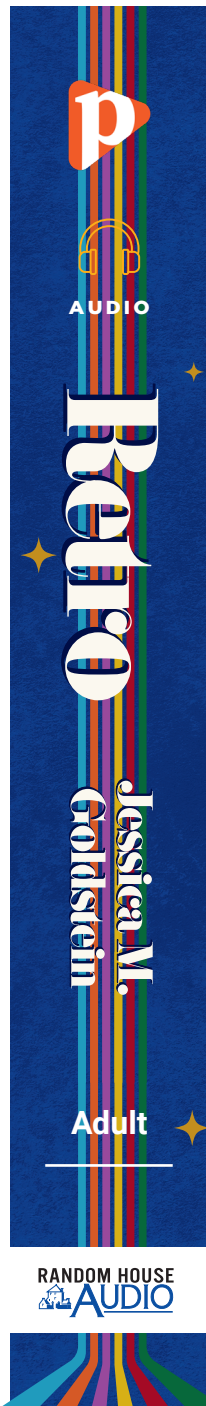
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