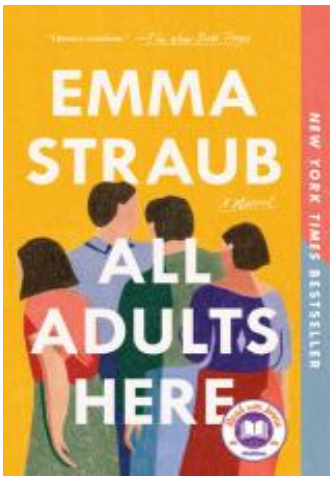
All Adults Here

by Emma Straub



About the Book

A warm, funny and keenly perceptive novel about the life cycle of one family --- as the kids become parents, grandchildren become teenagers, and a matriarch confronts the legacy of her mistakes. From the *New York Times* bestselling author of MODERN LOVERS and THE VACATIONERS.

When Astrid Strick witnesses a school bus accident in the center of town, it jostles loose a repressed memory from her young parenting days decades earlier. Suddenly, Astrid realizes she was not quite the parent she thought she'd been to her three, now-grown children. But to what consequence?

Astrid's youngest son is drifting and unfocused, making parenting mistakes of his own. Her daughter is pregnant yet struggling to give up her own adolescence. And her eldest seems to measure his adult life according to standards no one else shares. But who gets to decide, so many years later, which long-ago lapses were the ones that mattered? Who decides which apologies really count? It might be that only Astrid's 13-year-old granddaughter and her new friend really understand the courage it takes to tell the truth to the people you love the most.

In ALL ADULTS HERE, Emma Straub's unique alchemy of wisdom, humor and insight come together in a deeply satisfying story about adult siblings, aging parents, high school boyfriends, middle school mean girls, the lifelong effects of birth order, and all the other things that follow us into adulthood, whether we like them to or not.

Discussion Guide

1. Discuss the examples you see in this particular multi-generational family, or in your own life, of the ways that children can repeat or mutate the strengths *and* the mistakes that their parents handed down to them.

2. Astrid thinks about the role that birth order has played in the personalities of her three children, and how their own

individual childhood experiences have helped to shape the adults they have become. To what degree do you think she is correct in her conclusions about the forces that shaped her children? In what ways are the choices they have made as adults reflective of their younger selves? How much do you think birth order plays a role?

3. Why does Astrid choose to tell her children about her relationship with Birdie when she does? What results from that conversation? Why does she keep this relationship from her kids for as long as she does? Do you think Birdie becomes part of the Strick family over the course of the novel?

4. Compare and contrast Nicky and Juliette?s marriage with Elliot and Wendy?s. How are these two couples portrayed?

5. In what ways does Rachel provide Porter with certain aspects of partnership? How does Porter value her relationship with Rachel, and how do her feelings change over the course of the book?

6. What do Cecelia and August understand about forgiveness that the older characters do not? How do they provide the adults with a model for how to be true to yourself and what you believe?

Author Bio

Emma Straub is the *New York Times* bestselling author of seven books for adults: the novels AMERICAN FANTASY, THIS TIME TOMORROW, ALL ADULTS HERE, THE VACATIONERS, MODERN LOVERS, LAURA LAMONT'S LIFE IN PICTURES, and the short story collection OTHER PEOPLE WE MARRIED. She is also the author of three picture books: GAGA MISTAKE DAY, which she co-wrote with her mother; MAMA HUG; and VERY GOOD HATS. She is a Guggenheim Foundation Fellow, and her work has been published in more than 20 languages. Emma and her husband own Books Are Magic, an independent bookstore in Brooklyn, New York.

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