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Over Her Head

by Shelley Bates



About the Book

Laurie Hale has the perfect life--and the perfect family to go with it--until her teenage daughter is accused of murder, and the life Laurie knows disappears. Laurie Hale imagined fun, love, and success for her daughter, Anna. But when one of Anna's classmates is murdered and the police start asking questions, a very different future threatens everything Laurie values.

Anna isn't the only suspect--a whole group of teenagers seems to be involved, but none of them is talking, and the community is in an uproar. Laurie's marriage bears the strain of the crisis, and her only ally is Janice, a wealthy woman from the church who refuses to let Laurie slip away quietly. Ultimately, Laurie must face her fears: What if Anna really was involved in Randi's murder? And what kind of person is Laurie if she can doubt her own child's innocence?

Discussion Guide

1. Psalm 124 comes to mean a lot to Laurie Hale during the course of this book. Have you ever experienced the feeling of the waters overwhelming your soul? What did you do about it?

2. Laurie enjoys organizing church activities, her home, her friends, and her family. Is it possible to be involved in the church and be busy with the work of God?and yet not have a relationship with him? Has that ever happened to you?

3. Laurie didn't realize the extent of the emptiness in her soul until her daughter attempted suicide. Do you think God used this experience as a wake-up call?

4. Do you think Kate Parsons intended for Randi to die? What do you think will happen to Kate now?

5. Do you think the "mob mentality" is a reality? What would you have done if you had been on the bridge that night?

6. Tanya Peizer is a single mother doing the best she can to support herself and her daughter. Do you think she was partly to blame for Randi's being out the night she was killed? Tanya thinks she could have changed things if she'd been home. Do you?

7. Is Tanya's forgiveness of Laurie at the end of the book realistic? Do you think she will be able to forgive Kate Parsons?

8. Forgiveness is an important part of the Christian walk. Have there been times in your life when it has been particularly difficult to forgive?

Author Bio

A transplanted Canadian, Shelley Bates grew up on Vancouver Island and currently lives in California. Whether typing search warrants and making undercover phone calls for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or editing marketing collateral for the high-tech industry in Silicon Valley, Shelley has always found that everyone has a story. Most people have stopped telling her theirs in case she puts them in her books.

Shelley earned an M.A. in Writing Popular Fiction from Seton Hill University in Pennsylvania in 2002 and sold her thesis to a major publisher that year. It subsequently became a double finalist in the 2004 National Readers Choice Awards.

Grounds to Believe, the debut novel in her Elect Trilogy of inspirational women's fiction, won the grand prize in the Lagniappe for Literacy national fiction contest and is a finalist for the 2005 RITA Award for Best Inspirational. The second book in the trilogy, **Pocketful of Pearls**, will be an August 2005 release from Warner Faith, and the last book, **A Sounding Brass**, will be published in August 2006.

Between books, Shelley enjoys traveling with her husband, playing the piano and Celtic harp, making period costumes, and catering to her flock of rescue chickens. Visit Shelley on the Web at http://www.shelleybates.com.

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Publication Date: May 23, 2007
Paperback: 304 pages
Publisher: FaithWords
ISBN-10: 0446694932
ISBN-13: 9780446694933