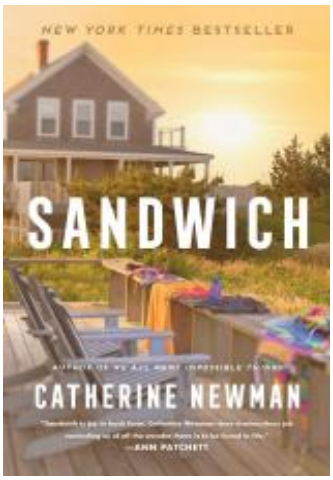
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

Sandwich

by Catherine Newman



About the Book

From the beloved author of WE ALL WANT IMPOSSIBLE THINGS, a moving, hilarious story of a family summer vacation full of secrets, lunch and learning to let go.

For the past two decades, Rocky has looked forward to her family?s yearly escape to Cape Cod. Their humble beach-town rental has been the site of sweet memories, sunny days, great meals and messes of all kinds: emotional, marital and --- thanks to the cottage?s ancient plumbing --- septic too.

This year?s vacation, with Rocky sandwiched between her half-grown kids and fully aging parents, promises to be just as delightful as summers past --- except, perhaps, for Rocky?s hormonal bouts of rage and melancholy. (Hello, menopause!) Her body is changing --- her life is, too. And then a chain of events sends Rocky into the past, reliving both the tenderness and sorrow of a handful of long-ago summers.

It's one precious week: everything is in balance; everything is in flux. And when Rocky comes face to face with her family?s history and future, she is forced to accept that she can no longer hide her secrets from the people she loves.

Discussion Guide

1. How do secrets work in this book? Why are there so many of them, and how do they relate to each other and/or move the story along?

2. How did you feel about the character named Rocky?s Menopausal Body?

3. This is, to some extent, a book about a long marriage. What are your thoughts about Rocky and Nick?s relationship?

4. What about Rocky?s relationships with her young adult kids? Her own aging parents?

5. Did you have a favorite character?

6. If you could have given a single piece of advice to one of the characters, what would it have been?

7. How important do you think the setting was to the way the story unfolded?

8. Does this book actually have a plot, and how would you describe it?

9. Did it end the way you thought it would? Was the ending delightful, satisfying, annoying, enraging or none of the above?

Author Bio

Catherine Newman has written numerous columns, articles and canned-bean recipes for magazines and newspapers, and her essays have been widely anthologized. She is the author of the novels WE ALL WANT IMPOSSIBLE THINGS, SANDWICH and WRECK; the memoirs WAITING FOR BIRDY and CATASTROPHIC HAPPINESS; the middle-grade novel ONE MIXED-UP NIGHT; and the bestselling kids? life-skills books HOW TO BE A PERSON and WHAT CAN I SAY? She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts.

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