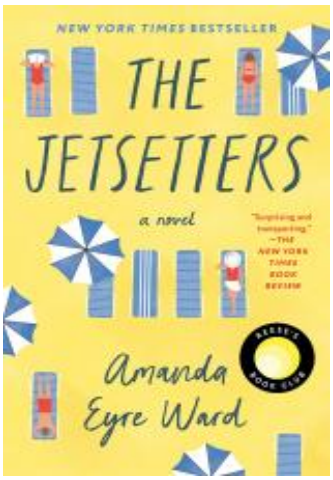
The Jetsetters

by Amanda Eyre Ward



About the Book

When 70-year-old Charlotte Perkins submits a sexy essay to the ?Become a Jetsetter? contest, she dreams of reuniting her estranged children: Lee, an almost-famous actress; Cord, a handsome Manhattan venture capitalist who can?t seem to find a partner; and Regan, a harried mother who took it all wrong when Charlotte bought her a Weight Watchers gift certificate for her birthday. Charlotte yearns for the years when her children were young, when she was a single mother who meant everything to them.

When she wins the contest, the family packs their baggage --- both literal and figurative --- and spends 10 days traveling from sun-drenched Athens through glorious Rome to tapas-laden Barcelona on an over-the-top cruise ship, the *Splendido Marveloso*. As lovers new and old join the adventure, long-buried secrets are revealed and old wounds are reopened, forcing the Perkins family to confront the forces that drove them apart and the defining choices of their lives.

Can four lost adults find the peace they?ve been seeking by reconciling their childhood aches and coming back together? In the vein of THE NEST and THE VACATIONERS, THE JETSETTERS is a delicious and intelligent novel about the courage it takes to reveal our true selves, the pleasures and perils of family, and how we navigate the seas of adulthood.

Discussion Guide

1. Discuss the many mother-daughter relationships at the core of the novel. How does Charlotte?s relationship with her mother impact her relationship with her own daughters?

2. What do you think of Lee?s decision to rig the ?Become a Jetsetter? contest? What kinds of boundaries is she crossing, and do you think her actions are justified? How does Ward explore ideas of privacy and boundaries between loved ones in the novel?

3. Which character did you like the best, and why?

4. How would this story be different if it didn?t take place on a cruise? How was the plot shaped by the confined cruise ship setting?

5. Discuss how the book handles the matter of age. Do you think there are different societal expectations for people of certain ages? How do you see those expectations represented or subverted in this book? How does that apply to the portrayal of female desire in the novel, particularly for Charlotte?

6. Did you look for yourself or elements of your own family dynamic in this novel? What aspects of the familial relationships in this book did you find relatable?

7. If you had to enter the ?Become a Jetsetter? contest, what would your story be about?

8. Why does Cord seem to have an especially difficult time coming out to his family? In what ways does his family mishandle his coming out, and what could they have done differently?

9. How does Winston?s alcoholism and mistreatment of his family impact them later in life?

10. Leo Tolstoy once wrote that ?All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.? After reading this novel, do you agree? Why or why not?

11. Discuss two of the main themes of the novel: love and truth. How are these themes at odds, and how do they work together?

Author Bio

Amanda Eyre Ward is the *New York Times* bestselling author of CAT & VIVIAN, SLEEP TOWARD HEAVEN, HOW TO BE LOST, LOVE STORIES IN THIS TOWN, FORGIVE ME, CLOSE YOUR EYES, THE SAME SKY, THE NEARNESS OF YOU, THE JETSETTERS, THE LIFEGUARDS, LOVERS AND LIARS and ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES.

Her bestselling novels have been featured in *People* magazine, the *New York Times* and more. Amanda publishes nonfiction in *Travel + Leisure*, the *New York Times*, *Texas Monthly* and more, and publishes original work on Audible.com. Amanda?s work has been optioned for film and television and translated into 15 languages. She lives in Austin, TX.

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