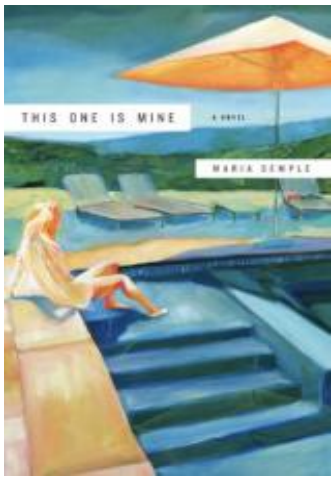
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This One Is Mine

by Maria Semple



About the Book

Violet Parry is living the quintessential life of luxury in the Hollywood Hills with David, her rock-and-roll manager husband, and her darling toddler, Dot. She has the perfect life --- except that she's deeply unhappy. David expects the world of Violet but gives little of himself in return. When she meets Teddy, a roguish small-time bass player, Violet comes alive, and soon she's risking everything for the chance to find herself again. Also in the picture are David's hilariously high-strung sister, Sally, on the prowl for a successful husband, and Jeremy, the ESPN sportscaster savant who falls into her trap. For all their recklessness, Violet and Sally will discover that David and Jeremy have a few surprises of their own. **This One is Mine** is a compassionate and wickedly funny satire about our need for more --- and the often disastrous choices we make in the name of happiness.

Discussion Guide

1. In many ways, this is a very ?LA? story. To what extent do you think the characters? attitudes and actions are shaped by Los Angeles? Could you see this story taking place anywhere else?

2. How does the title, ?This One Is Mine,? interplay with the story? The poem at the beginning of the book opens with the image of a slave block. Are any of the characters in the book ?enslaved? in a way?

3. In the first chapter, David is upset with Violet for what he perceives to be her lack of interest in maintaining the household. Is his anger justified?

4. What does Violet find sad about Los Angeles? Where do you think this sadness stems from?

5. What do you think about Sally?s friendship with Maryam? Why does Maryam put up with her?

6. Why do you think Violet is drawn to Teddy? What makes her risk ?losing everything,? as David puts it?

7. Los Angeles could be said to be a city of ambition. How do the characters? ambitions relate to one another?s? What fuels those ambitions, and when do they get out of control?

8. In some ways, Sally seems to want everything that Violet has: a successful husband, financial security, a nice house, and classy friends. Do you think Sally would be happy if she suddenly had everything she wanted? What similarities to you see in Sally and Violet?

9. Conversely, do you see any similarities between David and Jeremy?

10. Teddy seems to have a set of problems that make Violet?s (and everyone else?s) pale in comparison. Do you think Violet is drawn to him because of or in spite of these traits?

11. What do you think of Sally and Jeremy?s relationship? Do you think there is a way that it could have worked out?

12. Why is Violet happy when Sally tells her that she never really liked her?

13. At the end of the book, Violet, Sally, and David all go to visit Teddy in the hospital. In what ways did Teddy?s entrance in their lives bring them all together? How would this story have turned out differently if Violet had never met him at the health fair?

14. In Leo Tolstoy?s classic, **Anna Karenina**, Anna is miserable in a loveless marriage and recklessly succumbs to her desire for the dashing Vronsky. What similarities do you see between Tolstoy?s novel and **This One Is Mine**?

15. What other books did this one remind you of? What was similar or different about them?

Author Bio

Maria Semple is the bestselling author of GO GENTLE; TODAY WILL BE DIFFERENT; WHERE'D YOU GO, BERNADETTE; and THIS ONE IS MINE. Her novels have been translated into 40 languages. Before writing fiction, Maria wrote for TV. She lives in New York.

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