

A Thread So Thin

by Marie Bostwick



About the Book

New York Times bestselling author Marie Bostwick is back with **A Thread So Thin**, revisiting the popular town, quilt shop, and characters from her *Cobbled Court* series, for a timeless tale of friendship, love, and the choices we must make in their name?

While New Bern, Connecticut, lies under a blanket of snow, the Cobbled Court Quilt Shop remains a cozy haven for its owner, Evelyn Dixon, and her friends. Evelyn relishes winter's slower pace --- besides, internet sales are hopping, thanks to her son Garrett's efforts. In addition to helping out at the shop, Garrett has also been patiently waiting for his girlfriend, Liza, to finish art school in New York City. But as much as Evelyn loves Liza, she wonders if it's a good idea for her son to be so serious, so soon, with a young woman who's just getting ready to spread her wings...

Liza's wondering the same thing --- especially after Garrett rolls out the red carpet for a super-romantic New Year's Eve --- complete with marriage proposal. Garrett's the closest thing to perfect she's ever known, but what about her own imperfections? The only happy marriage Liza's ever seen is her Aunt Abigail's, and it took her decades to tie the knot. Soon, Liza is not only struggling with her own fears, but with the mixed reactions of her friends and family. And when she finds herself torn between a rare career opportunity and her love for Garrett, Liza must grasp at the thinnest of threads --- and pray it holds?

Discussion Guide

1. One of the recurring themes in **A Thread So Thin** is that women have many and varying choices today: to marry, not to marry, to have children, not to have children, to pursue a lucrative field or one that is fulfilling but does not provide financial security. Liza said, "The way I see it, the older you get, the more chance there is that the choices you make now will screw up the whole rest of your life." Why do you think Liza had this outlook on life? Do you agree with her? Like Liza, have you faced a crossroads in your life when you had a difficult decision to make about your future? Did the

decision turn out right for you? If not, did it or did it not impact the rest of your life? Looking back, would you make the same decision?

2. Both Garrett and Liza had lost their fathers due to betrayal, yet one of them lived life with a positive outlook, and the other seemed to continue to suffer from the betrayal. What do you think led to this difference?

3. When Liza's mother died, her mom's attorney, Franklin, gave her some of the support her mother would have provided had she lived. In your life, has there been an adult other than your parents who helped you through tough times and helped you celebrate your successes? Who is that person, and what did he or she do to help you?

4. After Liza was forced to move in with her aunt Abigail, she set out to make Abigail's life hell. Do you recall a time in your life when, in rebellion, you gave your parent or guardian similar grief? Why do you think you did this? Later, how did you feel about your attitude? Did you change your attitude, and why?

5. Liza loves New York City --- the ambience, the art, the food --- especially the people. How would you characterize the people where you live? Are they generally friendly or standoffish? Why do you think the local populace has this kind of attitude?

6. Garrett is an optimistic person. What is your outlook on life? Are you, like Garrett, confident that, one way or another, everything will work out and that the best is yet to come? Or do you find that you generally expect the worst to happen? Why do you think you have your attitude? Has your outlook been influenced by turns of events in your life, or do you think this is just a part of your inherited tendencies? Do you think a person can change his or her outlook on life? If so, how?

7. Abigail and Liza mended the rift between them, aided by their shared involvement in quilting. If you have mended a broken relationship in your life, share how the mending began and what brought you back together.

8. When Liza was trying to make up her mind what to do about Garrett's proposal, she surveyed her friends and acquaintances about their attitudes toward marriage. Do you think marriage is as relevant to women today as it was 50, even 25, years ago?

9. Why do you think it took Evelyn so long to say yes to Charlie's proposal? Was that wisdom on her part, or fear, or some of both? Have you, or has someone you know, faced similar difficulty in responding to a proposal? How does time and age change what women want or expect from life, marriage, and career?

10. One of Charlie's favorite sayings about a person who possessed a certain skill was, "You don't just lick it up off the rocks," meaning that a lot of the talents we think of as belonging to us alone are actually inherited. What talent or special skill do you have that you think you inherited from a member or members of your family?

11. After Liza did not immediately say yes to Garrett's unanticipated marriage proposal, and she witnessed his abrupt change in demeanor, she decided that the idea of being responsible for someone's happiness isn't any more comfortable than the idea of being responsible for someone's misery. Have you ever felt you were forced to "own" someone's happiness or misery? If so, did you convey that this was not a weight that should be put on your shoulders, and how did you accomplish this? How did the person react to your assertion?

12. Evelyn was thrilled that every woman in the new quilting class taught by her and her mother left with at least one new friend. She allowed that new friends are the kinds of treasures that don't show up on a balance sheet but do add up to the best sort of payday. Especially considering what Evelyn has been through in her marriage and her health, what does this attitude say about Evelyn? How do you think her attitude has contributed to or detracted from her happiness and success?

13. Why do you think Evelyn reacted negatively when she first learned about Garrett and Liza's engagement? Can you remember a time when you wished you could have taken back a response to someone's news?

14. What impact did Liza's father's betrayal have on her concept of family? How did this affect her ability to commit to Garrett?

15. Liza was profoundly touched by the beautiful quilt her friends and relatives made for her as their wedding gift. Have you ever received a gift that touched you similarly? If so, tell the group about it and the people who gave it to you.

Author Bio

Marie Bostwick is a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author of insightful, uplifting fiction for women. Marie lives in Oregon with her husband. When not writing books, she enjoys quilting, hiking, cooking and creating posts on her lifestyle blog, *Fiercely Marie*. Marie travels extensively, speaking at libraries, bookstores, quilt guilds and conferences.

Critical Praise

"Bostwick's polished style and command of plot make this story of bonding and sisterhood a tantalizing book club contender."

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