Daughters

by Corinne Demas

About the Book

From award-winning author Corinne Demas comes a moving story about the sometimes volatile but ultimately unbreakable bonds between mothers and daughters.

When Meredith flies home to New England, daughter Eloise in tow, she leaves her husband and a life back in LA. A heartbreaking loss is killing their marriage. So she looks to her mother and siblings for the support she desperately needs, and the love her daughter surely deserves --- two things her husband can?t seem to provide.

Meredith?s mother, Delia, is thrilled by their sudden arrival at the family farm. But her husband braces for the chaos his stepdaughter and granddaughter will surely bring. Meredith?s announcement that she?s moved home for good takes the whole family by surprise and turns everything upside down.

While wrestling with her future, artist Meredith is forced to confront her past --- and the disappointment she believes her mother, a violin teacher, felt when musically gifted Meredith abandoned the violin.

As Meredith works to repair relationships with members of her family, an old flame turns up and further complicates her life.

Delia, in a desperate attempt to rescue her daughter?s marriage, does something unforgivable, and Meredith has to decide if she should uproot Eloise and take off. When Eloise goes missing, help arrives from an unexpected quarter.

Discussion Guide

1. How does your own experience shape your response to the characters in DAUGHTERS? What moments in the novel resonate with you on a personal level?

2. How important is the setting in DAUGHTERS?

3. Does Kat have a good point about Delia and Bob moving into a more age-appropriate living situation? Is Delia right to refuse to abandon the farm, or do you think she is unrealistic and stubborn?

4. Meredith tells her family she?s ?done? with Josh and has no intention of going back to her life in California. Do you believe she?ll stick to this? Do you feel she should try to repair her marriage? Do you think her family should respect her wishes?

5. Do you agree with Meredith that what Delia does in heading to California is unforgiveable? Does it make it more forgivable that Delia changes course once there?

6. What does Eloise bring to the story? Do you think it would have been the same without her youth and innocence?

7. Bob seems like a curmudgeonly character at the start of the novel. What do you think changes him?

8. Wylie tells Meredith that he loves her and ?it?s just the way it is.? Do you feel they can have a future together? Do you hope they will?

9. What does Meredith?s art reveal to you about her as a character?

10. Wylie give Meredith the unlikely present of a scaffold. Do you view it as a symbol at the heart of the story?

11. There are many animals in DAUGHTERS: dogs, donkeys, chickens and a horse. What role do they play in the story?

12. Meredith notices that Delia is able to connect with her teenage pupil, Lindsey. Why do you think Delia wasn?t able to connect this way with Meredith?

13. Do you know why Meredith really gave up playing the violin? Does she know?

14. Evan seems like the only adult in the novel who is perfectly content. Is it because he?s the only one who isn?t in a long-term relationship? Do you think he needs to ?grow up??

15. How do you feel about the ending of the novel? And the Epilogue?

Author Bio

Corinne Demas is the author of 39 books, including two collections of short stories, seven novels, a memoir, a collection of poetry, two plays, and numerous books for children. She is a professor emeritus of English at Mount Holyoke College

and a fiction editor of the *Massachusetts Review*.

She grew up in New York City, in Stuyvesant Town, the subject of her memoir, ELEVEN STORIES HIGH: Growing Up in Stuyvesant Town, 1948-1968. She attended Hunter College High School, graduated from Tufts University, and completed a Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. She lived in Pittsburgh for a number of years, teaching at the University of Pittsburgh and at Chatham College.

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