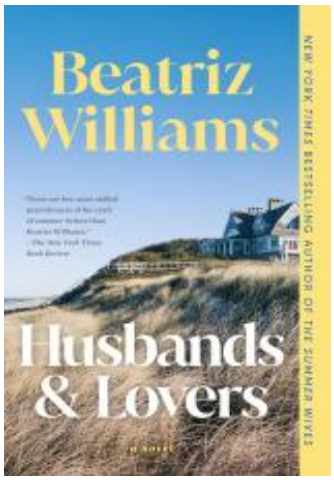
Husbands & Lovers

by Beatriz Williams



About the Book

Two women --- separated by decades and continents, and united by an exotic family heirloom --- reclaim secrets and lost loves in this sweeping novel from the *New York Times* bestselling author of THE SUMMER WIVES.

New England, 2022. Three years ago, single mother Mallory Dunne received the telephone call every parent dreads. Her 10-year-old son, Sam, had been airlifted from summer camp with acute poisoning from a toxic death cap mushroom, leaving him fighting for his life. Now, searching for the donor kidney that will give her son a chance for a normal life, Mallory is forced to confront two harrowing secrets from her past: her mother?s adoption from an infamous Irish orphanage in 1952, and her own all-consuming summer romance 14 years earlier with her childhood best friend, Monk Adams --- one of the world?s most beloved singer-songwriters --- a fairy tale cut short by a devastating betrayal.

Cairo, 1951. After suffering tragedy beyond comprehension in the war, Hungarian refugee Hannah Ainsworth has forged a respectable new life for herself --- marriage to a wealthy British diplomat with a coveted posting in glamorous Cairo. But a fateful encounter with the enigmatic manager of a hotel bristling with spies leads to a passionate affair that will reawaken Hannah?s longing for everything she once lost. As revolution simmers in the Egyptian streets, a pregnant Hannah finds herself snared in a game of intrigue between two men...and an act of sacrifice that will echo down the generations.

Timeless and bittersweet, HUSBANDS & LOVERS takes readers on an unforgettable journey of heartbreak and redemption, from the revolutionary fires of midcentury Egypt to the moneyed beaches of contemporary New England. Acclaimed author Beatriz Williams has written a poignant and beautifully voiced novel of deeply human characters entangled by morally complex issues --- of privilege, class and the female experience --- inside worlds brought shimmeringly to life.

Discussion Guide

1. Mallory and Hannah both face dire circumstances and hard choices that require them to decide whether or not to follow their heart. What do you think Beatriz Williams is saying about the female experience with these two characters?

2. HUSBANDS & LOVERS is written from two points of view in different times and settings. Which POV resonated the most with you? How did the structure of the novel open up your understanding of the larger story?

3. In chapter six, Monk says, ?You realize that once you choose one path, you can?t go back. You think about all the paths you could have taken and didn?t.? Do you agree with his statement? Are there paths that you wish you?d taken in your life?

4. Motherhood is a central theme in each storyline. Discuss how both Mallory and Hannah shape their lives and their decisions based on their children. What other themes did you like in the book?

5. Were you aware of the revolutionary fires in Cairo in 1952 before reading this novel? Did you learn anything new?

6. Class and privilege play pivotal roles in the narrative. Discuss how the characters in both storylines are impacted by their place in society.

7. Mallory gets a second chance with her first love. Do you think love can be rekindled? Are some things fated to be?

8. What did you make of the ending? Did you guess how the storylines would intersect before you finished the novel?

9. Winthrop Island is featured in several of Beatriz Williams' other novels. Did you notice any character cameos from her previous books?

10. Do you have any family heirlooms? Why do you think we often ascribe so much emotional value to objects?

11. Who would you cast in the film adaptation of HUSBANDS & LOVERS?

Author Bio

Beatriz Williams is the *New York Times, USA Today* and internationally bestselling author of HUSBANDS & LOVERS, THE SUMMER WIVES, THE SECRET LIFE OF VIOLET GRANT, A HUNDRED SUMMERS, the *Wicked City* series, and several other works of historical fiction, including five novels in collaboration with fellow bestselling authors Karen White and Lauren Willig.

A graduate of Stanford University with an MBA in Finance from Columbia University, Beatriz worked as a communications and corporate strategy consultant in New York and London before her first novel was published in 2012. Beatriz?s books have won numerous awards, have been translated into more than a dozen languages, and appear regularly in bestseller lists around the world. Her essays have appeared in magazines such as *Real Simple* and *Southern Living*

, among others, and she regularly reviews fiction for the *New York Times Book Review*.

Born in Seattle, Washington, Beatriz now lives in southeastern Connecticut with her husband and four mostly grown children.

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