Knitting Under the Influence

by Claire LaZebnik



About the Book

TO LIVE AND KNIT IN L.A....

Sometimes it feels like their weekly knitting circle is the only thing that keeps Kathleen, Sari, and Lucy from falling apart. Their fine-gauge scarves may look fabulous, but their lives are starting to unravel?

For years, beautiful, flighty Kathleen has been living off of her famous actress sisters. When she moves out, she misses her life of luxury and begins to think that marrying rich might be an easy way to get it back.

Lucy is dating the man of her dreams-gorgeous, a brilliant scientist, going places-but when an animal rights group targets him, she starts to wonder whose side she's really on.

And Sari finds herself suddenly face-to-face again with the "it" boy from high school who still has it-he's gorgeous, sensitive, and kind, and he has a son who needs Sari's help. But can she ever forgive him for what he did to her brother a decade ago?

Caught between life, love, and pursuit of the perfect cast-on, these three friends learn that there are never any easy answers, except maybe one-that when the going gets tough, the tough get knitting.

Discussion Guide

1. Why do you think there has been a resurgence of knitting in recent years by hip young women when it used to be the province of little old ladies?

2. Along those same lines, women friends seem very comfortable getting together for conversation only without the aid

of say, a football game. How do knitting or other crafty activities enhance or change the nature of female friendship?

3. There are three main women in the story, all very different. Which character do you most identify with? Why?

4. What do you think of Jason's assertion, near the end of the book, that "people can act badly and not be bad people"? Is this true of him? Were you satisfied or frustrated when Sari forgave him?

5. Why do you think Kathleen is so unmoored in her professional life? Have you ever gone through a phase like that? What did it take to get you out of it?

6. Which side of the James/Sari debate about research versus therapy do you come down on? Why?

7. At times, Sari's parents seem so blind to Charlie's problems that they frustrate the reader. Why is Sari's final scheme with them successful when she's run into so many roadblocks with them over the course of her life?

8. Though the novel's protagonists are three single and childless women living in a big city, many of the storylines have to do with their family relationships, including those with siblings and children. Which of these connections reinforce your ideas about families?

Author Bio

I grew up in Newton, Massachusetts, the youngest of five kids, and went to college about twenty minutes away from home. One of my sisters and my brother were both already enrolled at the same school, so it wasn't exactly a leap into the unknown --- neither was my subsequent move to New York, since two of my sisters and my brother lived there by then. But when I moved to Los Angeles in the mid-1980s, I was finally mapping out some new territory (although my sister Nell joined me seconds later). I thought eventually I'd move back to the east coast. Turns out I was wrong.

Now I live in the Pacific Palisades (a city in Los Angeles, not far from the ocean) and my four kids are growing up true Californians: they wear tank tops and flip-flops and don't even know what a "snow day" is. My husband writes for TV which doesn't impress people all that much until I mention that he worked on "The Simpsons" for a year-and-a-half and then people get really impressed. Especially teenaged type people. Visit my website, http://clairelazebnik.com/.

Critical Praise

"At turns hilarious, at times heartbreaking, and so, so honest about life, love, and friendship. I loved it."

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