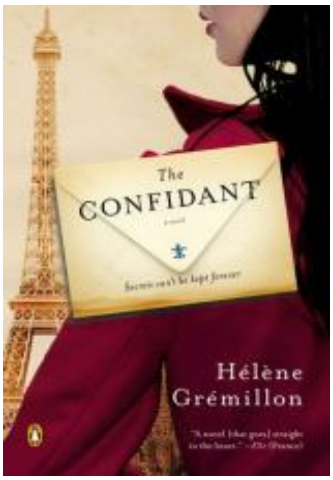
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The Confidant

by Hélène Grémillon



About the Book

Paris, 1975. Camille sifts through letters of condolence after her mother's death when a strange, handwritten missive stops her short. At first she believes she received it by mistake. But then, a new letter arrives each week from a mysterious stranger, Louis, who seems intent on recounting the story of his first love, Annie. They were separated in the years before World War II when Annie befriended a wealthy, barren couple and fell victim to a merciless plot just as German troops arrive in Paris. But also awaiting Camille's discovery is the other side of the story, which will call into question Annie's innocence and reveal the devastating consequences of jealousy and revenge. As Camille reads on, she begins to realize that her own life may be the next chapter in this tragic story.

Discussion Guide

1. Was Louis right to share this story with Camille? Why did he wait until after her mother had died?
2. What is the significance of Camille?s own pregnancy?
3. Which character is, in your opinion, the most to blame for the unhappiness in the novel? Is there any justice in the end?
4. Is Annie a victim or a perpetrator of her own unhappiness?
5. Do you have any sympathy for Elisabeth? What about Paul? Why or why not?
6. In *The Confidant*, does love function as a divisive force, a healing element, or a tool for survival?
7. What impact does a written letter have that a conversation does not? Why does Louis approach Camille this way?
8. Louis is a mysterious figure?we hear from him but never interact with him. What do you imagine he looks like? Describe his life beyond the novel.
9. In their own ways, both Elisabeth and Annie take extreme measures for the well?being of their child. How far would you go for the sake of your family?
10. Would Camille have had a happier life with Annie or with Elisabeth? Does each mother provide something the other does not?

11. How do you interpret the meaning of the final line of the book?

Author Bio

Hélène Grémillon was born in France in 1977. She has degrees in literature and history and has worked as a journalist at the French newspaper, *Le Figaro*, before becoming a full-time writer. She lives in Paris with her partner, singer and songwriter Julien Clerc, and their child. She received The Prince Pierre Literary Prize for ***The Confidant***, her first novel.

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