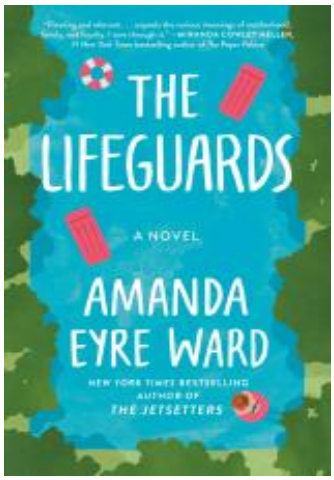
The Lifeguards

by Amanda Eyre Ward



About the Book

The bonds between three picture-perfect --- but viciously protective --- mothers and their close-knit sons are tested during one unforgettable summer in a gripping novel from the *New York Times* bestselling author of THE JETSETTERS.

Austin?s Zilker Park neighborhood is a wonderland of greenbelt trails, live music and moms who drink a few too many margaritas. Whitney, Annette and Liza have grown thick as thieves as they have raised their children together for 15 years, believing that they can shelter them from an increasingly dangerous world. Their friendship is unbreakable --- as safe as the neighborhood where they've raised their sweet little boys.

Or so they think.

One night, the three women have been enjoying happy hour when their boys, lifeguards for the summer, come back on bicycles from a late-night dip in their favorite swimming hole. The boys share a secret --- news that will shatter the perfect world their mothers have so painstakingly created.

Combining three mothers? points of view in a powerful narrative tale with commentary from entertaining neighborhood listservs, secret text messages and police reports, THE LIFEGUARDS is both a story about the secrets we tell to protect the ones we love and a riveting novel of suspense filled with half-truths and betrayals, fierce love and complicated friendships, and the loss of innocence on one hot summer night.

Discussion Guide

1. Between Whitney, Annette and Liza, which character did you most relate to or empathize with? Did your perception of the characters change at all as you read? If so, how?

2. Parenthood is a significant theme throughout the book. Discuss each mother?s relationship with her son. How are their relationships different? Similar? Why do you think the author chose for her main characters to be mothers?

3. Discuss the themes of protection and sacrifice. How did you feel each character navigated these issues?

4. Which scene in the book stuck with you the most?

5. What did you think about the Detective?s storyline? Why do you think his story was included?

6. How do money, class and privilege play into this story?

7. THE LIFEGUARDS is written with alternating points of view. What did you think of this structural choice? Did it create more suspense for you?

8. The author specifically chose Austin as the setting. How did you feel that played into the plot? If you imagine you were to write a novel about where you live, what characteristics would you give your own setting?

9. Talk about the various real-life elements (message boards, texts, flyers, news bulletins) that the author incorporated. How did they influence your experience of this story?

10. Discuss the ending of the novel. Were you surprised to learn the truth?

Author Bio

Amanda Eyre Ward is the *New York Times* bestselling author of CAT & VIVIAN, SLEEP TOWARD HEAVEN, HOW TO BE LOST, LOVE STORIES IN THIS TOWN, FORGIVE ME, CLOSE YOUR EYES, THE SAME SKY, THE NEARNESS OF YOU, THE JETSETTERS, THE LIFEGUARDS, LOVERS AND LIARS and ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES.

Her bestselling novels have been featured in *People* magazine, the *New York Times* and more. Amanda publishes nonfiction in *Travel + Leisure*, the *New York Times*, *Texas Monthly* and more, and publishes original work on Audible.com. Amanda?s work has been optioned for film and television and translated into 15 languages. She lives in Austin, TX.

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