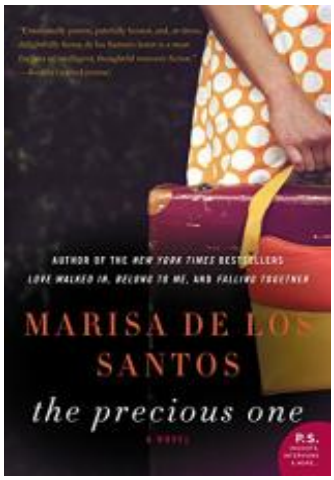
The Precious One

by Marisa de los Santos



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of BELONG TO ME, LOVE WALKED IN and FALLING TOGETHER comes a captivating novel about friendship, family, second chances and the redemptive power of love.

In all her life, Eustacia ?Taisy? Cleary has given her heart to only three men: her first love, Ben Ransom; her twin brother, Marcus; and Wilson Cleary --- professor, inventor, philanderer, self-made millionaire, brilliant man, breathtaking jerk: her father.

Seventeen years ago, Wilson ditched his first family for Caroline, a beautiful young sculptor. In all that time, Taisy?s family has seen Wilson, Caroline and their daughter, Willow, only once.

Why then, is Wilson calling Taisy now, inviting her for an extended visit, encouraging her to meet her pretty sister --- a teenager who views her with jealousy, mistrust and grudging admiration? Why, now, does Wilson want Taisy to help him write his memoir?

Told in alternating voices --- Taisy?s strong, unsparing observations and Willow?s naive, heartbreakingly earnest yearnings --- THE PRECIOUS ONE is an unforgettable novel of family secrets, lost love and dangerous obsession, a captivating tale with the deep characterization, piercing emotional resonance and heartfelt insight that are the hallmarks of Marisa de los Santos?s beloved works.

Discussion Guide

1. Taisy is summoned to visit with her estranged father, Wilson, and charged with writing his autobiography. Were you surprised with her decision to stay and do the project? Do you think it was more for her own benefit than for Wilson?s?

2. Taisy refers to her half-sister, Willow, as ?the precious one? early on in the novel. Why do you think the author chose that as the title?

3. Willow has been home-schooled her entire life and is now beginning to attend the local high school. How does this sheltered existence inform her character? What are your thoughts on home-schooling?

4. There are many storylines going on within THE PRECIOUS ONE. Did having the story told from two points of view help you to know the characters more fully?

5. When Wilson reveals his horrible upbringing, it?s quite a surprise to everyone. Do you think that should excuse his past behavior?

6. In proposing the book project to Taisy, Wilson reflects on his recent heart attack: ?It causes one to look at one?s life in a way that one has perhaps not looked at it before.? Do you think he had ulterior motives in asking Taisy to be his ghostwriter?

7. Taisy?s twin brother, Marcus, still maintains strong feelings about their estranged father. His ?anger stayed red-hot for years before it cooled to something hard and shiny and black.? Why do you think it was harder to forgive for Marcus than for Taisy?

8. Caro seems to be encouraging of Taisy being around. Why do you think she didn?t try to reach out before? Do you think it?s because she was another woman under his powerful sway? Why do you think Wilson has such a hold over the people in his life?

9. In addition to navigating the treacherous waters of high school for the first time, Willow also experiences attention from certain men and boys. Do you think Willow handled herself well in relation to the Mr. Insley situation? How could she have handled it differently? Were you surprised when Luka revealed his small part in it?

10. Even after realizing her teacher?s attention was inappropriate, Willow still tries to understand Mr. Insley: ?It could break your heart: people becoming, in the blink of an eye, so dreadfully human.? Can you recall a situation where someone disappointed you with his or her faults or human frailties?

11. Were you surprised about Ben?s reticence about getting back into a relationship with Taisy? Do you think she had any choice to do things differently back when they were teenagers?

12. Was there one storyline that grabbed you more than another, and why? Why do you think complicated family stories are so riveting to read?

13. Have you read any of Marisa de los Santos? novels? After now reading THE PRECIOUS ONE, are you intrigued to read her other titles?

Author Bio

Marisa de los Santos is the *New York Times* bestselling author of nine novels, including LOVE WALKED IN and I'LL

BE YOUR BLUE SKY. Marisa holds a PhD in literature and creative writing and teaches in the low-residency creative writing program at Wilkes University. She lives in Wilmington, Delaware, with her husband, David Teague.

Critical Praise

?Emotionally potent, painfully honest and, at times, delightfully funny, de los Santos?s latest is a must for fans of intelligent, thoughtful women?s fiction.?

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