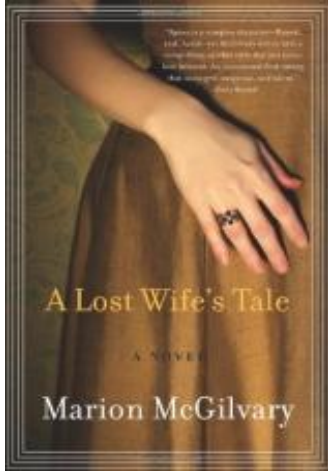


A Lost Wife

by Marion McGilvary



About the Book

A woman running from her dark past leaves her husband, home and former life to begin anew in New York City. Assuming a new name and working as a housekeeper for a recently divorced publisher, she begins to find love with her employer. But Adam knows nothing of the woman he's falling for ---- and for Edith, her secret history is never as far as she struggles to keep it.

Discussion Guide

1. Some main themes in the book are envy, guilt and isolation. Would you say the isolation is self-inflicted because of the envy and guilt? How do these play off the others?
2. Edith's self-perception and her perception by others is often very different. What do you think she actually looks like?
3. Does the fact that Edith doesn't like children make her an unlikeable character?
4. We are all influenced to some degree by our parents. Edith's family is comprised of a detached father, a cold, critical mother, and older absent siblings. Were they instrumental in her low self esteem and, correspondingly, her desire to be wanted by someone, anyone?
5. Edith seems to associate food with a pleasure that she won't allow herself to enjoy. In what ways does food serve as a metaphor for love and loss in the novel?

6. How does Edith use sex, and herself, as a commodity to get what she wants? Does this ultimately serve to meet her needs, or does it fail her?
7. What did you think of Edith's friendship with Kirsty?
8. Did Edith have a choice when saving herself from Bill?
9. Why is Edith so afraid of Cheryl? She could get rid of her cruelly by simply telling her the truth, but she doesn't. Is it merely because she can't face the implications, the guilt, the revelation ? or because she wants to save Cheryl from the truth?
10. In longing for someone to love her, but never feeling that she really deserves it, Edith chooses another man (Francisco) who displays all the same detachment and disinterest she has always been shown. Even Adam isn't that forthcoming. Do you think Edith has an urge to repeat unhealthy patterns?
11. How is Adam different from the other men in Edith's life? What is it about Adam that really allows her to fall in love with him?
12. In the end, would you say Edith is a victim or a user?

Author Bio

Marion McGilvary was a restaurant critic for the *Financial Times* for three years and was short-listed for the Glenfiddich Food and Drink Award. She has written for numerous publications in the UK, including *The Times*, *The Observer*, *Vogue*, *Marie Claire*, *Women's Journal* and *GQ*. She has written and illustrated several children's books and is the author of two books based on her columns in the *Times* and *Observer*. She lives in London.

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