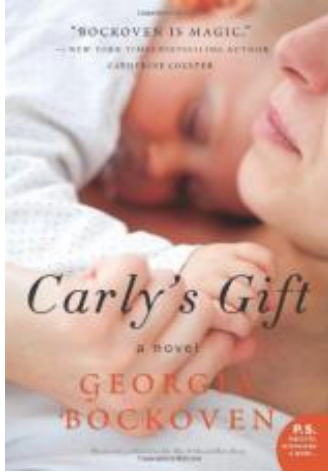


Carly's Gift

by Georgia Bockoven



About the Book

From the author of *THINGS REMEMBERED* and *THE YEAR EVERYTHING CHANGED* comes a moving novel about love that lasts forever

What's in the past is over and done with . . . or is it?

Sixteen years ago Carly Hargrove made a decision that would irrevocably alter her life. With little comprehension of the life-long consequences of her actions, she trades her own future happiness to protect the man she's loved since kindergarten, David Montgomery.

With an ocean separating them, Carly builds a life for herself without David. She's the mother of three, lives in a beautiful house, and is married to a man who comes home every night --- even if most of those nights he drinks too much. What more could she want?

Her answer arrives on a cold fall day when David shows up at her door. In town for his father's funeral, he has come to see Carly one last time, hoping to rid himself of the anger that still consumes him.

Instead, he is drawn into a web of secrets that rekindles the fierce need he once felt to protect Carly. He becomes caught up in her life in a way he never could have imagined --- a way that will bind him to her forever.

Discussion Guide

1. "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." This Maya Angelou quote is the theme that runs throughout Carly's *Gift* and shapes the characters' lives. Do you understand the reasoning that drove Carly not to tell David about what happened to her and that drove her to marry Ethan? Do you believe someone as young as she was at the time could be that selfless? Or do you think that such grand gestures are more likely to come from the idealism of youth?
2. Did Ethan's more selfish but equally grand gesture of marrying Carly set up his inability to put the past behind them? Was there something more that Carly could have done to help him get over his jealousy?
3. Do you believe the old saying that you never forget your first love? If so, how much of that comes into play with the feelings Carly and David have for each other?
4. After David recognized there was no way he and Carly would ever be together, what do you think his motives were for agreeing to let Andrea come live with him? How do you think you would have reacted under the same circumstances? What could motivate you to take a child into your home whom you'd known less than a month?
5. Carly acknowledges she made a huge mistake when she married Ethan. She also recognizes that she was doing the best she could at the time. How important to the story do you think it is that she was able to do this?
6. Did you understand Ethan's need to have Andrea stay with David? Considering he believed David to be Andrea's father, do you think there was anything he could have done differently to convince Carly it was the right thing to do?
7. Could you see the progression and change in Carly's decisions as the story unfolded? In particular, how she did better when she knew better? Other than time and experience, what do you think hastened this progress?

Author Bio

Georgia Bockoven is an award-winning author who began writing fiction after a successful career as a freelance journalist and photographer. Her books have sold more than four million copies worldwide. Her first book for HarperCollins, *A MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE*, will soon be a CBS movie starring Jane Seymour and James Brolin. The mother of two, she resides in Northern California with her husband, John.

Critical Praise

"Bockoven's well-charted heartwrencher is sensitively depicted and thought-provoking."

*— Publishers Weekly, on **An Unspoken Promise***

"Georgia Bockoven knows the secret to stirring readers' feelings."

? Sacramento Bee on **The Beach House**

"Bockoven is magic. Don't miss Another Summer."

? Catherine Coulter, *New York Times* bestselling author

"Always terrific."

? Romantic Times BookClub

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