

Grace on the Ledge, Patricia Thompson Collamer



Book Club Discussion Questions

1. The author writes between two time periods, telling stories of her mother's decline after stroke and of her life as a preteen in the 1960s. Did you like the overall style of writing? Did the style differ between time periods? If so, how?
2. Does the book make you want to learn about other parts of the author's life?
3. The author describes her mother and her loss of speech "The one-sidedness in our communication became a source of gripping sadness." She also reminds the reader several times that throughout the last years her mother was entirely present in the moment. How is this story different from others you have read because of the lack of dementia so many of our elders live with.
4. Was there anything you felt the author left out of the book you wish had been included?
5. How would you describe the author's relationship with her mother, her father, and her siblings?
6. What message or messages do you think the author wanted to leave the reader?
7. At the end of one passage the author states "Why did it take a stroke to render me just helpless enough to make me grow up?" Do you think the author changed over the time the book was written? If so, in what ways?
8. Were there any parts of the book that surprised you?
9. Discussions of mother-daughter relationships often include the different ways they communicate and the scrutiny each uses to assess the other. Did the book make you reflect on your own relationship with your mother, grandmother, or daughter? Do you share any similar feelings of being observed and criticized as a child?
10. Would you be interested in reading any other books by this author?
11. There were many stories included from the author's life growing up. Which one do you remember most clearly?
12. The author reports, "Often the first response to my book is for a reader to share a story of their own personal loss." Does the book leave you sad in any way? Or hopeful?