



THE JETSETTERS



Amanda Eyre Ward

BOOK CLUB KIT



A LETTER FROM AMANDA EYRE WARD

Dear Reader,

I'm so excited that you've chosen to climb aboard the *Splendido Marveloso* with Charlotte Perkins and her adult children, and I hope you enjoy their jet-setting adventure!

The idea for the novel *The Jetsetters* began one morning in my kitchen in Austin, Texas. I'm a mother of three, and my kitchen was lively and hectic. As my kids ate Honey Nut Cheerios, I paged through a travel magazine. I saw an ad for a Mediterranean cruise, and a voice in my mind said, "Amanda! You do not belong in this bathrobe in an Austin kitchen! You belong on the balcony of a cruise ship, gazing at a foreign sea!"

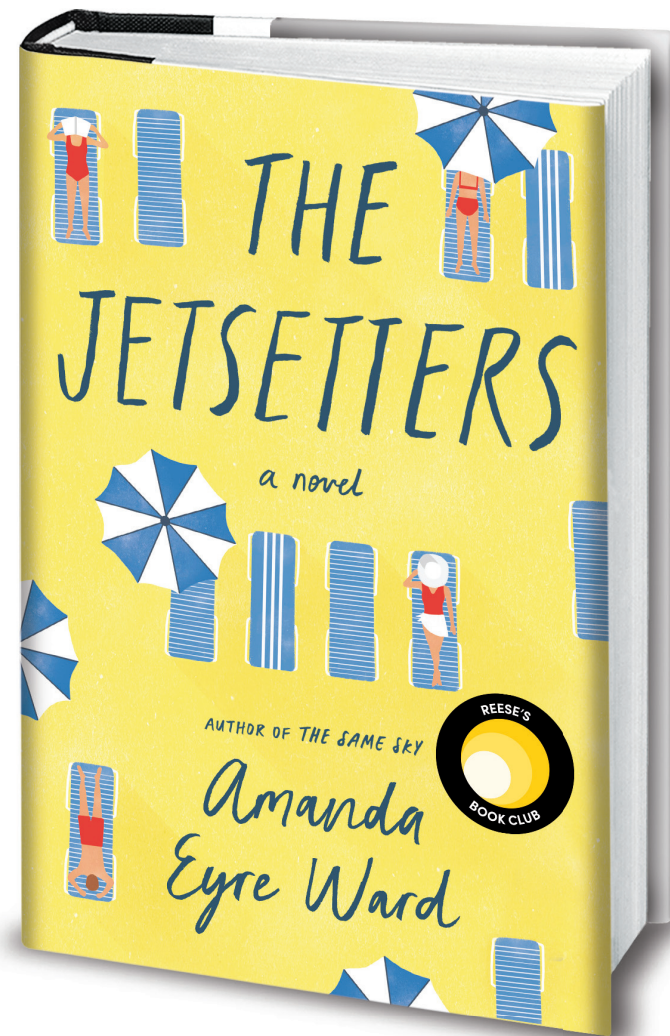
The next morning, I woke with a cast of characters in my imagination: a single mother named Charlotte Perkins, and her three adult children, who had grown away from each other and themselves. I knew they deserved a cruise to bring them back together. When forced back into each other's lives, I wanted them to be vulnerable, open up, and really see each other—maybe for the first time.

I had never been on a cruise ship. What did they look like? Were there really waterslides and discos onboard? I began researching itineraries. When I hit the button to buy tickets for myself and my two sons to sail from Athens, Greece to Barcelona, Spain, it was one of the most exciting moments of my life.

What I didn't anticipate was how the world of a cruise ship would bring me closer to my own children. With no chores, dishes, cooking, or commuting, we had time to connect in a real way. A cruise ship creates an alternative world, a place to slow down and enter trivia contests and linger over dinner. It was magic.

I've since taken three cruises and adored them all. It turns out I *do* belong on a balcony, gazing at a sunset, a cool drink and a great book to read at my side. I hope you'll enjoy vacationing with my Jetsetters, too.

Bon voyage!
Amanda



CHARACTERS

Charlotte: A mother of three grown children—grandmother to two—who lives in Savannah, Georgia. She recently won a luxury trip to Europe for herself and her children.

Winston: Charlotte's late husband.

Minnie: Charlotte's oldest friend in Savannah and recently deceased. Her pragmatic can-do spirit has helped Charlotte step out of her comfort zone on more than one occasion.

Lee: Charlotte's oldest daughter, a floundering actress in L.A., who was recently dumped by her celebrity boyfriend. She's suffered bouts of depression and has a difficult relationship with her younger sister, Regan.

Cord: Charlotte's second child. Sober for under two years, he lives in New York City with his fiancé, Giovanni, and rarely sees his mother or sisters and shares even less with them.

Regan: At 32, the baby of Charlotte's children. A once-budding artist, she's now mother to two young daughters and in a terribly unhappy marriage.

Giovanni: Cord's fiancé—who has never met Cord's family.

Isabella: Regan's nine-year-old daughter

Flora: Regan's seven-year-old daughter

Matt: Regan's husband, a former high school football star, now an orthopedic surgeon. He's also the reason Regan and her sister, Lee, have a strained relationship.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the many mother-daughter relationships at the core of the novel. How does Charlotte's relationship with her mother impact her relationship with her own daughters?
2. What do you think of Lee's decision to rig the "Become a Jetsetter" contest? What kinds of boundaries is she crossing, and do you think her actions are justified? How does Ward explore ideas of privacy and boundaries between loved ones in the novel?
3. Which character did you like the best, and why?
4. How would this story be different if it didn't take place on a cruise? How was the plot shaped by the confined cruise ship setting?
5. Discuss how the book handles the matter of age. Do you think there are different societal expectations for people of certain ages? How do you see those expectations represented or subverted in this book? How does that apply to the portrayal of female desire in the novel, particularly for Charlotte?
6. Did you look for yourself or elements of your own family dynamic in this novel? What aspects of the familial relationships in this book did you find relatable?
7. If you had to enter the "Become a Jetsetter" contest, what would your story be about?
8. Why does Cord seem to have an especially difficult time coming out to his family? In what ways does his family mishandle his coming out, and what could they have done differently?
9. How does Winston's alcoholism and mistreatment of his family impact them later in life?
10. Leo Tolstoy once wrote that "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." After reading this novel, do you agree? Why or why not?
11. Discuss two of the main themes of the novel: love and truth. How are these themes at odds and how do they work together?

LIMONCELLO SANGRIA



Serves: 1 pitcher

Ingredients:

3 cups Limoncellino Soda
1 cup white wine
Orange and lemon slices
for garnish

Instructions:

- Mix Limoncellino Soda and white wine together in large pitcher with ice and the orange and lemon slices.
- Serve chilled over ice and enjoy!

Courtesy of yummlly.com

THE MEDITERRANEAN SPARKLING SPRING



Serves: 2, so double, triple, or quadruple for your book club!

Ingredients:

3 ounces vodka
1¾ ounces triple sec
1¾ ounces lemon juice
3 mint sprigs
Prosecco

Instructions:

- Add vodka, triple sec, lemon juice, and mint sprigs into a mixing glass. Muddle.
- Add ice to the mixing glass. Stir.
- Strain into two serving glasses.
- Top with prosecco.

Courtesy of vinepair.com

BLOOD ORANGE VODKA COCKTAIL



Serves: 1 drink

Ingredients:

- 1 blood orange
- 2 oz. vodka
- 1 cup crushed ice
- 1 cup sparkling water
- 1 rosemary twig

Instructions:

- Slice the blood orange in half. Slice one half in round slices and squeeze the other half for juice.
- Pick a wide cocktail vase. Add 1 slice of blood orange to the bottom. Add the crushed ice on top, then another slice of blood orange.
- Pour vodka on top. Then add sparkling water and freshly squeezed juice.
- Decorate with a slice of blood orange and the rosemary, serve right away.

Courtesy of [yummly.com](https://www.yummly.com)

MEDITERRANEAN CUCUMBER TONIC



Serves: 1 drink

Ingredients:

3 mini-cucumber slices
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice for muddling, plus one lemon slice for squeezing
4 ounces tonic water
1 sprig fresh rosemary

Instructions:

- In a rocks glass, muddle 1 mini-cucumber slice and fresh lemon juice.
- Top with ice, 2 more mini-cucumber slices, tonic water, a squeeze from one slice of lemon, and a sprig of fresh rosemary.

Courtesy of marthastewart.com

MINT, LIME, AND GINGER SPARKLER



Serves: 6 to 8

Ingredients:

Fresh ginger (2-inch piece), thinly sliced, plus more for serving
¼ cup loosely packed fresh mint leaves
¼ cup fresh lime juice
24 ounces ginger beer (such as Q Mixers)
8 ounces seltzer
Lime wheels and mint sprigs, for serving

Instructions:

- In a large bowl, muddle fresh ginger, mint leaves, and lime juice.
- Stir in ginger beer. Strain into a pitcher, pressing down on solids. Stir in seltzer.
- Serve over ice with lime wheels, more ginger slices, and mint sprigs.

Courtesy of marthastewart.com

