

# **Modern Lovers by Emma Straub**

## **Discussion Questions**

1. *Modern Lovers* explores the concept of aging. How do you think these characters feel about their own journeys into adulthood? How does the adults' description of youth compare with the teenagers' experience or description of youth? What about their different perspectives on adulthood? Which of them, the adults or the teens, is more accurate? Is one perspective more true than the other?
2. Lydia soared on to become a star, leaving the rest of Kitty's Mustache behind. How does Lydia's success and subsequent death affect the current actions of these characters? Specifically, Elizabeth, Zoe, and Andrew see themselves in opposition to Lydia. What if she hadn't died?
3. Do you think Andrew was right in lying to Elizabeth about his relationship with Lydia? How might things have been different if he had told her the truth from the start?
4. Should Elizabeth have gone through with the Kitty's Mustache documentary, even without Andrew's approval? Considering the events that are set in motion, do you think this decision helps their marriage or hinders it in the end?
5. Does the fire at Hyacinth, though devastating at the time, actually lead to a happier marriage for Zoe and Jane? Why or why not?
6. Are Ruby and Harry a good romantic fit? Are they too young to know whether they are?
7. Self-image plays an important role in *Modern Lovers*. All of these characters have specific ideas about themselves, and often, the realities don't quite match. Discuss how the characters want to be seen, in comparison with who they actually are.
8. Discuss how the characters' friendships change over the years from college to early parenthood to middle age. How are their relationships with one another and their perceptions of themselves linked? How does one affect the other?