

Second Acts

Teri Emory

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Intelligent, witty, and filled with true feeling, this is a novel that celebrates women's bonds and resilience.

Second Acts, by Teri Emory, is a smart, heartfelt glimpse at love, loss, and surprises in the lives of three longtime friends who are navigating unfamiliar emotional terrain amid personal and professional change.

Sarah, Miriam, and Beth are closer than sisters, connected since their dorm days in the late 1960s.

Now, Sarah is a divorcée and mother living comfortably with her upward-swinging career and handsome boyfriend—until family secrets and tragedy shake her stable world. Elegant Miriam, a film scholar and a feminist, is still reeling from the loss of true love when a chance meeting upends her positions. Beth, a psychoanalyst and the wife of a wealthy business mogul, has everything she could ever want but still grieves a past she cannot reconcile.

From pre-September 11th Manhattan to sultry Savannah to the romance of Rome, *Second Acts* follows these three passionate women on their most arduous and rewarding journeys yet.

Bookended by shared brunches and told from their alternating first-person perspectives, *Second Acts* is an elegantly detailed portrait of what goes on behind women's calm and polished veneers. It peers into bedrooms and marriages, dreams and careers, decisions and regrets.

The women's voices sometimes teeter toward oversimilarity, but each woman's story is intriguing on its own. Their stories dip gracefully into the past, allowing for a peek behind their well-tailored curtains, without distracting from their stories in the present. Writing is clean and conversational, making for a delicious and unhurried read.

As Beth laments, regarding their carefree college days, "The songs we played reflected both the turbulent times we were living in and our aching desire to find true love." *Second Acts* is a continuation of such songs, a reminder that time is relentless and age does not limit the desires of the heart.

Intelligent, witty, and filled with true feeling, *Second Acts* is a meditation on resilience, second chances, and the unfaltering strength of women's friendships.

MEREDITH HARDWICKE (September/October 2017)

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