



Modern Lovers

By Emma Straub

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

An NPR Best Book of 2016

An *Entertainment Weekly* Best Book of 2016

A *Slate* Best Book of the Year

A *Washington Post* Notable Fiction Pick

“Ms. Straub writes with such verve and sympathetic understanding of her characters. . . [An] entertaining novel. . . deftly and thoughtfully written.” – Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

“It’s ‘Friends’ meets ‘Almost Famous’ meets the beach read you’ll be recommending all summer.” –TheSkimm

“Straub serves up a perfect slice of the zeitgeist with this entertaining novel about former college bandmates raising their precocious children while grappling with marital tensions and midlife crises.” –*People*, Named one of “Summer’s Best Books”

From the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Vacationers*, a smart, highly entertaining novel about a tight-knit group of friends from college—and what it means to finally grow up, well after adulthood has set in.

Friends and former college bandmates Elizabeth and Andrew and Zoe have watched one another marry, buy real estate, and start businesses and families, all while trying to hold on to the identities of their youth. But nothing ages them like having to suddenly pass the torch (of sexuality, independence, and the ineffable alchemy of cool) to their own offspring.

Back in the band’s heyday, Elizabeth put on a snarl over her Midwestern smile, Andrew let his unwashed hair grow past his chin, and Zoe was the lesbian all the straight women wanted to sleep with. Now nearing fifty, they all live within shouting distance in the same neighborhood deep in gentrified Brooklyn, and the trappings of the adult world seem to have arrived with ease. But the summer that their children reach maturity (and start sleeping together), the fabric of the adult lives suddenly begins to unravel, and the secrets and revelations that are finally

let loose—about themselves, and about the famous fourth band member who soared and fell without them—can never be reclaimed.

Straub packs wisdom and insight and humor together in a satisfying book about neighbors and nosiness, ambition and pleasure, the excitement of youth, the shock of middle age, and the fact that our passions—be they food, or friendship, or music—never go away, they just evolve and grow along with us.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Back in the 1980s at Oberlin College, in Ohio, Elizabeth, Andrew, Zoe, and Lydia had a band called Kitty's Mustache. Elizabeth wrote a song called "Mistress of Myself"; Lydia sang it and made it famous, but she died of a heroin overdose at age 27. Two decades later, Elizabeth and Andrew are married and have a son, Harry. Living nearby in Brooklyn's Ditmas Park neighborhood are Zoe and her wife, Jane, with their daughter, Ruby. They own a neighborhood restaurant called Hyacinth. Midlife crises are roiling both marriages: Zoe and Jane are considering divorce; Andrew, the scion of wealthy parents, has never held a meaningful job and is now bemoaning his failure to find fulfillment, and Elizabeth sells real estate in Ditmas and feels responsible for everyone. To further complicate matters, teenagers Harry and Ruby suddenly discover sex. Into this volatile mix comes a Hollywood producer who's making a movie about Lydia and urgently needs the former band members to sign over their rights to the iconic song. Straub (*The Vacationers*) spins her lighthearted but psychologically perceptive narrative with a sure touch as she captures the vibes of midlife, middle-class angst and the raging hormones of youth. Straub excels in establishing a sense of place: the narrative could serve as a map to gentrified Brooklyn; it's that detailed and visually clear. Events move at a brisk pace, and surprises involving resurgent passion enliven the denouement. Readers will devour this witty and warmly satisfying novel. Agent: Claudia Ballard, WME Entertainment. (May)

Review

"Reading this novel has all the pleasures of reading one of Anne Tyler's compelling family portraits — but transported from Baltimore to Brooklyn, peopled with aging hipsters (instead of perennially middle-aged folks) and doused with a Lorrie Moore-like sense of the absurdities of contemporary life." —Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

"The humorous insight Straub brings to the page about how everyday lives are lived will make for immersive reading and rich conversation. . . Straub recounts her characters' yearnings with love and empathy, which makes the book's wit — and *Modern Lovers* is screamingly funny —glow with warmth." —*USA Today*

"Straub serves up a perfect slice of the zeitgeist with this entertaining novel about former college bandmates raising their precocious children while grappling with marital tensions and midlife crises." —*People*

"[*Modern Lovers*] has the smart, cool sensibility of Straub's other novels, and you're sure to love this one just as much." —*Elle*

"Straub lets her characters fall apart and come together in their own messy, refreshingly human ways—always older, sometimes wiser, but never quite done coming of age." —*Entertainment Weekly*

"Summer in the city has never felt so good. . . *Modern Lovers* celebrates the updated look and feel of familial love and all of its complexities. Straub's clever and perceptive observations on growing up are gentle reminders that coming of age isn't just for kids." —*The Washington Post*

"With a real-estate agent, a chef, a yogi 'guru,' and teens sneaking off to do what teens do when teens sneak off— Straub's latest has something for everyone." —*Marie Claire*

“A lovely, satisfying early-summer read.” —*EW.com*

“Thoughtful and hilarious, *Modern Lovers* proves growing up doesn’t stop in adulthood.” —*Real Simple*

“[Emma Straub] delights in this multi-generational tale.” —*Good Housekeeping*

“Bestseller Emma Straub gives us an insightful look into middle age, parenthood, and the funny way that passions never fade, no matter how much time passes by.” —*Harper’s Bazaar*

“Straub has a gift for exposing larger truths through small, telling details. Her warmth and sense of humor electrify every page.” —*New York Magazine, Vulture*

“Really entertaining. The characters are complex and likeable... one of those stories that makes you realise that life really does run away from you.” —*The Guardian (UK)*

“Straub has a knack for keeping relationship drama amusing.” —*The Boston Globe*

“[Straub has a] gentle way of producing meaning, allowing characters’ trains of thought to run freely until they end up exposing a truth at once personally significant and broadly aphoristic. The deepening feels so natural you hardly notice it happening, and then you wonder how you arrived at such an inward-facing, luminous place.” —*Slate*

“*Modern Lovers* examines love as both a fictionalized form of entertainment and very real component of the human condition. It pains us, excites us, frustrates and compels us to do stupid and extraordinary things — and yet we seem ever-willing to come back for more.” —*Salon*

“A hilarious and heartfelt look at love and friendship, *Modern Lovers* is this summer’s page-turning must-read.” —*Mashable*

“Beach-ready.” —*Flavorwire*

“[*Modern Lovers*] is a treat. . . a fabulous coming-of-age novel about women entering into a new era of their lives.” —*Refinery29*

“In *Modern Lovers*, Straub’s new intertwined families are stuck in Ditmas Park, Brooklyn, for the summer, but there are plenty of fireworks — including a teen romance and a potential movie about the friends’ punk-rock past.” —*Newsday*

“A life-long friend group much like the Friends gang are now in their fifties, and their kids are becoming adults. Much like Monica, Rachel, Joey, Chandler, Ross, and Phoebe, the characters are all neighbors with each other, this time in Brooklyn. As they grapple with their new place in life, you’ll be drawn completely in by their stories and struggles.” —*Bustle*

“[Booksellers] are high on this *Big Chill*-for-Gen X story from the author of *The Vacationers*.” —*Hollywood Reporter*

“A smart, thoughtful novel about growing up and getting older.” —*PopSugar*

“A gentle and quirky story about growing up and letting go, *Modern Lovers* is the perfect summer read: It’s

breezy yet relatable and wildly entertaining.” —*PureWow*

“Modern Lovers takes place in a Brooklyn so brilliantly true to real life, it’s hard to ignore. A summer read of the highest order.” —HelloGiggles

“Sweet, charming, funny and gut-wrenching.” —The Fort Worth Star-Telegram

“[Straub] sets her observational wit on three middle-aged friends (former college bandmates) who find themselves in a crisis of identity as their now-grown children head off to college themselves.” —*Huffington Post*

“What happens when you age out of your cool? It’s a topic that filmmaker Noah Baumbach has explored, and Straub is his literary counterpart. . . With the multigenerational structure, it would be easy to compare Straub to other masters of the genre like Meg Wolitzer or Jennifer Egan, but she’s already a master in her own right after *The Vacationers*, so *Modern Lovers* should prove to be a witty romp.” —*The Millions*

“An enthralling page-turner with conflicts and mysteries that will keep readers riveted.” —Bust

“This is a coming of age story for the parents and children alike, each of who grows up during the course of the novel. . . Straub treats her characters with a rare good humor and affection, which is what makes *Modern Lovers* such an entertaining, yet affecting, story.” —*The Examiner*

“Straub has such a funny, perceptive writing style, you feel like you’re close friends with them all.” —*Cup of Jo*

“Wise and often hilarious, *Modern Lovers* is a testament to how the passions and secrets of our youth can last well into adulthood.” —*Buzzfeed*

About the Author

Emma Straub is the *New York Times*?bestselling author of *The Vacationers*, *Laura Lamont's Life in Pictures*, and the short story collection *Other People We Married*. Her fiction and nonfiction have been published in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Vogue*, *Elle*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*, and she is a contributing writer for *Rookie*. Straub's work has been published in fifteen countries.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lillie Levine:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important work, like looking for your favorite book and reading a reserve. Beside you can solve your long lasting problem; you can add your knowledge by the book entitled *Modern Lovers*. Try to face the book *Modern Lovers* as your good friend. It means that it can for being your friend when you really feel alone and beside that of course make you smarter than ever before. Yeah, it is very fortuned for you. The book makes you considerably more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let me make new experience in addition to

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