

STEPHANIE HEMPHILL

Sisters of Glass



A tale of two sisters, true love, and Venice from
the Printz Honor-winning author of *Your Own, Sylvia*

READERS GUIDE



Alfred A. Knopf

RHTeachersLibrarians.com



Grades 7 up

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QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

- ☞ Why does Maria's father choose her to marry a nobleman instead of Giovanna? What is Maria's reaction when she discovers she is to marry? How does her father's choice affect the sisters' relationship?
- ☞ Why is it so important that Maria marry a nobleman? What role do her brothers play in selecting an appropriate suitor? Who has the final say on the arrangement?
- ☞ Why is the relationship between Maria and her mother strained? How does the search for a husband both help and hurt their relationship?
- ☞ On page 35, Giovanna says that Maria has cursed her. Why does Giovanna blame Maria for what their father did? How does Giovanna express her anger at the situation?

ABOUT THE BOOK

Set in 15th-century Venice, *Sisters of Glass* tells the story of two sisters who are bound by their father's last will and testament to live their lives in conflict with their own desires and destiny. Maria wants to be a glassblower working in the family business; Giovanna wants to marry nobility and live the life accorded the wife of a nobleman. Yet, to honor their father, Maria will be wed to a nobleman she does not love, and Giovanna will marry the young glassblower who works for their family. Facing lives of misery, the girls finally seek help from an unlikely person, but one destined to alter their futures.



- ❧ Why is Giovanna more suited to marry a nobleman? What specific gifts and talents does she possess that make her more marketable? How does Giovanna feel about marrying a nobleman?
- ❧ Why does the family agree to hire Luca? What do they offer Luca that is so valuable to him?
- ❧ The attraction between Luca and Maria is mutual and immediate. How does Luca react to the fact that Maria will have to marry someone else? What risks does Maria take to spend time with Luca?
- ❧ What motivates Giovanna to change her attitude toward Maria? How does Giovanna show Maria that she is sorry for her previous actions?
- ❧ Why is Maria so hesitant to reveal her true feelings for Luca to Giovanna? Does Maria have a valid reason for keeping quiet? What is Giovanna's reaction when she discovers that Maria has feelings for Luca?
- ❧ Why does Leona, Andrea Bembo's sister, treat Maria with such disrespect and Giovanna with such acceptance? How does Leona eventually help both sisters?
- ❧ On page 1, Maria wants to tell Giovanna that she will trade positions with her. How could this statement be considered foreshadowing? Who helps Maria and Giovanna make both of their dreams come true?
- ❧ What does Luca's wedding gift to Maria reveal about his character and his love for Maria? How does the gift help to fulfill Maria's destiny?



INTERNET RESOURCES

How Glassblowing Works

entertainment.howstuffworks.com/arts/artwork/glassblowing.htm
OPEC.org/opec_web/en/

The History of Murano Glass

www.thehistoryof.net/history-of-glass-blowing-in-Murano.html
stardust.com/murano.html

The History of Venice

www.travelplan.it/venice_guide_history_culture.htm
europeanhistory.about.com/od/italyandthecitystates/a/venice.htm

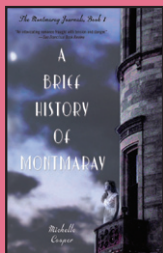


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

STEPHANIE HEMPHILL is the author of the Printz Honor-winning *Your Own, Sylvia*, a verse portrait of Sylvia Plath, as well as *Things Left Unsaid* and the critically acclaimed *Wicked Girls*, which received four starred reviews.

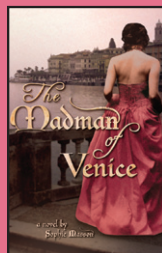
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