

AT WAVE'S END

A NOVEL

By
Patricia Perry Donovan

*A run-down inn and a brutal storm offer a mother
daughter unexpected chances...in life and love.*

About the Book

After a childhood as unpredictable as the flip of a coin, Faith Sterling has finally found her comfort zone in the kitchen of an upscale Manhattan restaurant. A workaholic chef, at least there she's in control. So when her free-spirited and often-gullible mother, Connie, calls to announce that she's won a bed-and-breakfast on the Jersey Shore, Faith's patience boils over. Convinced the contest is a scam, she rushes to Wave's End to stop Connie from trading her steady job for an uncertain future.

When a hurricane ravages the coast, Faith is torn between supporting the shore rescue and bailing out her beleaguered boss. But the storm dredges up deceptions and emotional debris that threaten to destroy the inn's future and her fragile bonds with her mother.

As the women struggle to salvage both the inn and their relationship, Faith begins to see herself and Connie in a new light—and to realize that some moments are better left to chance.

Invite the Author

Patricia is available to visit with your book group via phone call, Skype or in person (if it's geographically plausible). Please email her at patriciapdonovan@gmail.com.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

- Though *At Wave's End* is entirely a work of fiction, a major hurricane devastated the East Coast of the United States at around this same time. Talk about the role of the hurricane in the story, and how it transforms the characters. Are descriptions of the storm and its aftermath authentic? Did reading about the storm lead to a new understanding or awareness of some aspect of natural disasters that you might not have thought about before?
- What do the novel's opening pages tell you about the relationship between Faith and her mother? How does this relationship change over time?
- Did you like Faith Sterling as a person? What does her chosen profession say about her?
- What kind of mother is Connie Sterling? How would you describe her parenting style?
- Talk about the significance of "Moon and Stars." What meaning does it hold for Faith, Connie and David?
- Early on, we meet Faith's best friend, Ellie. During the novel, Faith bonds with Tanya, Merrill and Grace. How do these female friendships affect Faith, and how important are they to the story?
- How does the author use *The Mermaid's Purse*, a run-down bed-and-breakfast, in the story? What does the inn represent for each of the characters? How is Faith transformed by her stay at the inn?
- Of all the boarders at *The Mermaid's Purse*, which one(s) did you like the most?
- Connie wins *The Mermaid's Purse* in a lottery. Would you ever enter a contest like that? What would be the pros and cons to consider?
- Is Faith's initial assessment and treatment of Bruce justified?
- How is Faith transformed by the conversation she overhears between Connie and Roxanne?
- It is often said that too many cooks spoil the broth. How does David's presence in the kitchen affect Faith? Is the evolution of their relationship believable? Why is David so keen to take Faith surfing?

- What did you think of Faith's reaction when she finds her birth certificate? Was Connie justified in keeping this information from her?
- There are more than seventy food references in the novel. What does food represent in the story? What did you think of Faith's menu selections? Which was your favorite?
- Faith works hard to save the inn. What does the inn's future represent to her? If you had been a past guest at The Mermaid's Purse, would you have been compelled to contribute?
- Why do you think the author wrote this? What is her most important message?
- What did you think of the ending? Would you want to read more about any of these characters, and if so, which ones?

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