



Stone Creek

By Victoria Lustbader
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Introduction

In the novel *Stone Creek*, the author, Victoria Lustbader, explores many themes that will be immediately recognizable to the reader. Her exploration of the three different characters who engage in this *pas de trios* of love allows each one their own moments of revelation and change and allows the reader to relate on an intimate level with all three as they make their way through the nuanced entanglements of adult life and love.

Questions for Discussion

1. All three characters believe that they have met the love of their life. Danny thought Tara was the love of his life. Lily and Paul each believe the other is the love they were destined for. Do you believe there can only be one *true* love? Or is it possible to love again with the same kind of depth and fulfillment?
2. The book purposely brings up, without judgment, some of the many ways, motives and reasons why people are unfaithful to their committed partners, or to their idea of moral rightness. Do you think infidelity is ever justified? Can it be a good thing under the right circumstances? Do you think its ever justified to act in opposition to your own sense of what's morally right? What are other reasons, not explored in this book, that might cause someone to take such an action?
3. Each of the main characters in the book experiences a loss that paralyzes him or her in some way. Danny's loss is the most obvious; what loss do you think each of the other characters—Lily, Paul, Eve—suffer from? Do you think they all succeed in forgiving? Do you think that the act of forgiving, in each case, allows that person to move on with his or her life?
4. In reading about the beginning of their marriage, Lily's and Paul's relationship seems to be in perfect balance. How do you think this changes and what does Danny offer that Lily hasn't gotten in her relationship with Paul? Do you think Danny envisions the same intimacy in a relationship with Lily as he had with Tara?
5. Danny believes that he and Tara would never have had the problems that Lily and Paul have. Do you agree? Why? What are the differences in the two relationships?
6. Lily wonders which is worse – to lose something vital that you've had, or to have never had it at all; is one worse than the other and why? The reactions of the outside world are different in each case—when you lose something you had, the world notices and grieves with you. If you lose something you want but don't get, does the world notice? How do you grieve differently for a private loss rather than a public one? Do you think one process is easier than the other?
7. Lily's love for Danny is inextricably bound to her love and need for Caleb. They two of them bring up the two most primal urges in a woman/person: sex and parenthood. Would she have fallen in love with Danny if he didn't have a son, or if she didn't yearn for a child?
8. Danny's feelings for Lily go deeper than her resemblance to his dead wife. What is he responding to in her? Do you think they could have had a future together?
9. Do you think that Danny was right to give Eve Tara's journal? Why do you think he chose to do that? Who do you think it helped more, Danny or Eve? What does his act say about his feelings toward Eve and about his grieving over Tara? What do you think Eve's reaction to what she reads would be? Do you think she will feel differently about Tara and Danny afterward?
10. Lily faces one of the toughest decisions a person can face—torn between loving two people and having to choose one. Did Lily make the right decision in staying with Paul? What do you think would have happened if she had chosen Danny? What do you think are her reasons for her choice?
11. Lily and Danny will see one another again - they are determined not to lose their friendship, and Caleb's happiness. What do you think will happen when they do? Do you think it's possible for two people, who feel the way they do about each other, to remain just friends? Can very strong feelings for a person morph into something just as strong, and yet different?
12. Is this a happy ending?

About the Author

A former book editor, Victoria Lustbader became an author herself with her first novel, *Hidden*. She divides her time between Southampton, New York, and New York City.