Elizabeth Strout
Anything Is Possible: A Novel

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READERS’ ADVISORY:
Recalling Olive Kitteridge in its richness, structure, and complexity, Anything Is Possible explores the whole range of human emotion through the intimate dramas of people struggling to understand themselves and others.

ABOUT THE BOOK:

Here are two sisters: One trades self-respect for a wealthy husband while the other finds in the pages of a book a kindred spirit who changes her life. The janitor at the local school has his faith tested in an encounter with an isolated man he has come to help; a grown daughter longs for mother love even as she comes to accept her mother’s happiness in a foreign country; and the adult Lucy Barton (the heroine of My Name Is Lucy Barton) returns to visit her siblings after seventeen years of absence.

Anything Is Possible reverberates with the deep bonds of family, and the hope that comes with reconciliation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think Strout chose to structure Anything Is Possible in linked stories? How would your understanding of the book change if it had been written as a novel with one narrative instead?

2. How does the town of Amgash itself feature in the text? How does it shape the lives of its residents? If Amgash had its own personality, how would you characterize it?

3. The past often plays a role in these stories, and many of the characters find themselves struggling to reconcile with it. What are the various ways in which the past shapes them? How do they attempt to deal with their own pasts, and those of the characters around them?

4. Strout deals with many different types of family relationships in the book—between parents and children, spouses, and siblings. How were these different types of relationships treated? What were the differences and similarities in the ways the characters navigated these relationships? Which ones resonated most with you, and why?

For more discussion questions visit: PenguinRandomHouse.com