



My Daughter's Legacy

By Mindy Starns Clark and Leslie Gould

1. Nicole has a secret she's carried since childhood. How has it affected her throughout her growing-up years? What finally makes her decide to disclose it? What are the results of her sharing her secret with those she loves?
2. Therese's mother, Helene, veers away from her late husband's beliefs about abolition and instead embraces the lifestyle of her childhood, which includes the owning of slaves, after her father dies. What changes for Helene? What is her motivation? Were you sympathetic toward her or, like Therese, frustrated by her?
3. Nate is afraid to get close to Nicole because of her history as an addict. What's behind his fear? What makes him finally decide to take a chance on her? Do you think it is hypocritical of him, as a former addict, to fear a relationship with her?
4. The carte des visits from 1863 of the former slave with the web of scar tissue across his back has been referred to as the "viral photo that changed America." According to Frank Goodyear, codirector of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art, "It suggests that the Southern idea that slavery was a benign institution was in fact a lie." What impact do images have on your emotions? Is there a particular photo that has changed your thinking? If so, what is it and how did it affect you?
5. After much thought, Therese decides to spy for the enemy. What process does she go through to come to this decision as a Southern belle? Whose story helps convince her to do it? What was your response to Therese spying?
6. At the beginning of the novel, Therese is firm in her ideals but fairly compliant. By the end of the story, she is able to stand up for herself and those she loves. What are some of the steps to independence Therese goes through?
7. Therese volunteers as a nurse at the Institute Hospital and then is hired to work there. Her experience caring for her father doesn't prepare her for the work in the hospital. How is caring for soldiers different? If you had been alive during the Civil War, could you have volunteered to work as a nurse?
8. The night Maddee and Greg get engaged, Nicole decides that even if their union was the only good thing to come out of all of the pain and suffering of her accident, it still would have been worth it. Have you ever had something wonderful come from something awful? In the end, was the suffering you were forced to endure worth it?
9. Each of the four cousins contributes her own unique skill to the solving of the mystery—Renee with her knowledge of science, Danielle with her artist's eye and understanding of architecture, and Maddee with her ability to organize and administrate. What is Nicole's contribution, and how does her own history allow her to recognize addiction in others?
10. In all three novels of the Cousins of the Dove series, the cousins in the modern thread learn about themselves from their ancestors' trials and triumphs. What have you learned from your ancestors? Have any of their stories helped you navigate your own life?