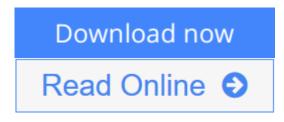


Late Bloomer

By Fern Michaels



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Buried secrets and past betrayals, old friendships and new beginnings are at the heart of this rich, compelling bestseller from Fern Michaels, one of today's most popular novelists.

Twenty years after a childhood accident left a permanent shadow over her life, Cady Jordan has returned to her Pennsylvania hometown. Her beloved grandmother Lola, a retired movie star, needs Cady's care -- but soon after arriving at Lola's lavish estate, it's clear that the colorful actress will be Cady's mentor to living life to the fullest. Cady wants nothing more than to come out of her shell, but to do so means resurrecting her lost memories of the day when a foolish stunt ended with a young bully's death and Cady's serious injury -- a tragedy for which her friends held Cady responsible. They're adults now -- a lawyer, a businessman, a stay-at-home mom. And a police chief: Boomer Ward, whose flaring attraction works on Cady's guarded heart. Now, Cady must determine who can be trusted as she draws closer to Boomer and confronts those who wish she'd never returned. Old wounds may be healed, but can Cady close a door on her heartache and embrace a bright new life?

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The eponymous late bloomer in this new novel by the prolific Michaels (No Place Like Home) is Cady Jordan, a dowdy 30-year-old loner who moves back to her hometown of Indigo, Pa., to take care of her ailing grandmother. Lola Jor Dan is no cuddly, cookie-baking granny; she's a flamboyant retired movie star, widowed six times and living on a lavish estate. She revamps Cady's wardrobe ("You're going to buy off the rack?") and encourages her to start living her life. But Cady can't: when she was 10 years old, she took part in a daredevil stunt that landed her in the hospital and killed another child. She has no memory of the accident, but has been a nervous, timid creature ever since. Now that she's back in Indigo, Cady hopes to recover her lost memory. Fortunately, the town is still home to all her cohorts of that day: Pete Danson, now a local lawyer; Boomer Ward, the town's police chief; Amy Hollister, who had been leader of the mischievous pack and is now a stay-at-home mom; and Amy's twin, Andy, an insurance salesman. The childhood attraction between Cady and Boomer becomes an on-and-off-again romance that complicates matters as Cady tries to get to the bottom of what happened, while her former playmates do everything they can to stop her. The action-packed plot holds few surprises, but Michaels's fans will be satisfied with this feel-good page-turner.

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From Library Journal

Refusing to slack off after 44 best sellers, Michaels introduces us to Cady Johnson, who is trying to heal after a childhood tragedy.

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From **Booklist**

Cady Jordan is moving back to Indigo Valley, Pennsylvania, 20 years after a devastating childhood accident. She has no memory of the tragedy that left her so fearful, and now she's returning to take care of her grandmother, the famous actress Lola Jor Dan, and to figure out what happened so long ago. The two are glad to be together, and the ailing, yet vivacious, Lola, who has watched Cady change from a spunky child to a pale imitation of herself, can't wait to see her granddaughter come out of her shell. Together the two tackle the mystery of the accident, but Lola also plays Pygmalion to Cady's Galatea, buying her a new wardrobe and giving Cady lessons on living. Cady is initially perplexed by her childhood friends' reactions to her return, which range from attraction to hostility, but the new Cady takes it in stride and even starts a relationship with an old nemesis. Michaels' snazzy tale reveals the ups-and-downs of friendship and small-town life. *Patty Engelmann*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lauren Joseph:

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