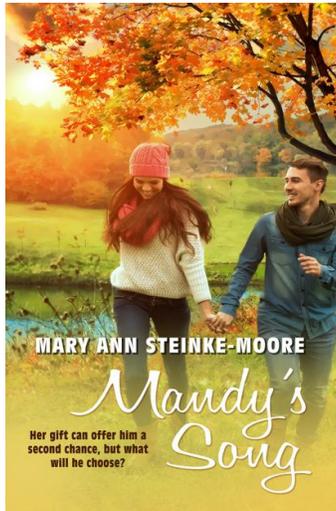


Discussion Questions



Also Available in Paperback:

MANDY'S SONG

Author: Mary Ann Steinke-Moore

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About the Book

High school senior Mandy Thorpe has two great hopes: to nudge her friendship with Erik Andersen into romance, and to step up her singing dreams by winning the lead in a musical.

She has other dreams, too. Since childhood, Mandy's prophetic dreams have called her to action. When those dreams become nightmares about Erik that grow ever more terrifying, Mandy is determined to do something about it.

With God's help, she must find the courage to make a difference in Erik's life before her nightmares become reality.

TITLE: Mandy's Song

Discussion:

Question 1: How does hiking by the river help Mandy when she is angry or sad? Do you have a place in nature where you go to calm down?

Answer 1: Seeing the beauty in nature helps her get out of her own head and put things in perspective. Time alone sets her free from the distraction of other people's demands. The rhythm of walking helps calm her physically and emotionally.

Question 2: Why is Mandy uncomfortable with her prophetic gift? Can it be a blessing?

Answer 2: It's hard for her to judge which dreams are true prophecies and which aren't. She can be embarrassed when she acts on a dream mistakenly. Her parents don't understand this gift and don't support her when she mentions it. It's a blessing when it warns her of danger in time to prevent the tragedy.

Question 3: How does Mandy's belief in God strengthen her during frightening times?

Answer 3: Instead of worrying uselessly or panicking and freezing, she prays, freeing herself enough from her emotions to take helpful action. Remembering that God is with her gives her comfort and power.

Question 4: How does Mandy become part of the answer to her own prayer for Erik's protection? Have you ever been part of the answer to a prayer for someone else?

Answer 4: She becomes sensitive to God's nudges that Erik needs help and listens when the time to act is urgent. She puts her loving concern for Erik above her fear of looking foolish and tells his mother he needs help right away.

Question 5: Is Mandy wise to keep caring about Erik when his emotional distance hurts her?

Answer 5: This can be difficult to judge. In the story, Erik heals and grows, coming back from the isolation and withdrawal of suicidal feelings. In time their love brings them joy, so in this case the answer is "yes."

Question 6: Advice columnist Ann Landers used to ask, "Are you better off with him or without him?" How is Mandy better off with Erik? How is she better off without him?

Answer 6: Mandy is better off with him because he pays attention to her dreams and finds ways to encourage her. They laugh at the same things and understand each other. They share the spark of love. She might be better off without him if she found someone who was less wounded and more open to love, who didn't push her away and damage her confidence.

Question 7: Does Mandy's singing talent help others? In what way? What talents do you have that help others?

Answer 7: Music connects people in emotionally deep ways, so when she sings in the musical her voice touches audience members, her solo at church inspires the congregation, and her nursing home concerts brighten the lives of the residents.

Question 8: What parts of going away to college are joyful for Mandy? Which parts are painful?

Answer 8: She is anticipating the fun of focusing on her passion, voice, free of all the high school required courses. She's looking forward to making her own daily choices, without her parents' supervision. She is grieving about how much little Tabitha will miss her, and vice versa. Even if she doesn't want to admit it, she will miss her parents and Ryan. And it will be hard having Erik two hours away at Purdue.

Question 9: If Mandy and Erik grow apart later, and marry other people, is their love for each other still valuable? Why or why not?

Answer 9 They learn much from caring for each other. He learns that it can be safe to trust someone enough to let them in, and that there is joy in sharing love. She learns that it can be worth fighting through barriers to reach a tender, loving soul.

Question 10: What, in addition to praying, could a friend or relative do to help someone who is feeling isolated and withdrawing into suicidal thoughts?

Answer 10: Listen to them and talk openly about if they are considering suicide. Involve an adult they trust. If they need immediate help, you can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24/7 at 1-800-273-8255, reach the Crisis Text Line 24/7 by texting "START" to 741-741, or call your local police. For more information, some places to start are: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org> and <http://www.sptsusa.org/>

