

Modern Girls

Jennifer S. Brown

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A dazzling debut novel set in New York City's Jewish immigrant community in 1935...

How was it that out of all the girls in the office, I was the one to find myself in this situation? This didn't happen to nice Jewish girls.

In 1935, Dottie Krasinsky is the epitome of the modern girl. A bookkeeper in Midtown Manhattan, Dottie steals kisses from her steady beau, meets her girlfriends for drinks, and eyes the latest fashions. Yet at heart, she is a dutiful daughter, living with her Yiddish-speaking parents on the Lower East Side. So when, after a single careless night, she finds herself in a family way by a charismatic but unsuitable man, she is desperate: unwed, unsure, and running out of options.

After the birth of five children—and twenty years as a housewife—Dottie's immigrant mother, Rose, is itching to return to the social activism she embraced as a young woman. With strikes and breadlines at home and National Socialism rising in Europe, there is much more important work to do than cooking and cleaning. So when she realizes that she, too, is pregnant, she struggles to reconcile her longings with her faith.

As mother and daughter wrestle with unthinkable choices, they are forced to confront their beliefs, the changing world, and the fact that their lives will never again be the same....



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June Ortiz:

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