



# Casting About

*Terri DuLong*

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## Casting About Terri DuLong

In this beautifully crafted and uplifting novel, the author of the acclaimed *Spinning Forward* welcomes readers back to the lush Florida island of Cedar Key, where the vibrant shades of hibiscus and azaleas are the perfect backdrop to a colorful, quirky community. . .

In the four years since Monica Brooks moved to Cedar Key, she's found a home, a husband, and now a business to love. Taking over her mother's bustling knitting shop is a welcome challenge, but Monica's exciting plans are waylaid by unexpected news. Her husband's ex-wife has been deemed an unfit mother, and custody of their eight-year-old daughter, Clarissa, is to be transferred to Adam.

Going straight from honeymoon to motherhood--especially when she's unsure she wants children--leaves the normally even-keeled Monica doubting herself at every turn. Yet in a place like Cedar Key, nobody goes it alone. With help from friends and relatives, Monica, Clarissa, and Adam begin to forge a close-knit family of their own--one that will need to be strong enough to withstand all the surprises set to unravel. . .

## Praise for Spinning Forward

"Poignant, absorbing, humorous. . .a debut that tugs at the heart." --Sophia Nash, author of *A Dangerous Beauty*

"Captures the essence of what often lies in each of our hearts. Don't miss it!" --J.L. Miles, author of *Cold Rock River*

"Like a lazy island summer. . .a story of secrets and loss, friendship and recovery, and rediscovered love." --Laura Castoro, author of *Love on the Line*

## Casting About Details

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## From Reader Review Casting About for online ebook

### Dale Harcombe says

Well, I've done it again. Brought home a book about knitting when I don't knit. But in my defence I had read and enjoyed the first book, Spinning Forward by Terri Dulong. Monica is now running her mother's yarn shop at Cedar Key and enjoying life with her new husband Adam.

Monica and Adam have only been married a few months when suddenly they get a call that changes their lives. Monica is not sure she even wants children at all, certainly not at this stage of her life. But then Adam's first wife is involved in an accident and suddenly Monica is being expected to take on her husband's eight year old daughter, Clarissa Jo.

I really enjoyed this story and the quirky characters of Cedar Key who never fail to provide help when needed, though I have to admit it took me a while to warm to Monica. But warm to her I eventually did. This is a feel good read that involves the reader emotionally and yes, I admit to a few tears. Clarissa Jo's mother Carrie Sue is a character readers will love to hate. She is so completely self obsessed and irresponsible. The one thing I did was query was that a nine year old would still believe in Santa, but that was a minor quibble. While I thoroughly enjoyed the book it has not made me want to take up knitting. I'll stick to reading about characters that do.

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### ?lkim says

??te bizdeki ilk kitap kapa??n?n kullan?lmas? gereken hikaye... -\_-

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### Pam says

3.5 stars

I was super happy to be at a local booksale and find a SIGNED copy of this book for .50! What a find!

A very easy, sweet, feel-good, predictable read. The author created lovely characters that melded well together, and crafted a story that combined some of my very favorite things- coastal towns, knitting, dogs, and family. What more could I ask for? Can't wait to read the next book in the series which I ALSO found at the same book sale. Yay for me!

Note: the first book in the series

Does not need to be read in order to enjoy Casting About.

\*\*\*\*~\*~\*MY OWN NOTES, SPOILERS\*~\*~\*\*\*\*

Monica and Adam are newlyweds when A's daughter Clarissa comes to live with them on Cedar Key. M doesn't think she has any motherly abilities, following in the footsteps of her fam Sybil. It's not all sunshine and roses as the new family finds their flow- but all's well that ends well. With support from her family and friends, M comes to love Clarissa and even changes the ship name to include her new daughter. We also learn that Sybil never really left after her death, and has been Clarissa's guiding angel as she adjusts to her new life.

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## **Maria says**

Another cute book in the Cedar Key series, this time, focusing on Adam and Monica, as they go through the process of adopting Adam's daughter Clarissa, whom he had with his ex-wife, Carrie Sue. The book goes on to describe how Clarissa comes back into Adam and Monica's lives, and the difficulties that Monica faces when coming to terms with having a step-daughter. We are also introduced to Carrie Sue, who tends to poke a thorn in everyone's side, except Tony (whom I was wary about from the beginning). I loved the additional characters of Opal, Hank, Grace, and Dora, each adding love and happiness to the book as I continued to read. As with DuLong's other books focusing on Cedar Key, this book left me wanting more, especially when it came to Adam and Monica's desire for a child, something that I was hoping would be elaborated on more by the end of the book. I did find that there were some parts which were a tad overdone in the book, such as Adam continuously saying how he loves Monica, and was very lucky to find her. Although this was a lovely testament of love, I felt that once was enough. I also was hoping for more of a deep connection between Monica and Clarissa however, the author only skimmed the surface in terms of their relationship. I loved the knitting group, and the coming together of the ladies in order to offer one another support; this is something that I wish existed in my own city! Overall, a light read which kept me wanting to know more about the characters and their lives. Looking forward to the next Cedar Key novel!

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## **Diane Wachter says**

Terri Dulong writes in a style very reminiscent of Debbie Macomber. This novel is the second book in the Cedar Key Series. Newly married daughter Monica, who has taken over her mother's knitting shop, suddenly becomes a stepmother to her new husband's 8 year old daughter when the mother is declared unfit. Many adjustments must be made by all three to make them into a family. Good story, 3 stars.

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## **Ann Boytim says**

Second book in this series and Monica Brooks has found a home in Cedar Key for the past four years. Monica is taking over her mother's knitting shop business and is happily married. Monica's husband has a daughter from a previous marriage and has just received the news that his ex wife was arrested and now he is to take custody of his eight year old daughter. Monica is unsure how to deal with this situation but on this island no one is left alone to deal with things and she gets help from many friends and family.

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## **Obsidian says**

The second novel in the "Cedar Key" series by Terri Dulong was very much improved in my opinion.

Monica Brooks, the daughter of Sydney Webster from Spinning Forward (Cedar Key) is the main protagonist in this novel that takes place four years later on Cedar Key.

At first in "Spinning Forward" I didn't really care for Monica. I thought she was a spoiled brat but after more interactions with her and her mother in that novel I did come around to her point of view and why she was so

frustrated with her mother.

In this novel, Monica is a newlywed and excited about starting her life with her husband Adam. However, Adam's daughter, Clarissa, from his first marriage comes to live with them and Monica finds herself floundering since she doesn't know if she has it in her to be a mother.

I really applaud Ms. Dulong for writing the novel this way. Often times most women around Monica's age don't know if they are cut out to be mothers' or even if they want to be. I liked her struggle with it and her attempts to get close to Clarissa but not knowing if she was doing the right thing. I also liked her very realistically being frustrated with Clarissa at times and just thinking that her husband would make all the decisions (since hey it is his child) and how awkward she felt being a step-mother.

The only reason that I did mark it down one star was that once again though knitting was discussed in this novel, I felt as if there were no details that the author added in order for me to understand the different patterns or the styles of knitting. I would stop focusing on the knitting per se and just make it more of a side note unless she plans on focusing on it more in her subsequent novels of Cedar Key.

Would recommend to fans of Cedar Key series!

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### **Barbara says**

This was a nice easy read. Unfortunately it seemed like someone else wrote and edited the last few chapters. On pg 294 the doctor was Dr Sutter. 2 pages later he was Dr Sutton. And suddenly at got added to the end of questions. Where is she in the rest of the book became Where's she at. And I got so tired of Monica worrying that she was not emotionally able to be a Mother. I read it because I wanted an easy read but now I'm wondering why.

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### **Crystal says**

Well Ms. DuLong has done it again. She has managed to suck me into life on Cedar Key so thoroughly that I didn't want to leave, in fact I want to go visit the real Cedar Key. Casting About picks up with Monica, who is Sydney's daughter from Spinning Forward. She is now running her mom's knitting shop and enjoying her 5-month-old marriage. Of course something has to happen or there wouldn't be a book. That something is her new husband Adam's 8-year-old daughter, Clarissa. She is dropped into their life leaving Monica wondering if she has the nurturing inside her to be a mother or if she is just like her grandmother who gave her mother up for adoption.

Such a different angle for a book. Imagine being a newlywed and not even sure you want to have kids. Monica is use to Clarissa visiting but nothing prepares her for life with a younger girl. As Monica begins to question her mothering ability, things begin to change slowly. I really like how things happen in this book. There is no poof and within the first few days and Monica is an excellent mother. It's a learning process. What Monica doesn't realize is it is a learning process for all mothers whether you are a natural mother to your children or a step-mother or adoptive mother. And where she's extremely lucky is she's not alone, she has her friends and family in Cedar Key to help her every step of the way.

I loved watching Monica, Adam and Clarissa grow and change through this novel. I loved seeing how the townspeople and family were again. I loved the other undercurrents running through the book and most of all

I loved the knitting. I don't know how to knit but every I read one of these books I want to learn. I actually bought stuff last year when I had surgery, but never quite got it. Somehow I think it's time to get the knitting supplies back out and learn.

Casting About is a beautiful story of love, hardship and triumph. It feels close enough to real life and I honestly felt like I was right there with Monica enduring the fears, trials, and happiness through the book. Life is never easy but those moments when things go right really shine through and Ms. DuLong does a beautiful job showcasing the good and the bad and the wonderful small-town life of Cedar Key. I can't wait to visit again and see what the inhabitants of Cedar Key are up to next.

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### **Lee says**

I found myself totally immersed in this easy read. I identified with so much of what happened in this story, not because I had experienced the same (although there was some I had) but because it was about a woman discovering who she really was and coming to terms with that.

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### **Whitney 'Thompson' Jenkins says**

I really liked this story, a lot better than the first. It seemed to be more involved and interesting. A great page turner!

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### **Sherrie Tindle says**

#### **Sweet story.**

Enjoyed the characters. Missed reading about many of the people in the first book though. Maybe in the 3rd book.

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### **Julie Barrett says**

Casting About by Terri Dulong

This book is about Adam who is recently married to Monica. Her mother has left with her new man to Paris and France and left the yarn shop to her to run.

Adam teaches at a nearby college and one phone call from the social worker changed their life. He now will have full custody of his daughter, Clarissa. Ever since she's moved in with them she experiences a ghost type person who guides her with what she should try.

Love being able to catch up with the others in the town and find out what's going on in their lives.

Most particularly interested in hearing how they plan to expand the shop with knitting trends.

Other relationships also go through some up and down times...There are very touching moments and some frightful as they go through serious health issues...

Love the knit chat especially, just all the everyday living, and the story of Adam and his family, kinda fills in

the missing pieces as I've read this series out of order.

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## Carol says

This is the kind of book that you would like to cuddle up with on a cold day, in other words, a "comfort read". I found out after I read it that there was an earlier book in the series. But that doesn't matter too much because this is a great standalone book. Now that I have read it, I would like to read the first book, *Spinning Forward*".

Monica Brooks, the main character, narrates the story in first person, has only been married for six months. She was going to take over her mother's yarn shop. She has fallen in love with the island life of Cedar Key. It is no wonder since her best friend and many of her relatives live there and act as a great support network to her.

Her life was feeling very comfortable and she thought it was going in the right direction. But her husband, Adam received a surprise phone that his ex-wife, Carrie Sue was in the hospital. She and her friends had gone out drinking while her eight year old daughter remained alone in the apartment. So, now her and Adam's daughter, Claris was staying in a temporary foster home.

Monica immediately wonders whether or not she would be a good mother or not. She had been an only child and knew nothing about children. She is so full of doubts. How is she supposed to bond with a little girl that she didn't know? What if she makes terrible mistakes? What if she is not a good mother?

Her friend, Grace has a very successful coffee shop with a beautiful view of the water. She has had no longstanding relationships with men. Then, someone who "looks like George Clooney" But does he have an alternative motive for this romance?

Clarissa, the long ignored and neglected daughter of Carrie Sue, comes to live with Monica and Adam. She has gotten used to seeing her mother constantly drunk and never having the opportunity for friendship. She needs a real mother, and a family, and friends and plenty of hugs and caring.

That is how this book starts. It keeps you reading and interested and is a quick read. My only criticism is that it seemed a little too tidy with the ending but it was a very comfy read. The author does tackle an unspoken problem of new mothers, which I applaud her for.

I recommend this to all women who have doubts about surviving motherhood and those would heartwarming story about families.

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## Wendy Hines says

I've tried knitting; had several folks try to teach me. I am uncoordinated and will stick to crochet. But there is just something comforting about the click of the needles. To start out with just some thread, or yarn so to speak, and with deft movements and creativity, blend it all together into something beautiful.

That's how I felt after reading *Casting About*. It's the second in the Cedar Key series, but I did not read book one. However, Ms. Dulong does a terrific job of catching the reader up so you don't feel like your stuck in the middle of nowhere. The first in the series is *Spinning Forward*.

Meet Monica Brooks. Monica just took over her mother's knitting shop in Cedar Cove, and she is a newlywed - five months! She's adjusting to her new life and has all sorts of plans for her shop. But then something happens, a stitch drops. I heard that expression from my grandma! Her husband Adam's ex-wife has an accident involving alcohol and is declared an unfit parent. Adam is thrilled his eight year old daughter Clarissa is moving in with them. But Monica isn't ready for a ready-made family. She isn't even sure she wants children of her own. But being a good wife, Monica pushes her self doubts aside and takes on the job as step-mom.

She has many trials and errors but eventually, the three of them weave a bond and become a family. Through it all are other wonderful characters, such as Adams's mom, Monica's best friend, and Monica's aunt. Not to leave anyone out, there is sporadic appearances from Monica's deceased grandmother. Haven't you heard of a ghost stitch? A very charming book that is perfect to curl up with in an afternoon with a good cuppa. Ms. Dulong's writing captures your heart and her characters will entrance you. I highly recommend this book!!

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