Meeting Lydia – Questions for Discussion

*Meeting Lydia* is Linda MacDonald’s first published novel, telling the story of early life bullying, midlife crises and internet relationships from the perspective of a woman in menopausal turmoil.

1. Marianne Hayward spent the first seven years of her education at a boys’ prep school. How important was this experience in Marianne’s life?
2. It could be argued that each of the instances of bullying were trivial. Why do you think they had such a major impact?
3. Regarding Charmaine, is Marianne’s treatment of Johnny justified?
4. Jealousy is a very destructive emotion yet it may also help to keep people together. Discuss.
5. What purpose is served by the scenes where Marianne is teaching her students?
6. Marianne tells her students, ‘We self-censor emails…’ To what extent is this true of her? In what ways is Edward Harvey’s email persona consistent with the child at school?
7. What are the pros and cons of internet relationships?
8. Although written only from Marianne’s point of view, it could be argued that Johnny is also going through a midlife crisis. What evidence is there for this?
9. Sheridan’s *The Rivals* features in Marianne’s childhood at school. There are several parallels with this work in the novel. If you are familiar with the play, how many of these did you spot?
10. What purpose is served by the chapter entitled ‘2000 Years hence’? Would you have chosen a different ending for the novel and if so, what and why?
11. What do you think are Marianne’s true feelings for Edward? What evidence do you have for your conclusions?
12. Who is your favourite character from the book and why?

Linda MacDonald may be followed on Twitter @LindaMac1 and would be happy to interact with readers and answer questions. Further information may be found via her Facebook author page at <https://www.facebook.com/LindaMacDonaldAuthor/>