

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What would your reaction have been as a child to have heard a parent say you were "ugly"? What effect would such a remark have had on you?
2. For most of us going through adolescence, we view our families through a different lens than we did in childhood. How does Giovanna come to questions her family and the "lies" that were once accepted as truths?
3. (*Follow-up to Question 2*) How similar to Giovanna's was your own passage from childhood to young adulthood? Consider the ideals of love, marriage, faith, and sex. How did your own understanding of them change?
4. As in her other works, Ferrante focuses on class. Start by talking about the childhood household of Giovanna and her parents. How does it differ from the Naples in which her aunt Vittoria lives. What effect does this new environment have on Giovanna? Why is she intent on casting off her privileged upbringing?
5. How would you describe Vittoria? What is Giovanni's reaction to meeting Vittoria? How does the relationship change Giovanni? In what way do her familial alliances change?
6. Giovanni wonders, "What happened in the world of adults, in the heads of very reasonable people, in their bodies loaded with knowledge? What reduced them to the most untrustworthy animals, worse than reptiles?" How would you answer that question? How does Giovanni come to answer that question?
7. Giovanna's sexual experiences are dark? Why does she pursue young men to whom she has no attraction? What drives her?
8. What is the significance of the bracelet, symbolically?
9. What is the meaning of Ferrante's title for this novel?
10. At the end of *The Lying Life of Adults*, Giovanna and a friend promise each other to "become adults like no one else has before." What do they mean? Does the ending suggest the possibility of additional Giovanni novels?

