



The Widow's Children: A Novel

Paula Fox

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"Chekhovian. . . . Every line of Fox's story, every gesture of her characters, is alive and surprising."—Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, *New York Times*

On the eve of their trip to Africa, Laura Maldonada Clapper and her husband, Desmond, sit in a New York City hotel room, drinking scotch-and-sodas and awaiting the arrival of three friends: Clara Hansen, Laura's timid, brow-beaten daughter from a previous marriage; Carlos, Laura's flamboyant and charming brother; and Peter Rice, a melancholy editor whom Laura hasn't seen for over a year. But what begins as a bon voyage party soon parlays into a bitter, claustrophobic clash of family resentment. From the hotel room to the tony restaurant to which the five embark, Laura presides over the escalating innuendo and hostility with imperial cruelty, for she is hiding the knowledge that her mother, the family matriarch, has died of a heart attack that morning. A novel as intense as it is unerringly observed, *The Widow's Children* is another revelation of the storyteller's art from the incomparable Paula Fox.

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