Discussion Questions for Elin Hilderbrand’s WINTER STORMS

1.) A variety of beginnings and endings—of relationships, marriages, businesses, and even a prison sentence—play major roles in the novel. In what ways are the Quinn family’s emotions at these two different stages of life similar? In what ways are they different?

2.) If you were in Ava’s shoes, which of her suitors would you choose? Do you agree with her choices? Have you ever been in a similar romantic predicament? How did you resolve the situation?

3.) In what ways does Kevin’s new business give his life renewed purpose? How are his achievements on his own different from his involvement with the Winter Street Inn?
4.) What does Jennifer and Patrick’s relationship demonstrate about the possibility of achieving perfection in your own eyes or in the eyes of others?

5.) Mitzi, Kelley and the rest of the Quinns spend a great deal of time waiting for news about Bart. Do you think the Quinns effectively balanced living their own lives with a respect for Bart while waiting for news of his fate? Have you ever had a similar experience where you were waiting for news of a loved one? How did you cope during that time?

6.) Winter is a nontraditional time to have a wedding. In what ways is a winter wedding particularly suited to Kevin and Isabelle’s relationship? Have you or anyone you know attended a winter wedding? Do you prefer a winter wedding or the more traditional summer wedding?

7.) In what ways does being stranded with their fellow family members during a snowstorm force the Quinns to deal with family resentments they may otherwise attempt to ignore? Have you ever found yourself “trapped” with family during a crippling snowstorm?

8.) Bart is a presence despite his physical absence throughout much of the novel. In what ways does this technique allow you as a reader to mold him in your image? Is there a specific family member or friend in your own life that his character calls to mind?