

BOOK CLUB EVENT GUIDE

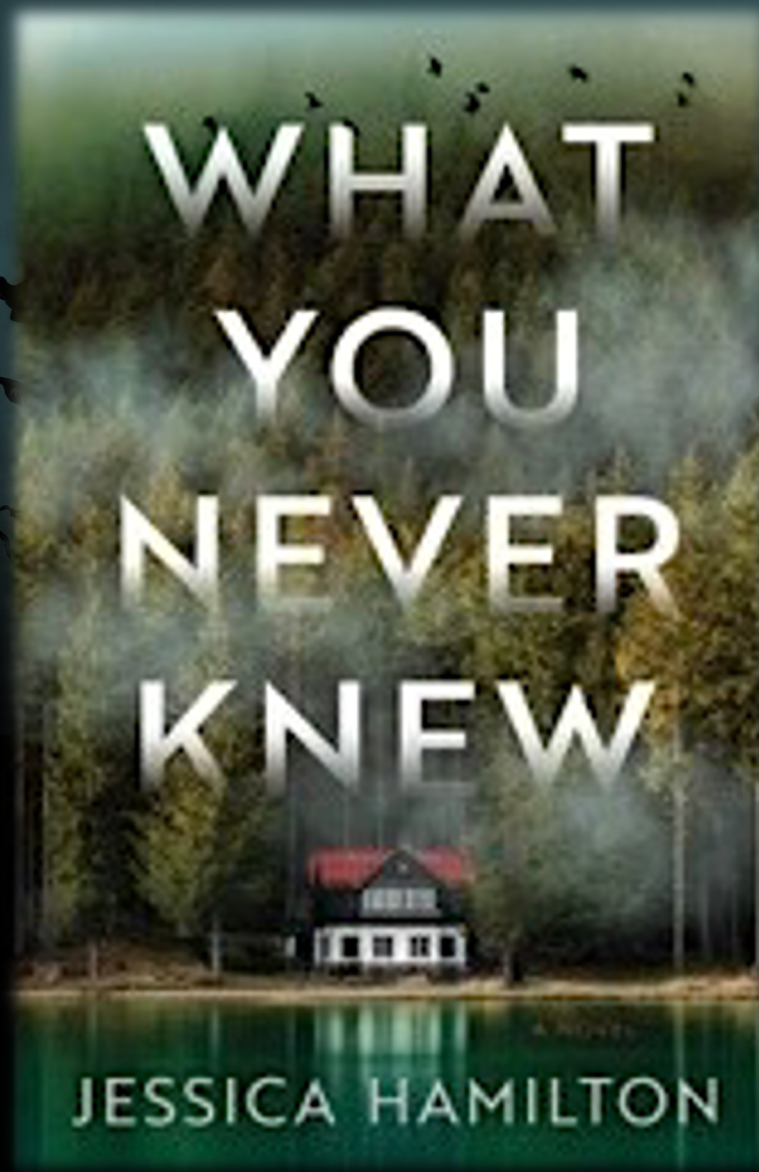


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WYNK PLAYLIST

APPLE MUSIC: <https://music.apple.com/ca/playlist/what-you-never-knew/pl.u-vxy6pm3f8ebxjj>

SPOTIFY: https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2gvoksiduq4tUvcMDvDUHH?si=_t037PMHTYQHUGJMAB
[AIXG](#)

THESE ARE SONGS AND ARTISTS THAT ARE DIRECTLY MENTIONED IN THE BOOK AS WELL AS SOME SONGS THAT ARE JUST NECESSARY FOR A GOOD COTTAGE PLAYLIST.

1. *CRAZY LOVE* BY VAN MORRISON
2. *CORCOVADO* BY STAN GETZ AND JOAO GILBERTO
3. *RUBY TUESDAY* BY THE ROLLING STONES
4. *SO LONG, MARIANNE* BY LEONARD COHEN
5. *FEELING GOOD* BY NINA SIMONE
6. *SUMMERTIME* BY MILES DAVIS
7. *MILESTONES* BY MILES DAVIS
8. *THE GIRL FROM IPANEMA* BY STAN GETZ AND JOAO GILBERTO
9. *AT LAST* BY ETTA JAMES
10. *MY FAVOURITE THINGS* BY JULIE ANDREWS
11. *YESTERDAY* BY THE BEATLES
12. *FLY ME TO THE MOON* BY FRANK SINATRA
13. *I FALL TO PIECES* BY PATSY CLINE
14. *AND IT STONED ME* BY VAN MORRISON
15. *BLACKBIRD* BY THE BEATLES
16. *TAKE FIVE* BY THE DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET
17. *RIVER* BY JONI MITCHELL
18. *BLUE RONDO A LA TURK* BY THE DAVE BRUBECK QUARTET
19. *A SUNDAY KIND OF LOVE* BY ETTA JAMES

COTTAGE QUIZ



HOW COTTAGE SAVVY ARE YOU? WOULD YOU SURVIVE ON AVRIL ISLAND ON YOUR OWN LIKE JUNE DID? OR WOULD YOU HIGHTAIL IT BACK TO THE MAINLAND AS SOON AS YOU COULD? TAKE THE QUIZ BELOW AND SEE HOW YOU DO (ANSWERS AT THE END OF THE GUIDE) .

1. IF THERE IS NO RUNNING WATER IN THE COTTAGE YOU MUST DO WHAT TO THE PUMP TO GET IT GOING?
 - A) FILL THE PUMP
 - B) PRIME THE PUMP
 - C) CHURN THE PUMP
2. ONCE THE WATER IS RUNNING YOU CAN GET A GLASS OF IT TO DRINK STRAIGHT FROM THE TAP:
TRUE OR FALSE
3. YOU 'RE SOUND ASLEEP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND A LOUD THUD WAKES YOU. WHAT DO YOU DO?
 - A) GET OUT THE OUIJA BOARD
 - B) PULL THE COVERS UP OVER YOUR HEAD
 - C) GET UP AND GO CHECK THAT THE WINDOWS AND DOORS ARE ALL LOCKED
4. WHEN DOCKING YOUR BOAT, YOU SHOULD GO INTO THE WIND OR CURRENT: TRUE OR FALSE
5. COMPOSTING AT A COTTAGE IS A GOOD IDEA: TRUE OR FALSE
6. IT 'S SUNSET, YOU HEAD DOWN TO THE DOCK TO WATCH IT. WHAT DRINK SHOULD YOU TAKE WITH YOU?
 - A) WHITE WINE SPRITZER
 - B) GLASS OF FULL-BODIED RED TO MATCH THE SUNSET
 - C) A BEER FROM A LOCAL CRAFT BREWERY
 - D) ALL OF THE ABOVE

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. IN THE BEGINNING OF THE NOVEL, DESPITE TALKING ABOUT HER MOTHER'S ILLNESS, MAY SAYS, THAT SHE THINKS HER MOTHER FINALLY GOT WHAT SHE WANTED, "OUR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION, DAILY DISPLAYS OF LOVE, AND DEEP CONCERN FOR HER WELL-BEING. SHE COULDN'T HAVE CHOSEN A MORE SUITABLE AND SATISFYING EXIT FROM THE WORLD." (PG. 1) WHAT DOES THIS TELL YOU ABOUT HER MOTHER AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP? DID YOU THINK MAY WAS BEING COLD HEARTED IN SAYING THIS?
2. DO YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS? IF YOU DO, HAVE YOU HAD ANY OF YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES WITH THEM?
3. WHO DO YOU RELATE TO MORE, MAY OR JUNE AND WHY?
4. MAY THINKS THAT IN DEATH SHE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO JUNE. DO YOU THINK THIS IS A POSSIBILITY? WHO WOULD YOU BE ASSIGNED TO IN YOUR DEATH?
5. JUNE ARRIVES AT AVRIL ISLAND FEELING LOST, GRIEF STRICKEN AND NOT CAPABLE ENOUGH TO TAKE ON THE ABANDONED ISLAND HERSELF. HOW DID SHE CHANGE AND EVOLVE FROM WHEN SHE ARRIVED, TO THE END OF THE NOVEL? HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED A LIFE CHANGING EVENT LIKE JUNE DID, THAT CAUSED YOU TO CHANGE?
6. WHEN JUNE FIRST ARRIVES BACK IN THE SMALL LAKESIDE TOWN OF AVRIL ISLAND SHE SAYS, "HOW DIFFERENT EVERYTHING FEELS NOW AS AN ADULT—SMALLER, LESS SHINY, LESS HOPEFUL AND FULL OF POSSIBILITY BUT ALL THE MORE VALUABLE." (PG. 28) WHY DOES SHE FEEL THAT THINGS ARE MORE VALUABLE EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE LOST THEIR SHINE AND POSSIBILITY? WHEN HAVE YOU FELT NOSTALGIA AS AN ADULT AND HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?

7. JUNE WAS IN THE DARK ABOUT A LOT OF THE BAD THINGS HAPPENING AROUND HER DURING HER CHILDHOOD AND LEARNING ABOUT THEM AS AN ADULT WAS SHOCKING AND PAINFUL. DO YOU THINK IT WAS RIGHT THAT MAY KEPT ALL OF IT FROM JUNE? WAS SHE PROTECTING HER OR HURTING IN THE END?

8. “MOTHERS ARE NOT ALWAYS GOOD JUST BECAUSE THEY’RE MOTHERS AND FATHERS ARE NOT ALWAYS GOOD JUST BECAUSE THEY’RE FATHERS. WIVES ARE NOT ALWAYS FAITHFUL, HUSBANDS ARE NOT ALWAYS HONEST, DAUGHTERS CANNOT BE PERFECT, AND SISTERS CANNOT BE SAVIOURS. THE SOONER WE ACCEPT THOSE VARIABLES AND FORGIVE PEOPLE FOR THEM, THE SOONER WE HEAL.” (PG. 90)
DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS SENTIMENT OF MAY’S? WHY OR WHY NOT?

9. JUNE SHOWS EMPATHY FOR HER MOTHER EVEN AFTER SHE FINDS OUT ALL OF THE HORRIBLY DESTRUCTIVE THINGS THAT APRIL DID. JUNE SAYS, HER MOTHER LIVED HER LIFE IN “SURVIVAL MODE” (PG. 287) AND THEN WONDERS IF IT WAS BECAUSE OF HER MOTHER’S CHILDHOOD WITH TWO ALCOHOLIC PARENTS OR IF SHE CAME TO IT NATURALLY. HOW MUCH OF APRIL’S BEHAVIOUR DO YOU THINK IS A CASE OF NURTURE AND HOW MUCH OF IT IS A CASE OF NATURE? WERE YOU ABLE TO FEEL ANY EMPATHY AT ALL FOR APRIL IN THE END?

10. AT THE END OF THE BOOK JUNE SAYS, “THAT PLACE CAN BE TAKEN FROM YOU, BUT THE IMPRINT OF PLACE IS TATTOOED ON THE INSIDE OF YOUR SOUL, MAKING IT YOURS FOREVER.” (PG. 292)
DO YOU AGREE WITH HER SENTIMENT? IS THERE A PLACE THAT HAS HAD THAT EFFECT ON YOU?

FOOD AND DRINKS IDEAS

DINNER

THE PERFECT BURGER: [HTTPS://WEEKENDATTHECOTTAGE.COM/JUICY-BURGERS/](https://weekendatthecottage.com/juicy-burgers/)

INGREDIENTS: 2 POUNDS MEDIUM GROUND BEEF, 1 POUND GROUND PORK, 1 ZUCCHINI, GRATED, 1 CUP ONION, CHOPPED, 1 EGG, 1 TABLESPOON DIJON MUSTARD, 1 TEASPOON CURRY POWDER, 1 TABLESPOON WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE, ½ TEASPOON TABASCO SAUCE ½ TEASPOON EACH, SALT AND PEPPER, 1 TABLESPOON BUTTER

DIRECTIONS: PREHEAT BARBECUE OR GRILL ON HIGH HEAT/ MELT BUTTER IN SAUCEPAN OVER MEDIUM HEAT AND SAUTÉ CHOPPED ONIONS UNTIL SOFT AND GOLDEN. REMOVE FROM HEAT AND ALLOW TO COOL/ IN A LARGE BOWL, MIX TOGETHER THE GROUND BEEF, GROUND PORK, GRATED ZUCCHINI, SAUTÉED ONION, EGG, CURRY POWDER, DIJON MUSTARD, WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE, TABASCO SAUCE, SALT, AND PEPPER/ HOW TO MAKE BURGER PATTIES: MEASURE OUT 10-OUNCE PORTIONS OF MIXTURE AND PRESS TO FORM EACH INTO A PATTY SHAPE. REMEMBER TO PRESS AN INCH-WIDE DIVOT INTO THE CENTRE OF EACH PATTY TO HELP THEM MAINTAIN THEIR SHAPE WHILE THEY COOK/ BARBECUE BURGERS FOR 5 MINUTES PER SIDE ON THE HOT GRILL. ADD CHEESE OR OTHER TOPPERS DURING THE FINAL MINUTE OF COOKING.

WARM POTATO SALAD: [HTTPS://WEEKENDATTHECOTTAGE.COM/WARM-POTATO-SALAD/](https://weekendatthecottage.com/warm-potato-salad/)

INGREDIENTS: 2 POUNDS BABY RED POTATOES, 2 TABLESPOONS EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, 1 FRENCH SHALLOT, QUARTERED AND FINELY-CHOPPED, 2 TABLESPOONS POMMERY DIJON MUSTARD 2 TABLESPOONS APPLE CIDER VINEGAR, JUICE OF HALF A LEMON, 1 CUP SOUR CREAM, 1 CUP CELERY, ROUGHLY-CHOPPED (LEAVES INCLUDED) , 2 GREEN ONIONS, ROUGHLY-CHOPPED, 3 RED RADISHES, HALVED AND THINLY SLICED, SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE

DIRECTIONS: SCRUB POTATOES THEN, PLACE INTO A MEDIUM-SIZED POT. COVER WITH WATER AND BRING TO A BOIL. REDUCE TO LOW AND COOK FOR 12-15 MINUTES. DRAIN AND COOL/ HEAT A MEDIUM-SIZED SKILLET ON MEDIUM-HIGH HEAT. ONCE THE SKILLET IS HOT, ADD OIL AND MOVE ABOUT UNTIL IT SHIMMERS. ADD CHOPPED SHALLOT AND COOK UNTIL IT SOFTENS. ADD MUSTARD, VINEGAR AND LEMON JUICE, STIR AND COOK FOR ABOUT TWO MINUTES. ADD SOUR CREAM, STIR AND COOK UNTIL BUBBLING. REMOVE FROM HEAT/ CUT POTATOES IN HALF AND PLACE INTO A LARGE BOWL. ADD CELERY, SCALLION AND RADISH. POUR DRESSING OVER VEGETABLES, STIR AND ADD SALT AND PEPPER TO TASTE. SERVE WARM.

COTTAGE CAESAR SALAD: <https://weekendatthecottage.com/homemade-caesar-salad-recipe/>

INGREDIENTS: 2 LARGE HEADS ROMAINE LETTUCE, 1 POUND SMOKED SLAB BACON, THICK-CUT, 1 CUP GARLIC CROUTONS, **FOR THE DRESSING:** 6 OIL-PACKED ANCHOVY FILLETS, PATTED DRY, 2 CLOVES OF GARLIC, CHOPPED, 1 TEASPOON DIJON MUSTARD, 1 LARGE EGG, ROOM TEMPERATURE, JUICE FROM ½ LEMON, SEEDS REMOVED, 1 TABLESPOON CAPERS, ¼ CUP VEGETABLE OIL, 2 TABLESPOONS EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, 1 CUP PARMESAN CHEESE, FRESH-GRATED, DIVIDED IN TWO, DASH WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE, DASH OF HOT SAUCE, SALT AND FRESH-GROUND BLACK PEPPER TO TASTE, WEDGE OF LEMON FOR GARNISH, OPTIONAL

DIRECTIONS: PREHEAT OVEN TO 425° F/ SLICE SLAB BACON INTO ¼-INCH STRIPS AND LAY ONTO A BAKING SHEET FITTED WITH A ROASTING RACK, ALLOWING AMPLE ROOM BETWEEN EACH STRIP. SPRINKLE WITH FRESH-GROUND BLACK PEPPER. TRANSFER TO OVEN AND BAKE UNTIL BACON IS CRISPY, ABOUT 10-15 MINUTES. REMOVE FROM OVEN AND PLACE ONTO PAPER TOWELS TO ABSORB FAT. CHOP INTO BITE-SIZED PIECES/ REMOVE DISCOLOURED OR WILTED LEAVES FROM THE ROMAINE LETTUCE AND DISCARD. CHOP USABLE LEAVES INTO ½-INCH BITE-SIZED PIECES. RINSE, SPIN AND DRY/ **MAKE DRESSING:** PLACE GARLIC, ANCHOVIES, EGG, CAPERS, DIJON MUSTARD, LEMON JUICE, OILS, HOT SAUCE AND WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE INTO CANISTER OF A CONVENTIONAL OR IMMERSION BLENDER AND PROCESS UNTIL SMOOTH. ADD ½ CUP OF FRESH-GRATED PARMESAN CHEESE AND PULSE TO COMBINE. SEASON TO TASTE WITH SALT AND PEPPER/ TRANSFER LETTUCE INTO A LARGE ATTRACTIVE SERVICE BOWL. ADD HALF THE DRESSING AND TOSS. TASTE AND ADD MORE DRESSING IF DESIRED. ADD BACON, CROUTONS AND THE REST OF THE CHEESE. TOSS AND SERVE IMMEDIATELY. GARNISH WITH LEMON.

DESSERT

WARM TOASTED SMORES BARS: <https://celebratingsweets.com/easy-oven-smores-dip/>

INGREDIENTS: 1 ¼ CUPS SEMISWEET CHOCOLATE CHIPS, ¼ CUP MILK, 15-20 MARSHMALLOWS HALVED, GRAHAM CRACKERS AND FRUIT FOR DIPPING.

INSTRUCTIONS: PREHEAT BROILER AND PLACE A RACK IN THE UPPER HALF OF YOUR OVEN (AT LEAST 5 INCHES FROM THE BROILER/ IN A LARGE MICROWAVE SAFE BOWL, COMBINE CHOCOLATE CHIPS AND MILK. HEAT IN 15 SECOND INTERVALS FOR A TOTAL OF ONE MINUTE, STIRRING WELL BETWEEN EACH INTERVAL. IF THE CHOCOLATE IS NOT MELTED, HEAT IN 10-SECOND INTERVALS, STIRRING REALLY WELL, UNTIL MELTED AND SMOOTH. THE KEY IS TO HEAT THE CHOCOLATE VERY SLOWLY SO THAT IT DOES NOT OVERHEAT/ POUR THE MELTED CHOCOLATE INTO AN OVEN SAFE SKILLET OR CASSEROLE DISH (I USED AN 8-INCH CAST IRON SKILLET, ABOUT 3 ½ CUPS VOLUME) . TOP THE MELTED CHOCOLATE WITH HALVED MARSHMALLOWS AND PLACE UNDER THE BROILER. BROIL UNTIL THE MARSHMALLOWS ARE TOASTED AND GOLDEN BROWN. THIS WILL HAPPEN FAST, SO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON IT. SERVE IMMEDIATELY WITH GRAHAM CRACKERS, COOKIES AND/OR FRUIT.

COTTAGE COCKTAILS

STRAWBERRY WATERMELON SANGRIA: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/bobby-flay/watermelon-strawberry-sangria-2437173>

INGREDIENTS: 1 SMALL SEEDLESS WATERMELON, RIND REMOVED, FLESH CUT INTO LARGE CHUNKS (ABOUT 4 CUPS, 1 POUND STRAWBERRIES, HULLED AND SLICED, 1 CUP RESERVED FOR GARNISH, 1 BOTTLE ROSE WINE-COLD, 1 CUP VODKA, 1 CUP FRESH ORANGE JUICE, 1/2 CUP ORANGE LIQUEUR, 1 ORANGE, SLICED, 1 LIME, SLICED

* (FOR MOCKTAIL VERSION, LEAVE OUT ALCOHOL AND REPLACE WITH CLUB SODA)

DIRECTIONS: COMBINE THE WATERMELON AND STRAWBERRIES IN A BLENDER AND BLEND UNTIL SMOOTH; ADD A SPLASH OF THE VODKA IF NEEDED TO GET THE FRUIT PUREED/ STRAIN INTO A LARGE PITCHER; YOU WILL NEED ABOUT 4 CUPS TOTAL JUICE. ADD THE ROSE, VODKA, ORANGE JUICE AND LIQUEUR AND STIR TO COMBINE. ADD THE ORANGE AND LIME SLICES, COVER AND REFRIGERATE FOR AT LEAST 1 HOUR AND UP TO 24 HOURS. JUST BEFORE SERVING, ADD THE RESERVED STRAWBERRIES. SERVE IN GLASSES OVER ICE.

APEROL SPRITZ: <https://cookieandkate.com/classic-aperol-spritz-recipe/>

INGREDIENTS: ICE, 3 OUNCES (1 PART) APEROL, 3 OUNCES (1 PART) DRY PROSECCO, 1 OUNCE (A SPLASH) CLUB SODA OR UNFLAVORED SPARKLING WATER, ORANGE SLICE, FOR GARNISH.

DIRECTIONS: ADD ICE TO A WINE GLASS UNTIL IT IS NEARLY FULL. POUR IN THE APEROL (I USUALLY EYEBALL THIS AND POUR UNTIL I 'VE FILLED ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THE GLASS/ POUR IN AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF PROSECCO. TOP YOUR DRINK OFF WITH A SPLASH OF CLUB SODA AND ADD A SLICE OF ORANGE. ENJOY!

BEER SHANDY

INGREDIENTS: 6 OUNCES BEER, 6 OUNCES LEMONADE, GARNISH: LEMON SLICE

DIRECTIONS: FILL A STANDARD PINT GLASS HALF-WAY WITH BEER/ FILL REMAINDER WITH LEMONADE/ GARNISH WITH LEMON

A BIT ABOUT THE WRITING



BELOW ARE SOME ANSWERS FROM AN INTERVIEW THAT I DID ABOUT THE WRITING OF THE NOVEL.

1. WHAT WAS THE EVOLUTION OF THIS STORY LIKE FOR YOU?

THE SEED OF THE STORY WAS PLANTED WHILE I WAS DRIVING ON THE HIGHWAY ONE DAY AND IMAGINED A SISTER BEING KILLED IN A CAR ACCIDENT, CAUSED BY HER OWN NEGLIGENCE, AND HER LAST THOUGHT BEING OF HOW ANGRY HER YOUNGER SISTER WAS GOING TO BE AT HER FOR DYING. THE STORY JUST UNFOLDED FROM THERE OF THE SISTER'S DEATH BEING THE CATALYST FOR FAMILY SECRETS TO SURFACE. ANOTHER FACTOR IN THE WRITING OF THIS NOVEL WAS THE LOSS OF MY OWN FAMILY COTTAGE DUE TO CONFLICT WITH MY OWN MOTHER AND STEPFATHER. I HAD SPENT EVERY SUMMER OF MY LIFE AT MY FAMILY COTTAGE AND SO HAD MY CHILDREN UP TO THAT POINT, SO IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE PLACE. THE WRITING OF THE NOVEL HELPED ME A LOT THROUGH THAT HARD TIME AND I WAS ABLE TO WRITE A LOT OF THE VISCERAL DETAILS OF MY OWN COTTAGE, THE BUILDING ITSELF AND THE SUMMERS THERE, INTO THE BOOK, FEELING IN SOME KIND OF WAY AS THOUGH I WAS PRESERVING THE MEMORIES.

2. WHAT SHOULD READERS KNOW ABOUT JUNE BENNETT?

SHE IS QUITE A DAMAGED INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS LIVED HER LIFE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF OTHER PEOPLE, HER MOTHER, HER OLDER SISTER AND HER HUSBAND. SHE ALLOWED HER MOTHER TO TELL HER WHO SHE WAS, AND HER HUSBAND TO DETERMINE WHAT SHE DID WITH HER LIFE AND THEN RELIED ON HER OLDER SISTER TO TELL HER WHAT TO DO NEXT. SHE REBELLED AGAINST IT THROUGHOUT HER LIFE, BUT IT ONLY MADE THINGS MESSIER FOR HER, NEVER ACTUALLY FREEING HER. ONLY ONCE SHE GETS TO AVRIL ISLAND, ALONE, GRIEF STRICKEN AND MAKING SOME SHOCKING DISCOVERIES, DOES SHE START TO TRULY BREAK AWAY FROM THOSE INFLUENCES AND MAKE HER OWN CHOICES AND FIND HER OWN WAY.

3. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO START THE NOVEL WITH THE DEATH OF A CHARACTER AND THEN USE ALTERNATING POINTS OF VIEW BETWEEN A DEAD CHARACTER AND A LIVING ONE?

I WAS INSPIRED TO START THE STORY WITH MAY'S DEATH FOR THE REASONS MENTIONED IN QUESTION 4, ESSENTIALLY, IT'S WHAT STARTED IT ALL. I WANTED TO WRITE ABOUT TWO SISTERS BUT ALSO THE GRIEF OF LOSING ONE WHICH IS ONE OF MY GREATEST FEARS BECAUSE I'M VERY CLOSE TO MY OLDER SISTER. I NEEDED MAY TO DIE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NOVEL, BUT I ALSO NEEDED HER TO BE A VOICE IN IT WHICH WAS A BIT TRICKY AND WHAT EVENTUALLY INSPIRED THE GHOST PROTAGONIST ELEMENT OF THE NOVEL.

4. WHAT WAS THE GENESIS OF YOUR CHARACTERS? WHAT COMPELLED YOU TO EXPLORE THEM AND DID YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE TO WRITE?

THE CHARACTERS I WRITE ARE USUALLY A MASH UP OF PEOPLE I'VE KNOWN AND EXPERIENCES I'VE HAD WITH SOME ENTIRELY NEW BITS THROWN IN THERE. FOR APRIL'S CHARACTER I USED THE GLAMOUR AND BEAUTY OF MY MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER AS INSPIRATION. I ALSO TOOK SOME OF THE RELATIONSHIP STRUGGLES I'VE HAD WITH MY OWN MOTHER AND MAGNIFIED THEM TO CREATE THE DYSFUNCTION THAT APRIL CREATES WITH HER OWN DAUGHTERS.

THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP OF MAY AND JUNE WAS DEFINITELY INSPIRED BY MY OWN RELATIONSHIP WITH MY OLDER SISTER ALTHOUGH THEY'RE VERY DIFFERENT TO ME AND MY SISTER AS PEOPLE, THE DYNAMIC IS SIMILAR. I'VE ALWAYS LEANED ON MY SISTER FOR SUPPORT, AND I KNOW SHE'S FELT A MATERNAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ME EVEN FROM A YOUNG AGE.

I WAS COMPELLED TO EXPLORE MOSTLY THE SISTER RELATIONSHIP AND THE MOTHER DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE AT THE TIME I WAS WRITING THE NOVEL MY SISTER AND I WERE BOTH EXPERIENCING UPHEAVAL AND CHANGE IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR MOTHER WHICH MEANT WE WERE RELYING ON EACH OTHER QUITE A BIT. NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE WRITING OF THIS BOOK WAS VERY THERAPEUTIC FOR ME.

MY FAVOURITE CHARACTER WAS APRIL, JUST BECAUSE SHE WAS SO INTERESTING TO WRITE. SHE WAS A VERY SELFISH AND DESTRUCTIVE CHARACTER, BUT I HAD EMPATHY FOR HER BECAUSE I DO BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE'S CHILDHOODS CAN CAUSE THEM TO DEVELOP SURVIVAL STRATEGIES THAT CAUSE THEM TO DO THINGS THROUGHOUT THEIR ENTIRE LIVES THAT ARE DAMAGING TO THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

5. WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN WRITING THIS NOVEL?

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WRITING THIS BOOK WAS PROBABLY HAVING A GHOST NARRATOR. I HAD TO MAKE HER CHARACTER BELIEVABLE AND CREDITABLE AND NECESSARY. IN THE FIRST DRAFT MY AGENT DIDN'T LOVE THE INCLUSION OF MAY AND I DEBATED GETTING RID OF HER PERSPECTIVE, BUT I JUST COULDN'T DO IT. SO, I HAD TO WORK HARD AT REVISING HER SO THAT SHE WORKED AND WAS CRUCIAL TO THE STORY. ANOTHER CHALLENGE WAS STAYING MOTIVATED. I'D ALREADY HAD TWO NOVELS REJECTED AND AT TIMES IT FELT LIKE I WAS WASTING MY TIME WRITING A THIRD. IT WAS MY LOVE OF WRITING AND THE STORY THOUGH THAT KEPT ME GOING AND IT PAID OFF IN THE END.

A BIT ABOUT THE AUTHOR



BELOW ARE MY ANSWERS TO SOME PRETTY RANDOM QUESTIONS THAT WILL HELP YOU GET TO KNOW ME A BIT BETTER. THEN SHARE THEM AROUND, JUST FOR FUN!

1. WHO IS YOUR HERO? **VIRGINIA WOOLF**
2. IF YOU COULD LIVE ANYWHERE, WHERE WOULD IT BE? **EUROPE**
3. WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST FEAR? **SOMETHING HAPPENING TO MY CHILDREN**
4. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FAMILY VACATION? **SKIING IN QUEBEC**
5. WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT YOURSELF IF YOU COULD? **MY INABILITY TO HAVE SLEEP DEEPLY**
6. WHAT REALLY MAKES YOU ANGRY? **INJUSTICE, SEXISM AND PREJUDICE**
7. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO WORK HARD? **A PERSONAL SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT**
8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR CAREER? **I GET TO WRITE BOOKS**
9. WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST COMPLAINT ABOUT YOUR JOB? **I DON'T HAVE ONE**
10. WHAT IS YOUR PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT? **THE RELATIONSHIP THAT I HAVE WITH MY CHILDREN**
11. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOOK TO READ? **A GOOD THRILLER OF COURSE, ALTHOUGH I DO LOVE LITERARY FICTION AS WELL**
12. WHAT MAKES YOU LAUGH THE MOST? **I SEEM TO LAUGH THE MOST WHEN HANGING OUT WITH MY SISTER**
13. WHAT WAS THE LAST MOVIE YOU WENT TO? WHAT DID YOU THINK? **TENET, IT WAS GREAT, MADE ME THINK**
14. WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU WERE SMALL? **A WRITER**
15. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GAME OR SPORT TO WATCH AND PLAY? **BASKETBALL**
16. WOULD YOU RATHER RIDE A BIKE, RIDE A HORSE, OR DRIVE A CAR? **RIDE A BIKE, HORSES SCARE ME**
17. WHAT WOULD YOU SING AT KARAOKE NIGHT? **I DON'T SING, FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS**
18. IF YOU COULD HIRE SOMEONE TO HELP YOU, WOULD IT BE WITH CLEANING OR COOKING? **COOKING**
19. IF YOU COULD ONLY EAT ONE MEAL FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHAT WOULD IT BE? **SPAGHETTI**
20. HAVE YOU EVER HAD A NICKNAME? WHAT IS IT? **JESS THE MESS, JUST BECAUSE**
21. DO YOU LIKE OR DISLIKE SURPRISES? WHY OR WHY NOT? **I LOVE SURPRISES, THEY'RE EXCITING**
22. IN THE EVENING, WOULD YOU RATHER PLAY A GAME, WATCH A MOVIE, OR READ? **READ**

23. WOULD YOU RATHER VACATION IN HAWAII OR ALASKA, AND WHY? HAWAII, THE WARMTH
24. WOULD YOU RATHER WIN THE LOTTERY OR WORK AT THE PERFECT JOB? WORK AT THE PERFECT JOB
25. WHO WOULD YOU WANT TO BE STRANDED WITH ON A DESERTED ISLAND? MY SISTER
26. IF MONEY WAS NO OBJECT, WHAT WOULD YOU DO ALL DAY? WRITE BOOKS
27. IF YOU COULD GO BACK IN TIME, WHAT YEAR WOULD YOU TRAVEL TO? 1958
28. HOW WOULD YOUR FRIENDS DESCRIBE YOU? SUPPORTIVE, BOSSY, FUN, CONSIDERATE
29. WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES? READING BOOKS, YOGA, TAROT CARD READING, MOON GAZING, EXERCISING
30. WHAT IS THE BEST GIFT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN? A RED VINTAGE TYPEWRITER
31. WHAT IS THE WORST GIFT YOU HAVE RECEIVED? A T-SHIRT FROM MY HUSBAND THAT SAID CHILL OUT
32. ASIDE FROM NECESSITIES, WHAT ONE THING COULD YOU NOT GO A DAY WITHOUT? MUSIC
33. LIST TWO PET PEEVES. MESS AND INCONSIDERATION
34. WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS? PROMOTING MY FIFTH BOOK
35. HOW MANY PAIRS OF SHOES DO YOU OWN? MAYBE TEN?
36. IF YOU WERE A SUPER-HERO, WHAT POWERS WOULD YOU HAVE? FLYING AND INVISIBILITY
37. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE ZOO ANIMAL? I DON'T REALLY LIKE ZOOS, BUT IF I HAD TO CHOOSE THEN, ELEPHANTS
38. IF YOU COULD SHARE A MEAL WITH ANY 4 INDIVIDUALS, LIVING OR DEAD, WHO WOULD THEY BE? VIRGINIA WOOLF, J.D. SALINGER, SYLVIA PLATH, THE DALAI LAMA
39. WHAT'S THE LONGEST YOU'VE GONE WITHOUT SLEEP (AND WHY) ? 2 DAYS, TRAVELLING TO AUSTRALIA
40. WHAT'S THE TALLEST BUILDING YOU'VE BEEN TO THE TOP IN? THE CN TOWER

ANSWERS TO COTTAGE QUIZ

1. B
2. FALSE
3. C
4. TRUE
5. FALSE
6. D