

Reading Guide

The Space Between Sisters

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Introduction

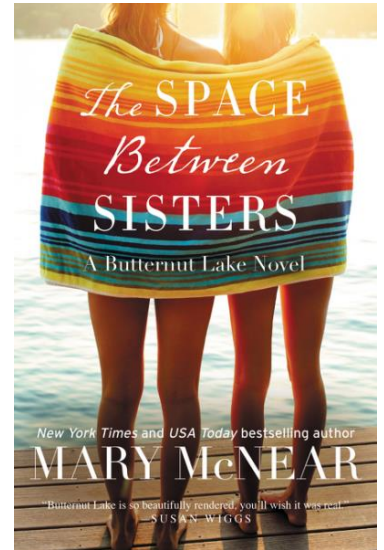
They are two sisters who couldn't be more different. Win organized and responsible, plans her life with care. Poppy impulsive and undependable, leaves others to pick up the pieces. But despite their differences, they share memories of the idyllic childhood summers they spent together on the shores of Butternut Lake. Now, thirteen years later, Win, recovering from a personal tragedy, has taken refuge on Butternut Lake, settling into a predictable and quiet life.

Then, one night, Poppy unexpectedly shows up on her sister's doorstep with her suitcases, an aging cat named Sasquatch, and a mysterious man in tow. Although Win loves her beautiful sister, she wasn't expecting her to move in for the summer. At first, they relive the joys of Butternut Lake. But their blissful nostalgia soon gives way to conflict, and painful memories and buried secrets threaten to tear the sisters apart.

As the waning days of summer get shorter, past secrets are revealed, new love is found, and the ties between the sisters are tested like never before...all on the serene shores of Butternut Lake.

Questions for Discussion

1. Poppy returns to Butternut Lake because she has nowhere else to go, but also because it's the one place she truly considers home. Is there a place of your heart that you truly consider "home," even if it is somewhere you haven't been in years?
2. Win and Poppy react to their upbringing in very different ways. Poppy is a free spirit. Win tries to control her world. Do you think their coping mechanisms have worked for them? And is it possible that Poppy is also, in her own way, just as much a control freak as her sister?
3. Win protests that three years isn't long enough to get over her husband's death. Do you think it's been long? Is there ever really an expiration date on grief?
4. Do you think Win actually is allergic to Sasquatch? Or is she just upset that his presence is an interruption to her routine?



5. Sam and Alicia seem to have found a very sensible way to deal with their divorce. Do you feel Sam may have been selfish in his desire to move back to Butternut? Was Alicia at all at fault for choosing to stay in the city? Or did they simply grow apart?
6. Justine is a very mysterious character. What do you think is truly going on in her life?
7. Sasquatch was the one constant in Poppy's life. Do you believe animals can sense the pain in their human companions? Is it at all possible that he knew the time had come when he could let go?
8. Sisters are always fascinating as characters in books, movies, and on television. Why do you think the sister-sister relationship is such an intriguing one? Do you know sisters like Win and Poppy—two women raised by the same people who are wildly different individuals?
9. Rich the photographer is not brought to justice, and it's possible he never will be. Have you ever had to face a situation where you needed to accept that a perfect outcome may not be possible?
10. Do you think it was fair that Win and Poppy's grandparents left the cabin solely to Win?