

My Sister's Keeper Study Guide

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult

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Introduction

Jodi Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper* (2004) explores the medical, legal, ethical, and moral issues related to long-term illness—a complicated subject in the contemporary world. In the book, thirteen-year-old Anna sues her parents for the right to control her body. Conceived as a sibling donor match for her sister Kate, who suffers from leukemia, Anna has undergone numerous procedures to provide Kate with whatever she needs to fight her disease, but when Anna learns she is to give up a kidney for her sister, Anna hires a lawyer and takes her parents to court.

Picoult's idea for *My Sister's Keeper* came while doing research for her novel *Second Glance* (2003), when she was intrigued by information about eugenics in the United States in the 1930s. Supporters of eugenics wanted to improve the human race by allowing only those with desirable genetic characteristics to reproduce. Picoult also learned about stem cell research and linked the ideas, wondering if stem cell research could become human genome research. The related issues are complex and emotional.

A news story about a mother in Colorado who conceived a child so that the baby could donate cord blood to save the life of his elder sister also captured Picoult's imagination. The author took the idea to the next level and added more invasive procedures to increase the story's drama and ethical dilemma.

Picoult's personal experience also shaped the plot. Her middle child, Jake, had ten surgeries in three years beginning when he was six years old. Picoult's son suffered from cholesteatoma—a benign but potentially fatal tumor that can grow into the brain—in both ears. Because of this experience, Picoult understands the lengths to which a mother will go to protect her child and also how needs of a sick child are demanding for the entire family.

My Sister's Keeper won a 2005 Alex Award from the Margaret Alexander Edwards Trust, and *Booklist* named it as one of the top ten adult books for teenagers. Reviewing the novel in *Booklist*, Kristine Huntley concluded, "This is a beautiful, heartbreaking, controversial, and honest book."

Author Biography

Jodi Picoult was born on May 19, 1966, in Long Island, New York, the daughter of Myron and Jane Picoult. She had a happy childhood growing up with her younger brother, Jonathan, in Nesconset, New York, on Long Island. Picoult began writing stories when she was young and continued the practice throughout her childhood. She also put her love of books to work with a job as a library page.

While a student at Princeton University, Picoult studied creative writing with such luminaries as Mary Morris and Robert Stone. During her student years, she published two short stories in *Seventeen* magazine. After earning her bachelor's degree in English in 1987, Picoult held several jobs. She worked for a brokerage firm on Wall Street as a technical writer, as a copywriter at a two-person advertising agency, and as a textbook editor. While teaching creative writing at a Massachusetts middle school, she earned her master's degree in education from Harvard in 1990. Picoult left the post in 1991 to focus on writing.

Picoult began writing what became her first novel while pregnant with her first child. *Songs of the Humpback Whale*, which focuses on the idea of love, was published in 1992. Picoult's second novel, *Harvesting the Heart* (1993), was based on her experiences as she tried to balance her children's needs with her writing. After the birth of her third child, Picoult made motherhood her focus and considered writing her hobby.

The author continued to write novels regularly as her children grew older. The focus of her work also evolved. Beginning with *Picture Perfect* (1995), she wrote about social issues—in this case, spousal abuse—and began receiving significant critical attention. Well-researched books became a hallmark of Picoult's work. For example, she spent a considerable amount of time exploring suicide pacts for the failed agreement at the center of *The Pact* (1998), the molestation of children by priests and related legal issues for *Perfect Match* (2002), and ghost hunters for *Second Glance* (2003).

Inspired by news items about designer babies, gene therapy, cloning, and old eugenics policies, Picoult wrote *My Sister's Keeper* (2004). The novel spent weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. She followed with *Vanishing Acts* (2005) and *The Tenth Circle* (2006). As of 2006, Picoult makes her home in Hanover, New Hampshire, with her family. Picoult focuses on her writing and makes numerous appearances across the United States each year.



Plot Summary

My Sister's Keeper is about 13- year-old Anna Fitzgerald, who enlists the help of an attorney, Campbell Alexander, to sue her parents for rights to her own body. Anna was conceived as a donor for her sister Kate, who is 16 and has leukemia. Anna donated genetic material throughout her life, and the latest donation is for her to give a kidney to Kate. If she wins the lawsuit, she would not have to donate.

Her parents, Brian and Sara Fitzgerald, have different reactions to the suit. Brian has mixed feelings while Sara feels that Anna should donate the kidney. Sara is a lawyer turned housewife and decides to represent the parents' side in the suit. Sara attempts to get Anna to drop the suit, but Anna refuses and moves out of the house to the fire station where her father works. Jesse is Brian and Sara's son and the oldest child.

After Kate's cancer diagnosis, Jesse grows up to be a troublemaker involved in alcohol, drugs, theft, and arson. There has been an arsonist setting fires in the area that Brian and his fellow firefighters have been putting out. The arsonist is revealed to be Jesse, and Brian finds out the truth after finding clues. Brian confronts Jesse and learns how badly Kate's illness has hurt him. Brian vows to keep Jesse's arson a secret. Jesse eventually straightens himself out and becomes a police officer.

The judge at the hearing, Judge DeSalvo, is a parent who lost his child in a drunk-driving accident. The guardian *ad litem* assigned to Anna as her representative is Julia Romano, an old girlfriend of Campbell's.

Julia and Campbell met in a private high school. She was a scholarship student from a poor background while he was a rich kid. They fell in love and enjoyed a relationship until Campbell broke up with her at graduation. Julia never knew the reason but felt it was because of her social class. They meet again because of Anna's case. Although they try to conduct court business, their attraction to each other is obvious.

Campbell has a guide dog named Judge even though Campbell seems to have no disabilities. He keeps the purpose of the dog a secret. Julia and Campbell spend the night together with Campbell being the first one to leave. Feeling abandoned again, Julia is frustrated about her relationship with Campbell when he has a seizure during Anna's testimony. The purpose of the dog is to be a seizure dog. She discovers Campbell developed epilepsy after a wreck before graduation, and he broke up with her because he did not want to be a burden. She supports him, and they reunite. They eventually marry.

Campbell and Sara bring in their witnesses and battle over whether Anna is mature enough for medical emancipation. Julia, who is supposed to deliver a report about who she thinks should win, is undecided. Anna, who has refused to testify, is the last witness to speak. She reveals that Kate was suicidal and did not want Anna to go through with the transplant. That is why Anna started the lawsuit. The judge decides for Anna and gives Campbell medical power of attorney over her.



Anna and Campbell get in a wreck after leaving the courthouse, and Brian is one of the rescue workers called to the scene. Despite their best efforts to save Anna, the doctor says she is brain dead, so her parents take her off life support. Not knowing about the case, the doctor suggests organ donation. Campbell says her kidney should go to Kate. Kate gets the kidney and makes a recovery, living a normal life as a dance teacher and grateful for her sister's gift.

Prologue and Monday

Prologue and Monday Summary and Analysis

The prologue begins with a quote about planning a war by Carl von Clausewitz, Vom Kriege. Anna remembers trying to smother her sister with a pillow at age 3. Their father stops her. She remembers thinking up ways her sister could die. Anna says her sister ultimately killed herself, or that is what Anna wants to think.

"Monday" begins with a Carl Sandburg poem called "Kin." The speaker tells his brother he is fire, who will alter him.

Anna

Anna Summary

Thirteen-year-old Anna Fitzgerald tells how she learned she was conceived in a lab to save her sickly sister 16-year-old Kate, who has acute promyelocytic leukemia. Anna says Kate is in remission. Anna has been Kate's allergenic donor or a perfect sibling match. She has given Kate leukocytes, stem cells, and bone marrow. She goes to a pawnshop to sell a necklace. The pawn dealer gives her less than it is worth. She lets it go with regret, and the dealer tells her to pretend she misplaced it.

One day their mother, Sara, hears a noise coming from Kate's room. She is crying, and Sara thinks Kate is sick. She is crying over a soap opera. When Kate and Anna are alone, they talk about the soap opera. Anna blocks the television set that Kate wants to see. Anna says they are showing only previews, but Kate says she might not live to see the next show. During mid-conversation, Kate shows she is in pain. She rubs her lower back, which means her kidneys are bothering her. Anna offers to get Sara, but Kate says to wait.

They hold hands. Anna thinks that what she plans to do is like fueling a fire, which her father has explained. He also explained how a person has to break walls to escape from a fire. Anna counts her money, which is over \$100. Anna goes to see their brother, Jesse, who has lived in the attic over the garage since he was 16. She reflects on how Jesse has gotten into trouble, but her parents have too much going on, so they ignore it. Jesse is making moonshine whiskey. Anna tries it and hates it. He wants to know what she wants. Anna tries to act nonchalant, but Jesse says nobody just visits him, that he would have known if it were about Kate. Anna says it does concern Kate in a way. She gives her brother the newspaper articles. Jesse looks at them and tells her not to mess things up. They have their roles. Kate is the victim. He is the troublemaker. She is the mediator. Anna denies that.

She goes to a lawyer named Campbell Alexander, whom she read about in the newspaper, to enlist his services. Jesse waits for her after he drops her off. She tells Campbell's secretary she has an appointment. The secretary is mystified and says they do not deal with children, but she can refer Anna to other lawyers. Anna cites cases Campbell has won that involved minors. The secretary looks at her and then shows her into his office. Anna waits in the office and looks at the surroundings.

A dog comes in followed by Campbell. He thinks she is selling something, which she denies. He cannot believe she wants to be a client. Anna tries to pet the dog, but Campbell says not to because he is a service dog. He will not say why. He tries to get her to leave, but she wants to know if he tried to sue God. She puts the articles on his desk. He says he sued a Catholic church because they were denying an orphan experimental treatment with fetal tissue. She tells him her sister has leukemia. He says he is sorry, but Anna cannot sue for her sister. Anna thinks about all her donations, and

how a decision has been made about her without asking her opinion. She wants to sue her parents so she can have control over her own body and can stop providing medical help to her sister.

Anna Analysis

The quote, Anna's little story, and the poem foreshadow Anna's plans to sue her parents for control over her body and to stop saving her sister Kate. The poem deals with fire, which is an overall theme in the book. The reader learns from Anna's perspective how she was conceived and why. She describes the family's relationships to Kate, and how everyone has been affected. She mentions her father describing fire in relation to her quest. She compares Campbell's mystery illness with Kate's.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell misunderstands what Anna wants. He thinks she is pregnant. Anna informs him that her mother wants her to donate one of her kidneys to her dying sister. She explains her medical history. At birth, she donated cord blood to her sister, who went into remission. At age 5, Anna donated lymphocytes several times. After that didn't work, she gave bone marrow for a transplant. After her sister's relapse, she gave peripheral blood stem cells. Campbell asks why she cannot tell her parents how she feels. She says she is ignored. She feels the only reason she is alive is to save her sister. She says that if her sister does not get the kidney, she will die. Campbell asks why she is here now. She says because her donations never seem to end.

She offers a small amount of money and is shocked to hear his regular fee. He decides to do the case *pro bono* but tells her she can polish doorknobs as payment. He tells her he will file a petition of legal emancipation for medical purposes for Anna in family court. He tells her there will be a hearing, and she will get a guardian *ad litem*. She gives him her name and phone number and leaves. Campbell tells his secretary Kerri to take dictation for the petition that she will file with the family court the next day. Kerri questions this and asks where the girl will live. The dog nudges him, and Campbell has to leave and says it is not his problem.

Campbell Analysis

This is told from Campbell's perspective upon meeting Anna. The issue of medical ethics and designer babies covered by the media is raised. That Campbell's attitude is all business is highlighted by his hunger for media attention for the case and how his doing the case for free will just bring him more business. Campbell initially shows disdain for her youth. He seems callous about Anna's living situation, but his dog's actions make the reader think something else is going on.



Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 1990. Sara, Anna, and Kate's mother find a bruise on 2-year-old Kate's back during bath time. The next morning, Sara goes to wake Kate up, remembering that her daughter had been tired and had the sniffles. When she undresses her, she sees a line of bruises on her back. Sara takes Kate to the doctor, and they draw blood, which Kate resists. While waiting for the test results, Sara is hoping to be told that Kate is fine and that they can go home. The doctor, however, tells her that Kate's white cell count is low. He sends them to a hematologist for another test. Sara realizes that the hematologist is also in oncology, which deals with cancer. She calls the fire station where her husband Brian works and leaves a message that he needs to come to the hospital.

At the hospital, Kate has more blood drawn and is given a chest x-ray because of her cold symptoms. Sara and her husband wait with Kate and their son Jesse, and the couple discusses milestones in Kate's life. A phlebotomist comes in and asks to run tests on Kate. This distresses Sara, and she and Brian argue. The doctor tells them that the test results indicate that Kate has leukemia. It is a rare type that can be treated, but the prognosis is not good. They have to perform another test for which they withdraw bone marrow. On the way home, the family plays a game. Brian finds it hard to share the diagnosis with a friend. Sara and Brian wonder whether it is their fault and face an uncertain future.

Sara Analysis

Sara's perspective as the mother is covered when Kate was first diagnosed. The reader finds out about Brian, the father, and his profession as a firefighter. The reader finds out Sara used to be a lawyer before becoming a housewife. Sara's sister is a contrast to her because she is a single executive. Pre-diagnosis, Sara is a loving mother to Kate and Jesse, paying attention to both of them. After the diagnosis, Sara's decisions and devastation are shown. Sara's temper is displayed while doctors try to test Kate. Sara's tendency to analyze words is shown. She goes from denial to guilt. Sara plays a game with Kate about what animals say. The game shows the biological inabilities of animals and is comparable to Kate's own situation. At the end of the chapter, Sara notices Brian sounds like a hurt animal.



Brian

Brian Summary

Brian talks about letting a fire go. The family has dinner. The family converses. Sara wonders where Anna is. She calls for her. Anna comes to dinner and behaves mysteriously, which Brian notes is unusual for her. Kate points out that Anna's locket is missing. She is evasive when she's asked about it. The family banter, and Anna leaves. Brian is at the fire station talking to his coworkers. He realizes Kate will die from kidney problems, not the leukemia. After dinner at home, Brian and Sara wonder what is wrong with Anna. He mentions that he is on call, and the arsonist may set another fire. They reassure each other about Kate even though both are doubtful. At the fire station, Brian sits on the roof looking at the sky. He is interested in astronomy. Anna joins him.

Brian Analysis

The theme of fire is illustrated from Brian's point of view. He thinks sometimes a fire should be allowed to burn itself out, and he has to be patient. The fire represents Kate's illness. His affection for Kate is shown. Kate is wearing a T-shirt with a picture of a crab and the word "cancer" written on it. Kate's sense of humor about her illness is revealed often in the book. Sara has a bad reaction to it, which is her usual reaction. Brian notes that Anna is supposed to be his easy child because he has troubles with Kate and Jesse for different reasons. The family's defined roles crop up often in the book. Anna's feeling that her parents care more Kate's welfare is shown. The locket that Anna pawned is discussed; the locket represents Kate and Anna's relationship. Brian's relationships with his coworkers are evident. He is their captain. He usually shares his wisdom by comparing fire to something. The subject of an arsonist on the loose is introduced. This will be vital to the story.

Brian's love of astronomy is introduced. Like fire, this is a theme of the book. Anna's real name is Andromeda, who was a princess who was punished for her mother's vanity. She is saved by Perseus. Her constellation resembles arms stretched out and hands tied together. This symbolizes Anna's rocky relationship with her mother Sara, how trapped she is, and how she needs saving. Brian's perspective is that the story has a good ending. He talks about how supernovas are watched by everyone as they die. Kate's dying is also public. At the end of the chapter, Brian tells Anna as they are stargazing the story of Orpheus, who tried to prevent Death from taking his wife, but he failed. Anna is not surprised he failed. This is symbolic in that Anna and Brian know about trying to keep death at bay.

Tuesday

Tuesday Summary and Analysis

This segue includes a poem called "First Fig" by Edna St. Vincent Millay. It symbolizes the temporary state of existence, which is Kate's. It continues the fire theme.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna shares how out of place she feels in her family. She describes the process of Kate's dialysis. Kate, Anna, and Sara discuss kidney transplants while Kate goes through dialysis. An old family friend, a sheriff, Vern Stackhouse, arrives to serve papers. The papers are to inform Anna's parents about her wish for medical emancipation. It lists that Anna is in control of her medical future and that she not be made to give a kidney to her sister. Bewildered, her mother wonders what's going on. Kate has sudden pains, and while Sara tends to her, Anna leaves. She passes by the nursery and wonders if her parents value her or her genetic material. She has her brother pick her up, and since he's always been a troublemaker himself, he welcomes her to the dark side.

Anna is confronted at home by her parents. She says she has a lawyer, and Sara tells her to get rid of him. Sara is angry, but Brian wants Anna to explain. She says she does not want to continue helping Kate. Her mother protests, but her father tries to play mediator and wants them to talk. Anna realizes she has nothing to say. Her mother asks her whether she realizes what will happen. Anna says she is invisible, and her mother slaps her.

Anna remembers when she and Kate fought over sharing a room, and Kate made a dividing line that trapped Anna. Her mother helped her get out. In the present, Anna is in the shower, and Kate wants to talk. Kate tells her she is the only friend she has. Anna disagrees but realizes Kate's illness has kept her from making friends. Kate says she can stop being her sister, but she does not want her to stop being her friend. Anna does not want that to happen, either.

That night, Anna watches Kate sleep and realizes that smothering her would be like what she is doing. She overhears her parents talking. Her mother thinks Anna needs more attention, but her father thinks maybe what Anna is doing is not a bad idea. Sara goes into Anna's room. Anna tells her she must hate her. Sara disagrees, saying she loves her so much. They hug, and Anna wishes she could go back to the simple days of childhood. Sara says they will straighten everything out.

Anna Analysis

Anna emphasizes something she does throughout the book in that she feels like an outsider in her family. The reader learns about dialysis. Kate's lighthearted attitude toward her sickness is emphasized again. Anna assumes her helping role by reporting on the outside world for Kate. Sara is the one who brings up the kidney transplant. The reader learns about that. Sara is the one who spearheads the treatments. Anna compares herself to Kate when her mother is served with court papers by saying the



blood leaves her body. This is an emphasis on their bond. The petition's language is very stark and ensures that Anna is the primary concern. Kate's pain after the petition is served represents the pain the family feels as a response to the suit. Another symbol is the call button that Sara is pushing that Anna calls a bomb trigger. Anna overhears a parent talk about his baby, and Anna's feelings show when she wonders whether her parents cooed over her or just sent her away for her donation.

Jesse is again shown as Anna's escape. Her mother is the angry one while her father tries to be more reasonable. Anna again feels left out. She has a childhood memory about how she has always obeyed her mother. Anna and Kate's conversation in the bathroom serves to show how their sister/friend relationship is murky. Anna's thinking about smothering Kate harkens back to the little story at the beginning of the book. The reader is introduced to Brian and Sara's positions on Anna's lawsuit. At the end of the chapter, Anna has become the accepting child she used to be who relies on Sara while trying to deny that she is growing up and realizing her mother is not perfect.



Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 1990. Sara remembers being in the hospital with younger Kate. She tries to entertain her, and a doctor enters. The doctor is softer than he seems. Sara talks about her sister, Suzanne. She recalls how helpful her older sister was. She is now a single, career-driven woman. Sara places a call to her. The nurses explain leukemia to Brian and Sara. They discuss chemotherapy and its effects. They mention the possibility of a bone marrow transplant. A nurse says Jesse might be a match, but if not, Kate will go on a transplant list. She points out a transplant from a stranger is riskier. Sara wonders whether Kate can have a normal life. The nurses discuss how she can die. Kate undergoes chemotherapy, gets sick, and is upset. Her parents try to support her through the grueling treatment. They give Jesse a blood test to see whether he is a potential donor. He is not a match. The parents are devastated, but the doctor tries to reassure them that if one sibling does not match, another could. A question forms in Sara's mind. Sara notes that the world goes on despite their troubles.

Kate finishes a round of chemotherapy, and her hair starts falling out. At dinner, Jesse complains that Kate gets away with not eating anything. This angers Brian, and he says that they can be treated equally if Jesse goes through chemo, too. Sara tries to reassure her son. A week after coming home, Kate becomes feverish and is rushed to the hospital. The chemo worked, but there is a post-chemo infection. They bring her fever down and stop her shaking. Sara dreams about Kate's being treated and giving birth to another girl. Suzanne comes in to help with things. Sara is glad for her sister's competence. Sitting at Kate's hospital bed, Sara tells Brian they should have another baby. Brian cannot believe she wants a replacement for Kate if she dies. Sara says they can make sure that does not happen.

Sara Analysis

The reader is introduced to Dr. Chance through Sara's flashback of the first meeting. He is Kate's oncologist, and he appears throughout the book. Sara brings up her sister Suzanne, who is older and makes Sara feel inferior. Sara remembers how much Suzanne has helped her, and she reaches out to Suzanne about Kate. Their relationship as sisters can be compared to Anna and Kate's relationship. Suzanne helps Sara, and Anna helps Kate. The reader is given an introductory course to leukemia and treatments. There is irony in the fact that chemotherapy kills to save a life. Sara compares helping Kate through the chemo to putting down sandbags before a tsunami rolls in. Jesse wants comfort after the blood test, and Sara tries, but she cannot feel sympathy. This is the first time that Jesse is pushed aside for Kate. He is not a match, and that goes with his rebel image in the family. A dead flower in the doctor's office bothers Sara because it reminds her of death. She ends up throwing the plant away. Sara's actions with the plant equate with her fight for Kate's life.



Sara compares Kate's hair falling out to another weather event, a blizzard. The dinner scene is another example of how Kate is favored over Jesse; this time, Brian is the favoring parent. The first of Kate's hospital returns starts. Sara compares the doctors hovering over Kate to bees over flowers drawing what is needed. Sara compares Kate's appearance to the moons Brian likes, another astronomy reference. Dreams are often visions of the future. Sara's first dream represents her fear of Kate's fading away. The second predicts what comes true, that Sara has another girl. The arrival and help of Suzanne shows that Sara wants her sister to make everything well again. She will transfer this sisterly obligation to Anna, whom she decides to have at the end of this chapter.

Wednesday

Wednesday Summary and Analysis

This segue is a poem called "Fire Pages" by Carl Sandburg. The speaker will share the story of fire.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell is at home and wonders about loyalty to parents as he talks to his mother on the phone about his philandering father. He thinks about Judge, his service dog, but is evasive about his purpose. Campbell goes into the office and gives his secretary directions about cases. He finds Anna polishing his doorknob. He gets a phone call from Sara. Sara says that Anna has decided to withdraw the lawsuit. Campbell says he will need to hear that from Anna herself. Sara does not realize Anna is there and thinks she is jogging. Campbell gets off the phone. He presses Anna about what she wants to do. When she finds out he will still be her lawyer, she says she has not changed her mind.

He has a memory of disappointing his father while boating. Campbell says the judge on the case lost a daughter in a drunk-driving accident. In the courthouse, he sees Sara arguing with a clerk. Anna and Brian are with her. The clerk says only lawyers are allowed in chambers. Sara points out that she is a lawyer, which Campbell didn't know. She can represent herself. Vern comes in and acts friendly with Sara and Brian. Campbell feels at a disadvantage. They see Judge DeSalvo. Campbell thinks he knows all the local lawyers and finds out Sara has not been practicing until now. The judge wants to know what is going on. Campbell explains that Anna wants medical emancipation. Sara dismisses him, saying her daughter was just being a silly teenager. Campbell says she still wants to continue, according to their office meeting. Sara finds out Anna was not jogging. With the conflict, the judge decides to talk to Anna, who is waiting outside with her father.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell thinks about his obligation to his parents, which was prompted by Anna's case; he has a memory of disappointing his father. His apartment is modern and state of the art, which describes Campbell's cold personality. The reader learns a little more about Campbell's service dog and that he has the name Judge because Campbell, as an attorney, wants to be able to control a Judge. The reader is introduced to Campbell's cynical feelings about love, but he has an interest in a woman with a certain look that he spots. He has the first of many encounters with people wanting to know what the dog is for; he always lies and jokes about it. Campbell has his first conversation with Sara, who is against the case. It is also the first time Campbell has to confront Anna's indecisiveness about the case. The reader finds out the judge presiding over Anna's case lost a daughter, so his feelings could be biased. Campbell and Sara's legal roles are drawn, but he appreciates Anna's bond to her mother.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna imagines her funeral. She thinks the funeral would not be much with not much more than her family attending. She thinks her obituary will be relegated to the inside of the paper. Then she thinks Kate's funeral will be big with everybody who was involved in her cancer fight in attendance. She will have lots of flowers and a front-page obituary.

Going to talk with the Judge, Anna notices he wears flip-flops, which makes her feel better. The judge explains that there seems to be a conflict between what Sara and Campbell are saying. Anna asks whether there will be a trial. The judge says not if her parents agree to the emancipation, which Anna thinks is not likely. He then says that after a petition has been filed like in her case, the respondents or her parents will have to go to court and present their reasons why she cannot make her own decisions. If they do not do that, he will find in her favor by default. Anna is determined to remain calm so she will look good to the judge. She remembers playing a joke on a nurse with Kate. She says she just cannot give a kidney. He gives her a Kleenex, and she tries to compose herself. The judge says nobody can give a kidney without consent. Anna says a parent would decide for a small child. The judge says she is not a small child. He says she can complain. Anna says it just would not stop with the kidney. The judge asks whether her mother was lying about Anna wanting to stop the suit. Anna says no. Then he wants to know why she lied to her mother. Anna says it is because she loves her, and then she apologizes. Then the judge says he will find a guardian *ad litem* to assist her lawyer in doing what is best for her. Anna agrees.

The judge then asks everyone else to come in. He says he will have a guardian *ad litem* spend 2 weeks with Anna, and then he will expect a report. Afterwards, there will be a hearing. Sara says that 2 weeks could be crucial in terms of Kate's illness. The judge then decides to hold a hearing next Monday. He explains that he wants Kate's medical records when Campbell interrupts. He questions the propriety of opposing counsel living with his client. Sara says he cannot be thinking of taking her daughter away from her. Campbell says he wants to make sure that Sara does not try to influence Anna. The judge says he is not removing Anna, but Sara cannot talk about the case with Anna unless Campbell is present. If she violates that, the judge will have to be stricter. Sara agrees, and the judge leaves. Campbell says he needs to speak to his client. Sara says she is her daughter and takes her out of the room.

On the way home, there is tension as Brian misses a turn. They arrive home. Kate wants to know what happened. Sara asks Anna to tell her what happened and when she is silent, Sara becomes angry and comments that she will not talk unless a judge is there. Jesse is impressed by a judge's being involved, and Sara tells him to leave. He leaves in a huff. Brian says they should calm down. Sara says she cannot be calm when a child has basically killed another child. She tries to take her words back, but Kate leaves with Sara following. Anna escapes, too. She goes to a Laundromat, a



favorite place. She looks at different clothes and imagines being their owner, but she always comes back to being a donor for Kate. A worker asks Anna whether she needs change, and Anna is afraid to answer.

Anna Analysis

Anna's jealous feelings are shown when she imagines her funeral to be simple while Kate's would be elaborate. Anna sees the judge as "different," like her. The reader finds out both Anna and Kate have fun with Kate's illness. After comforting an upset Anna, the judge says he will appoint her a guardian who, the readers will find out, will be important to the book. As the hearing is set, Anna sees her mother in the lawyer role. Campbell arranges it so that Sara and Kate cannot talk to each other about the case. Anna's role as daughter, however, is stronger than the one she plays as Campbell's client. At the house, the family acts out their usual roles. Sara is the protector of Kate. Brian tries to make peace. Kate appears hurt. Anna runs off. Anna goes to the Laundromat to connect to other lonely people and to let her imagination run wild. She tries to imagine herself in other lives, but her life with Kate is the dominant one. The worker asking her about change goes beyond coins to Anna's needing a different life, which is a common theme in the book.

Jesse

Jesse Summary

Jesse talks about how he liked to play with matches. He and Anna bonded over one of his little fires at home one time. She connects him to the family. Jesse drives along the highway and thinks it would be best if he died in a wreck. He wonders who would get his organs. He goes to Duracell Dan, a homeless man who collects batteries. Jesse brings him food in exchange for Dan's keeping his supplies, which include perchloric acid that he stole from a school lab and sawdust. He takes his supplies and goes to an abandoned building. With a cigarette and his materials, he sets a fire. He looks at the fire trucks and firefighters coming in. Through binoculars, he sees his father.

He comes back home. Sara is happy to see him. Kate has been vomiting blood, and he needs to drive them to the hospital. Sara says Anna has left, and Kate would not let her into the room, so she had to break the door down when she heard her coughing. On the way to the hospital, Jesse remembers arguing with Kate and wonders if this is the end. He carries her into the hospital with his mother telling the staff she needs platelets. Doctors tell them that Kate is suffering from the effects of end-stage kidney disease. Sara asks whether a transplant is still possible. One doctor remarks that Kate is weaker and might not survive the operation. The mother wants to know if it could happen if there was a donor. Jesse asks if he could be a donor. The doctor says no, noting that this is a special case. His mother marvels at his offer, but he tries to shrug it off. Kate tries to mouth something. Jesse makes out "Tell Anna," but his father comes in before he understands anything else. He goes outside and wonders what Kate meant.

Jesse Analysis

The reader is introduced to Jesse's love of fire. His connection to Anna is emphasized. Jesse's rebellious attitude is shown. He says he drives fast through traffic "sewing up a scar."⁽⁹³⁾ This is one of many medical references in the book. There are physical scars and mental scars for the characters. He thinks about organ donations, which is the focal point of the story. Jesse is revealed to be the arsonist, and he is getting bolder. Jesse's materials for starting a fire are listed, which is important later in the book. The reader sees his feelings of guilt and worry about Kate. He is rejected again as a donor for Kate. The reader sees he feels he cannot help himself, so how could he help Kate? Jesse refers to fire again when he talks about how his father smells of smoke and again when Jesse smokes in a no smoking area. Jesse's feelings of helplessness are shown.

Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 1990-91. Sara remembers talking to other pregnant women in a beauty salon when she was pregnant with Anna. They discuss baby names, and one asks Sara if she knows the gender. Sara thinks to herself that she knows everything genetically about the baby, but she answers that she is having a girl. Someone asks whether she has a name picked, and Sara realizes she has not thought of the little things, just that the baby would save her sister. Sara shares times she thinks Kate will be OK and times she is very sick. Sara and young Jesse have a conversation in the car, and they pass by a cemetery. Jesse asks whether Kate will go there. Sara answers that she is not going anywhere.

Brian and Sara are at a television studio to appear as guests on a newsmagazine. The reporter, Nadya Carter, tells them they have an introduction about Kate, and then Brian and Sara will answer questions. The show starts, and Nadya asks Brian why they went to a geneticist. He explains that their daughter has a severe form of leukemia, and she needs a bone-marrow donor. Her brother was not a match, so they thought another sibling might be a good idea. Nadya points out that the sibling has not been born yet. Sara says they went to a geneticist because of the time issue. The doctor picked one embryo out of four to implant in Sara. Nadya says the couple has received hate mail. Brian says they are accused of wanting a designer baby. Nadya presses him about it. Brian says they did not want a baby with a certain eye color, height, or IQ. They just want a baby with Kate's characteristics that could save her life. Nadya asks Sara what she will tell the baby when she is an adult. Sara says she hopes to be able to tell her not to aggravate her sister.

On New Year's Eve, Sara goes into labor. In the hospital, Sara has contractions and asks Brian to get the doctor. It is time to deliver. The baby is born, and Sara looks at the cord. She reminds the doctor to take care of the cord. He cuts it and stores it until Kate's treatment can start.

The day after Anna's birth, Sara leaves Maternity and goes to Radiology to visit Kate. The child laughs at their matching gowns. A pediatric cocktail has been administered to Kate to sedate her. The therapist arrives to take Kate to the RT suite. Kate clings to Sara. Brian tries to reassure her. She refuses to let go and climbs into her mother's arms. Sara promises she will always be watching her. The radiation therapist prepares Kate for treatment and promises her a sticker afterwards.

Sara notes that with cancer, the sicker you are, the more likely it is that you are healing. Kate becomes very sick and cries all the time. She also has to be kept in isolation, and visitors have to wear protective suits. Her toys have to be sterilized, and the teddy bear she sleeps with is in a plastic bag. While waiting outside the treatment room, Sara practices giving injections to an orange. Kate will need growth factor shots that Sara will



have to administer. Brian tries to eat the other orange, but Sara says it could be tainted by previous injections.

Dr. Chance and a nurse come in. The nurse has an IV bag full of red fluid. Sara and Brian follow them and they see the nurse, who puts the bag on a pole and hooks the drip to Kate's central line. Kate is asleep with her parents on both sides of her. Sara looks at Kate's hips, the iliac crest, where bone marrow is created. Sara observes that the stem cells of Anna's will flow into Kate's blood into her chest but will go where they are supposed to. The cord blood flows through the tube as they watch.

Sara Analysis

The other women think she is having an ordinary pregnancy, but Sara reveals the truth of Anna's conception to the reader. Sara shows that she is not thinking of the baby as her own person but for what she can do for Kate. Jesse, the child, brings up Kate's death, but Sara is in denial. Kate and Brian make an appearance on a talk show because of the unusual pregnancy; there have been stories like this in the real media. Sara and Brian defend themselves against the resulting controversy about designer babies, which has been an issue in real life. Again, Anna is not thought of as an individual but as a help for Kate.

Anna is born at the beginning of a new year, which is a symbol for new beginnings. Sara is more concerned about the umbilical cord than the new baby. Sara's attention is back on Kate. Sara notes the irony that the sicker chemo makes you, the better the chances are. Kate is isolated in more than one sense. Sara prepares for her duties as nurse and watches Anna's blood go into Kate, which enforces her need to save Kate.



Julia

Julia Summary

Julia is bantering with her twin sister, Isobel, over the state of Julia's apartment. She says that when they were teens, Isobel, or Izzy, was the good one while she was the rebellious one. Now Julia has a regular job, and Izzy is an artist. Julia gets a phone call from Judge DeSalvo. He needs a guardian *ad litem* for his case. Being a guardian for minors in court cases is her job. She learns the specifics about the medical emancipation case, and the name of the lawyer makes her hesitate. However, she agrees to do it.

Julia rings the doorbell at the Fitzgerald house, but no one answers. As she gets ready to leave, Anna comes out. Julia introduces herself as Julia Romano and asks Anna whether she knows what a guardian does. Anna is suspicious and talks about how a girl was kidnapped by somebody pretending to know her mother. Julia produces identification and the emancipation petition. Anna looks at it and gives it back. They wonder where everyone is. Anna hopes Kate is fine. Julia asks Anna whether they can talk.

Julia and Anna are at the zoo. Julia usually takes the children assigned to her to the zoo to get them to talk. She realizes that Anna is older than most, and this might be the wrong place. They have a brief conversation. Anna responds to her questions about her sister's health and her mother's being the opposing lawyer. Julia asks what Anna likes to do. Anna says she used to play hockey. She stopped because she became too busy with Kate. Julia asks about friends. Anna says that friends are hard to keep with all the medical stuff she is involved in. Julia asks who she talks to. Anna answers Kate and asks if she has a cell phone.

Anna calls the hospital and finds out Kate is not there. Anna says she might not be in the system yet. Julia asks whether she can face the consequences if she stops donating. She says she knows what will happen, but she has never said she likes it. Julia wonders to herself what she would do if Izzy needed an organ. Julia thinks she would be a donor, no question about it. Then Julia realizes it would be her choice. Julia asks if her parents ever consulted her. Anna says they phrase the questions where she has to answer "yes." Julia asks whether she ever told her parents that she did not like their choices for her. Anna says she might have objected one or two times, but they are Kate's parents, too. Julia realizes that things get messy when parents make decisions for a child in favor of another child. Julia wonders whether Anna filed the case because she feels she could make her own decisions or just needs attention. They talk about a polar bear baby that was sent away, and Julia asks Anna how she feels about that. Julia says she is trained to look for signs of depression. Anna holds on to the railing, and her eyes are lackluster. Julia realizes Anna will lose Kate or herself. Anna asks Julia whether she can go home.



On the way home, Anna seems withdrawn. She asks what the next step is. Julia says she will talk to everybody else involved like her parents, her siblings, and her attorney. At the house, Anna asks Julia to go in with her. She is afraid of her mother's reaction because she did not tell her where she was. Julia asks if that is common. Anna says she is usually obedient.

Sara is not as intimidating as Julia thought she would be. Sara is upset and wants to know where Anna has been. Julia tells her her name and position. Sara thanks her for bringing Anna home and subtly tries to indicate that she should leave when Julia says she wants to talk to Sara. Julia says she has less than a week to turn in her report. Sara says that is not possible because Kate is in the hospital, and she gives Anna a look. Sara says she knows she is doing her job, but this is just a misunderstanding. Anna indicates that she should go. Julia realizes that no matter the circumstances, Anna will be under Sara's influence. She tells Anna that she will contact her the next day and leaves.

Julia goes into Campbell's office past the secretary. They know each other. She explains she is the guardian on the Fitzgerald case. They talk about her college experience, and he says he thought he would run into her sooner or later. Julia says maybe he was trying to avoid her.

Julia Analysis

The character of Julia Romano is introduced as the guardian appointed to Anna. She has an identical twin sister. Their relationship is in her thoughts as she works with Anna. Julia notes that she was the rebel growing up while her sister was the good one, and then their roles reversed as adults. There is a mystery as Julia badly reacts to the name of the lawyer on Anna's case.

Julia observes that Anna's house is orderly despite the family chaos. Julia is impressed by Anna's maturity but finds her complicated. Anna's love of hockey is introduced and how she stopped it because of Kate. The reader is introduced to how Anna's childhood was different in regard to friends. Julia observes how Anna is caught in the middle. Anna sees the polar bear as a victim like she is. Julia is introduced to Anna's mother whose influence over Anna is obvious to Julia. When she goes to Campbell's office, the reader realizes they knew each other from the past, and Julia is angry with him.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell focuses on business and has flashbacks to a conversation he had. He is interrupted by Julia, whom he has not seen in 15 years. He observes the changes in her appearance and greets her. She explains why she is there, and after making the avoiding remark, she apologizes. He remarks on her appearance, and Julia says she would rather talk about Anna. Campbell thinks to himself that it will be hard to forget about the past. She comments on Judge. She tries to pet him, but Campbell tells her not to because he is a service dog. They change the subject to Anna. Julia says she saw Anna, and her mother may be trying to get her to drop the case. Campbell says he can have Sara moved out of the house. Julia cannot believe he would do that.

Judge starts barking and pulling on Campbell's clothes. Campbell ignores him and says he will get a restraining order against Sara if he has to. Julia objects and says Anna does not need any more upheaval. Julia wonders what is wrong with Judge. Campbell brushes it off and says he will protect Anna's legal rights. Julia accuses him of being selfish and remarks how strange it is that Anna wants to stop being used to another person's advantage and she chooses him as a lawyer. Campbell says she does not know him. Then Julia asks whose fault that would be. He feels a shudder and has to leave the room with Judge, noting that he leaves Julia for a second time.

Campbell remembers the Wheeler School. He was a sixth-former when Julia entered Wheeler. She dressed differently from the rest of the students in t-shirts and army boots. She had wild, dark hair and wore no makeup. She enjoyed reading the classics. Her nickname was Freak. She dyed her hair pink. He took an interest in her and one day followed her to a cemetery. He said he needed her help with homework. She said he was just like the rest of the students and had to use his trust fund money to hire a tutor. Their English assignment was whether to help in a hypothetical situation. After he asked her whether she would help in that situation, she said yes. Then he asked why she cannot help him.

In the present, Campbell is in the bathroom, freshening up. He compliments Judge and goes back to his office. Julia is gone. Kerri says that Julia said he could find her on his own, and that she wanted the medical records. There is a Post-it note on the desk where Julia wants the records sent. Campbell pockets it and says he'll handle it. Then he remembers kissing Julia a week after they met as teenagers.

He stops by the Fitzgerald house and notes that this is his first house visit for a client. Anna opens the door. He finds out Sara is at the hospital with Kate. He says he heard she met her guardian. Anna says she was okay. He says she is concerned that her mother is trying to talk her into giving up the case. Anna says Kate is the main topic of conversation. She asks if he has kids, and he asks her what she thinks. She says he



does not seem like the parent type because he is so tense. He makes an effort to relax and says he is not used to visiting clients at home. Anna says she is not used to hoping.

Campbell goes to Julia's apartment. When she opens the door, she appears upset. She wants to know what he wants, and he holds up the records. Then he sees Julia come into the room and is shocked to see he was talking to Julia's identical twin. Izzy realizes who he is and acts hostile. Julia says it is just business, and Izzy leaves. Julia thanks him for the records and wants him to leave. He says he went to see Anna, and they are in agreement. He wants to know what she has been up to. She says she went to Harvard Law, and her sister became a jewelry designer. She says she just moved in. He says he thought she would settle down with a husband and kids. He says he hoped to be the husband. She says he never wanted that. He tries to reminisce, but Julia says it is too painful. He realizes it was painful for both of them.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell remembers a conversation with Julia, but the reader does not know Julia is the other speaker. He is all business until he sees her in his office. Campbell wants to talk about the past, but Julia wants to be professional. Their past will be revealed and will be a stumbling block throughout the book. Julia finds out he has a service dog, but Campbell does not explain as usual. Campbell and Julia argue over the case, and Julia refers to the past. The reader should note the dog's behavior during their argument as it foreshadows an important plot point.

There is the first flashback to Campbell and Julia meeting in school as teenagers. They are shown as opposites, Julia as the punk rebel and Campbell as the spoiled rich boy. The reader should also note Campbell in the bathroom after his sudden exit, as this is another foreshadowing of a plot point. There is another flashback to their first kiss. Julia's influence is seen on him as he visits Anna at home; he has never visited a client at home before. He mentions he talked to Julia but does not bring up their past connection. On this visit, he and Anna get comfortable with each by joking. A sense of humor helps their relationship throughout the book.

When Campbell goes to Julia's home, his feelings get in the way. He finds out about her twin for the first time. The twin knows who Campbell is. Julia fends her off and tries to get rid of Campbell, but their past keeps creeping into their conversation. They try to catch up and joke, but the pain is still there.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna thinks about the photos of her and her siblings in the living room. She realizes there are fewer photos of her. Her father calls. Her mother is staying at the hospital with Kate, and he offers to take her to the station. She says she can go to Jesse if she needs something even though his help is doubtful. Her father has to leave because of an alarm. She goes to the garage. She says people are nice to her because of Kate and wonders how they would treat her if Kate were well. Jesse drives Anna to the hospital. She wants to try one of his cigarettes, and after she does so, she does not like it.

In the hospital parking lot, Jesse tries to assure her she is not doing the wrong thing. Anna disagrees. He asks about how she will face Sara. Anna realizes she would not be able to be alone with Kate with Sara there. Jesse says he will take care of it. Anna remembers talking about dying with Kate when they were younger. The conversation makes her uncomfortable while Kate is more laid back about it. Jesse gives her money for cab fare and hides her in a linen closet in the hospital. He takes out a flask and pours liquor on himself. Then he staggers around and acts drunk. He starts calling for his mother. The nurses try to stop him. Sara comes out of the room and is embarrassed. She apologizes to the nurses and takes him to the cafeteria for coffee.

Once everything settles down, Anna goes to Kate's room. Anna remembers a happy Thanksgiving. They were playing football, and Jesse tackled Kate. Brian and Sara were angry, but Kate was glad she was being treated normally. Anna looks at Kate in her hospital bed, a familiar scene. Kate opens her eyes and seeing Anna, calls her name. Anna crawls into bed with her sister, thinking that Kate makes her remember who she is.

Anna Analysis

Anna shows how she feels neglected through talking about family pictures. She shows her relationships with Jesse and Kate. Jesse is helpful in getting Anna in to see Kate at the hospital while Kate tries to get Anna to confront dying. The reader sees how a normal holiday family event is different for the Fitzgeralds. Anna realizes how she and her sister are intertwined. In this chapter, the writer shows Anna feels like a part of Kate even though she has been wanting her independence.

Thursday

Thursday Summary and Analysis

"Thursday" begins with a poem called "Under the Oak" by D.H. Lawrence. This poem refers to the major theme of astronomy and how people can have different perspectives.



Brian

Brian Summary

Brian remembers a fire they tried to put out, and how he would not put his men in danger. Brian is at the fire station cooking breakfast. Julia comes in and introduces herself. Sara has told him about her. Julia helps him cook and asks about Kate. Brian thinks that Kate's night was fine; Sara's night was not fine because of Jesse. Brian silently realizes he is trying to put out fires everywhere. He is fighting Kate's sickness, Anna's case, Jesse's addictions, and Sara's despair. Julia calls his name and breaks his reverie. Smoke is filling the kitchen. Brian takes care of it and apologizes.

He tells Julia that Sara's sister is a big help. He says he and Sara take care of the kids together, and it is better now that they are older. He notices Julia making a note in her book. He wonders whether Anna is too young to be left alone but realizes Anna has had to be more mature for her age. Julia wants to know how he thinks Anna is doing. He says her lawsuit must mean something is wrong. He says Sara thinks Anna is feeling neglected. She wants to know what he thinks. He tries to change the subject. Julia picks up on this. Brian asks if she has siblings. She answers that she has a twin sister and six brothers. She says they turned out fine. Brian wonders whether her parents play favorites. He says it is not right, but it happens. He wants her to meet someone. Brian remembers successful saves in his career and wished he identified who he wanted to save.

Brian Analysis

There is the firefighting/rescue theme. Brian's saying the rescuer is more important than the victim can be compared to the roles of Anna as rescuer and Kate as victim. The reader learns that Brian relishes his job and sees it as an escape from the drama surrounding Kate's illness. Brian and Julia first meet. Julia and Brian bond over cooking. Brian again thinks that a fire should burn out on its own. The reader sees Brian wanting to save everybody in his family.

Lost in his thoughts, he sets a fire that Julia stops and which puts Julia in the rescuer role. Brian remembers rescuing a child in a fire, and he is trying to rescue his children from a "fire" at home. The reader and Julia find out Brian's perspective, which is struggling not to favor one child over the other. His rescue stories underscore his need to save his family.



Julia

Julia Summary

Brian takes Julia to his car. It is filled with astronomy maps. He says it is a hobby, and Anna is named after a galaxy. As he drives, he says dark matter pulls things to it. Julia remembers talking to Izzy after Campbell left the night before. Julia is crying, and Izzy voices her disapproval of Campbell. Izzy tells her she should quit the case, but Julia says no. She warns Julia that Campbell will hurt her and that she still has feelings for him. Julia decides to leave. She goes to a bar looking for men, but the bar she ends up in is gay. Julia talks to the bartender, and she gets drunk. She talks about her past, and the bartender observes that no one is ever satisfied.

Brian and Julia enter the Fitzgerald house and see Anna eating cereal. Anna is surprised, but she feigns nonchalance and asks her father about work. He says he is taking Julia to the hospital to see Kate and invites her. Anna does not think she is wanted there. Sara calls and speaks to Anna. Kate wants to know where Anna is. After she hangs up, Julia asks her whether Kate knows about the case. Anna fiddles with the cereal and spills it. As they clean up, Julia tries to reassure Anna that Kate will not hate her. Julia remembers talking about broken relationships with the bartender. She remembers the first time she and Campbell made love.

At the hospital, Brian greets Kate, who is very pale. Anna holds back but goes to the bed when Sara holds out her hand. Sara wants to know why Julia is there. Julia says she heard that Kate is feeling better and hopes they can talk. Kate wants to know who she is. Anna says maybe Kate is not well enough. Julia realizes she is afraid she might side with Kate. Sara agrees with Anna. Julia tries to talk about the case, but Sara interrupts and wants to talk to her outside. Sara says she knows Julia is just doing her job, but Sara's job is to keep her daughters happy. She asks Julia not to tell Kate that the case is still pending. Julia agrees, and Sara says she loves both of her daughters. Brian, Sara, and Anna leave.

Julia is alone with Kate. She says she is assisting the family on healthcare issues. Kate says she looks like a lawyer. Then she says she was groggy the day before. Julia wants to know whether Kate is aware of her medical situation. Kate explains she got graft versus host disease after the bone-marrow transplant. She says it defeats the leukemia but badly affects the organs and skin. The medications that counteract that condition hurt her kidneys.

Julia wants to ask Kate more medical questions but realizes that is all Kate ever hears. She wants to know what Kate wants to be when she grows up. Kate is suspicious and wonders whether she will grow up. She says she would like to be a ballerina because they control their bodies. Julia asks about Jesse, whom she has not met. Kate says he gets into trouble with his addictions. She thinks it is because he wants attention. Julia asks about Anna. Kate recalls that she spent many holidays in the hospital and how



angry that made Anna. She says when she is well, they act like regular sisters by arguing. She says she has wished Anna had never been born. Julia says she has felt that way about her sister. Julia says living without her has been an appealing idea. Kate then says Anna has to think about life without her.

Julia Analysis

Julia is introduced to Brian's astronomy hobby, about which the reader already knew. Brian's talk about invisible forces symbolizes the forces in his own family. The effect of Campbell on Julia is shown, and the reader learns about her sister's negative reaction to their romance. Julia fills her role as Anna's comforter. Julia is the one who needs comforting as she confides in a bartender about Campbell.

In her flashback, she remembers wanting to be rescued, which fits into the rescue theme of the book. Julia tries her best to be fair with the family, but Sara as the protector wants to keep her away from Kate. Julia's conversation with Kate shows that Julia wants to talk openly about her medical issues, and she also wants to talk about regular things.



Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 1996. Sara remembers 8-year-old Kate trying to decide what to wear for her birthday. Sara noticed a bruise on Kate's thigh. Kate had been in remission for 5 years. Sara still worried about her, mistaking minor problems for bigger ones. Kate had her birthday party and received a goldfish named Hercules. Some tests taken before the appearance of the bruise came back with bad results. Kate was in molecular relapse. The doctor recommended a drug that could put Kate back into remission, or she could be immune to it.

Sara got into an argument with 10-year-old Jesse who balked at not being able to get sports equipment. He also had to miss an orthodontist's appointment. He went to his room. Sara went to apologize and found that Jesse had taken his braces off so she would not have to bother with the orthodontist anymore. After a couple of weeks on the new drug, the children talked about how long certain animals live. Jesse said a goldfish lives for 7 years, and if Kate had been one, she would already have been dead.

Sara and Brian went back to Dr. Chance's office after a 5-year absence. The drug had worked and put Kate in remission. However her blood tests were abnormal. The doctor said the drug could only do so much. A bone-marrow transplant was not advisable. An infusion of blood cells from a donor could help to build Kate up before she had to take harsher treatments. Sara wanted to know when this could be done, and the doctor replied that it could happen when she brought in Anna.

Brian and Sara tried to talk in the elevator with a contentious homeless man there. Sara said she could bring Anna in after school. Brian suggested that that might not be a good idea. Sara said they had Anna to be a donor for Kate. Brian pointed out that she did not remember being the donor. Sara became defensive and said people should be there for those they love, including Anna.

Brian and Sara took Anna to the hospital. Sara had told her that Kate was sick and that the doctor needed something from Anna to make Kate feel better. Anna chattered and colored pictures. The doctor was ready for her. Sara put her in her lap, and Brian was ready to hold her. When Anna saw the doctor with a syringe, she became upset and started moving about. Brian told Sara he thought Anna knew what was going to happen.

The doctor brought in nurses who tried to comfort Anna. The doctor reassured them they could do this. Sara realized that Anna was reacting like Kate did when she got her blood drawn. While Sara vacuumed, she accidentally knocked over the goldfish. Sara thought he was dead, and Kate wanted to know what was wrong. The goldfish, however, stirred and swam again.



Anna was needed for another donation, and Sara had to pick her up from a birthday party. Sara talked to the birthday girl's mother who seemed to know the situation. Anna had lied about where she was going, telling the mother she had to see her astronaut mother off to the airport. In the car, Sara wanted to know why Anna lied. Anna asked why she had to leave the party. Sara was angry and told her to stop acting like a 5-year-old. Then she realized that that was Anna's age.

Brian and Sara talked about a fire. Sara saw a silly letter in the Dear Abby column, and she and Brian joked about it. Then Sara complained about how life was unfair. Brian consoled her.

Anna was needed for a third donation. While waiting, Anna told her mother that the donation was not bad in case she would forget to tell her afterwards. Suzanne arrived to take her sister away from the house to a fancy hotel suite. Suzanne told her she needed to take a break. Sara was full of self-pity and realized that she was waiting for Kate to die. Suzanne told her that Sara's relaxing would not affect Kate's health. Sara finally learned to enjoy the environment, grateful to her sister.

While the children were outside after a rainy spell, Sara notices the goldfish was sluggish. She talked to a doctor about it, and he said the rain may have caused the water to have too many minerals. He suggested she clean the bowl and put in bottled water. She did so, and the fish was well again. Kate came in and said she had already changed the water one time. Her mother feigned ignorance. Kate said fish could not pay attention long, but she thought he knew who she was. Sara was touched and wondered how long the miracle could last.

Sara Analysis

Kate is able to have a normal birthday party. She receives a goldfish that becomes symbolic as Sara tries to rescue him as she wants to rescue Kate. Sara accidentally knocks him over, and he seems to be dead, but he revives. Another time, he is listless, and Sara expends great effort to save him. There is an encounter with Sara that leaves Jesse feeling neglected, and he rebels. He is a child who is starting a life-long pattern.

The reader finds out Brian and Sara argued over Anna's donating the second time. The sense of humor Kate has about the illness is shown by Brian and Sara. Young Anna has bad reactions to donating the first two times but is good the third time. Suzanne saves Sara from her bleak situation because Sara wants her to be her savior like she wants Anna to be Kate's.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna tries to imagine what it would be like to live without Kate. It is a tough time, and when Anna feels better, she tries to imagine herself doing adventurous things. Anna, however, cannot imagine those things. Her life without Kate looms ominously. Anna and her parents are in the hospital cafeteria. Sara tells Anna that she and her father will pay more attention to her, and that a judge should not be involved. Anna asks whether it is acceptable to stop. Sara says yes. Anna volunteers to tell Kate. Sara says that once the judge knows, they can just forget everything. Anna has a strange feeling and asks whether Kate will want to know why Anna cannot be her donor. Sara says that when she said, "Stop," she meant stop the lawsuit. Anna shakes her head furiously. Her mother wants to know what they did to bring this about. Anna says it is nothing that has been done to her. Sara says it must be what they have not done. Anna accuses them of not hearing her.

The deputy, Vern Stackhouse, comes in. He gives Sara an envelope. Sara reads it and asks Anna what she said to Campbell. Anna is confused and does not know what she is talking about. Her father picks up the legal document and asks what it is. Sara explains it is a motion for a temporary restraining order. Sara says that means she has to move out and cannot see Anna. She asks Anna whether that is what she wants. Anna says she never requested that. Sara says a lawyer would not do this on his own. Anna says she does not understand what is happening. Sara asks how she thinks she is able to make her own medical decisions. Sara says she will do what Anna wants and leaves.

A few months earlier, Anna had stolen Kate's makeup for a date. When Anna came home, Kate was angry. Anna said Kate borrowed her things, too. Kate said that makeup could not be washed like the clothes she borrows. Anna said she thought she could wear Kate's makeup if her germs were in Kate's body. Kate pried about the date, but Anna would not talk. They started tickling and wrestling with each other. Kate said Anna was killing her. Anna was startled by the words, and they just lay there, side by side.

On the way home, Sara and Brian fight about getting another lawyer. There are television cameras at the courthouse. A reporter asks Anna why she is suing her parents. Another reporter asks Anna whether she realizes she is Rhode Island's first designer baby. Sara tells them her daughter has nothing to say. Anna notes to herself that she knows how she was conceived. If she were really a designer baby, she'd have genes of thankfulness and compliance.

Anna and her father wait outside while Sara and Campbell talk in the judge's chambers. Julia comes in and asks Anna whether she is all right. Anna nods and then shakes her head. Julia asks whether she wants her mother to leave the house. Anna says no and that she has changed her mind. She cannot continue with the case. Julia nods and says she will talk to the judge. Her father asks whether she really wants to stop. She does not



respond. He says he has an extra bed at the station. They would not be moving out, just needing some space. She leaves the building with her father, avoiding reporters and feeling lighter.

Anna Analysis

Anna opens the chapter with a common theme in the book. She imagines herself in roles outside being Kate's sister. Anna analyzes words like her mother does. Anna thinks to herself after her mother calls her "honey" that terms of endearment can be food. She says love cannot fill you up like food, which is what Sara is looking for in her family. There seems to be consensus between Anna and Sara until it is revealed to be a misunderstanding. The restraining order just stirs up the lawsuit controversy.

When Anna takes Kate's makeup and goes on a date, she seems like a regular teenager. Her argument with Kate about it ends with a reminder of her sickness. They just cannot lead normal lives. The media is brought up again as they cover the case. Brian plays rescuer by offering Anna an alternative living arrangement. Anna makes a reference to astronomy by saying her father's rescuing her made her feel like she was catching stars.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell admits he is using the press to his advantage. The judge wants to know why the order was filed when they had already covered it. Campbell says he met with Julia. She told him that Sara said the lawsuit was just a misunderstanding that needed to be straightened out. He says this violates the judge's order. Campbell says Sara has to separate her roles as lawyer and mother. Until she learns to do that, a physical separation is needed. The judge asks Sara whether she said those things to Anna. Sara admits what she said and says further that she was just trying to straighten things out. Julia comes in. The judge asks her whether she has talked to Anna. Julia says yes and that she is mixed up. The judge wants her opinion on the motion. Julia says there is not much to go on, but the mother should not have to leave the home. Campbell says Sara admitted to violating the court order. She should be reported to the bar for ethical violations. The judge interrupts and says the case is beyond worrying about such matters. He tells Sara another lawyer should be hired for her side. He says he will not grant the order, but Sara must not talk to Anna about the case. He warns her that if this happens again, he will have her removed from her home and report her to the bar. He tells Campbell not to bother him again until Monday.

Campbell says he has to see his client and looks for her. Sara and Julia go with him. They find Vern sleeping on a bench. He is asked about Anna, and he says she left with her father. Julia escorts Sara out. Julia calls out that she needs to talk to him on the way out. Judge starts nudging him. Campbell starts to leave. Julia comes back and starts chasing him. She says she wants to talk to him. He says he has a meeting. She says she thought the issue with Anna and her mother had been settled. He says he took care of it by giving Anna options to stop Sara's influence.

Julia says Anna is only 13. Her take on the trial is different from the parents' take. Anna is not an adult. She is not able to decide anything outside of her family. Campbell says that is the petition's purpose. Julia wants to know whether he knew Anna had talked about changing her mind. Campbell says he was not aware of that. Julia says Anna was just trying not to be pushed into dropping the suit. She did not mean to be apart from her mother. Judge starts to make noise. Campbell says he has to leave. Julia wants to know where he has to go. He says he told her has a meeting. He goes into a room and pretends he is greeting people. Julia says she is going to be waiting for him. Campbell says he is busy. Then he tells Judge it is all right.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell uses the media to further his case like lawyers do in real life. Another legal phase evolves as Campbell, Sara, and Julia resolve the restraining order. Julia and

Campbell argue over Anna; there is no mention of their past this time. The mysterious plot point involving Campbell appears again, leaving Julia and the reader to speculate.



Jesse

Jesse Summary

Jesse comes home to find a good-looking woman on the front steps. Jesse silently admires her appearance. Julia introduces herself. She explains her role in the case. She wants to know where Anna is. Jesse asks whether he is his sister's keeper. He invites her to see his etchings. Julia agrees and wants to talk to him. Jesse tries to hit on her, but Julia resists. He takes her to his apartment, which is a mess. She refuses a drink. He gets a beer. Jesse says there must be controversy going on, but he tries to avoid it. She wants to know about Kate and Anna. He hedges but says they manage to live with him like everybody does. She writes in her pad and wants to know what family life was like. Jesse wants to give light responses, but he gets serious.

He recalls a Christmas when he was 12 during which Kate needed a transfusion from Anna. He was sent to a neighbor's house, and they were enjoying a regular family Christmas and felt sorry for him. He says he sneaked outside to cut down a tree, and he put it in the living room and decorated it. His parents came home tired and did not say anything about the tree. His presents came from the hospital gift shop. Julia wonders whether Anna has had similar experiences. Jesse says no, that Anna is part of healing Kate.

Julia wants to understand their decision-making process concerning when Anna will donate to Kate. Jesse says there is none. He looks through the window at the tree stump he cut and reflects on how his family never hides their mistakes. He remembers as a 7-year-old, digging a hole to China and getting stuck in the darkness. His father got him out and told him he could have been hurt. He says the hole was not really that big. Darkness depends on a person's perception.

Jesse Analysis

Jesse has his first meeting with Julia. Not surprisingly, he is attracted to her. In Jesse's dialogue, the title of the book *My Sister's Keeper* appears. He wants to know if that is what he is when Julia asks where Anna is. He explains his role in the family to Julia as being ignored because he was not involved in the medical issues. Jesse indicates he thinks Anna is right for pursuing the case; this is the first time he has ventured an opinion. When Jesse, the child, was in the hole, Brian played the rescuer role and got him out. The hole can symbolize the hole Jesse has dug for himself by getting into trouble. His realization at the end is that everyone in the family has his or her own point of view on the Kate issue.



Brian

Brian Summary

Anna moves into the station, and Brian explains to his coworkers. They are supportive and say they will protect her. Brian notes to himself that she needs protection from him and his wife. He finds Anna on the bed, listening to music. He tries to engage Anna in activities and is embarrassed when she asks about where to put her tampons. He acknowledges the awkwardness of the situation. He has a memory of her when she was little and wishes she could have stayed that way.

Brian goes to the hospital. Kate is undergoing dialysis, and she is asleep. Sara goes to him and asks about Anna. Brian explains that Anna will stay at the station for a while. Sara accuses him of indulging her. He says she just needs room to breathe. He says he worries about Anna. Sara says she worries about both of their daughters. He kisses her and tells her she knows where they are.

The fire station gets a call for a hurt patient at a nursing home. Anna goes with them. An elderly lady has fallen. Brian checks her over and they put her into the ambulance. Anna holds her hand. Brian says she has had a stroke, but she'll live. Anna comments that it must be nice to be able to heal someone so easily. When Brian is finished, he cannot find Anna in the emergency room. He finds her in Kate's room in Sara's lap that she is too big for. She and Kate are asleep. Brian wakes up Anna and says they have to go home. Anna gets up and says it is not home.

At midnight, Brian gets Anna up to go to the rooftop to see a meteor shower. Anna wonders whether Kate can see them outside the window. Brian says he does not know. Anna says he must want to ask why she is pursuing the case. Brian says it is up to her to tell him. Anna just puts her head on his shoulder.

Brian Analysis

Brian shows his support for Anna by moving her into the station. His position versus Sara's is highlighted. Anna helps her father fill his rescue role and sees a medical crisis from another angle. Despite their differences, there is still a connection between Sara and Anna. The astronomy symbolism is evident at the end. The shower is a backdrop for their issues.

Friday

Friday Summary and Analysis

The segue focuses on an excerpt from *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. This passage mentions two themes of the book, astronomy and fire. The passage is about the sureness of love.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell enters the hospital with Judge. He gets past the guard. He is going to see Dr. Peter Bergen, a psychiatrist who is the chairman of the medical ethics board of the hospital. Campbell reflects that he cannot find Anna, and he cannot reach Julia. He finds the doctor doing Tai Chi. The doctor is not happy to see him. Campbell says he needs the Fitzgerald girl's medical charts. The doctor says they have been sent. Campbell says he means Anna. Campbell asks whether the ethics committee has any records of Anna. The doctor says the committee did not need to meet about Anna. Kate is the patient. Campbell points out that Anna has been an outpatient and inpatient at the hospital eight times. The doctor says those procedures would not be studied by the committee. There is no need when doctors and patients agree. The doctor says they are busy with their jobs, and they don't try to look for controversy.

Campbell recalls Julia and himself in high school, standing at his locker. Boys laugh at them and throw condoms. Julia wants to know what he tells the guys about them. He says he tells them nothing. She asks about what he tells his parents. He says he does not say anything. Julia curses at him and leaves.

When Campbell's elevator opens, Julia is there. She wants to know why he is there. He says getting no answers from doctors. Julia says she is there to see the oncologist, Dr. Chance. Campbell says the lawsuit must still be on. Julia does not know. She has not heard from anyone in the family, except Jesse, who has a crush on her. They both share that they were not allowed into Kate's room. Campbell points out that they have a hearing in 3 days unless Anna cancels. He says they need to talk about the case. Julia resists, but Campbell says they cannot let their bad behavior interfere with the case. They go outside to walk. Julia says the oncologist says nothing else can be done for Kate, just the kidney transplant. Julia shares that the doctor thinks Kate is too weak. Campbell points out that Sara is strongly for it. Julia defends Sara, saying Kate will die anyway, so why not risk the transplant? Campbell says it is a big operation for Anna, and risking Anna's health for a needless procedure is too much.

They end up at a restaurant called Luigi Ravioli. Luigi is Julia's uncle. He escorts them to a table. Campbell remembers his mother's pressing him for his girlfriend's name. Campbell would not tell her. In the present, Julia says she knows what is good for Anna, but she does not know whether Anna is capable of deciding on her own. Campbell eats and asks whether she thinks the petition is fine, and if not, what is the problem? Julia says Anna is easily influenced by Sara and Kate, and with a decision this big, she does not know what she is getting herself into. Campbell is sure Anna will make the decision by the time of the hearing. He remembers taking Julia to his house. She was awestruck by it, but then he said he was joking and took her to a neighboring house that was smaller. Julia said his parents would not approve. He said they would and thinks he lied to Julia then but not for the last time.



In the present, Julia tries to figure him out. She says Anna must have hired him because they both like to avoid things. Julia wants to know why he took the case. He avoids the question by joking. Julia and Campbell are getting closer when his phone rings. It is Anna who is at the police station. Campbell remembers that his parents never met Julia and did not seem likely to. At her house, Campbell says he should not have taken her to his parents' house. He said he would call her before graduation, but he never did. He did not see her at graduation. Julia thinks she knows the reason, but she is wrong.

Back in the present, Julia follows Campbell to the police station. Anna is there and upset. Jesse has been arrested. Campbell asks what he can do. Anna says he is a lawyer who can get him released. Campbell says he is not Jesse's lawyer. Campbell wryly tells her to call her mother. Julia wants to know what is going on. Anna says Jesse got caught stealing a car. The car belongs to a judge. Campbell tells the police officer that Jesse has no record. The officer tells him that Jesse just became an adult. He has a long juvenile record. Campbell explains the family situation to the officer and asks for a break. The officer says he will do what he can, but Campbell needs to plead Jesse. Anna wants to know whether everything is all right. Campbell says yes, but he is not going to be involved with Jesse again, and he needs to see her. Campbell goes to see Jesse in his cell. He berates him for stealing a judge's car. Campbell says he can be released on bail. Jesse has to turn over his license and promise not to move. Jesse is fine because he gets to keep his car. Jesse is released, and when he sees Julia, he hits on her. Julia tells Anna they are going out to eat. Campbell tells Jesse he is going to court.

Campbell recalls their graduation and how he ignored Julia. In the present, Campbell tells the prosecutor that Jesse will waive information. If the prosecutor will remove some of the traffic misdemeanors, Jesse will not bother them again. The prosecutor says he will tell the judge that the police want to give Jesse a break. They sign forms and go to court. He is placed on probation, and they go outside. Jesse thanks him for helping Anna. Campbell remembers Julia's leaving him a note asking for a meeting at the cemetery. Julia accused him of letting their class differences get in the way. She said she did not need him. Campbell said he needed her and kissed her. Then he left.

In the present, Campbell and Anna are riding in the car. He tells her that she needs to be mature and that she cannot expect someone to do everything for her. Campbell says he does not know where the case stands. He says people keep telling him she will stop the suit. He tells Anna she has to fight for herself. He says they are almost at her house. She says she should go to her temporary home, the fire station. Campbell is frustrated and says he thought she did not want to be apart from her mother. He wants to know what she wants. Anna lets loose and says she wants to stop being a medical experiment. She is never consulted. She is not important to her family. She leaves the car while it is moving and goes to the fire station. Campbell is impressed by her strength but thinks her whining will not go over well in court.



Campbell Analysis

The ethics committee is introduced. The conversation shows Anna was never a concern. Campbell has another flashback to his high school days with Julia. Their social positions are highlighted. Campbell and Julia's present day conversation is full of tension, and there are allusions to the past, but he is attracted to her. She is attracted to him, too. Campbell's flashback to his mother is another example of their class differences then. The flashback with the house is when Campbell hides his shame over their class differences. He also refers to his mystery. The flashback about his parents also points to the mystery.

Campbell, not Brian, comes to Jesse's rescue at the police station. Campbell could also fill the rescuer role because he is attempting to rescue Anna from donating. Like most people, Campbell has no hope for Jesse. The graduation flashback includes a plague of locusts, which bodes bad times that are happening for Campbell and Julia. Campbell makes a reference to ghosts, which occurs throughout the book. This is symbolic of the possible death of Kate and the death of Julia and Campbell's relationship. Campbell and Jesse have memories of childhood. Jesse's memory of tadpoles not turning into frogs symbolizes the possibility of Kate not turning into a woman. Campbell sees a softer side of Jesse, which is rare. The last flashback is of Julia and Campbell's last meeting. Campbell's inability to drive at the time just deepens the mystery. Campbell forces Anna to take a stand, but while he is proud of her, he thinks the case is hopeless.



Brian

Brian Summary

Brian remembers a Greek legend about Pandora's Box that demonstrates how hope is vital, especially for a father. Campbell enters the fire station with Anna. Over coffee, Brian and Campbell talk. Campbell asks about them moving out. Campbell asks whether they should talk because of Sara's stance. Brian says so much is happening. Kate is in the hospital, and Sara is trying to fight on two fronts. Campbell says he is sorry about Kate. Brian wants him to know that he thinks Anna is justified. Campbell wants to know whether he will tell a judge that. Brian says he thinks it is necessary.

Brian goes on a call where a girl has overdosed. Brian becomes angry with her indifferent boyfriend, and his coworker, Paulie, has to calm him down. Paulie says he can take time off. Brian says he wants to work. It's work and the hospital. Campbell has to leave after the coffee. Brian says he will take care of Anna. Campbell tells him about Jesse stealing the car. Brian feels like he is going to crack.

Brian Analysis

Brian tells of Greek legends, including the one about Pandora's box, and hope. He indicates that hope is all he has in his personal and professional lives. Brian tells Campbell he will testify for Anna; Brian has, so far, hinted he would do this. Brian lets his feelings about Kate interfere with a rescue case, but he wants to work to escape from his family drama. Campbell delivers a blow to Brian about Jesse.



Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 1997. Sara remembers taking Anna to the hospital when she was younger after she fell off her bike. Kate said she liked sitting in the waiting room better. Sara remembered hearing 9-year-old Kate screaming in the bathroom. She had rectal bleeding, which is a sign of the leukemia. Sara cleans her and says this would be like getting her first period if Kate lived that long. Kate said that it had come back. The doctor said Kate had a clinical relapse. He recommended a bone-marrow transplant. Brian had said several months ago that they were told a transplant was risky. The doctor says it is risky, but it is Kate's only chance of survival. Brian had difficulty contacting the insurance company on the phone. The person at the insurance company told him that they had looked at Kate's case, and they didn't think the surgery was best for her. He wanted to know whether dying was best for her.

Sara had to give Anna shots for the harvest, the same shots she gave Kate after the cord blood transplant. The purpose was for 6-year-old Anna to overproduce cells so there would be enough for Kate. She had tried to explain what was happening to Anna, but all Anna worried about were the shots. A cream was supposed to numb the needle prick, but Anna still got upset and told her mother she hated her. Sara argued with the insurance company about covering the transplant. They would cover most of the infusion but not the transplant. Sara wanted to know whether their doctors knew anything about the disease. She said that they would be wasting their money with an infusion. The insurance person said that if they tried an infusion, they might cover a transplant. Sara said they could not wait that long and accused the insurance company of not treating their customers like human beings. The insurance person hung up on her.

Suzanne arrived the night they were preparing to go to the hospital for Kate's preparatory transplant regimen. Sara and Brian gave her instructions on household schedules. Suzanne handed them a check for \$100,000, which would have covered the transplant, but Brian said that it had already been taken care of through donations by firefighters all over the country. The next morning Sara told Kate that it was time to leave. She found Kate cleaning her room. Kate said she did it in case she did not come back. Sara said she had worries about what could happen to her children when she first became a parent. She said that when you are faced with a deadly disease, you either fall apart or confront it. Kate was half asleep on the hospital bed with tubes coming out of her. Because of the chemo, she had been vomiting and had mouth sores and excess mucus. Sara suctioned out her mouth for her.

Sara thought of how helpful the nurses had been. A nurse named Donna found Sara crying. She got her out of Kate's room and took her for coffee in the kitchenette. Sara shared her sorrows with the nurse and said Donna must have had somewhere else she wanted to be. Donna hugged her and said that they all wanted to be somewhere else.



Sara took Anna into the operating suite. Anna asked what would happen if she changed her mind. Sara said that Anna did not have to do this, but she, Kate, and Brian were depending on her. Anna nodded and held her mother's hand. She told her not to let go. The staff got Anna ready for surgery. She let go of her mother's hand as the drugs took effect. She acted like she wants to get up, but she was asleep, and the nurse said that was just the drug's effects. Sara kissed her, left, and went to Kate.

Brian told Sara, who was holding a basin for Kate to vomit in that Anna wanted her. Sara said she was kind of busy. Brian told her again that Anna was asking for her. Donna told her they'll be all right. Sara nodded and left. Sara heard Anna crying before she went into her room. Anna told her it hurt. Sara hugged her and told her she knew. Anna asked whether Sara could stay. Sara shook her head and said she had to get back to Kate. Anna said she was in the hospital. Sara asked Brian what she was taking for pain. Brian said not much because they did not like to give children too many drugs. Sara said that was silly and told Anna, who was reaching for her, that she would be back soon.

Sara talked to a nurse about giving Anna something stronger. The nurse was resistant, but Sara told her the drugs she needed and that she knew what she was talking about. When Sara returned to the room with the drug, Brian was giving Anna the locket as a thank you for helping Kate. Sara thought to herself that she had never thought of doing that. Anna was excited over her gift, and Sara offered her the drug.

Brian took Anna to visit Kate. He helped her walk in. She had to put on scrubs. The doctor pointed to the bag of marrow that Anna donated. Kate asks whether it hurt. Anna said sort of. She asked Kate whether her tubes hurt. She said not much. Kate thanked Anna for the donation and took her hand.

Twenty-one days after the transplant, Kate's white cell counts increased, which was good news. Brian and Sara celebrated by going out to eat. He hired a nurse for Kate. Sara started talking about medical things, but Brian wanted to change the subject. Sara agreed but then realized all she could think about was the illness and that it had estranged them.

Kate left the hospital having lost weight. She put a cap on her bald head and had to wear a mask. The nurses said farewell. As she and Sara went outside, Sara took her hand and promised that they are a team.

Sara said hospital bills were coming in. The insurance company and the billing department of the hospital could not seem to cooperate with each other. Sara opened a letter from a mutual fund. The funds were for the children's college. The letter stated that Brian had taken all the money out of Kate's account, over \$8,000. Sara thought there must be an error. Brian said he withdrew the money. Sara could not believe that he did not tell her. Brian said the firefighters collected \$10,000. He had arranged for a payment plan with the hospital. Sara said he lied to her. She pointed out that Suzanne was going to give them the money. Brian said it was his job to take care of Kate, not her sister's. He said Kate would not live long enough to go to college. Sara left and locked



herself in the bathroom. Brian knocked on the door and apologized. Sara just ignored him.

Sara said they had to wear masks at home. She checked Kate to make sure she was healing. She had to give Kate shots. Kate did her schoolwork at home. She did not want to leave the house because she thought she looked strange with no hair. Sara left the room with Kate and Anna following. She got clippers and started shaving her head. Kate could not believe it. Sara said it was only hair. Anna wanted her head shaved, too. At the mall, the three of them were bald and had a good time.

Sara Analysis

Brian and Sara gain a different perspective on their medical situation when Anna is the one who is injured. Sara and Brian are presented with a tough choice concerning the bone-marrow transplant. Sara's struggles with the insurance company are common in real life. Anna's resistance as a child to preparing to donate for Kate is shown. Suzanne and Brian compete to rescue the family financially. Sara's battle as rescuer to Kate continues. Nurses step in as Sara's rescuers. Sara is caught between her daughters' medical needs. Brian gives her the locket, which she pawned to raise money for the lawsuit earlier in the book. This shows Brian is more focused on Anna than Sara is. Anna and Kate bond over the donation.

Brian and Sara's estrangement is obvious over dinner alone. Sara helps Kate move forward. Brian will not take Suzanne's money because he wants to be the rescuer. Once again, Brian tries to be realistic about Kate while Sara is in denial. The masks the family has to wear are symbolic for the masks they put on in their lives, especially in relation to Kate's illness. The fact that Sara, Anna, and Kate shaved their heads serves as an act of solidarity for the characters.

The Weekend

The Weekend Summary and Analysis

This short interlude contains a quote by John Heywood from *Proverbes*, another fire reference. The quote means there are consequences from a tragedy, which is the point of the book.



Jesse

Jesse Summary

Since Jesse's car has been taken away, he steals a dump truck and goes to see Duracell Dan. He gets his stuff and invites Dan along. He swears him to secrecy. They go to an old shed, and Jesse notes to himself that he brought Dan to fight the loneliness. Jesse recalls that his parents went overboard with gift giving. When there was a medical procedure, Kate and Anna would get presents and then they would give Jesse presents to be fair. They gave him a skateboard he loved. He father promised he would take him to a parking lot after Kate's regular bone-marrow aspiration, so he could use it. He ran outside ready to go when his mother and Kate returned. Kate's nose was bleeding, and Sara told Jesse to get Brian. Brian and Sara took a crying Kate to the bathroom. Jesse asked about going to the lot, but Brian just looked at him like he was invisible, like he was smoke.

Jesse and Dan watch the shed burn. Jesse sees that Dan is crying. Jesse is confused, and Dan says that is where the rat lives. Jesse thinks he's talking about the animal but then realizes he is talking about a homeless man. Jesse asks Dan whether someone lives there. Dan says not anymore. Jesse recalls when he was 11, he ran away to the middle of town. Jesse noticed that people ignored him even when he made faces. He ended up in the middle of traffic, and the police took him to the police station. Brian picked him up and wanted to know what his problem was. Jesse remembers that he just wanted attention.

Jesse promises Dan he will try to save Rat. He wets his shirt and wraps it around his head. He can hear the sirens. He tries to see through the smoke in the building and burns his hand. He is crying and trips over a foot. He gets Rat and carries him out. He puts Rat on the ground and leaves before the incoming firefighters can see him.

Jesse Analysis

Jesse admits to his loneliness when he invited Dan to the fire. The skateboard incident points to how neglected Jesse feels because of Kate's situation. He makes a reference to smoke, which is a common theme. His time in town shows how invisible he feels. Jesse does show a conscience when he rescues Rat, but he does not want to play the rescuer role, which is discussed often in the book.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna wonders about the origins of life. She marvels about how nothing evolved into the ability to make decisions. She says the decision-making process is still flawed, though. On a Saturday, Anna is at the hospital with Kate and Sara. The trial starts in two days. The family is trying to ignore what could happen. Kate is doing well, working on a crossword puzzle. Dr. Chance comes in and asks Kate about her pain. She says there is not much. The doctor warns it may get worse in an hour. Sara says Kate is feeling so good, though. The doctor says things are going to get worse because of renal failure. Sara tries to talk about the transplant, and the room goes quiet. Anna is embarrassed. The doctor says the organ donation is up in the air. Sara protests, but Kate interrupts and wants to know how long it will take for things to get worse. The doctor says probably a week. Kate wants to know if it will hurt. The doctor reassures her he will see that it does not. Kate thanks him for his honesty. The doctor becomes emotional and says he does not need thanks. He leaves. Anna notices that her mother is fading. Anna goes to her and tells her to stop. Sara tells Anna that she is the one who has to stop. Anna says her name in response to the crossword question about a four-letter word for vessel. Then she leaves.

Anna is at the fire station looking at family pictures. Julia is there. Anna wants to know whether she has a boyfriend. Julia hastily tells her no. They talk about a boy Anna likes. Then they talk about how their families discuss sex. Anna asks her whether she thinks Campbell is cute. Julia is startled and says he could be handsome to some women. Anna says it is weird that she will get married, and then she thinks that Kate will not. Julia wants to know what will happen if Kate dies. Anna looks at a photo of her and Kate as children. She realizes how similar they are. At the station, Anna gets a phone call from her mother. Kate is fine. Sara apologizes for earlier, and Anna does too. Sara says she also wants to say good night.

Unable to sleep, Anna reads the Guinness Book of World Records. She reads about incredible survivals and thinks there should be a listing called "Longest-surviving APL patient--Most ecstatic sister."(255) Her father comes in, and they start talking about directions and how to use stars as a map. Brian says it involves getting positions to cross on a chart. Anna thinks you go to where all the positions cross and wish for the best. Anna tells a story about the moon and stars. The moon ends up trying to hold everything together.

Anna Analysis

Anna's conclusion about the decision-making part of the brain relates to her decision about Kate. The crossword incident allows Anna to express her emotions. Tension continues between Anna and Sara. Julia's conversation with Anna shows how she tries



to connect with the teen on subjects outside of Kate's problems. Anna talks about photographs again; the photos remind her of her connection to Kate. Anna connects the Guinness book to tales of survival. Astronomy is used as a symbol for direction in Anna's life and how to cope.



Brian

Brian Summary

A woman has lost her house in a fire. She tells Brian she has very little left. He says he can get her insurance to take care of things. The woman says she has no homeowner's insurance. She does not want to live her life expecting bad things to happen. Brian wonders to himself how it feels to be surprised by tragedy. Brian goes to the hospital where Kate is lying in bed with a stuffed bear she has had since childhood. She presses the button on a morphine drip. She is asleep. Sara lies on a cot. She asks about Anna. Brian says she is asleep. He thanks Sara for calling. Sara says Kate was in pain for a little while.

Brian remembers when he and Sara went on a road trip. They went to a psychic, who felt Sara's face. The fortuneteller said she would bear three children and live a long life, but it would not be as happy as it sounded. Sara asked her to explain. The fortuneteller said fortunes could be molded like clay, but a person could shape only his or her future, not someone else's. That is where the bad part came in. She put her hand on Brian's face and told him to save himself. Brian asked Sara whether she remembered the psychic, but Sara did not seem to.

She wants to talk about his testimony at the hearing. Brian admits he will testify for Anna. Sara cannot believe it. He ascertains that Kate is still asleep and says he has thought about this. He says they have to respect Anna's wishes. Sara says that with his support, the judge might rule for Anna. Brian says that is why he is doing it. They just look at each other, and Brian finally asks what Sara expects from him. Sara says she wants to go back to what the past used to be. Brian realizes Sara is no longer the carefree woman from the road trip who told him she would always love him. He knows he is not the same, either. He doubts what she said on the trip.

Brian Analysis

Brian compares his situation to a fire victim's. The past and present of Sara and Brian's lives are presented. The fortuneteller was right. She predicted how Sara will try to control her family, and how that will not be good. The fortuneteller told Brian to be his own rescuer. The strain Kate's illness puts on their relationship becomes worse when Brian says he will testify for Kate.



Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 2001. Sara recalls 10-year-old Anna asking for \$600 for hockey equipment. Anna filled in for a sick player and found out how much she liked it. Sara said they would discuss it. Later, Brian and Sara did not even know she was playing. Sara wondered what other secrets her daughter had.

The family was about to go watch Anna play hockey when 13-year-old Kate said she could not go because of her looks. She had a bad rash, a swollen face, and bad skin. They were the signs of graft versus host disease that Kate got after the transplant. Over the past 4 years, it had been happening off and on. This was the marrow rejecting the body. This was good because it meant the cancer cells were being resisted. The symptoms, though, were terrible. Sara let her stay home from school when it happened because of the effect this had on her appearance. Sara could not leave her alone, and she had promised Anna they would go. Kate resisted, but Sara put winter clothes on her. Sara said sternly that it would be cold at the rink, which meant Kate had to go. The family watched Anna play hockey. She was the only girl and was younger than the other players. The family watched in suspense, and Anna steered the puck from the goal. Brian marveled at her goalie talents, and Sara realized that Anna always saved.

That night, Kate woke up with blood coming from different areas of her body. They took her to the hospital, and Kate was very weak and passed out. She received transfusions, IV fluids, and CT scans. This was the worst her parents had seen. Dr. Chance took them into a lounge and explained about a poison therapy that was new. It would be administered through an IV for up to a couple of months. It was not a cure, but the other therapies had run their courses. He pointed out that Kate had survived longer than anyone thought. Sara agreed to the treatment, but the doctor said the bleeding would probably win. Sara could not remember whether she told Kate she loved her before she went to bed.

In the wee hours of the morning, Sara found Brian missing from the hospital room. She found him in an atrium, writing on paper with a crayon. Brian was worried when he saw her, but she told him that Kate was all right. She was undergoing the poison treatment and had had a couple of transfusions. Brian suggested taking Kate home immediately so she could die in her own bed. Sara tried to deny it. Brian emphasized that she was dying. Her death would occur in the near future. He reminded her that the doctor said the poison treatment was just temporary. Sara started to cry and said she loved her. Brian said he did, too. That was why they had to stop this. Sara picked up his paper and saw Kate's good traits and favorite things listed. Sara wanted to know whether that was a eulogy. Brian said he needed to do it while he still could. Sara said it was not time, yet. Sara called her sister soon after that, and she could not speak. Suzanne asked her whether she needed to go there. Sara said yes while crying.



For 10 days, Kate lived on transfusions and the poison therapy. On day 11, she slipped into a coma. Sara wanted to stay by her bed but was called away by Jesse's principal. Ninth-grader Jesse had flushed lab chemicals down the toilet and ruined the school's septic tank. He was expelled for 3 weeks. In the car, Sara told him he was grounded. Jesse said he principal was a jerk. Sara said there were jerks everywhere. There was always something to fight. Jesse accused her of making every conversation about Kate. Jesse said she did not understand how it was to be the cancer girl's brother. Sara pointed out that she was the cancer girl's mother, and she felt like blowing things up. She saw a bruise on his arm. She thought cancer or drugs. She asked about it, but he would not explain it. She wanted to know whether the mark came from a needle. Jesse said yes. It came from a needle when he donated blood that gave Kate platelets. He left Sara in the car in the hospital lot.

A couple of weeks later, the nurse persuaded Sara to take time for herself. She showered at home and paid bills. Suzanne made her coffee. Sara wanted to know whether there were any calls. Suzanne said the hospital did not call. Anna came home and was surprised to see her mother. Anna was excited and handed her mother a letter. Anna had been accepted to a hockey camp on scholarship. She pointed out that they had let Kate go to leukemia camp. Sara told her she could not do this. Anna said it was not scheduled until the next summer. Sara thought to herself that Kate could be dead by then. Sara wanted Anna around in case Kate needed her to donate. Suzanne tried to intervene and said they should talk later. Anna was stubborn and wanted to know why she could not go. Sara asked Anna not to force her to do anything. Anna retorted that she never made Sara do anything, emphasizing that it was actually the opposite. She balled up the letter and left the room. Suzanne tried to lighten things up.

Seventeen days after Kate went to the hospital, she developed an infection. She had a fever and was given an antibiotic. Sara said how good Steph, the nurse, was. Dr. Chance came in and said he wanted to be invited to her wedding. Sara insisted it could happen. The doctor said she needed to let go. An angry Jesse left Kate's hospital room with Brian following. Anna said she would not do it. Sara said if she did not do it, she would regret it. Anna went into Kate's room. Kate had been placed on a respirator. Anna wanted to know whether Kate could hear her, and Sara said yes. Anna softened and promised not to go to camp. She would not go anywhere. She told Kate to wake up. There was no response.

Brian and Sara were with Kate holding hands. Sara said she should have agreed to take her home. Brian said they had to try the poison treatment. Brian said that Kate was so good. She was waiting for Sara to let her go. Then he started to cry.

Brian fell sleep. Sara held Kate's hand and tried to read her palm. She wanted to alter her lifeline. Sara talked about Kate's not wanting to go to camp. She had told her to get on the left side of the bus so she could see her mother waiting for her. She said she would get the same seat in heaven, so she could see Sara watch her. Sara told her she loved her. She squeezed her hand for the final time. Suddenly, however, she felt Kate's pulse picking up and her fingers moving as Kate came back.



Sara Analysis

Brian and Sara find out about Anna's interest in hockey for the first time. For once, Sara does not give in to Kate and concentrates on Anna for a change. Sara again pushes for a new treatment while Brian wants to let Kate go. Sara needs Suzanne to be her rescuer again. Sara wants to think the worst of Jesse, but he is helping Kate in his own way so he can feel needed. Sara makes Anna put her life on hold for Kate, which is a pattern.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna thinks about how people would look in heaven. She wonders whether she could find Kate after so many years apart. Campbell lets her father know that the other lawyer wants to discuss the case. He means her mother. They are going to meet in his office Sunday afternoon. Anna is at Campbell's office. Sara walks in all dressed up. She says she wants them to come to an understanding. Campbell wants to know whether she wants to make a deal. Sara tells Anna she realizes how much she has done for Kate. Sara says Kate may have one last chance. Campbell tries to interrupt, but Anna wants her to continue. Sara says that if Kate gets sick after the transplant, Sara will never ask for her help again, but asks Anna to agree to the transplant. Anna looks at her father, who looks frozen. Campbell asks that if his client agrees to the transplant, she will not be required to undergo any more procedures. Sara says yes. Campbell says they will have to talk about it. Anna remembers when she stopped believing in Santa and realized her parents were different than she thought they were. Anna thinks this about her mother. She hugs Sara and starts to cry. Sara is happy and thanking God. Anna hugs her harder and tells her she cannot. Sara stops hugging her, puts on a pained smile, and leaves. Campbell wants to make sure this is what Anna wants. Anna answers.

Anna Analysis

Anna continues her deep thoughts by wondering about Kate in Heaven. Sara's role as mother/lawyer is highlighted in the meeting. The Santa story is proof of how much Anna is disappointed by her parents.



Julia

Julia Summary

Julia talks about Campbell while Izzy tries to watch a movie. She is going through papers to prepare for the hearing the next day. It is her report to the judge. She realizes that whether she is for or against Anna, it is a bad situation. She admits it is hard to stay professional. Izzy says she should move on. The doorbell rings. Izzy sees Campbell through the peephole and tells him Julia says she is not there. Julia pushes her sister out of the way and lets Campbell and the dog inside. He wants them to have dinner so they can discuss Sara's plea bargain. Julia refuses, but he says he knows she wants to know what Sara said. She gives in but wants to talk only about the trial. Campbell gets her to relax at a marina. Julia remembers the bartender trying to get her to open up. She told him he did not know her, but he says maybe she did not know herself.

In the present, Julia and Campbell have dinner on a sailboat. They talk about being animals. Campbell says Anna told him she would be a phoenix. Julia says they are not real. He says Anna said they could be if someone could see them. He wants to know how Julia sees her. Julia wonders if this dinner was meant to get her to side with him. They both know her report will mean a lot to the judge. Julia says she will not share her decision until the hearing. She says she wants to leave. Campbell says she told him she did not think it was best for Anna to donate to her sister. Julia says she also told him Anna was not able to make up her mind. Campbell says her father moved her out. He could influence her. Julia wonders to herself how long Anna's resolve will hold. She wonders about the future. She is angry and thinks Campbell is using her.

Campbell says Sara has offered a deal. She said Anna would not have to do anything else if she would donate the kidney. Anna refused her. Julia says that Campbell is trying to influence her and that it is wrong. Campbell says he is just trying to help Julia. Julia becomes sarcastic and says this has nothing to do with trying to sway her report. She says the animal he would be is a parasite, something that takes without giving back. She wants to know whether he can stop lying. He says he never lied. She wants to know the dog's purpose. He tells her to be quiet and kisses her. When they pull apart, Julia says she is still right. They end up making love.

Julia Analysis

Julia's relationship with Campbell progresses in this chapter. Julia's attraction to him grows. He calls her his old name for her, Jewel, which is something that can withstand pressure. Anna's wanting to be a Phoenix shows her desire for a new life and to be seen. Julia and Campbell argue over the trial like they have done in the past. They end up together on a boat, which is Campbell's turf and his place of childhood memories.

Monday

Monday Summary and Analysis

This section quotes the New Testament, James 3:5, another fire reference. This Bible verse illustrates how a spectacle can result from a seemingly unimportant thing or, in this case, a hearing from Anna's desire to stop donating.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell says they sleep in the small cabin. He watches Julia sleep. He says he did not date much after Julia. They were just flings. He has thought about leaving during the night, but he was not able to. Judge makes a noise, and he gets up. He has to get to the courthouse before Anna. He leaves Julia his car keys and walks to his apartment to shower and change. He realizes he is leaving her like he did other women, but he feels more mature now.

Campbell and the dog go to the courthouse and see reporters gathered outside. He knows that will scare Anna. He sees Vern inside and tells him to arrange for security. He spots Sara, who is professionally dressed. Brian comes in asking about Anna's whereabouts. Sara says she thought she was with him. He says when he came back from an early morning call, he read a note from her that said she would join him at the courthouse. He looks at the reporters and says she probably ran off. Julia comes in, dodging press questions. Campbell offers to look for her. Sara says she can do that. Julia wants to know whom they want to find. Campbell says Anna is missing. Campbell has a sudden realization along with Sara. They all walk out. Julia gives him his keys back and tells him he must know it is not going to turn out well. He thinks she means the two of them. She means Anna because of her indecisiveness. Campbell says it is normal for her to be afraid.

In the hospital room, Kate is pale, receiving her last-resort drugs. Anna is at the foot of the bed. Campbell tries to summon her. The door opens, and Jesse comes in. Campbell wryly wonders how he found transportation and asks whether he needs a ride to the hearing. Jesse says he thought he would stay at the hospital since the family would be at the hearing. He remarks on how bad Kate looks. Anna wakes up and says that she is dying and what else would she look like. Campbell tells Anna they should go. In the car on the way, she talks about a case she found on the Internet about a brother who could not water his crops from a river on his brother's land even though he needed the water. Campbell goes by the courthouse and parks at a park. Anna is confused and says they will be late. Campbell says they are late and wants to know what is happening. Anna insists they are going to court. He says he wants to know why they are going to court.

Anna hedges and tries to change the subject to the dog. Campbell says he does not share the reason with any one. Anna says she is not just anyone. He says he got an ear infection that made him deaf in one ear. The dog hears for him. He keeps it a secret because he does not want pity. Anna says she chose him because she wanted it to be about her and not Kate. Campbell does not buy it. Anna says he lied to her because he could hear. Campbell laughs, and they take jabs at one another. He says he'll take her to breakfast and tells her not to worry about being late.



The judge is angry. Campbell comes in an hour-and-a-half late. He says he had a problem with the dog. Sara reacts, and the judge says she gave another explanation. He sticks to the dog story. The judge asks whether the petition can be resolved without a hearing. Campbell says no. The judge determines that Sara is representing her side. The judge says he wants the hearing to be informal and quick. It should not be any more difficult than it has to be. They enter a courtroom. Anna is scared and wants to know whether she will have to talk in front of everyone. Campbell knows she will, even if she gets support from Julia and Brian. He lies to her, though, to keep her calm. Campbell asks the judge whether he can address the court before bringing in witnesses. The judge hesitates but allows it.

Campbell says Anna has always been medically treated for Kate's benefit, not her own. He says that although he knows Sara loves her children and the decisions she made for Kate were sincere, the court has to question the decisions she made for Anna. He sees Julia watching him. He brings up the case of a homeless woman who started a fire that killed six people. She knew the fire happened, but she did not call for help because she was afraid of getting into trouble. They could not charge her because no one has to help anyone in trouble, including a suitable donor. He says the difference between what is legal and what is moral can be complicated. He says it distorts what is wrong and what is right. He says the hearing will clear things up.

Sara is the first witness. Campbell asks that Sara be treated as a hostile witness. The judge says he wants to see civility between them. Campbell agrees. He determines her name and that she is Anna's mother. He points out that her daughter Kate was diagnosed with acute promyelocytic leukemia at age 2. He wants to know whether that was when they decided to conceive a genetic match for Kate. Sara admits that was how Anna was conceived. They wanted to use Anna's cord blood for a transplant. He wants to know why they did not look for an unrelated donor. She says that was too risky. The chance of death was higher with an unrelated donor. He wants to know how old Anna was when she made her first donation. Sara replies that Kate had the transplant a month after Anna's birth. Campbell says he did not ask when Kate received it. He wants to know when Anna donated it. He confirms that the cord blood was taken from Anna right after she was born. Sara says Anna did not know what was happening.

He wants to know when the next body part donation took place. Sara says Anna was 5 when she donated lymphocytes. He asks her to explain the procedure. Sara says blood had to be drawn from her arms. He wants to know whether Anna agreed to the needle. Sara says she was 5. He wants to know whether she sought Anna's permission to insert a needle into her arm. Sara says she asked Anna to help her sister. Campbell wants to confirm that Anna had to be held down for the needle to be inserted. She says yes. He wants to know whether she considered that to be proof of Anna's permission. After seeing the judge's stern look, he asks whether there were side effects the first time lymphocytes were taken from Anna. Sara says she had bruises and sensitivity. Sara said it was a month before she gave blood again. Sara said Anna had to be restrained that time as well. She tries to elaborate, but Campbell interrupts to ask about side effects. Sara replies they were the same. She says she was aware of what was happening to Anna. She says it hurts to see your child go through a procedure, no



matter which child it is. Campbell says she must have overcome that because there was a third blood withdrawal. Sara says it took a while to get the lymphocytes. The procedure is not perfect. Campbell wants to know what Anna's age was at the next donation.

Sara tries to talk about Kate, but Campbell interrupts and says he wants to know what Anna went through at age 6. Sara says she donated granulocytes, which is similar to lymphocyte donation. It, too, required that blood be drawn. Campbell wants to know whether she asked Anna if she would participate in that donation. Sara is silent, and the judge tells her to speak. She looks at Anna and says that they did not want to hurt her. The whole family was in pain. Campbell blocks Anna and asks Sara whether she obtained Anna's permission. Sara asks him to stop. She says they know what happened in the past, and she will agree to what he is trying to prove while he tortures her. Campbell says it must be difficult to hear. He says it does not sound so innocent when he sums everything up. The judge asks him what he is getting at since he knows how many procedures were involved. Campbell says Kate's medical history is the focus, not Anna's. The judge warns to him to get on with it.

Before Campbell can say anything, Sara says Anna was put under general anesthesia because she was young, and needles were injected into her hips to take out the bone marrow. Campbell wants to know whether it was just one injection. Sara replies it was 15. Campbell confirms that the needle was inserted into the bone. Anna's side effects were a little pain, and she was given drugs. Campbell points out that Anna had an overnight stay, and she needed drugs. Sara says she was informed the donation was not so bad for the donor. She says that might have been what she wanted to hear. She admits she was concentrating more on Kate than Anna. She says she was certain like the rest of the family that Anna just wanted her sister to get well. Campbell says, of course she did, because she did not want any more needles. The judge tells him to stop.

Sara wants to speak. She says it is not a clear-cut case. Campbell is standing for only one of her daughters for the purposes of the trial. She supports and loves her daughters the same, no matter what. Campbell says she has said she thinks of Kate's health over Anna's. She has been giving Kate the advantage. Sara says he is there to do the same; only he is trying to give Anna the advantage.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell leaves Julia again which also happened in the past. He has another confrontation with Anna about her wavering about the trial. Lying is part of this chapter because he and Anna lie to each other, and he lies to her about having to testify, which is a major contention of the hearing. The dog is still a mystery. The hearing is under way, and Campbell grills Sara about Anna being a voluntary donor, but she makes her own point about how he favors Anna.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna says children are more open-minded. Growing up means the mind closes more. Campbell treats Anna to a soda at court recess. He asks her for her assessment so far. She thinks she feels invisible with everyone else talking about her in front of her. Anna says it is different from what she thought. Asked to explain, Anna says she thought she would feel more confident. Campbell's questioning her mother makes her realize how complicated it all is. She thinks to herself that it could have been she who was sick and Kate was the donor. A procedure might work for Kate, and she would not have to donate anymore. She wonders to herself whether she would feel good or bad about what she did. She wonders what would happen if the judge agreed or disagreed with her. Anna knows she is maturing because she has doubts. Campbell says she cannot back out now. Anna says she will not, but even if the verdict is in their favor, it is still a bad situation. Anna remembers babysitting twins who asked questions about the future she could not answer.

The next witness is Dr. Bergen, the chairman of the medical ethics committee at the hospital. Campbell asks him to explain the purpose of the committee. The doctor explains that the committee comprises a group of doctors, nurses, religious officials, and scientists who look at cases to make sure people are being treated fairly. They meet when there is a controversy about a patient. For instance, suppose a doctor wants to prolong a patient's life while the family does not. He says they see cases when doctors request it or there are grievances. He says they make recommendations only. Campbell tries to ask about minors and whether the group will intervene for a minor with grievances because the parents have their own goals. Sara objects, which is sustained.

Campbell asks the doctor whether parents are in charge of their children's health-care decisions until they become adults. The doctor says that is the law, but adolescent children should agree even if the parents already have. He says that in the case of a complaining minor, the committee decides whether it is good for the adolescent and considers the adolescent's mental state and reasons. Campbell wants to know if they ever met because of Kate's case. The doctor says they have met twice. The first time was to recommend that she undergo have a stem-cell transplant. The last was to discuss whether a donor kidney would be good for her. They approved of the stem-cell transplant. There was a split vote over the kidney transplant. Some of the members thought Kate's health would be endangered by another surgery. Others thought she would die anyway, so a transplant was advisable. Whenever the committee reaches a split vote, the parents must decide. Campbell wants to know whether the group talked about the donor's giving permission. The doctor admits no medical center would force a child to donate a kidney. The doctor points out that if Anna was complaining, her case would go to the group, but it has not because she is not a patient. Campbell says she is a patient because she has hospital records. The doctor agrees she has undergone procedures. Campbell wants to know why the group never met because of Anna. The



doctor says they thought Anna was in agreement. Campbell asks whether the group, if Anna had not wanted to donate anything, would have examined her case. The doctor says that since it is an unusual situation, the group was doing what it could. Campbell gets the doctor to agree that the committee should look at unusual situations.

Campbell wants the doctor's opinion about Anna's being asked to donate ever since her birth. Sara tries to object, but the judge wants the doctor to continue. He admits he voted against Anna's donating a kidney. He thought the operation would be fatal for Kate. He says until the present, he agreed with the Fitzgeralds because the risks have been small. Campbell and the doctor argue about whether the doctor would give up his car to save the judge. The doctor says there are laws that prevent people from becoming guinea pigs. Campbell wants to know why the laws failed Anna. Anna remembers Kate saving her from a runaway walker at a party years ago. Sara questions the doctor. He says he has worked at the hospital for 10 years. Sara makes it clear the doctor has never said Anna was at a medical disadvantage. She brings up the fact the doctor has a teenage son. She asks him if he were given an option to save his son's life, would he challenge it or agree to it. The doctor does not answer.

There is another recess. Campbell says he and Anna should go for a walk. When Anna passes her mother, her mother starts to straighten her shirt and then apologizes. Anna touches her mother's hand and asks Campbell to meet her outside. Campbell gives her a disapproving look, but he leaves. Anna kisses her mother on the cheek and compliments her on her questioning.

Anna Analysis

Anna's observation about adults being close-minded could refer to her mother, but her own mind is changing as she grows into adulthood. Anna refers to feeling like a ghost, which is a constant reference in this book. Anna's story about the twins illustrates the uncertainty of her future. Dr. Bergen, whom Campbell talked to in a previous chapter, testifies about the ethics committee. Campbell shows that the committee never considered the issue of Anna's donating even though they had voted concerning Kate's procedures. Anna's recollection about Kate's saving her life proves that Kate has helped her as well. Sara does prove her case, and Anna shows how proud she is of Sara despite their differences.



Sara

Sara Summary

The year is 2002. Sara remembers Kate's meeting a boy named Taylor during chemo. They compared stories. He asked for her number, and Kate talked about how good he looked after he left. Sara was delighted with all this. Kate and Taylor talked on the phone at home. She fussed over her appearance. Her hair had grown back straight and short. She said his kind of leukemia had a good cure rate. Kate said she would have bad luck now that she had met Taylor. Sara denied it, but Kate went into a relapse. Sara overheard Kate and Anna talk about Kate's first date with Taylor. Kate talked about kissing him. Kate said she felt like she had something in common with him when she felt the scars on his hands from an infection.

Sara said that Kate did not want to have the peripheral blood stem cell transplant because that would keep her away from Taylor. They finally decided to have Kate take chemo as an outpatient to prepare for the donation from Anna. She had to wear a mask at home. If her counts decreased, she would go into the hospital. Kate did not have to worry about Taylor because he came to her first outpatient chemo appointment. Taylor teased Kate about throwing up, but Kate is happy he is there. Sara remembered meeting Brian when she was evacuated from a flood, and how he saved her life in a way. Kate ended up vomiting, but Taylor helped her through it. He invited her to a dance the hospital has for sick kids, and she accepted. Sara observed them with pride.

Sara and Kate went dress shopping for the dance. Kate worried about her appearance. Her hair had fallen out. She did not like wigs, so she wore a scarf. The dresses seemed to show off Kate's scars. Kate got angry at the saleswoman and showed her her chest catheter. Kate became discouraged and left. Sara reminded her that other girls at the dance would be like her with dresses that have to cover defects. She suggested that they make their own dress. Kate was skeptical and was still angry. Anna took Kate into a hair salon. Anna asked the beautician whether she did prom hairstyles. Anna said her sister needed one. Kate caught on to what Anna was doing and took off her scarf to reveal her bald head. The salon fell silent. The sisters suggested different hairstyles, and the befuddled stylist suggested extensions. The sisters laughed hysterically while the stylist wanted to know whether this was a practical joke.

Sara chaperoned the dance. The dance was held in the hospital conference room with food appropriate for the patients. Kate and Taylor were dancing. She wore a dress her mother found on the Internet. It was a sheer shirt over a sheath. She wore a mask, and her corsage was silk because real ones could make her sick. Photos were taken at the house before they left. Brian got emotional at seeing this milestone in his daughter's life. She noticed that Kate and Taylor were missing and searched for them afraid that something was wrong. She overheard them in the courtyard. They talked about dying, and Kate promised that she would go to his funeral because he worried whether anyone would be there. They kissed even though Sara knew they should not because of germs.



Kate was upset when she went for her stem cell transplant because she had not heard from Taylor. Sara tried to comfort her. Sara asked a nurse about him and found out that he had just died. Sara waited for a month before telling Kate; she wanted to make sure she was strong enough. She visited his mother, who said he got sick after the dance. After Sara tells Kate, Kate is angry with her for keeping it a secret. Kate stopped talking to her for awhile. Sara walked into Kate's room and saw her looking at pictures. She had pictures of Taylor. She also had pictures of herself and the family at different stages. She studied the pictures of herself as a baby before she became sick. She said she did not remember being her and that she was pretty.

Sara Analysis

This chapter is about Kate's first love. It is not a typical story because they both have cancer. Like any typical teen, Kate worries about her appearance. Kate and Anna have a regular conversation about boyfriends except for a few cancer references. The sense of humor about the illness shows up again with Kate and Taylor and Anna and Kate. Sara's emotions are heightened at the dance because of fears for the couple's health; she has more than motherly concern for her teenage daughter. Again, Sara thinks she is rescuing Kate by withholding the information about Taylor's death. Photographs are important in this book as a connection to the family. The photographs help Kate to heal from Taylor's death.



Jesse

Jesse Summary

Jesse remembers being sent to a camp for troubled kids on a farm. He talks about how he delivered a lamb, and he thought it was not breathing until he took off the skin sac. He always looked at it in the pen. Its eyes reminded him of how it almost died. He says Kate has got that look in her eyes.

Kate is surprised to see him at the hospital. They joke around, but Jesse can feel her slipping. She flinches, and Jesse asks if she needs help. She says no. He remembers bargaining when he was a child to make daylight last longer. He wants to bargain to make Kate stay alive. He asks whether she fears death. She says she will get back to him; she has to rest. Jesse leaves the room and punches a hole in the wall.

Jesse Analysis

Jesse's experience at the camp proves he can be a rescuer instead of a troublemaker. He compares the lamb and Kate because they both had been close to death. He and Kate joke at the hospital, but Jesse is fearful about her dying. Jesse's repressed anger does come out when he punches the wall.



Brian

Brian Summary

Brian talks about how to make something explode. He says it is difficult to wait at the hearing. While in court, his beeper goes off. He has to get permission to leave. He wants to explode when he sees the media. He remembers looking at Kate before the hearing. He went home, and no one was there. At Jesse's apartment, he knocks over the recycling bin. He puts everything back in except the orange juice container, which can not be recycled.

The fire is located at an elementary school. It is summer, so no one is there. Brian thinks it is arson. He goes through the damage and sees gasoline from a Molotov cocktail was the cause. His coworker, Paulie, wants to know whether they will catch the arsonist. He marvels over finding a cigarette in the ruins. Brian studies the cigarette and says the arsonist must have smoked and watched the fire. Paulie points out the window was already broken when they got there. Brian thinks the arsonist was aware of how to bring in oxygen which would increase the flames. Brian smashes the cigarette.

He continues giving instructions on how to make something explode. Brian is waiting for Jesse when he enters his apartment. Brian accuses him of hiding something. Jesse feigns ignorance and wants to know why he is not in court. Brian wants to know why Jesse has acid under the sink. He says he used it when he did tile work. Brian says he must not be aware that it is an explosive. Jesse tells him to say what he has to say. Brian says he wants to find out whether Jesse made the bottles more flammable, if he knew the homeless man almost died, why Clorox is in the trash when he does not wash anything, and that a nearby school was set on fire with bleach and brake fluid. Brian shakes him by the shoulders. Jesse wants to know whether he is finished. Brian defies him to deny it. Jesse does and says he does not cause every problem. He puts the cigarette in Jesse's hand and tells his son he left something behind. Brian notes to himself that sometimes you have to let a fire go and step back.

Jesse gets upset, drops the cigarette, and covers his face. He says he could not help her. He wants to know whether his father told anyone else. Brian realizes Jesse wants to be caught. He hugs his son because he knows his son would not want that. Jesse cries, and Brian sees how much bigger he is. Brian wonders why someone who could not save has to cause destruction. Brian wonders who is to blame. Brian vows to himself that he will stop his son's fire setting, and he will not tell the police or fire chief about it. He realizes that Jesse is similar to him in using fire to have a sense of control. Jesse's breathing calms, and Brian remembers Jesse as a child. He remembers how Jesse used to look up to him.



Brian Analysis

Brian discovers Jesse is the arsonist in this chapter. His recitation of the recipe to blow something up shows his knowledge as a firefighter and also leads to the discovery about his son. The clues Brian finds at the apartment and the fire scene help him solve the case. Jesse's admission reveals his guilt over Kate. Brian gives his son room like he would a fire. Brian has a couple of realizations. Jesse cannot be the rescuer, so he becomes the destroyer. Jesse plays with fire like he does except they have opposite approaches. Brian cannot rescue in the courtroom, but he can rescue his son.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell observes how antsy doctors are when they serve as witnesses. They act like they have more important things to do such as saving lives. Campbell uses delaying tactics to make the doctor wait. Dr. Chance is Kate's oncologist, and Sara wants him to leave as soon as possible because her daughter is the one who has to be saved.

Campbell asks the doctor whether the treatments were guaranteed to work. The doctor replies there are no guarantees with cancer. Campbell wants to know whether he told this to the Fitzgeralds. He says he tells them the risks because treatments can harm other parts of the body. A treatment that cures can have bad effects. The doctor smiles at Sara. He says Kate was supposed to die by age 5, and she is 16 now. Campbell points out that that is because of Anna. The doctor notes that Kate has the strength and a perfectly matched donor. Campbell wants to know how the Fitzgeralds worked with the hospital to conceive Anna. The doctor says after the brother was found not to match, he told Sara about a family where the siblings did not match the patient. The mother happened to get pregnant, and the baby was a match. Campbell wants to know whether the doctor told Brian and Sara to conceive a donor for Kate. He says no; he just said a future sibling could be a match. Campbell wants to know whether the doctor told the couple that the child would have to be a lifelong donor to Kate. The doctor says the cord blood was the only treatment then. After Kate rejected that, the other donations followed. Campbell asks whether it would be acceptable if Kate could be cured by Anna's cutting off her head and giving it to her. The doctor says no, that he would not risk another child's life. Campbell says he has been doing that for 13 years.

The doctor points out the treatments posed no risks to Anna. Campbell asks him to read something from a piece of paper. The doctor reads a list of things that could happen as a result of surgery. The doctor says it is a regular consent form. Campbell establishes that Anna was the patient, and Sara signed the form. Campbell says the possibility of death from anesthesia is serious. The doctor says there is hardly any risk, and marrow donation is pretty basic. Campbell wants to know why Anna underwent anesthesia then. The doctor says it calms the child down. Campbell wants to know whether Anna had pain. The doctor says it has been so long; Anna has surely forgotten it. Campbell says they could ask Anna. The doctor does not respond. Campbell wants to know the effects of growth factor shots that Anna has had twice. The doctor says the effects should be negligible even though they have only been tested on animals. The doctor says dangerous drugs are not prescribed. Campbell points out the damage the drug thalidomide did.

Campbell wants to know about the risks of kidney donation. The doctor says it has the same risks as any surgery. Campbell asks whether having one kidney could be bad for her. The doctor says no. Campbell has the doctor read something else. It is a list of what could happen to a person with one kidney such as high blood pressure and pregnancy problems. In addition, donors cannot play contact sports because of the risk



to their only kidney. Campbell points out Anna is a hockey player. Campbell enumerates each of Anna's donations and asks the doctor whether he is sure she has not been really hurt by these procedures. The doctor says Anna has not suffered great damage. Campbell wants to know whether Anna derived any good from them. The doctor says yes, she is helping her sister.

Anna and Campbell have lunch in the courthouse. Julia walks up to them and asks Anna how she is. Anna says she just wants it to be finished. Julia assures her it will be soon and looks at him. Anna says she will take the dog for a walk, but Campbell says she cannot do that. Only he can walk him. Anna says she is going to the restroom. Campbell says Anna wanted them to be alone. Julia says she is perceptive. Campbell tries to joke, but Julia wants to know about the night before. Campbell says he has to walk the dog. She asks why he will not talk to her. He says it is for the best as he walks away.

The hearing is over for the day. Brian is gone, and Sara offers to take Anna to the station, but Campbell steps in and says he will do it. At the station parking lot, Campbell says the hearing has been going well so far. Anna acts indifferently and gets out of the car. Anna walks away from the station, and Campbell follows. She stands looking up at the sky. Anna asks him if he was ever aware of doing the wrong thing even though it felt like it was for the best. Campbell is reminded of Julia and says yes. Anna says she hates herself at times. Campbell says he can hate himself, too. Anna wants to know about his relationship with his parents. Campbell says he thought he would be like them, but he is not, and that is fine with him. Anna says she understands. She says he was invisible as well.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell's questioning of Dr. Chance is tough, but the doctor is defensive. As usual, Campbell refuses to be truthful with Julia. Anna and Campbell have much in common. Anna makes an astronomy reference about how long it takes to see something that is already there, which applies to all the characters, especially Sara and Brian. Campbell remembers his parents, something he has been doing throughout the book. Anna and Campbell connect, and she points out that their parents did not see them for who they were, which is the point of the astronomy reference. Anna has mentioned feeling invisible in the book before and does so here.

Tuesday

Tuesday Summary and Analysis

This section contains a quote about fire from William Shakespeare's *King Henry VI*. The quote says a fire can be put out, but in certain circumstances, it can be stronger than anything else.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell says Brian should seal his case. When the judge finds out one of her parents supports Anna, granting the emancipation will not be that hard. He says Brian's support would counteract Julia's report. Campbell notes that Anna's testimony will just be customary. Brian comes in to the courthouse with Anna. Campbell senses Brian wants to say something and tells Anna to take Judge for a quick walk. Anna figures he is trying to get rid of her to talk about her and refuses to leave. Campbell asks Brian whether things are all right. Sara enters the courtroom. Brian tries to be reassuring, and Campbell realizes he is not the one being reassured.

At the hearing, Campbell asks Brian whether he ever disagreed with Sara about Anna's donating to Kate. Brian says the cord blood donation seemed simple. It was going to be thrown away, and Anna would feel no pain. He says Kate did go into remission, but in 1996, she suffered a relapse. He says the doctors wanted Anna to donate lymphocytes, which would be a temporary fix for Kate. Campbell asks whether he and his wife argued over this. Brian says he had misgivings because Anna was aware of what was going on, and it was not going to be pleasant for her. Campbell wants to know how Sara changed his mind. He says she told him that if Anna did not give blood then, there would still be marrow donation to contend with. Campbell asks him his opinion about that. Brian says you face tough choices when your child is so sick. He says he did not want to put Anna through anything, but he wanted Kate to live. Campbell confirms that Anna's bone marrow was used. Campbell asks him whether he would, as a rescue worker, perform a procedure on a patient who did not need it. Brian says no. Campbell then wants to know why he let Anna undergo a procedure she did not need. Brian replies that it was done to save Kate.

Campbell wants to know whether he and his wife had any other arguments about treatments. Brian says that a few years earlier, Kate was in the hospital hemorrhaging, and it looked like she wouldn't survive. Brian says he thought they should let Kate die. Sara disagreed. He further explains how the poison therapy helped her and put her in remission for a year. Campbell points out that there was a treatment that helped Kate that did not involve Anna. Brian explains that he thought it was over for Kate. His wife remained hopeful, and Kate revived. He looks at Sara. He says Kate's kidneys were shutting down, and he did not like to see her in agony. He does not want to be pessimistic like he was the last time. He does not want to lose hope if he does not have to. Campbell asks whether he was aware of Anna's plans to sue. Brian says no. He asks whether Brian talked to Anna about it. He says yes. Campbell points out that subsequently, Brian and Anna left the house because he wanted to give her room to breathe.

Campbell wants to know whether he, after moving out and talking with Anna a great deal, sides with his wife about Anna's being Kate's donor. Campbell expects him to say



no. Brian says yes, instead. Campbell is startled and asks Brian to explain. Brian says he wants Anna to donate a kidney. Campbell is stunned, knowing the judge will be less likely to favor Anna. He hears Anna make a little noise and asks Brian whether he wants Anna to have a big operation so she can give up an organ for her sister. Brian becomes emotional and says he does not know what to do. He says this is tricky, and there is no answer after 13 years. Brian slumps over in the stand.

The judge calls for a brief recess so Brian can compose himself before Sara's questioning begins. Campbell and Anna leave and go to the vending machines. He hands her a beverage that she does not drink. She says she has never seen her dad get emotional. She says her mother would cry, but her father always did it out of their sight. Anna wonders whether she should blame herself since she brought him into the case. Campbell says the judge would have wanted him to speak even if she objected.

He tells Anna she will have to speak. Anna is shocked at his request. Campbell says he thought he had a tighter case when it appeared Brian was going to support them. He says that is gone, and he does not know what Julia will say. If Julia supports her, the judge will want to hear from her to assess Anna's maturity. Campbell thinks to himself that there was no doubt about Anna's testifying. He thinks Anna must have wanted to do it so she could explain her lawsuit. Anna, however, refuses to testify. She says he told her she would not have to do it, and he should speak for her. Campbell points out that since she started the suit, she has to explain why she does not want to fill the role she has had for 13 years. Anna still protests. Campbell tells her she may not think anybody has ever heard her before, but they will listen now. Anna will not cooperate. Campbell wants to know the reason behind this. She will not say and admits there are issues she does not want to discuss. She says she thought he would understand. She rebuffs his pleas so he tells her he cannot do anything.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell is relying on Brian's testimony, but Brian changes his mind. The strain on Brian and Sara's relationship is shown. Brian tries to be the mediator as he often is by reassuring Anna about him and her mother and voicing his support for both his daughters on the witness stand. Anna seems to be hiding something as she refuses to testify. She senses Campbell is not being totally forthright either and uses that. Campbell and Anna have had conflicts before, but this is a serious one.



Sara

Sara Summary

The time is the present day. Sara is getting ready to question Brian. She remembers why she loves him and wonders to herself what he thinks of her. The judge interrupts her thoughts and asks whether she wants to question the witness. They greet each other. Sara remembers a bad vacation they took and unknowingly speaks about it aloud. Brian joins her in remembering. Campbell interrupts and wants to know what is going on. The judge agrees with him. Sara realizes that even if the destination was lousy, they still had a great time. Brian says that they had fun when Kate was not sick. Sara wants to know whether Anna would miss that if Kate were not around. Campbell objects. The judge allows Brian to speak. Brian says the whole family would miss that.

Sara realizes she and Brian are in agreement. She thinks to herself she cannot blame him for how he felt. She realizes that they were so caught up in Kate's struggle, they did not see all they had. She thinks to herself that they will always have memories of Kate even if she dies. The judge interrupts her thoughts again and asks whether she wants to continue. She asks him about when he thinks he will be coming home. Later, they visit the vending machines. He buys her cookies. Sara says she did not know what to ask him in the courtroom. She asks him whether they have been good parents and thinks about all her children. Brian admits he is not sure and wonders if anyone is. He feeds her a cookie, and she feels connected to him.

Brian and Anna come home that night. Sara plans to go to the hospital but talks to Anna first. Anna wants to know whether Sara will reprimand her. Sara says she realizes Anna wants her own identity. She says it is fine that Anna has her own opinions. Sara says Anna reminds her of herself. Sara and Brian are in bed. She realizes how familiar he is. They make love. Sara says they will lose her, not knowing which daughter she is referring to. Brian kisses her and tells her to quit. They become silent.

Sara Analysis

After Brian's revelation on the witness stand, Sara falls in love with him all over again. Her unmovable stance on Kate's treatment cracks as she realizes Brian and Anna are entitled to their feelings. Sara was a lawyer but became a housewife, and she assures Anna it is fine to be different. Sara and Brian's lovemaking finalizes their reunion.



Wednesday

Wednesday Summary and Analysis

This section is a quote about fire from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which concerns how fire can not only illuminate, but can also show the dark. In this section, painful truths are revealed.



Julia

Julia Summary

Julia comes back to the apartment after a jog. She becomes angry because the coffeemaker will not work. Izzy is there and wants to know what happened with Campbell. Julia says he repeated history and berates herself. Izzy offers to punish him. Julia still cannot believe it happened twice.

Julia goes to the courthouse and sees Judge, the dog. He pulls her toward Campbell, who is arguing with Anna. Campbell says that the trial has all been for nothing and that he thought he knew her. Anna says she thought she knew him. She leaves and calls him a name to herself. Julia cannot be angry at Campbell. Campbell says he wishes she did not overhear them. He says Anna will not testify. Julia says that is understandable since she cannot argue with her mother. Campbell wants to know what Julia will report to the judge. Julia wants to know whether his request is because of Anna or his fear of losing the case. She wants to know why Anna agitates him. Campbell says to stay out of his business and not destroy his case like she wants to. She points out that it is Anna's case.

She says he and Anna are afraid. She knows why Anna is, but she wants to know why he is. He denies being afraid. Julia says he cannot joke now. She says he runs away from people. He starts to feel close to Anna, and he is at a loss. He thinks he can have sex with Julia, but he cannot get too close. She says he is close to his dog, and he will not talk about why. He tells her she is pushing it. Julia says she is entitled to tell him what a creep he is. She says he has to be a creep so no one will get close. She says he must hate that he is so transparent. He says he has work to do. She tells him to go ahead and be all business because he would not want to show he has feelings. She starts to leave, but he says she does not know what she is talking about. She faces him. He tries to explain about the dog, but Vern comes out and says Campbell is late. Campbell tells her she is next on the witness stand.

Julia Analysis

Julia is despondent over Campbell and leans on her sister for support. This sisterly relationship is strong, like the one between Anna and Kate. She argues with Campbell about the case and his secrecy. He seems to be ready to reveal his secret when they are interrupted.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell is shaken from his conversation. He returns to the courtroom and is about to question Julia. Sara says the psychiatrist she wants to call as a witness has to go to work later, so she wants to put the psychiatrist on the stand. The judge asks for Campbell's opinion. Campbell does not object. He wants to put off questioning Julia. The child psychiatrist takes the stand and identifies herself. She has an unusual last name. Campbell jokes with Anna in writing about it, but after writing her own joke, she writes that she is still angry. Sara asks her how she met her children. The doctor says she met Jesse approximately 7 years ago when he was having trouble. She says she has talked to all the children from time to time. Sara says she asked the doctor for her opinion on how Anna would be hurt if Kate died. The doctor discusses a case involving a girl donating for her twin. She says the twin donor was enriched by the experience. She points out that Anna would benefit from donating to Kate. Campbell thinks to himself how silly all this is and how everyone else seems to be falling for it. The doctor says Anna is not able to make medical decisions. She says at Anna's age, her brain is not ready for it. The judge wants to know the doctor's recommendation. She says Anna needs her parents' supervision.

Campbell is determined to be ruthless in his questioning. Campbell wonders what will happen to Anna if Kate dies. The doctor says her parents can help her. Campbell points out that Sara is helped by keeping Kate alive. He says Sara's choices are not objective; they are determined by Kate's health. He says Sara is like Anna, except she is not donating. The judge cautions him. Campbell says that if Sara cannot be objective, why is her opinion more valuable than Anna's. Campbell says there is no way a parent can be objective in this case.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell is preparing to call Julia to be a witness, but Sara calls a psychiatrist who supports her case. The closeness of Anna and Campbell's relationship can be seen in their joking. Campbell is harsh about questioning the doctor and points out that Sara is the instigator.



Julia

Julia Summary

Julia is in the bathroom during a recess. Anna comes in and ignores her while washing her hands. Julia tells her she knows that Anna does not want to be a witness. Anna says she does not wish to discuss it. Julia says she has to do what she does not like. Anna admires Kate's (? Julia's) knapsack. Julia says it took many spools to make the pattern. Anna says that is similar to truth as she leaves.

Julia sits on the witness stand being questioned by Campbell. Julia says Anna feels responsible for her sister's health. She says she knows the family wanted her to be a donor, but they want the best for Anna. She says she understands how the family was desperate to keep Kate alive. Julia says people have to know when to end things. Julia has a memory of using another guy to forget about Campbell. Julia says at the beginning she thought Anna should be freed from being a donor. She says she was basing her decision on the mental effects, not the physical ones. She does not think Anna should have to donate because she will not benefit physically. She says it is not easy to make a final decision about the case. The family is not objective enough to make decisions. She thinks Anna's parents have too much influence on her decisions. The dog starts to make noises. The judge wants to know what she recommends.

Julia Analysis

The conversation between Anna and Julia illustrates that Anna is hiding something. Memories of Campbell and the details of the case intertwine throughout her testimony. Julia seems to be on both sides, and the judge wants her to pick one.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell thinks to himself that Julia is going to favor his case. He knows Julia is struggling with her decisions. The dog is tugging at his coat, but Campbell ignores him. Julia says she cannot make a final decision. She says the parents are not to blame. She points out Anna's independence. She says it is a Solomon's choice where she has to divide a family, not a baby. Anna nudges Campbell and says she will testify. Campbell ignores the dog while Anna says she wants to speak.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell admits to feeling conflicted. His dog's actions are foreshadowing Campbell's mystery. Julia cannot make up her mind, so Anna steps up to speak.



Anna

Anna Summary

Anna remembers to herself throwing up after trying to give an oral report on kangaroos in school. She is nervous about testifying and looks at her parents. She is ready to give up when she sees how bad Campbell looks. Campbell tries to make her comfortable by making another joke about the psychiatrist's last name. Anna feels better, but the dog is behaving strangely. Campbell tries to control the dog at the judge's request. He asks Anna why she filed the petition. Anna says she asked. He asks her to explain. Anna says her mother asked her to donate a kidney.

Anna remembers to herself when Kate's kidneys started deteriorating a couple of months back. Kate became weak, and the causes could have been genetics or treatments. Dialysis was useless. One day, Sara and Brian entered their room. Sara said that according to her research on the Internet, recovery from a kidney transplant would not be as bad as from a bone marrow transplant. She said Kate could not have just any kidney. It had to be Anna's. Brian said that that was too much for both of them. Anna wondered to herself how she would be affected by giving up a kidney. Kate said she would not go through with it. Sara became upset and told Kate that she was killing herself. Kate says she was dying already.

Back in the present at the hearing, Campbell wants to know whether she made her wishes against being a donor known. The dog begins to make weird movements. The judge says the bailiff will have to take the dog out. Campbell ignores the dog and wants to know whether Anna filed the lawsuit on her own. Anna says she was persuaded by someone. Everyone is shocked, and Anna wonders to herself if she should have been truthful. Campbell wants to know who. She answers that it was Kate. The room is silent, and Campbell collapses.

Anna Analysis

Anna's story about kangaroos mentions that the kangaroo carries the embryo, as well as older siblings, who take over. This is like Anna and Kate's situation. Needing to escape from testifying, Anna wants to become other people like she has before. Campbell uses humor again to lighten up the situation. Anna and Campbell's truths slowly emerge in this chapter. Anna relates her memory of Kate's resisting the transplant and her confession on the stand, and the truth about Campbell emerges through the actions of the dog and Campbell's physical state.



Brian

Brian Summary

Brian thinks to himself that he has been looking at things incorrectly. His reverie is interrupted when he sees Campbell on the floor having an epileptic seizure. Brian rushes to assist him. He tries to keep the dog out of the way and turns Campbell on his side in case he gets sick. Brian is looking for something to put in the lawyer's mouth so he will not bite his tongue. The dog fetches a bite block from the briefcase. Brian tells Vern to summon an ambulance. Julia asks whether Campbell will be all right. Brian says yes and that he is having a seizure. Julia wants to know what she can do. Brian says she just has to wait. Julia says she is confused. Brian thinks that astronomy has changed over the years because the earth's axis is shaky. He reflects that life is shaky, too.

Campbell throws up and coughs himself awake in the judge's chambers. Brian tells him to relax, that he has experienced a bad seizure. Campbell wants to know what is going on. Brian notes to himself that victims can lose their memories concerning seizures. Campbell sees an IV line hooked up to him and balks. Brian says he needs the drugs. Campbell has urinated on himself, and Brian helps him change into one of his spare uniforms. Campbell says it began when he was 18 after sustaining a head injury in a car accident. Campbell says he has to get back to Anna's testimony. Julia stops him. Brian says he will check on the ambulance crew and leaves them alone. Brian remembers different cultures' interpretations of astronomy and how everyone's perceptions are different.

Brian Analysis

Brian uses astronomy to make several points: how perceptions can be wrong, how life is unstable, and how perceptions differ among people. These can be applied to Kate's illness and the characters involved. Brian becomes Campbell's rescuer. Campbell's mystery is revealed to Brian and Julia.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell notes to himself how bad he feels when Julia comes in. He tells her the dog is for seizures. Julia is not surprised and wants to know why he did not tell her. He says his parents did not even know. He tries to talk about the case, but Julia wants to know when it started. He says that a couple of days before their graduation, he had to attend a party with his parents and drove his own car, so he could visit Julia afterwards. He says he got into a wreck on the way to the party. He says he had a seizure that night. He took numerous tests, but the doctors could not pinpoint the cause. He learned that he just had to endure it, but he was not going to put anyone else through it. He says Julia did not need to be with him since his seizures were unpredictable.

Julia says she could have decided whether she wanted to be with him or not. He says he did not want her taking care of him; she was too independent for that. Julia says if she had known, she would not have felt so bad about herself since he left. Campbell says she is wonderful. Julia says she has her flaws and that you love someone for their flaws. Julia says she is the one who decides to leave, not him. Campbell tells her to leave then. Julia says she will after 50 years or so.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell tries to resist, but he finally tells Julia the truth. He developed epilepsy after a wreck, and the dog is a seizure dog. He left Julia because he didn't want to burden her with his illness. Julia gets him to see she has her own imperfections, and they reconcile.

Anna

Anna Summary

Anna enters the men's room where Campbell is cleaning up. She says Julia says he wanted to see her. He apologizes. Anna asks whether that was why she could not pet the dog. He says yes. She asks how the dog knows what is happening. He says that dogs are supposed to be able to pick up on smells or electrical impulses before a person can. He explains that Judge takes him away before the seizure happens. He says he normally gets 20 minutes' warning. Anna wants to know whether his sickness is the reason he represented her. He says it could be, but his doorknobs had to be cleaned. Anna is reluctant about testifying. He says if he can go back to the hearing, she can.

He and Anna return to the courtroom. The judge says they can break for the day. Campbell refuses and asks the court reporter where he left off. He confirms that Kate told her to instigate the case. Anna says that was not exactly right. Campbell asks her to explain. Anna says Kate did not request that she sue for medical emancipation. Campbell wants to know what Kate wanted. Anna looks at her mother and thinks her mother has to know the answer to his question. Campbell prods her. Anna shakes her head and cannot speak. The judge tells her she has to. She says Kate asked her to kill her.

Anna remembers when all this started. Kate would not let her into the room after hockey practice one day. When she finally does, Anna smells alcohol and finds a hidden bottle. Anna jokes about it until she sees Kate with pills. Kate refuses to explain. Kate finally says her life will end soon anyway, and she has hurt too many people. Anna points out how they have tried to make her well and that she cannot commit suicide. Kate becomes upset and says she cannot bring herself to commit suicide. Anna realizes that this is not her first attempt.

Back in the present at the hearing, Sara denies Anna's story and says she must be confused. She knows Kate would have confided in her. Anna says Kate knew it would destroy her mother if she knew. Anna starts to cry and says that she has always tried to help Kate. She does not want her sister to die, but Anna has always been the one to help her. Anna recalls another talk she and Kate had. Kate told her not to donate a kidney. Anna said she would do it. Anna asked Kate whether she thought a transplant would help. Kate said it could, but she told her again not to do it. That time, Anna understood what Kate was trying to say.

Anna looks at her mother and her pained expression. Brian comforts Sara and has her sit down. Campbell asks to approach Anna. Anna wonders to herself how that dog knew Campbell needed help. He asks whether she loves Kate. Anna says she definitely does. Campbell says she was going to do something that could cause her death. Anna says



she did not want to prolong her sister's suffering. She thought that was Kate's wish. Anna confirms it was her wish, too.

Anna remembers washing dishes with Kate. Kate said Anna did not like the hospital, and Anna said, "no kidding." Kate said she knew Anna would try anything to get out of going. Anna agreed and said Kate would be well then if Anna stopped going. Kate pointed out she might be dead. Kate said in that case, Anna could do whatever she wanted to do and go wherever she wanted to go. Anna felt bad because Kate seemed to be reading her mind. They stopped talking, and Anna noted to herself that they did not want to face the fact that she wanted Kate to live, but Anna herself would like to be on her own.

Anna feels horrible on the stand. She hates that everybody knows her conflict; that was why she did not want to testify. Campbell asks her why she thought that Kate wanted to be dead. Anna says Kate said she wanted it to be over. He asks whether that is why Kate asked for Anna's assistance. Anna feels better and realizes he is trying to point out that Kate wanted to sacrifice herself so Anna could be free. Campbell wants to know whether she told Kate she was going to quit donating. She says she did the night before she asked him to represent her. He wants to know what Kate's reply was. Anna remembers to herself telling her sister at bedtime, and how she looked. Anna says Kate thanked her.

Anna Analysis

Anna realizes Campbell is like her sister in that they both try to cope with physical conditions. Anna makes a major revelation by revealing Kate wanted to kill herself but could not go through with it and had hinted Anna should not donate. Anna feels guilty until Campbell makes her see that Kate was implying she wanted Anna to stop donating so Anna could live her own life. Campbell came to Anna's rescue by doing that.



Sara

Sara Summary

Sara notes to herself that the judge wanted to go to the hospital to speak to Kate. Kate looks bad, but she is having a playful argument with Jesse. Kate stops talking when she sees everyone who has come to visit. She wants to know what is happening. The judge tells Sara he knows she wants to talk, but he has to do it. He introduces himself to Kate. He asks Kate whether he can talk to her in private. Everyone leaves. Sara hears Kate tell the judge that she knew this would happen because she was the cause. Sara remembers a family demolishing a house across the street and how they rebuilt.

The judge leaves the room somberly. He says the closing arguments will commence at 9 in the morning the next day, and then he leaves. Julia wants to leave with Campbell. He apologizes to Sara and asks whether she will take Anna home. Then Julia and Campbell go. Anna says she has to talk to Kate. Sara agrees, and they go into the room. Anna tells Kate she tried while Kate takes her hand. Brian, Anna, and Jesse leave. Sara looks at Kate, who looks weak. Kate says she must have so much to ask. Sara says it can wait and hugs her. Sara realizes children are a gift and that they should be enjoyed while they live. Sara apologizes. Kate tells her not to worry about it. She says she has no regrets and asks her mother if her life was good. Sara says it was.

Sara Analysis

Kate becomes a witness at the hearing from her hospital room. The conversation between her and the judge is not shown. Sara's memory about the house is her way of thinking how the family has to rebuild after Kate's death. Sara realizes her children are individuals who have their own fates beyond her control. Her apology to Kate and Kate's response shows the family is ready for whatever happens.

Thursday

Thursday Summary and Analysis

This section contains a quote about fire from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. It means a person's sacrifice can help another person. This is an important idea for this section.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell notes that it is rainy. He is in his apartment trying to get ready for his closing argument in court. Julia comes in, and they talk. He reflects that he dreads the judge's verdict. He hopes he did well by Anna and knew it was a bad situation, no matter the verdict. Julia tells Campbell she hates his apartment, which is modern but sterile. He says he does too.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell is the first character who notes the rain. The rain is important in a future event, and the rain could symbolize dowsing the fire that has been burning so far in the book. Campbell thinks about Anna's maturation process since they met. Campbell and Julia are in agreement about a part of their new life together.

Jesse

Jesse Summary

Jesse thinks about the rain. He jogs past the elementary school and runs until he collapses in a field. He remembers taking drugs there during a storm and hoping lightning would strike him so he could feel alive for once. The lightning never came. He leaves and thinks that he needs to change his goals.

Jesse Analysis

Jesse uses the rain to cleanse himself of his past. He remembers how it was stormy when he was using drugs, and he talks about lightning. Lightning is related to fire.

Anna

Anna Summary

Anna thinks about the rain. She reflects that rain is ongoing in its path and comes back.

Anna Analysis

The rain makes Anna think about the cycle of life. The rain contributes to the earth and renews itself. This can also be related to organ donation.

Brian

Brian Summary

Brian remembers it was raining when Anna was born. He told Sara they should name her Andromeda or Anna for short. Sara asked whether he meant the book. He says he meant like the princess in the sky who is between her parents.

Brian Analysis

The rain makes Brian remember Anna's birth. His explanation that the name means someone between her parents points to Anna's relationships to her parents.



Sara

Sara Summary

Sara observes that it is raining. She fiddles with her notes in court and feels unsure of herself. The judge asks her if she is ready. She reads from the cards that the law has always supported parents making decisions for their children. There is lightning, and Sara drops her cards and jumbles them. She asks the judge whether she can begin again, and he agrees. She addresses Anna. She tells her that she has always loved her and always will. She knows as Kate's parent, she cannot be objective. She says she is programmed to want to save Kate. She says Anna will understand when she is a mother. Sara says as a sister, she wants equality. As a mother, she wants everything for her children. Sara says she had to fight Anna in this case. She says she had to say why she could make Anna's decisions. She admits that she is conflicted, that sometimes she is sure of herself, and other times she does not know what to do. She says that even if the verdict is in her favor, she could not make Anna give up a kidney.

She says the case was never about a kidney but about making decisions that are influenced by so many factors. She looks at Campbell and says he pointed out nobody has to go into a burning building to save someone else. Sara says it is different when a parent wants to save a child from a burning building; it is mandatory. She says in her case she was sending her other child to save her sister in a burning building. She says she knew it was risky, but she wanted both of them. She knew it was the right thing to do. She sits down.

Sara Analysis

Lightning forces Sara to give up her lawyer role and speak as a mother. Her role as lawyer makes her admit she has doubts, but her role as mother leads her to say she would do anything to keep her family together. Sara experiences a mother/lawyer conflict throughout the book, and it is resolved here.



Campbell

Campbell Summary

Campbell, too, discards his notes. He says he agrees with Sara in that this case had nothing to do with genetic material. He says it is about Anna growing up. In 10 years, she will be great. He says the parents are not able to be objective, and it is Anna's choice even if she is a minor. He says Anna did not sue for selfish reasons. He says Anna may decide to give a kidney to Kate, anyway. He says what he, the judge, or the parents think is not important. What Anna thinks is.

The judge calls for a break to make his decision. Campbell jokes with people outside about his dog's purpose. This makes him feel better. The judge comes back with a picture of the daughter he lost. Campbell thinks he has lost. He says he had to think about the quality and sanctity of life and how Kate's life affects Anna's. He says he may be biased because his daughter was killed in a drunk-driving accident. He says he would have done anything to prolong her life. He says the Fitzgeralds have been in that situation for 14 years. He admits he is jealous of them. He says it goes beyond the kidney and to who should make the decisions and how. He says there is no solution. He says he has to make decisions he is comfortable with like others do. He says Kate does not want her life to end, but she does not like her quality of life anymore. He says the deciding person is the one who is at the core of the case. He says it should be Anna, not Kate. He says he knows Anna's age is an issue. However, he thinks it does not matter because in childhood, you cannot borrow without asking permission.

He asks Anna to stand. The judge says she is medically emancipated from her parents. He says that she will have to still abide by her parents' rules, but she gets to make her own medical decisions. He tells Sara they need to see Anna's doctor and explain about the verdict. He requests that Campbell take medical power of attorney until she is an adult so that he can help her with tough choices. He says her parents should be involved, but Anna has the final say. The judge tells them to sign the forms, and he tells Anna to keep him updated. He bangs his gavel, and everyone stands up as he leaves. Campbell tells Anna she won. Julia tells them they were strong. Anna is dazed. Brian hugs her, and Sara joins them.

Campbell Analysis

Campbell copies Sara by speaking without notes. Campbell's speech acknowledges Anna's maturity and importance. Even though Campbell has told the truth about the dog, he still jokes about it to strangers like he has done throughout the book. The judge compares the loss of his child to the possibility of the Fitzgeralds losing theirs. He disregards her age and even respects childhood and rules for Anna. Campbell gets a new life with Julia and medical guardianship of Anna. Despite all the challenges, the Fitzgeralds are still intact.

Anna

Anna Summary

A half-hour after the decision, Campbell is going to take Anna to the hospital. They had filled out the forms, and Anna's parents had left. She knows about Campbell and Julia's relationship and wonders to herself why there is so much secrecy about it. She asks him what she should do. He says he just enabled her to make her own decisions. She asks him what he will do. He says he needs to pursue paying clients. She jokes that he has to provide for Julia, and he agrees. She asks him whether he was being truthful at the trial when he talked about how good she will be in 10 years. Campbell teases her for asking, but he predicts different scenarios for her. She thinks about all the careers she has wanted. She knows for sure she wants to be Kate's sister in 10 years.

Anna Analysis

Anna notes that the rain is an obstacle as she and Campbell ride in the car. She mentions for the first time his connection to Julia. The closeness of Campbell and Anna is revealed. Anna again thinks of the roles she has wanted to take on to escape Kate but realizes the role she wants the most is Kate's sister.



Brian

Brian Summary

Brian is at the hospital with Kate who is undergoing dialysis when his beeper goes off. There is a car accident. Two cars, a BMW and a truck, have collided. The BMW is in worse shape. Brian talks to a police officer and finds out three have been hurt, and one has been sent to the hospital. He sees his coworker, Red, trying to get into the driver's side of a car. Red tells him the first driver flew through the windshield. She was taken away in the ambulance. Two people are stuck in the car he is working on. Brian tries to maneuver around the wreckage and sees the truck has jammed into the passenger's side of the car. Brian finds an area where he fits, and a dog comes out. He realizes Anna is one of the victims. He screams that they have to be released. He gets Campbell out. Anna, wearing her seatbelt, is not moving, and her eyes are open. Paulie, his coworker, tries to help, but Brian hits him. Brian explains one of the victims is Anna. His coworkers try to keep him away, but he puts her on a backboard. She is carried to the ambulance. Brian starts to work on her and sees an old scar and becomes upset. Red steps in for him and tells him she barely has a pulse. While Red puts in her IV, Brian calls in her situation, which is a head injury. The cardiac monitor stops, and Brian gets the paddles. He cuts through her shirt, and Red shocks her. Her pulse returns. They get to the hospital, and Red tells him to stay put.

They take her to the emergency room. Brian is not allowed in the trauma room. Firefighters are everywhere, and one gets Sara, who comes in wanting to know what is happening. He tells her about the car accident, and how he did not know she was one of the victims. He wonders to himself how much to tell her about her breathing problems. He wonders to himself if he acted properly or if his emotions got in the way. They hear Campbell wanting to know where Anna is. He is in bloody clothes with his arm in a cast. Brian is unable to speak. Campbell understands what happened and tries to deny it. The doctor comes out and starts talking medically because he knows Brian. Sara wants an interpretation. The doctor says Anna's head collided hard on the window. She has a fatal head injury. She is breathing on a respirator, but she is brain dead. He apologizes and hesitates. Then he asks about organ donation. Brian thinks to himself about how it is easy to notice one star over another one. Campbell says he has power of attorney for Anna, and there is a patient upstairs who has to have that kidney.

Brian Analysis

Brian thinks he is doing a typical rescue until he realizes Anna is part of the wreck. Brian comes to her rescue as he has done in the past, but he is full of self-doubt as he was during the case. It is ironic that the doctor who does not know about the case asks about Anna's being an organ donor. Brian uses astronomy to illustrate that Kate overshadowed Anna, and he and Sara could not see it until it was too late. It is also

ironic that Campbell who fought Anna's being a donor to Kate wants the seriously injured Anna's kidney to go to Kate.



Sara

Sara Summary

Anna's organs have been removed. Jesse, Suzanne, Campbell, and Julia are there.

Sara and Brian go into the room to see her. She reflects that they have to turn off her breathing machine. She takes Anna's hand, which is warm and soft. Sara knows she has prepared to lose a child, but she can not go through with this. Brian explains that Anna is not herself; the machine is keeping her alive. Sara cries and says it is not Anna's time. Sara and Brian hug, and she looks at her daughter. She has to admit her husband is right. It is not Anna. Sara agrees to turn the machine off. Brian does it while Sara massages her. The monitors flatline, and Sara feels the heart stop.

Sara Analysis

Sara explores language in relation to Anna's death. She has analyzed words throughout the book. Brian helps Sara to let Anna go. The Fitzgeralds lose a child, but it is not the one they thought it would be.

Epilogue

Epilogue Summary and Analysis

The epilogue begins with a poem called "Submergence" by D.H. Lawrence. This combines the themes of fire and astronomy. It is about moving on after a loss.



Kate

Kate Summary

It is now the year 2010. Kate talks about how they grieve for Anna. Her father says he can see Anna in the sky. Her mother searches for signs that say Anna is going to return. Kate blames herself. It is because of her Anna was in the situation that led to the wreck. She reflects that if things were different, Anna would still be living, and Kate would be the ghost that is always there. Kate shares that she was very sick after the transplant, but she began to recover. Eight years have passed since her last relapse. Dr. Chance is mystified and says it must be the therapies. Kate says someone had to die, and Anna made the sacrifice. She talks about how she listened to music in her room to drown out her mother's crying. Her father worked all the time. Then her mother left the house to shop, her father started doing regular things, and she started laughing at a television show. She felt guilty, but Jesse said Anna would have laughed too. She realizes how precious life is, and how the pain can ease.

She wonders whether Anna knows what the people in her life are up to. Campbell and Julia got married. Jesse became a policeman. Her father conquered alcoholism. Kate is a dance teacher who is reminded of her sister when two little girls are dancing. Kate remembers her mother getting photos developed after Kate's high school graduation. They look at the pictures together and find a picture of Anna on the old roll. Kate kept the picture. She hides it away and will look at it when she forgets certain things about Anna. Another reminder of Anna is when Kate looks at her scar from the kidney transplant in the mirror. With Anna's kidney and blood in Kate, Kate will always have Anna with her.

Kate Analysis

This is set in the future from Kate's perspective. It is the first time her perspective has been shown. She speaks of her grief for Anna, and it is obvious how much she loved her sister. Her father uses astronomy to cope with Anna's death. Her mother, who was so hopeful for Kate is hopeful Anna will return. Kate feels guilt about Anna's death as Anna felt guilt about the lawsuit. Kate refers to being a ghost, which is a common reference in the book. Kate talks about how her family dealt with Anna's death, and how they recuperated.

She shares what happened to all the characters. Kate makes a reference to water and fire. Jesse finds redemption as a rescuer instead of a destroyer. Kate fulfills her dream of being a dancer who is in control of her own body as she once told Julia she wanted to be. Photographs have been used throughout the book to make points, and Kate is once again healed by a photo of Anna like she was of a photo of Taylor's. Kate realizes Anna will always be a part of her.



Characters

Anna Fitzgerald

Anna is a 13-year-old girl from a middle-class family in Rhode Island. Her father, Brian, is a firefighter, and her mother, Sara, is a housewife who used to be a lawyer. Her two older siblings are Jesse and Kate. Jesse is an adult who has had a troubled past and lives in an apartment at the family house. Kate is 16 and has recuperated from leukemia, but the treatments have hurt her kidneys, and she needs a kidney transplant. Anna is a natural choice for the donor because she was conceived to help Kate medically and has made donations to her throughout her life. Anna seeks help from a lawyer, Campbell Alexander, to gain control over her body so she can stop being a donor to Kate. Anna is more mature than her age and often ponders deep questions about her sister's illness and her role in it. Anna struggles with her decisions, and even though she has her outbursts, she is very close to her sister, and at the hearing, she admits that it was Kate who made her decide to instigate the suit.

What seemed to be a selfish act of a child was really the love of a sister. Although Kate's illness has prevented her from having a normal life, Anna is close to Kate and the rest of her family. She is on the opposite side from her mother in the case, but they are still a close mother and daughter. Her father tries to look after her as well as Kate, and she bonds with Jesse because they both feel like they don't fit in. Anna's business relationship with Campbell grows into a more personal one. She is with him in the wreck that ultimately kills her. She does donate the kidney while dying and at Campbell's request. At the hearing, she stood up for herself and her sister and ended up saving her sister's life, anyway. Anna, who had always felt invisible in her family, ends up being a heroine.

Campbell Alexander

Campbell is the lawyer Anna Fitzgerald asks to represent her in her lawsuit against her parents. He seems cold and calculating at first by being single-minded about Anna's case and pandering to the media. He has a guide dog, but he will not explain the animal's purpose. He makes jokes when people ask him about it. His softer side is revealed through Julia, Anna's guardian *ad litem*, and the flashbacks to their teen romance. He is the product of a wealthy background with parents who are shallow. His epilepsy and, therefore, the reason for the dog, is revealed in court. Although he wins the case, he feels for both sides and when faced with deciding to donate Anna's organs, he makes sure Kate is the kidney recipient. He left Julia all those years ago because he did not want her to have to deal with his condition, but Julia chooses to stay with him. He marries her.



Sara Fitzgerald

Sara is a lawyer turned housewife. As Brian's wife and Kate, Jesse, and Anna's mother, she does everything she can to keep her family together. She is close to her sister, Suzanne, who is a career woman. She wants Suzanne to be her rescuer, and she wants Anna to be Kate's rescuer. She is totally focused on Kate's illness and wants to try every treatment possible. She either ignores Jesse or gets angry with him. It is her idea to get pregnant with Anna and for Anna to make donations. She is shocked when Anna sues her and Brian. Her temper and devotion to Kate make her a worthy adversary to Campbell in the courtroom. At first, Sara can not understand why Anna is doing this and estranges herself from Brian, but after all the facts are revealed at the hearing, she understands the conflicts involved and how Anna is her own person who can make her own choices and that Kate can make her own choices, too. She and Brian become a stronger couple, and she makes peace with Anna before her death. She was shattered by Anna's death and hoped for her return. Through her family, she healed.

Brian Fitzgerald

Brian is a dependable husband to Sara and father to Kate, Jesse, and Anna. He is a firefighter who loves his job. His hobby is astronomy, and he makes astronomical references that can relate to his own life. When Anna sues him and his wife, he is surprised but wants to support Anna. He moves her into the fire station so she can have some distance from the home situation. This puts a strain on Brian and Sara's marriage, and they just talk about the medical issues. His decision to testify for Anna at the hearing does not help matters. At the hearing, however, he changes his mind and wants Anna to donate. Brian is really conflicted on the matter. He is not only a rescue worker; he likes to rescue everyone around him, and in this case, he cannot. Even though his sister-in-law Suzanne can help the family financially, he wants to be the provider. He is the only one who learns Jesse is the arsonist and sets him on the right path. He grows closer to his wife as they learn how the medical issues have overshadowed their marriage. He develops a drinking problem after Anna's death but conquers it.

Jesse Fitzgerald

Jesse is the oldest child in the Fitzgerald family. After his sister is diagnosed with leukemia as a toddler, he is still a child himself and often has to give up events for Kate. After Anna's birth, he feels useless because he is the sibling that cannot help. He acts out in school and is on a downward spiral into drugs, alcohol, stealing, and arson as he grows up. He tries to project the rebel image around his family, Julia, and Campbell, but his actions show his softer side. He donates platelets to Kate anonymously. He helps Anna out by taking her to the lawyer's office and when visiting Kate. Brian finds out Jesse is the arsonist, and Jesse has a breakthrough. He plays with fire because he can control it. Fire is a theme in the book, and Jesse shows the negative side of fire. He



becomes a police officer and wins an award. He transforms himself from a destroyer to a rescuer.

Julia Romano

Julia is the guardian *ad litem* assigned to represent Anna in the hearing. She has to make a report about which side she supports. She was a rebel as a teenager from a large, poor family and has turned into a responsible adult. She is close to her twin sister. Close sisterly relationships permeate the book, including Anna and Kate's and Sara and Suzanne's. She had a romance with Anna's lawyer, Campbell Alexander, as a teenager despite their class differences. She was hurt when Campbell abandoned her. As she works with him on Anna's case, she is attracted to him even though she tries to resist it. She is good with Anna and Kate because she talks to them like they are real teenagers. At the hearing, she is unable to pick a side. She finally learns why Campbell left her after he has a seizure at the hearing. When she finds out he has epilepsy, she refuses to abandon him. They get married.

Kate Fitzgerald

Kate is diagnosed with leukemia as a toddler. When her brother, Jesse, does not match her for bone marrow donation, their mother Sara has the idea to get pregnant with a baby who is a genetic match for Kate. Anna is born, and she donates to Kate on several occasions. Kate struggles with being a normal teenager and having cancer because her appearance is affected, and her first boyfriend had cancer and died. At 16, Kate is cancer free, but the treatments have affected her kidneys, and she needs a kidney transplant. It is assumed Anna will be the donor, but she files a lawsuit to gain control over her body so she can stop donating. Anna reveals at the hearing that Kate was suicidal and urged her not to donate a kidney. Kate wanted her sister to be free of obligations to her. The judge rules for Anna, but after Anna dies in a wreck, Kate gets Anna's kidney. She recovers and becomes a dance teacher. She had told Julia she wanted to be a ballerina because she could have control over her body.

Duracell Dan

He is the homeless man Jesse bribes to keep his arson materials. He is with Jesse at one of his fires and tells Jesse a homeless man is in the burning building. This forces Jesse to save the man.

Suzanne Crofton

Suzanne is Sara's older sister. She is a single, career woman who lives a different life than Sara. She is a support during Kate's illness and even tries to help financially.



Vern Stackhouse

Vern is a sheriff and friend of the Fitzgerald family. He serves Sara with papers related to Anna's lawsuit. He is around during the hearing and provides assistance to the family and Campbell.

Isobel Romano

Isobel is Julia's identical twin sister and roommate. She had a bad breakup and cautions Julia against Campbell. Toward the end, Isobel and Campbell seem to come to an understanding.



Objects/Places

Providence Hospital

This is where Kate is diagnosed and has her treatments and other stays. Anna is also a patient here as a donor. Her birth and death occur here.

The Fitzgerald House

This is the home of the Fitzgeralds where Brian, Sara, Kate, and Anna live. Jesse lives in an adjoining apartment.

The Fire Station

This is where Brian works and where he and Anna live to give Anna some distance from her mother and the case. The rooftop is a favorite place to watch the stars.

The Locket

Brian gives the locket to Anna as a child after one of her donations. It is a thank you present for helping Kate. Thirteen-year-old Anna sells it at a pawnshop to raise money for attorney fees.

The Courthouse

This is where the hearing is. Campbell and Anna's secrets are revealed here.

Campbell Alexander's Office

Anna first meets Campbell here to initiate the lawsuit.

Dr. Chance's Office

This is the office of the oncologist that diagnoses and treats Kate. The idea for Anna's conception begins here. It is also where Anna's donations are suggested.

Duracell Dan's Hideaway

It is an underpass where a homeless man lives. He stashes the materials Jesse uses for arson.



Jesse's Apartment

The apartment is part of the Fitzgerald house. From items in the apartment and other clues, Brian figures out that Jesse is the arsonist. This is where he confronts his son.

The Wheeler School

The Wheeler School is the private high school where Campbell and Julia met.

Julia's Apartment

Julia lives here with her twin sister, Isobel. This is where she and her sister talk about Campbell.

Campbell's Apartment

Campbell's apartment is very sterile and high tech. It seems to reflect his personality. Julia reveals she does not like it, and he agrees.

Shakespeare's Cat

Julia goes to the gay bar Shakespeare's Cat to forget Campbell.

Hercules the Goldfish

A pet Kate got for her birthday. Sara saves him from near death a couple of times.



Themes

Fire

Fire is a common theme in the book, and it ties much of the plot together. The passages that preface each section concern fire. Brian is a firefighter. Jesse sets fires. Kate's illness can be compared to a fire because it is out of control and destroys everything in its path. Anna compares her initiating the lawsuit to fire. Brian says a fire should be allowed to burn unchecked. He is referring to Kate's illness in that they should let it run its course without interference. He uses fire to make points in conversations with his coworkers. Brian connects fire to the story of Pandora's Box and hope. Hope is what he has left as Kate's father. He is trying to put out the home fires, which include Kate's illness, Anna's lawsuit, Sara's stubbornness, and Jesse's troubles. Julia puts out the fire Brian starts in the kitchen; and in her role as guardian *ad litem*, she tries to put out fires. She also rescues Campbell.

People that put out fires are rescuers. Characters in the book fill the rescuer roles. Brian is a rescuer on the job and in his family. Anna is Kate's medical rescuer. Campbell points out at the hearing that people are not obligated to rescue by sharing a story of a homeless woman who let people die in a fire. Suzanne is Sara's rescuer. Jesse goes from arsonist to rescuer. At the hearing, it is revealed that Kate wanted to be Anna's rescuer for once.

At the end of the book, it rains, and this puts out the fires of the characters burning throughout the book. Jesse's inner fire is put out with Brian's help, and he redeems himself. Kate's fire is stopped, and she becomes healthy because of the kidney transplant. Campbell and Julia's fire is contained because they reunite. Sara and Brian's fire from Kate's illness and Anna's lawsuit and death is also contained, and they become a stronger couple.

Astronomy

Brian's hobby is used to make points throughout the book. Some of the passages preceding the sections make astronomical references. Anna's real name comes from a constellation named Andromeda, whose story is she is punished because of her mother, but she is rescued. The constellation resembles arms tied together. This can be applied to Anna's story because her mother is pressuring her to donate, but with the hearing and the wreck, Anna is rescued. Brian's talking about watching supernovas dies is comparable to the family and others watching Kate die. The story of Orpheus illustrates how death is inevitable. Sara continues the theme by comparing Kate's sick face to the moons Brian likes, moons that are "still, remote, cold."(118) Anna refers to the pleasant memory of catching stars after learning she can stay at the fire station. The punctuation of meteor showers during Brian and Anna's conversation symbolizes what is hard for them to say. Anna compares astronomy maps to trying to find direction in her own life.



Anna talks about astronomy to Campbell during the hearing. She talks about how stars are there even if one cannot see them. This applies to how oblivious parents, especially Anna and Campbell's, can be to their children.

Brian feels he lives on a different planet because of the situations of Anna and Jesse. He talks about cultures looking between the stars and realizes he has been looking at the wrong things. While rescuing Campbell from his seizure, he thinks about how astronomy of the past makes astronomy today inaccurate and says it is because the earth's axis shakes. This tells the reader the life-shaking events of the book such as Kate's illness and Campbell's condition affects the perceptions of the people involved. After Anna's death, Brian thinks about how the brightness of a star can overshadow another star, and when the other star is seen, it is too late. This applies to how Kate overshadowed Anna, and when Anna finally asserts herself, she dies. After Anna's death, Kate reveals that her father said he could see Anna reincarnated in the stars.

Roles

The characters in the book play different roles. Anna is in the donor role for her sister when she would rather be in the role of a teenager who has friends and plays hockey. The lawsuit is Anna's way of resisting her lifelong role. Throughout the book, she imagines herself in outlandish adventure roles, and after winning the hearing, Campbell thinks she will have fantastic roles in 10 years. Anna concludes that that the role she wants most is to be Kate's sister.

In the hearing, it is revealed that Anna does not mind playing the donor role, but Kate is tired of being the recipient. By getting Anna not to donate a kidney, Kate can be Anna's savior, and they would have reversed roles for once.

Jesse point out to Anna before she begins the lawsuit that the siblings have their own roles in the family--he as the troublemaker, Kate as the martyr, and Anna as the peacemaker. Jesse changes roles by the end of the book. At first, he does not see himself as a rescuer because he cannot rescue Kate. After he has a breakthrough with his father, he goes from arsonist to police officer or savior.

Sara and Brian's roles go beyond being parents. Sara wants to play the savior role for Kate, but she has to get Anna to play that role. She demonstrates that she expects sisters to help each other as her sister, Suzanne, helps her. Sara has conflicts with the mother/lawyer role. After the lawsuit begins, Sara tries to balance being a mother to Anna and a lawyer on the opposing side of the lawsuit. This is a constant struggle until Sara realizes she is a good mother, and she should not try to save her children from themselves. Brian is the savior and mediator as he tries to save everybody in the family and acts as a buffer between Anna and Sara.

Campbell has the lawyer role as he panders to the media and questions the witnesses at the hearing. He could be seen in a rescuer role as he rescues Anna from donating to Kate. He also has the romantic role with Julia, but this does not come to fruition until the



end of the book after his secret is revealed. Julia has a mediator role as Anna's guardian *ad litem* and a romantic role with Campbell after she learns the truth. Julia's role as a sister is shown with her twin, Isobel.

Ethical Dilemmas

At the heart of *My Sister's Keeper* is an ethical dilemma: Should thirteen-year-old Anna be forced to give her kidney to her dying sister? Through much of the novel, it seems like Anna does not want to give Kate her kidney because she is tired of being a store of spare parts for Kate. Since she was born, Anna has undergone a number of painful procedures to save Kate's life. Kate suffers from cancer and conditions related to the illness and its treatment. Her family's life has been focused on Kate's illness and its potential recurrence during times of remission, since before Anna was born.

Indeed, Anna was created to be a perfect sibling match for Kate. The Fitzgeralds went to a geneticist who created several embryos with the couple's sperm and eggs, then figured out which one matched Kate. That embryo was implanted in Sara and became Anna. At the time, there was public controversy over their decision because Anna was seen as a "designer baby." The ethical debate led to a talk show appearance for the couple, as well as hate mail.

More than anyone else in the family, Sara sees no ethical dilemmas, neither in how Anna was created nor in making Anna suffer to try to keep Kate alive. Sara only responds to the latest crisis and the best solution at hand. When necessary, taking from Anna to give to Kate is no dilemma for her. The result is that Kate has lived longer than her doctor ever expected, but at the cost of a balanced family. The needs of Kate and her illness are put above all else, with Sara diligently guarding those interests at the expense of her husband and other children. Even Julia, the court-appointed guardian of Anna's interests, cannot make a decision on what should be done.

Anna's lawsuit brings all these issues and the ethical dilemma to the forefront. With Campbell acting as her lawyer, she seeks the right to decide whether she gives up a kidney. Anna's true motivation in her quest for medical emancipation is yet another ethical dilemma. As she reveals on the stand during the hearing, the reason that Anna has brought the lawsuit was for Kate's benefit. Kate cannot tell her mother that she does not want to have the transplant. Kate is aware of the toll her illness has had on everyone and she seems tired of fighting. In fact, she has tried to kill herself before. This situation brings up the ethical dilemma: Should Kate be allowed to die when a measure can be taken to save her life?

None of these ethical dilemmas is allowed to reach its full conclusion in the story. The novel ends with Anna suffering an injury that leads to brain death. As executor of her medical rights, Campbell authorizes the kidney transplant. Kate's cancer goes into remission, and she has a normal life. But she knows that she is alive because Anna died. She believes that one sister had to die for the other to survive, another ethical conundrum.



Control

One issue that shapes many of the characters and situations in the novel is that of control. Nearly every major character in *My Sister's Keeper* is looking for control over some part of their existence in the face of disease. Anna, for example, seems to want to control her body and what is taken from it as evinced by her lawsuit. While it is later revealed that she actually filed the suit at Kate's behest, Anna is still looking to control the situation to give her sister what she wants. Anna knows she cannot control her mother, her family, or her sister's illness, but she seeks control of her own destiny.

Kate and Sara would like control of the opposite sides of the same coin. Kate wants to control her existence and the toll she puts on her family. She would like to become a ballerina if she grows up because she believes they have control over their bodies. Sara has spent her life since the diagnosis of Kate's cancer trying to control the disease as well as Kate's life. Sara has done everything in her power, including creating Anna, in an attempt to control Kate's destiny. Sara has controlled all she could to keep Kate alive, without truly examining the consequences to herself and her family.

One of the costs of Sara's focused assault on Kate's disease is the loss of closeness with Jesse. Both Brian and Sara have given up on Jesse, who repeatedly acts out. He loves his sisters and has done what he can to keep Kate alive, most notably giving his blood regularly to boost her platelets. But he has also moved into an apartment over the family garage to be separate from, yet still part of, his family. He sets fires to get attention and to feel a sense of control over something. Jesse knows the fires, car theft, and substance abuse are all masks for his pain, but he needs a parent to care about him. Brian reclaims control over his son when he finds evidence that Jesse set fires.

Anna's lawyer, Campbell, is also obsessed with control. He has suffered from epileptic seizures since the age of eighteen, but he keeps his condition a secret. Whenever someone asks why he has a service dog, he gives an obviously untrue answer. He allowed his condition to end his high school romance with Julia without telling her why. He controlled the situation because he believed she should be free of the burden of caring for someone with his condition.

Familial Bonds

The importance of familial, especially sibling, relationships is another underlying theme of *My Sister's Keeper*. Despite all the problems created by Kate's illness and Sara's quest to keep Kate alive, the Fitzgeralds remain a family. Though Brian and Sara have their problems, they work together to keep the family together amidst the disruptive force of Kate's illness. Even Jesse, the delinquent son, still lives at home and is there to help out when Kate is ill or Anna needs his support.

In turn, Anna helps her brother get out of jail when he is arrested for stealing the judge's vehicle. Anna also does all she can to help her sister. While the pair squabble as sisters do when they share a room, Anna files the lawsuit to give Kate what she wants. All the



siblings resent what has happened to them, but respond to the needs of the others in their family when the situation calls for it. After Anna's unexpected death, the family grieves separately but eventually grows closer again.

Like Kate and Anna, Julia and her twin sister, Izzy, are close. Julia allows her to move in after a painful breakup. Izzy wants to protect her from Campbell. While Campbell's relationship with his parents is not close at all, it serves as an illuminating contrast to the Fitzgeralds and the Romanos.



Style

Point of View

Each chapter in the book is told from the first person point of view. All the main characters narrate a chapter. They even have their own fonts. Picoult could have made this Kate's story since it is the central issue, but she allows the characters to share their own stories. Kate has one chapter, and it is the final one. The other characters have more than one chapter each. The reader can see the effects of Kate's illness on the Fitzgerald family. Everyone in the family despairs about Kate's illness and Anna's lawsuit, but they have different perspectives. The reader sees Campbell and Julia's thoughts on the lawsuit and also their feelings about each other. By viewing Anna's thoughts, the reader can see she does not take her decision to sue her parents lightly and that she is smart and perceptive. Jesse seems like an unlikable person, but his thoughts and actions show his pain over Kate's illness and his helplessness.

The reader sees Sara's desperation to heal Kate at all costs and the epiphany she has during the hearing. The author shows Brian's conflict over supporting his children when the family is in a divisive crisis. Campbell's tough side as a lawyer and softer side with Julia are in his chapters. His growing friendship with Anna is shown. Because of the mystery of the guide dog, the reader wonders what Campbell's medical problem is. Julia is able to see the Fitzgeralds objectively, so the reader gets an unbiased stranger's view. After the intertwining of the character's viewpoints, the chapter from Kate's point of view is surprising and enlightening. Up until her chapter, she was always a character seen by everyone else.

Setting

The book is set in Providence, Rhode Island. The medical settings are Kate's hospital room and Dr. Chance's office, which are both located in Providence hospital. Although Kate goes through tough times in her hospital room, Anna goes there to visit her sister despite the lawsuit. It is in Dr. Chance's office that Sara gets the idea of having another child. His suggestions of how Anna can donate to Kate start there. The hospital is where Sara finds out about the lawsuit. The Fitzgerald house, which includes Jesse's apartment, is another setting. It is in the house where Kate's leukemia signs begin, and she has other medical problems there. The house is where family arguments such as between Kate and Sara take place. Brian finds materials around the apartment that make him realize Jesse is the arsonist. The homeless man, Duracell Dan's, place at the underpass is where the rest of Jesse's materials are kept.

Campbell and Julia's flashbacks are at the Wheeler School, which is a private high school in Rhode Island where they met. The class differences between Campbell and Julia and the other students' reactions to their relationship occur at the school. Campbell's apartment is part of the story because it is described as being modern and



up-to-date but not warm like Campbell at first. Julia tells Campbell after they reconcile that she does not like his apartment. Julia's apartment is where she and her sister discuss Campbell. Julia goes to a bar called Shakespeare's Cat to try to escape Campbell.

The fire station is a setting where Brian works, and he and Anna live to get away from the lawsuit at home. The fire station is a rescue place in different ways. Not only does it house the firefighters, but it also gives Brian an escape from the house and medical drama. On the rooftop, he can practice his astronomy hobby. Anna escapes there to get away from the pressures of her mother and the lawsuit.

The courthouse is where the hearing is held. Campbell's secret is revealed there, and the truth behind the lawsuit is also revealed there.

Some settings serve as places that save the characters. The hospital obviously saves Kate's life. The fire station saves Brian and Anna. The courthouse saves the Fitzgerald family and Campbell and Julia's relationship.

Language and Meaning

At the beginning of each section, the language of passages from famous works refer to the book's situations and themes. Anna's first memory story's language sets the tone for the rest of the book.

The language in the main part of the book is simple, but medical terms are used often. They are well explained. Sara, Kate, and Anna have as much medical knowledge about Kate's condition as anyone else. Sara uses medical language to try to save Kate. Kate uses it, along with the language of a frustrated teenager, who is concerned about appearance and dating. Anna also mixes it with her own concerns about her life outside Kate. Legal language is used in the petition and in the hearing. The medical language helps Kate, but the legal language helps Anna. Sara analyzes words as she ponders situations. For example, she talks about how there is no word for a parent whose child dies. (703) Anna tries to figure out language, too. Brian and Anna use the language of astronomy and legends in an attempt to figure the world out. Brian uses his firefighter language to demonstrate situations.

There is a combination of characters' thoughts and dialogue. Because of his medical knowledge as a rescue worker, Brian's thoughts let the reader know what is wrong with Campbell. Julia's language with the Fitzgeralds is that of the mediator, which is part of her role as guardian *ad litem* even though she is not as conciliatory toward Campbell. The characters' thoughts allow the readers to understand them; their dialogue does not sufficiently describe the characters. For example, Anna's thoughts reveal her maturity beyond her 13 years. Jesse projects a tough-guy image to everyone with crude language, but his thoughts reveal his softer feelings about his family. Campbell is similar in that he acts like the tough lawyer, but his flashbacks to Julia and his present-day thoughts unveil his romantic side.



Getting ready for the last day of the trial, Campbell, Brian, Jesse, Anna, and Sara note that it is raining at the beginnings of their chapters. These words quench the fires that have been raging in the book.

Structure

The chapters are not numbered. They are titled by the character's names. There is a prologue with a quote and then a short story by Anna. The sections are started by a day of the week and a passage. Sara's chapters are flashbacks titled by years until her chapter called Present Day where she joins the present. She begins with Kate's diagnosis and goes through the milestones of Kate's illness. Campbell and Julia's chapters are in the present, but they have flashbacks to their time together in high school. There is an epilogue by Kate set in a time in the future.

The plot zigzags back and forth between the present and the past; it depends on the speaker. The book chronicles the events of the Fitzgerald family out of order mainly after Kate's diagnosis: Anna's birth; Anna's donations; Anna, Kate, and Jesse's childhoods; and the hearing and its aftermath. Campbell and Julia's professional and personal stories and sections of the past about their teen relationship are mixed in.

Multiple Points of View

One striking feature of *My Sister's Keeper* is the way Picoult uses multiple first-person narrators to tell the story. A first-person point of view tells the story from one character's perspective in his or her own voice. Each section in the novel is made up of parts designated by the name of the character whose voice and perspective is being revealed. Picoult emphasizes the differences in these voices through the use of different fonts for different characters.

The use of multiple voices allows readers the ability to understand the situations from different standpoints. The way Sara sees Kate's cancer and Anna's lawsuit is quite different from Anna's viewpoint, Jesse's position, and Campbell's and Julia's judgment. The result is a rounded, dramatic narrative.

Flashback/flash-forward

Several characters use flashbacks and flash-forwards as part of their narratives. Flashbacks look back in time, while flash-forwards describe future events. The only major character in the book who does not get a voice in the main chapters is Kate. She speaks only in the prologue and epilogue, eight years after the novel's end. In the prologue, she talks about how she imagined killing her sister and that she only existed in relation to Anna. In the epilogue, Kate describes what happens after Anna's death.

Most of Sara's chapters present flashbacks. In each chapter, she primarily describes Kate's illnesses and treatments, but she also includes some information about her



family. She begins with when Kate was diagnosed with cancer, then goes through each relapse, until she reaches present day and the court case. These flashbacks show Sara's increasing tension and desperation to keep Kate alive.

Campbell also incorporates flashbacks in his sections. When describing his teenage relationship with Julia, his flashbacks are set in italics. In these memories, Campbell describes how the relationship got started, what kind of people he and Julia were as teens, and important events in their romance. The flashbacks emphasize the importance of the relationship for Campbell, while underscoring how remote it is in his everyday life.

Heroes and Anti-heroes

In *My Sister's Keeper*, Picoult contrasts the actions of heroes with those of anti-heroes. A hero is a primary character that displays commendable traits such as courage and integrity. Anna is a heroine because she takes action to give Kate what she wants. The whole point of her lawsuit is to bring her sister peace, though it costs Anna much in her life. Characters like Jesse and Campbell can be defined as anti-heroes. Anti-heroes have the reader's sympathy despite their flaws, and while not villains, see themselves as social outcasts, distrust the world, feel helpless, and lack courage and integrity. Jesse defines himself by his rebellious acts: arson, drug use, stealing cars, and supporting Anna's seemingly mutinous lawsuit. Though he does some good things, most of his time and energy is spent in self-destructive, self-serving acts.

Campbell is better adjusted than Jesse, but he bucks the system in his own way. He takes on Anna's case primarily because of the publicity it will bring him. Campbell wants to win the case, not necessarily because it is the best thing for Anna, but because it is a challenge. He also is dishonest about who he is to nearly everyone. Many people ask about the dog, but it is not until Campbell has a seizure in court that he admits to having epilepsy. Campbell also bowed out of his relationship with Julia years earlier, and he does not tell her why he ended it until she sees his seizure. Campbell keeps the world at a distance with cold and cowardly behavior.

Historical Context

Designer Babies and Genetic Planning

In interviews describing the origin of *My Sister's Keeper*, Picoult talks of a news story from 2000. On August 29, 2000, Adam Nash was born. He was considered the world's first "designer baby." Like Anna in the novel, Adam was conceived for a specific purpose. His six-year-old sister Molly had an uncommon type of anemia, a genetic disease called Fanconi anemia (FA), in which the body cannot make healthy bone marrow. Doctors gave the child only a year to live. Medical professionals recommended to her parents, Jack and Lisa Nash, that the best chance for Molly to survive was to receive stem cells from a genetic match. Though the couple could conceive naturally, fifteen embryos were created via in vitro fertilization (IVF) with the couple's sperm and egg in a laboratory. Two embryos were perfect matches, and one was implanted in Lisa Nash. It became Adam.

After Adam's birth, stem cells from his umbilical cord blood were transplanted into Molly. Doctors hoped the stem cells would become bone marrow inside Molly and give her a functioning immune system. Though the transplant worked and Molly recovered, the means of and reason for Adam's creation became an international controversy. There were two ethical issues involved: Should anyone be created just to provide assistance to someone else, and should embryos be screened for selected traits?

Critics saw such genetic planning as a new form of eugenics and a violation of natural law. Others believed it would lead to parents screening embryos for characteristics such as eye color and intelligence. Some medical professionals raised the question of how the family would feel about the child if his donation did not have the desired effect. Lisa Nash was certain she did the right thing, telling Josephine Marcotty of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, "This technology had to be brought to the forefront so people with Fanconi anemia or any other [genetic] disease know there is a way to have a healthy child."

Because of the success of Molly's transplant, some experts believed that more and more embryos would be subject to pre-transplant genetic diagnosis (PGD). PGD was developed in the early 1990s by scientists working in Great Britain and refined over the next decade. In this procedure, "cell clusters" created by in vitro fertilization are examined for genetic markers. In 2000, about twenty-five genetic diseases could be identified by PGD. Between August and October 2000 alone, at least three hundred babies conceived with IVF in the United States underwent PGD. However, there have only been a few cases worldwide similar to the Nash family's. For example, in 2002, a couple in Leeds, England, was given permission by the British government to screen an embryo to be free of the faulty gene which cause thalassaemia, a disease of the red blood cells, so that the resulting infant could be used to help an older sibling.

Not all parents are using genetic planning for the interests of other children. A 2002 article in *Washington Monthly* cites a deaf lesbian couple who only wanted a



congenitally deaf sperm donor so they could have deaf children. Both of their children were born deaf. Their choice contributed to the debate over genetic planning for children. Observers worry that parents will want to control their children's appearance using such genetic testing, as well as gender, personality, interests, and sexual orientation. Genetic enhancement is also another possibility as PGD and similar techniques are refined and enhanced.

In an editorial piece in the British publication the *Spectator*, Bryan Appleyard brings up a central issue to the debate over designer babies, one touched on in *My Sister's Keeper*. He writes,

We will ... design our babies. They will certainly be no better than us and, with luck, no worse. The best we can hope for is that, having designed them, we can still find it in our hearts to love them. But that, I think, may turn out to be the real problem.

Guardian Ad Litem

In the novel, Julia acts as a Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) for Anna in her case against her parents. The Latin term means "guardian at law." GALs are appointed by the court and ensure their clients receive due process and have their feelings and opinions known in court. A GAL is usually a lawyer, but can be any adult who has received special training. The latter are usually called Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) or Volunteer GALs. In Rhode Island, the setting of *My Sister's Keeper*, the GAL speaks on behalf of the interests of a minor child or adult with special needs in court cases.

The use of GALs became widespread in the United State after the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act was passed in 1974. This law requires the use of GALs in court cases involving abuse or neglect of a child. States will not receive federal funding for child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment programs unless they provide GALs for such children. It took several years for the use of GALs to be widespread in the United States, though the level of compliance from state to state is inconsistent.



Critical Overview

Like many of Picoult's novels, *My Sister's Keeper* was generally embraced by critics for its gripping exploration of emotionally complicated issues. For example, Tom Jackson of the *Tampa Tribune* represented the sentiments of many reviewers, declaring "*My Sister's Keeper* is a gut-wrenching, melancholic work designed to linger in the minds of its readers long after they have finished it." Others, such as Kim Uden Rutter of the *Library Journal*, called it "timely and compelling."

Many critics praised the way Picoult presents the story's dilemmas. Jennifer Reese of *Entertainment Weekly* commented, "*My Sister's Keeper* crackles when the characters wrestle with unanswerable moral questions." Similar sentiments were expressed on the Picoult's construction of the novel. While Andrea L. Sachs of *People Weekly* commented, "Picoult's style borders on the poetic," Robin Vidimos of the *Denver Post* noted, "It's a busy story, but Picoult keeps all the balls in the air and the story moving at a good clip. This book may be Picoult's breakout book, moving her from a book-group favorite to a wider audience."

A number of reviewers took issue with the number of narrators used. For example, Tamira Surprenant of *Capital Times* (Madison, Wisconsin) wrote:

The device is effective to a certain degree, and *My Sister's Keeper* is a quick and enjoyable read, but there are almost too many narrators. The story would not have missed a beat if the romantic interests of Anna's attorney had been left out.

Some critics, like Katherine Arie of the *Washington Post*, were also critical of the novel's pacing, though she felt multiple narrators were necessary to fully understand the story, noting:

The novel's shifting points of view also help to add depth to a cast of characters who would otherwise seem rather thinly drawn. Without this device, Anna's mother could become a one-sided study in shrill desperation, and Anna's lawyer, Campbell, could be mistaken for a base egomaniac.

Reviewers were divided about the effectiveness of the subplot involving Campbell and Julia. Some found the storyline out of place. Echoing such sentiments, Sara Kuhl in the *Wisconsin State Journal* noted, "The relationship is distracting." *Entertainment Weekly's* Reese added, "Soapy discursions like this dilute the effect of Picoult's sharp central narrative." Still, several critics found Campbell to be necessary to the balance of the whole novel. For example, Jeanne Ray of the *Boston Herald* noted, "Some much-needed comic relief arrives with Campbell."

A few critics dismissed *My Sister's Keeper* outright. Meredith Blum of the *New York Times Book Review* saw the book as a "soap opera," and as "some awkward combination of a sci-fi novel and a movie on the Lifetime Channel." However, most reviewers agreed with the point of view expressed in the *Kirkus Review*: "The author

vividly evokes the physical and psychic toll a desperately sick child imposes on a family." The review concluded, "There can be no easy outcomes in a talk about individual autonomy clashing with a sibling's right to life, but Picoult thwarts our expectations in unexpected ways."

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3



Critical Essay #1

Petrusso is a history and screenwriting scholar and freelance writer and editor. In this essay, Petrusso argues that while the surprise ending to My Sister's Keeper is controversial among critics and readers, it is logical to the story and underscores major ideas and themes in the novel.

In many reviews of Jodi Picoult's *My Sister's Keeper*, critics object to the way the novel ends. The last fifty pages or so feature a somewhat unexpected climax and a most stunning conclusion. The climax nears when Anna finally agrees to take the stand and explain why she filed the lawsuit. Throughout the text, it seems like the thirteen-year-old has taken her parents to court to win control over her own body because she does not want to donate a kidney to her sister, Kate. Anna testifies that she filed for medical emancipation as a favor to Kate, so that the cancer patient can end the many treatments that have extended her life. Kate wants to be allowed to die of the renal failure already so close to taking her life. After the drama temporarily increases because of Campbell's seizure in the courtroom, there are a few pages of calm as Julia and Campbell's subplot is resolved.

Back on the stand, Anna reveals that Kate did not want to live and why. Though their mother, Sara, can barely fathom Anna's explanation, Kate does not want the kidney that Anna is prepared to donate. On the stand, Anna says, "It was so she wouldn't have to go through this anymore. I thought it was what she wanted." A few lines later, Anna adds, "It was ... it was what I wanted, too." Anna also comes to terms with her feelings, thinking, "in addition to the piece of me that's always wanted Kate to live, there's another, horrible piece of me that sometimes wishes I were free." Anna is ashamed of her thoughts, but Campbell helps her realize that perhaps Kate understood that Anna needed to be free, too, and that was one reason why she was prepared to die.

After Judge DeSalvo talks to Kate, he grants Anna's medical emancipation in the climax of the novel. The aftermath of this decision, however, turns the novel on its head and defies readers' expectations with a plot twist at the novel's resolution. While riding in a car with Campbell after signing the necessary paperwork, Anna ponders her future and hopes that Kate will be a part of it. Readers then learn that a car accident takes Anna's life and injures Campbell and his service dog, Judge. Because Campbell holds Anna's medical power of attorney, he donates the brain-dead girl's kidney to her sister. Readers then learn in the epilogue that Kate survived and her cancer went into long-term remission. Readers also realize that it was Kate's unlabeled voice in the beginning saying, "In the end, though, I did not kill my sister. She did it all on her own. Or at least this is what I tell myself."

Critics are divided on the effectiveness of this ending. A number of reviewers see it as unsatisfying and a cop-out on Picoult's part. The critic in the *Kirkus Review* calls it a "too-neat twist," while Andrea L. Sachs of *People Weekly* states, "The ending could be a bit more courageous." Other critics regard the twist as a plus. Sara Kuhl of the



Wisconsin State Journal writes, "the book's ending is satisfying and most importantly, makes the reader think about the delicate web of life."

Two reviewers in particular raise interesting points on both sides of the issue. In the *New York Daily News*, Sherryl Connelly notes, "It's only at the story's close that [Picoult] skirts the very issues she's raised." In contrast, Tom Jackson of the *Tampa Tribune* writes:

Some have called the shocking twist of an ending an avoidance of the very issues Picoult raises, but the author herself claims it was inevitable and "fictionally necessary." Besides, it is the rare conclusion that causes a reader to revisit the prologue, and this one does precisely that.

Connelly has missed the point of *My Sister's Keeper*. The ethical and moral medical dilemmas are important to the story, but they are not its primary theme. While the novel is ostensibly about Anna fighting against being forced to give Kate a kidney, Picoult focuses most of her attention on the Fitzgerald family itself. Kate's illnesses are only a conduit for Picoult to explore the emotions in and dynamics of the family. Family is at the core of the book, not cancer. Numerous choices that Picoult made in the novel's construction, characterizations, and plot lines underscore this position.

For example, mother Sara has essentially missed the point of having a family. She has moved from crisis to crisis with Kate, without seeing how to spread her love and creating togetherness among the rest of the family. Even though times that Kate's cancer is in remission are presented as less stressful, Sara is constantly on guard for any recurrence. Not only does Sara know little about Jesse and Anna, but she does not even know much about the child she is trying to save because she never asks Kate what she wants. Sara has kept Kate alive for the next medical crisis, creating her own constant worry, and continually alienating both her husband and other children in small, but significant, ways. Yes, Sara has done the best she can under impossible circumstances, but she has an epiphany in the courtroom listening to Anna. Sara later apologizes to Kate, but still believes what she did was right.

To make certain that Sara, especially, truly understands the fragility of life, one of her daughters had to die by novel's end. Picoult foreshadows this scenario in the prologue. Readers know one of the sisters will die, and it seems logical that it would be Kate. However, the prologue makes it clear that it is not. When reading the book for the first time, a reader might note that there is no label on who is speaking in the prologue after noticing every part of each section begins with a name of whose voice and perspective is therein. Being drawn into the action of the novel, it is easy to forget that the person in the prologue is anonymous until the end. The epilogue is labeled "Kate: 2010," about eight years after the novel ends. Only then does the prologue become key to fully understanding what happened in the book, as Jackson notes.

The prologue and epilogue are also important because they are the only times that Kate speaks, and then only after Anna has been long gone. Kate is the only major character without a first-person voice and perspective in the main section of the novel. As in her



family, everything in the novel revolves around Kate, but she is not heard. Her words are filtered through everyone else's opinions, wants, needs, desires, and expectations. While Anna listens to Kate, and Jesse helps her in his own, sometimes sly, way, Brian does not really seem to know his daughter. Because he cannot save her, he focuses on his job as a fire captain to save everyone else.

Sara has so intertwined keeping Kate alive with her own identity that she does not see Kate as a person. Sara believes that if Kate dies, she will, too, in some way. The family psychiatrist testifying on Sara's behalf, Dr. Neaux, agrees with Campbell when he states, "You might say that [Sara] defines her own ability to be a good mother by keeping Kate healthy. In fact, if her actions keep Kate alive, she herself benefits psychologically." Though it is natural for parents feel this way about their children, Sara takes it to a dysfunctional level. When Anna is testifying that Kate has tried to kill herself, Sara interjects. Sara believes that Anna misunderstood Kate. Anna tells her mother, "She couldn't tell you. She was too afraid if she killed herself she'd be killing you, too."

Though Sara denies it throughout *My Sister's Keeper*, Anna has always existed to keep Kate alive, and Sara's affection for Anna has been measured in those terms. Sara's actions and decisions in her narrative sections of the story clearly show her motivations. Anna was created and screened in a laboratory to help Kate's cancer, an idea that came from Sara, not from her husband. While pregnant with Anna, Sara did not even think of a name but focused on what the infant would provide Kate once it was born. Brian named Anna after a constellation—her full first name is Andromeda. When Anna was born, Sara did not show interest in her new baby, but only in preserving her cord blood and getting it to Kate as soon as possible.

Anna reports that there are next to no pictures of her childhood around the family home, while Jesse and Kate are depicted in many more photographs. When Sara outlines every procedure in her chapters, she only thinks of Kate, not dealing with the pain or hurt Anna might feel as she is involved in painful procedures over and over again. Brian tends to his youngest child at these times. Jesse is ignored completely as he plays only an occasional small part in keeping Kate alive; Sara gave up on her son long before. While Brian went along with that, before the end of the novel, the father is determined to reconnect with his son.

Thus, Anna, like Kate, wants to live and die on her own terms. Kate understands this, and says so in the prologue. Anna knew she had to be sacrificed; it was why she was created. Anna also had to die to make Sara understand what losing a child really means. Kate cannot die because Sara could not handle that loss; the mother would cease to function if her life's purpose vanished. Losing Anna, though unexpected and emotionally devastating, is easier for Sara than losing Kate would have been. Anna has served her purpose in the family. She has kept Kate alive for many years, made Sara and the rest see what they were missing, and, in death, given Kate a new lease on life. Kate also thrives after Anna's death because Kate has the freedom Anna won for her in court.



Anna's death also adds to the moral and ethical dilemmas highlighted in *My Sister's Keeper*. On this point, Katherine Arie of the *Washington Post* muses, "Can a child born to save another ever really be free? Babies selected for certain characteristics, like Anna, are predestined to be tied indefinitely to the circumstances of their birth, and their parents and siblings in need." Just when Anna thinks she has finally won choices and understanding for herself, Kate, and even Jesse by winning medical emancipation, her life is taken from her and given to Kate. The only solace in the novel's end is that Kate says that she has treasured Anna's sacrifice every day of her life.

Source: A. Petrusso, Critical Essay on *My Sister's Keeper*, in *Literary Newsmakers for Students*, Thomson Gale, 2007.

The Kite Runner (2004), written by Khaled Hosseini, is a novel that also takes a first-person perspective on life-changing childhood events. The novel is set in Afghanistan and the United States, and features several significant plot twists.

The Tenth Circle (2006), by Jodi Picoult, focuses on a family dealing a problematic teenager as well as parents who must face problems in their own lives. Trixie is suffering from emotional issues, while her father, Daniel, has not fully dealt with his own teen years as well as difficulties in his marriage to Laura.

Vanishing Acts (2003), another novel by Picoult, deals with a dramatic family situation. Delia Hopkins learns that the respected father who raised her had kidnapped her from her mother when she was a young child, gave her a new identity, and told her that her mother was dead. He is jailed while Delia deals with the emotional and legal fallout from the situation, including her still-living mother.

The Adolescent Alone: Decision Making in Health Care in the United States (1999), edited by Jeffrey Blustein, Carol Levine, and Nancy Dubler, is a collection of essays about the issues surrounding teens in terms of medicine and how choices should be made for their health care.



Critical Essay #2

In the following essay, Newhart describes the usefulness of My Sister's Keeper in a health and biomedical ethics course.

In *The Fiction of Bioethics* (reviewed by Carol Quinn in *Teaching Philosophy* 25:2 [June 2002]), Tod Chambers discusses what has come to be known as the distinction between the use of "thin" and "thick" case studies in bioethics. Thin case studies give only the skeletal outline of a moral dilemma, emphasize clear-cut clashes between fundamental bioethical principles, and usually take place within the public dimension of the practice of medicine, e.g., emergency rooms, clinics, etc. Chambers's conclusion is that thin case studies lend themselves to being used by their presenters to compel students (and others) to take a particular position on the ethical dilemma presented by the case. Thick case studies, on the other hand, immerse the student in the issue being presented by the case. Thick case studies contain a lot of details concerning both the public and private dimensions of health care in order to situate the dilemma in a rich contextual background. Thus, they enable the student to confront the issue in all of its complexity and preclude the possibility of an easy and/or "obvious" conclusion.

While I do make use of thin case studies to elucidate simpler concepts quickly, as a teacher of biomedical ethics, I am always in search of effective thick case studies to bring the issues to life for students. I have used journalistic narratives, documentaries, and even full-length feature films for this purpose. This summer, I stumbled upon a contemporary novel entitled *My Sister's Keeper* that I am very much looking forward to using as a thick case study in my Health and Biomedical Ethics course next spring.

My Sister's Keeper is about a thirteen-year-old girl named Anna, who was conceived through *in vitro* fertilization and selected through preimplantation genetic diagnosis to be a perfectly matched donor for her older sister Kate, who has leukemia. Kate was diagnosed with acute promyelocytic leukemia at the age of three. She was not expected to live past the age of five, but with Anna's help she has lived to be sixteen. After numerous medical procedures including cord blood donation and bone marrow transplantation, and in spite of the fact that Anna is closer to Kate than anyone else in the world, Anna is suing her parents for medical emancipation. Kate is now in need of a kidney, and this is where Anna draws the line. Anna's decision to take legal action against her parents comes at a crucial point in the history of Kate's illness and catapults the family into a situation where they have to account morally for the decisions they've made throughout the course of Kate's illness.

The novel is especially suited as a thick case study because of the stylistic decisions made by the author. There are seven main characters. Brian and Sara Fitzgerald are the parents of Kate, Anna, and Jesse, who is the sisters' older brother. In addition to the five Fitzgeralds, there are Campbell Alexander, Anna's attorney; and Julia Romano, Anna's *guardian ad litem*. Each chapter is narrated by a different character, and each character is limited to his or her own perspective or point of view. The effect of these stylistic decisions is an understanding on the part of the reader that *all* of the characters



truly believe they are doing the right thing in spite of the fact that their actions clash, sometimes violently, with the interests of other characters. In the absence of a transcendent, omniscient narrator, there is less danger that the reader will be tempted to jump to an easy or obvious conclusion.

Given current popular and scientific interest in embryological issues, the specific issues explored in my bioethics course have shifted over time to deal predominantly with ethical controversies concerning the beginning of life. The specific issues planned for next spring are research on human subjects, euthanasia, abortion, research on embryonic stem cells, prenatal and preimplantation genetic diagnosis, gene therapy, alternative reproductive technologies, gamete donation and surrogacy, and human cloning. Clearly, and happily, *My Sister's Keeper* presents a rich and complex case study in which almost all of these issues can be explored.

What is more surprising, and pleasing, is how *My Sister's Keeper* brings into play so many other biomedical ethical topics discussed in the class and even some that are not. In terms of general normative ethical theories, the plot of the novel presents an implicit opposition between Utilitarian measurements of relative suffering and the high premium placed on an almost Kantian sense of autonomy. There is no attempt to conceal or deny the amount of suffering Kate's death will bring to the entire family, including Anna; yet, as Julia, Anna's *guardian ad litem*, tells us, Anna is in a no-win situation: "Either this girl loses her sister ... or she's going to lose herself." The most important good at stake in Anna's lawsuit against her parents for medical emancipation appears to be Anna's autonomy. Both Jesse—Anna's brother—and Julia stress that up to this point the medical procedures Anna has been subjected to have not been a result of her choice.

However, even once the ethical primacy of autonomy is granted, the issue of the interdependence of the family members complicates the possibility of an autonomous—in the sense of independent—decision on Anna's part. Echoing the criticisms of modern Western ethical theories that have been made from the perspective of an ethics of care, Sara (Anna and Kate's mother) tells us, "[N]obody ever really makes decisions entirely by themselves, not even if a judge gives them the right to do so." Sara is implying that we take into account the interests of those with whom we are in morally significant relationships, and one of Anna's primary relationships is with her sister, Kate. Anna describes this relationship: "Kate and I are Siamese twins; you just can't see the spot where we're connected. Which makes separation that much more difficult."

The specifically biomedical ethical issues that arise in *My Sister's Keeper* from the application of these general ethical theories and perspectives include the value of informed consent to medical procedures, the role of the family in individual patient medical decision-making, and the extent to which parents are justified in making medical decisions for minors. Moreover, *My Sister's Keeper* contains even more specific references to biomedical ethics such as a description of how the medical ethics committee works at Providence Hospital, where Kate and Anna have been patients, and an account of the "six principles" of "Western Bioethics," *i.e.*, autonomy, veracity, fidelity, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice. Additionally, there is some consideration of



the different kinds of relationships that doctors and nurses have with Kate and her family.

So far, I have two ideas for assignments to use in conjunction with *My Sister's Keeper*. The novel considers various aspects of the biomedical ethical issue that it portrays so effectively, including the psychological aspect, the legal aspect, the social aspect, the medical aspect, and the historical aspect. One possible project would be to assign a small group of students to explore each of these aspects in more detail, ostensibly in order to determine what in the novel is fact and what is fiction, but more importantly to give them incentive to gain more in-depth knowledge about the current state of the issue. Another possible assignment might be to have students write either a skit in which each character in the novel addresses a particular bioethical issue or a monologue where one character addresses a number of related bioethical issues.

I fear that I am not able to do *My Sister's Keeper* justice in this review. I can only ask that you read it for yourself. Whether you teach bio-medical ethics or not, whether you teach philosophy or not, I believe you will get a lot out of it. It is thoroughly engrossing in its engagement with the complex, sticky web of contemporary bioethical issues that it presents, and it is informative in a way that laypeople and professionals alike can understand and appreciate.

Source: Laura Newhart, "*My Sister's Keeper: A Novel*, by Jodi Picoult," in *Teaching Philosophy*, Vol. 28, No. 4, December 2005, pp. 382-84.



Critical Essay #3

In the following interview excerpt, Picoult talks about how she became interested in the topic genetic planning and how she performed her research for her novel.

BRC: What made you choose to write a book with a plot that concerns genetic planning, namely with one child being conceived as a possible donor for another?

JP: I stumbled over this idea by accident while I was researching my last novel, *Second Glance*. That book involved the VT eugenics project—namely, how Vermont was one of twenty-six states in the US in the 1920s and 1930s that had a law on the books to sterilize people they felt were degenerate. When Hitler praised these laws during WWII, funding dried up—as did the American Eugenics Society. The organization that moved into its corporate headquarters, believe it or not, is the Human Genome Project. In many ways, this incredibly advanced science has the potential to be "our" eugenics project, if it's used incorrectly.

I found an article about a family that was the first one in the US to conceive a child as a bone marrow match for an older, ill sibling. The newborn's cord blood stem cells were given to his sister; she went into remission; it's been three years. Happy ending, right? Well, I started to wonder what might happen if that sister goes OUT of remission—if the brother would feel morally responsible. I wondered how he'd feel if his parents mentioned that he was conceived because his sister was sick. Of course, I was flashing forward, and offering the worst-case scenario ... but it seemed like such a heavy load to lay on a child. I started thinking about what that child might be like as a teenager—an age when you normally try to figure out who you really are—and so Anna Fitzgerald, and her family, were born.

BRC: How did you research this topic? Where did you begin? In the course of your research did you ever feel this story was too emotionally painful to write?

JP: I started in my own life, which is very rare for me. My middle son, Jake, was diagnosed at age 5 with a cholesteatoma—a very rare, benign tumor that grows from the inside of the ear. It's not cancerous, but it will burrow into your brain and kill you if you don't get it out ... and it's an awfully aggressive tumor. The typical treatment involves removing the ear canal wall, making it easy to remove subsequent growths—but also rendering the child deaf in that ear. My husband and I decided to go with a more experimental treatment instead—one that would require extra surgeries for Jake, but might preserve some of his hearing. In three years time, he was diagnosed with tumors in BOTH ears ... and he had ten surgeries. Now, at age ten, he is a happy, healthy guy who is deaf in his left ear and has hearing somewhere in the bottom-normal range in his right ear. It's something we look back on now ... but for a while there, we were used to dropping everything at an instant to take Jake in for surgery; hospitals became a comfortable place; our other children learned that their lives came second to Jake's illness.



All this played heavily in the writing of *My Sister's Keeper*—as did the basic feeling I had as a mom: that I would have done anything to keep Jake from having one more surgery. Sara, in *My Sister's Keeper*, would say the same about Kate.

From there, research became twofold: speaking to oncologists and oncology patients (as well as their parents), and to attorneys about medical emancipation. You'd be surprised—talking to pediatric cancer patients is remarkable, because they are all so amazingly upbeat. It's as if they know that they've got to make the most of the time they have here—every time I interviewed one, I'd come away amazed and inspired.

I didn't get emotionally overwhelmed writing this book initially, because I'd known all along there weren't going to be any happy endings. But then I got to the end of the book and was so upset about finishing it that I actually called an oncology nurse, asking her if there might be a different ending—a medical miracle. I won't give it away for you, but rest assured: I cried the whole time I was working on it.

Source: Bethanne Kelly Patrick, "Interview With Jodi Picoult," in *Bookreporter.com*, April 9, 2004.



Quotes

"I'm an allogeneic donor--a perfect sibling match. When Kate needs leukocytes or stem cells or bone marrow to fool her body into thinking it's healthy, I'm the one who provides them. Nearly every time Kate's hospitalized, I wind up there too." Anna's chapter, p. 13

"They don't really pay attention to me, except when they need my blood or something. I wouldn't even be alive, if it wasn't for Kate being sick." Campbell's chapter p. 33

"For God's sake, Anna,' my mother says. 'Do you even realize what the consequences would be?' My throat closes like the shutter of a camera, so that any air or excuses must move through a tunnel as thin as a pin. I'm invisible, I think, and realize too late I have spoken out loud. My mother moves so fast I do not even see it coming. But she slaps my face hard enough to make my head snap backward." Anna's chapter, pp. 89-90

"And I've known lots of families where one sibling isn't a match, but another sibling turns out to be just right. We only have those two,' I start to say, and then I realize that Dr. Chance is talking about a family I haven't yet had, of children I never intended. I turn to him, a question on my lips." Sara's chapter, p. 112

"Brian,' I whisper. 'I've been thinking.' He shifts in his seat. 'What about?' I lean forward, so that I catch his eye. 'Having a baby.' Brian's eyes narrow. 'Jesus, Sara.' He gets to his feet, turns his back on me. 'Jesus.' I stand up, too. 'It's not what you think.' When he faces me, pain draws every line of his features tight. 'We can't just replace Kate if she dies,' he says. In the hospital bed, Kate shifts, rustling the sheets. I force myself to imagine her at age four, wearing a Halloween costume; age twelve, trying out lip gloss; age twenty, dancing around a dorm room. 'I know. So we have to make sure that she doesn't.'" Sara's chapter, pp. 121-122

"Brian nods. 'People seem to think that we're trying to make a designer baby.' 'Aren't you?' 'We didn't ask for a baby with blue eyes, or one that would grow to be six feet tall, or one that would have an IQ of two hundred. Sure, we asked for specific characteristics--but they're not anything anyone would ever consider to be model human traits. They're just Kate's traits. We don't want a super baby; we just want to save our daughter's life.' I squeeze Brian's hand. God, I love him.'" Sara's chapter pp. 174-175

"Through some miracle, these stem cells of Anna's will go into Kate's bloodstream in her chest, but will find their way to the right spot." Sara's chapter, p. 182

"He smiles at me, and I suddenly am seventeen again--the year I realized love doesn't follow the rules, the year I understood that nothing is worth having so much as something unattainable." Julia's chapter, p. 199



"'I just thought that. . . That I might be the guy.' There is a thick, viscous silence. 'You didn't want to be that guy.' Julia says finally. 'You made that pretty clear.' 'That's not true, I want to argue.'" Campbell's chapter, p. 224

"'I always wanted to be a ballerina.' Her arm goes up, a weak arabesque. 'You know what ballerinas have?' Eating disorders, I think. 'Absolute control. When it comes to their bodies, they know exactly what's going to happen, and when.' Kate shrugs, coming back to this moment, this hospital room.'" Julia's chapter, p. 280

"'And how long will it take to get the lymphocytes here?' I ask. Dr. Chance turns to me. 'That depends. How soon can you bring in Anna?'" Sara's chapter, p. 293

"Anna scowls. 'Why do I have to leave the party?' Because your sister is more important than cake and ice cream; because I cannot do this for her; because I said so. I'm so angry that I have to try twice before I can unlock the van. 'Stop acting like a five-year-old,' I accuse, and then I remember that's exactly what she is." Sara's chapter, pp. 300-301

"She smiles up at me. 'In case I forget to tell you after, it wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be.'" Sara's chapter, pp. 303-304

"But I didn't call. And I didn't meet up with her at graduation. And she thinks she knows why, but she doesn't." Campbell's chapter, p. 367

"'I think Anna's right.' At first I'm not sure Campbell Alexander's even heard me. Then he asks, 'Are you willing to tell that to the judge at a hearing?' I look down at my coffee. 'I think I have to.'" Brian's chapter, pgs. 383-384

"'Mommy,' she sobs. 'It hurts.' I sit down on the side of the bed and fold her into my arms. 'I know, sweetie.' 'Can you stay here?' I shake my head. 'Kate's sick. I'm going to have to go back.' Anna pulls away. 'But I'm in the hospital,' she says. 'I'm in the hospital!'" Sara's chapter, p. 405

"Your Honor, all of Anna Fitzgerald's life she has been medically treated for her sister's good, not her own. No one doubts Sara Fitzgerald's love for all her children or the decisions she's made that have prolonged Kate's life. But today we have to doubt the decisions she's made for this child." Campbell's chapter, pp. 504-505

"'I couldn't save her.' The words are ripped from his center. He hunches his shoulders, sliding backward into the body of a boy. 'Who. . .who did you tell?' He is asking, I realize, whether the police will be coming after him. Whether I have spoken to Sara about this. He is asking to be punished.'" Brian's chapter, p. 570

"'After having moved out with Anna, after having spoken to her at great lengths about why she's initiated this lawsuit--do you agree with your wife's request to have Anna continue to be a donor for Kate?' The answer we have rehearsed is no; this is the crux of my case. Brian leans forward to reply, 'Yes, I do,' he says." Campbell's chapter, p. 592



"No, you're not doing it? Or no, you won't tell me?' 'There are just some things I don't like talking about.' Her face hardens. 'I thought you, of all people, would be able to understand that.' She knows exactly what buttons to push." Campbell's chapter, p. 597

"Mrs. Fitzgerald, are you finished?' There has never been a need for me to cross-examine Brian; I have always known his answers. What I've forgotten are the questions. 'Almost,' I turn to my husband. 'Brian?' I ask. 'When are you coming home?'" Sara's chapter, pp. 602-603

"In a little while, I will go to the hospital, but right now I sit down across from Anna, on Kate's bed. 'Are you going to lecture me?' she asks. 'Not the way you think' I finger the edge of one of Kate's pillows. 'You're not a bad person because you want to be yourself.'" Sara's chapter, p. 604

"And another thing--this time, you don't get to leave me. I'm going to leave you.' If possible, that only makes me feel worse. I try to pretend it doesn't hurt, but I don't have the energy. 'So go.' Julia settles next to me. 'I will,' she says. "In another fifty or sixty years." Campbell's chapter, p. 652

"I don't want her to die, but I know she doesn't want to live like this, and I'm the one who can give her what she wants.' I keep my eyes on my mother, even as she swims away from me. 'I've always been the one who can give her what she wants.'" Anna's chapter, p. 659

"I know I jump at every sliver of possibility that might cure Kate, but it's all I know how to do." Sara's chapter, p. 681

"At this time,' Judge DeSalvo says, 'I'm going to declare you medically emancipated from your parents.'" Campbell's chapter, p. 690

"Campbell is the one who actually answers the doctor. 'I have power of attorney for Anna,' he explains, 'not her parents.' He looks from me, to Sara. 'And there is a girl upstairs that needs that kidney.'" Brian's chapter, p. 702

"Brian comes up behind me. 'Sweetheart, she's not here. It's the machine keeping her body alive. What makes Anna Anna is already gone.'" Sara's chapter, p. 704

"I wonder if she was at Jesse's graduation from the police academy, if she knows that he won a citation from the mayor last year for his role in a drug bust. I wonder if she knew that Daddy fell deep into a bottle after she left, and had to claw his way out. I wonder if she knows that, now, I teach children how to dance. That every time I see two little girls at the *barre*, sinking into *plies*, I think of us." Kate's chapter, pp. 710-711

"I think about her kidney working inside me and her blood running through my veins. I take her with me, wherever I go." Kate's chapter, p. 712

Topics for Discussion

Compare and contrast the sister relationships of the following: Anna and Kate, Sara and Suzanne, Julia and Isobel.

Campbell and Kate both have medical conditions that are important in the book. Discuss how these medical conditions impact those around them. How do Campbell and Kate cope with their conditions?

Parents have conceived babies to help their sick siblings in real life. Not so long ago, this would not have been possible. Discuss designer babies and how the fertility industry can help or hurt people.

Discuss the ways Anna and Kate try to be normal teenagers. How are their lives different from those of their peers?

Why does Kate only have one chapter at the end? Why does the reader not get her perspective during her illness and Anna's hearing?

The media coverage of Sara's pregnancy and Anna's lawsuit are in the book. Do you think the media coverage in the book is too intrusive? Do you think the media coverage in the book is fair?

What do you think Anna would have done if she had lived? Would she have donated the kidney to her sister? Why or why not?

Imagine what Kate's conversation with the judge was at the hospital.

- Analyze one of the poems that open each section of the novel. How does the poem reflect the content of that section? Research the background of the poem and its poet to add depth to your arguments for a paper. For a group activity, have each person analyze one poem and one section. Share your findings and discuss the implications of the poem for the chapter.
- Research some of the ethical questions raised by the novel, focusing on a particular issue, such as creating a child specifically for its cord blood to benefit a sibling or the implications of a teenager donating an organ to a sibling or parent. Write a paper in which you take a position on the issue you choose or, for a group activity, stage a debate with students taking opposite sides of each issue.
- Research the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century, one topic that Picoult said inspired her to write *My Sister's Keeper*. Write a paper in which you compare and contrast the goals of the eugenics movement with the choices made in the novel.
- In the novel, Picoult describes the action from multiple points of view, focusing on Anna, Sara, Brian, Campbell, and Julia. Jesse's voice appears much less often in the text than these voices, and Kate's voice only appears in the prologue and



epilogue. Write a short story in which you more fully elaborate Jesse's point of view on the action or take Kate's perspective on what happens.

- Some critics were disappointed in the ending of *My Sister's Keeper*. Were you let down that the complex ethical issues presented were not resolved? If not, write a brief essay explaining why you found the ending satisfying. If so, outline a different ending and epilogue in which Anna lives. Discuss different opinions in a group.



Further Study

Ball, Edward D. and Gregory A. Lelek, *100 Questions & Answers About Leukemia*, Jones and Bartlett Publishers, 2002.

This guide, written by an expert on and survivor of the disease, offers practical information about leukemia, its treatment, and support for victims.

Eveloff, Scott E., *Both Sides of the White Coat: An Insider's Perspective*, iUniverse, 2000.

This memoir, written by a medical professional, explores the effect of the life-threatening illness of Eveloff's son on the entire family.

Fitzgerald, Helen, *The Grieving Teen: A Guide for Teenagers and Their Friends*, Fireside, 2000.

This book offers practical advice for teenagers to cope with people who are dying, the death itself, the funeral or wake, and their feelings in the aftermath.

Hope, Tony, *Medical Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

This guide summarizes the basic issues in contemporary medical ethics, including genetics and reproductive technologies.



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Rutter, Kim Uden, Review of *My Sister's Keeper*, in *Library Journal*, Vol. 129, No. 5, p. 108.

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Seitz, Stephen, "Hanover Author's Novel Offers Ethical Dilemma," in the *Union Leader* (Manchester, New Hampshire), March 28, 2004, p. E1.

Surprenant, Tamira, "*Sister's Keeper* Thought-Provoking Girl Serves as Medical Donor for Ill Sibling," in the *Capital Times*, March 26, 2004, p. 11A.

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Project Editor

David Galens

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Sara Constantakis, Elizabeth A. Cranston, Kristen A. Dorsch, Anne Marie Hacht, Madeline S. Harris, Arlene Johnson, Michelle Kazensky, Ira Mark Milne, Polly Rapp, Pam Revitzer, Mary Ruby, Kathy Sauer, Jennifer Smith, Daniel Toronto, Carol Ullmann

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Product Design

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Manufacturing

Stacy Melson

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's "For Students" Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on "classic" novels frequently



studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel; and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of "classic" novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals—helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized



Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- **Introduction:** a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- **Author Biography:** this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- **Plot Summary:** a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- **Characters:** an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in *Invisible Man*—the character is listed as "The Narrator" and alphabetized as "Narrator." If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. • Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name "Jean Louise Finch" would head the listing for the narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname "Scout Finch."
- **Themes:** a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- **Style:** this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- **Historical Context:** This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- **Critical Overview:** this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- **Criticism:** an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).



- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an “at-a-glance” comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author’s time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes “The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,” a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children’s Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.



Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

“Night.” Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234–35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the “Criticism” subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on “Winesburg, Ohio.” Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335–39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. “Margaret Atwood’s “The Handmaid’s Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,” Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9–16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133–36.

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Adams, Timothy Dow. “Richard Wright: “Wearing the Mask,” in *Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69–83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59–61.

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Editor, Novels for Students
Gale Group
27500 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331–3535