

Sister: A Novel Study Guide

Sister: A Novel by Rosamund Lupton

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Plot Summary

Sister tells the story of Beatrice Hemming's search for her sister's killer. This search leads her down many surprising, dangerous, and unexpected roads.

The book begins as a letter to Beatrice's sister, Tess. Beatrice wishes they could talk in person; she misses her very much. She tells her of how she came to live in her flat in London and how her life was changed permanently. Beatrice goes to a meeting with Mr. Wright, the man assigned to her case. She was to give a very important testimony that would send someone to prison for life. When asked when she first felt that something was wrong, she replied that it was when her mother phoned her to tell her that her sister, due in three weeks, was missing. Bee hopped on the next flight to London from New York City.

Within a few days, Tess' body was found in an old public restroom in Hyde Park; her wrists had been slashed. Mr. Wright then asks Bee to go back to when the story should really begin, so she tells of Tess's surprise pregnancy. She had been having an affair with her married tutor; he had told her he wanted no part in the life of the child. Tess was ecstatic; she saw having a baby as a miracle and was not upset that the father would not be involved. Once pregnant, she found out her baby had cystic fibrosis, a disease that had slowly taken the life of her brother. She became involved in an experimental gene therapy to replace the bad gene with a good one.

After posing as Tess during a re-creation of the last time she was seen, Bee learned from the father of the child that Tess had already had the baby and it had been stillborn. Bee could not believe Tess had not told her. After an autopsy, it is determined that Tess had committed suicide. Bee was shocked but wondered for just a moment if maybe she did not know Tess as well as she thought, considering Tess had not told her the baby had been born. She pushed this thought aside and began searching for a killer; she knew Tess would never commit suicide. Tess had suffered from the death of her brother and the abandonment of her father, so she knew suffering and also knew how precious life was. This sends Bee on dangerous and thrilling adventure into Tess's life.

As she considered possible suspects, including the father of Tess's baby, an obsessed classmate, a therapist, and a scientist, the police began to become annoyed, but Bee was determined to find her sister's killer. The killer ended up being none of these suspects. He was the sweet St. Anne's Hospital doctor who had been so willing to help Bee find information for her sister. The trial in which her sister had been involved had been hijacked by this doctor to study an IQ gene in humans; problems occurred and he had to get rid of the evidence, which was Tess. The story ends with the killer, William Saunders, drugging Bee and locking her in the same restroom in which he had killed her sister. The entire book was a letter to Tess written in Bee's mind as she lay on the concrete floor waiting for the drugs to cause an overdose or for William to return to finish the job he started. She hears sirens and voices coming closer. She tells Tess she is sorry and that she loves her.

Chapters One and Two

Chapters One and Two Summary

Sister tells the story of Beatrice's search for her sister's killer. This search leads her down many surprising, dangerous, and unexpected roads.

In chapter one, the narrator, Bee, begins writing a letter to her sister Tess on a Sunday evening. They had frequently communicated through letters, so, although it is not nearly the same as being with her, a letter can be very useful. In this letter, Bee tells Tess what she is missing. Reporters are outside Tess's flat. Through this letter, Bee begins to reminisce about her relationship with Tess and talks about their childhoods. They were always very close, despite a five year age difference and very different personalities. Bee is serious and solid, while Tess is artistic and light-hearted. Bee finds it funny that there are so many people interested in Tess's story when just a few months ago no one wanted to hear her story.

On Monday afternoon Bee goes to give her statement to a lawyer at the Crown Prosecution Service in preparation for a trial. She speaks with Mr. Wright, who is in charge of collecting her statement. He asks when she first knew something was wrong. She said it was when her mother called and said Tess was missing. Bee flew to London from New York City and tried to cling to the belief that her younger sister had simply been irresponsible and gone on vacation for a few days. The biggest reason why this was not very likely was that she was due to have a baby any day. She also had been receiving nuisance calls. So, Bee went to the police station and spoke with Detective Sergeant Finborough. She spoke of the father of Tess's baby; Emilio Codi was Tess's married tutor who was not supporting her on her decision to keep the baby. The police had already met with him. They decide to do a reconstruction of the last sighting of Tess at the post office. This reconstruction would then be televised.

Bee prepares to play the role of Tess with the assistance of Tess's clothes and a wig. The warm and motherly policewoman PC Vernon assists her with her Tess makeover. As Bee is getting ready to shoot the reconstruction, her mother sees an engagement ring on her finger and asks if the father of the baby had decided to marry Tess. Bee wants to focus on finding Tess before they worry about her future.

In chapter two, the reconstruction is filmed on a cold January day, less than a week after Tess's disappearance. After the shoot, Bee goes back to Tess's flat. As she looks for the spare key, the landlord, Amias Thornton, stops her. When she tells him she is Tess's sister, he gives her the spare key that Tess no longer hides outside her flat. This makes Bee wonder why all of a sudden Tess would take her advice and put the spare key in a safer location. She enters and observes Tess's cold, damp, and uninviting flat.

The doorbell rings, but it is Tess's friend Kasia, looking for her. She does not know Tess has gone missing. Bee learns that Amias had reported Tess missing because she had



promised to meet him for dinner, and she never did. She never broke a promise. When Bee is alone and goes into Tess's bathroom, she knows that Tess had not planned to leave; her toiletries are still there.

The story returns to the present day and Bee's interview with Mr. Wright. They decide to stop the interview for the day, and Bee heads back to Tess's flat. Twice she feels the sensation of a man following her and breathing down her neck. She believes it is just her nervousness regarding the trial; this man should still be in jail awaiting trial. Upon returning to the flat, she thinks back to her first night there and Tess's room with its paintings, art supplies, and broken window that had been covered and taped up with plastic.

The next morning, Tuesday, Bee wakes up and returns to Mr. Wright's office to continue the interview. He has her tell about finding out that Tess was pregnant and the details regarding this pregnancy; she vividly remembers the conversation she had with Tess. Bee tells Mr. Wright about the baby having cystic fibrosis and going through gene therapy created by a Professor Rosen.

Chapters One and Two Analysis

Chapter one is an introduction to the characters for the reader. Through Bee's letter to her sister Tess, much is learned about their relationship and personalities. Bee is the older, more mature and rational sister. She is perfect for the role of older sibling. Tess is the flighty, artistic sister who has always been so full of life. These characters traits will most likely prove to be important throughout the rest of the book and Bee's statement to the lawyer.

It can be assumed that Tess is no longer alive by the way Bee writes this letter. It is as if not only does she miss Tess, but she cannot be with Tess. And, with the focus of this book so far being about Tess's disappearance, most likely she is dead. Or, there is some other reason why she no longer lives at her flat and must be told through a letter what had taken place regarding her going missing. The fact she was pregnant with the child of a man who was trying to keep her and the baby a secret makes the man, Codi, a very likely suspect. Already the reader wants to know if he played a role in Tess's disappearance. This chapter raises many questions, including the question of what happened to Tess. Who else was involved in her disappearance?

Chapter two continues to give clues as to what happened to Tess, as well as details about her character. Tess's wild, carefree, and positive outlook on life is reinforced in Bee's description of her apartment, her relationship with Emilio Codi, and Tess' feelings towards having a baby. Details are given about the baby having cystic fibrosis, the disease that killed Tess and Bee's brother, Leo. This information will most likely be important later in the book. The reader looks for clues and facts in the story, playing detective, much like Bee must have. Foreshadowing and a sense of anxiety takes place when Bee feels the presence of a man following her. This lets the reader know that the

person who abducted Tess was a man. It also makes the reader wonder if Bee is imagining him, or if he has escaped from jail and is following her.

Chapters Three and Four

Chapters Three and Four Summary

In chapter three, DS Finborough and PC Vernon arrive at Tess's flat, greatly disappointing Bee, who hopes it is Tess arriving. They have come to tell Bee that Tess had already had the baby and that it had been stillborn. Because of the baby Xavier's, death, Tess had been referred to a psychiatrist, who said she was suffering from postpartum depression. This gives Bee a glimmer of hope that Tess may be alive and unharmed. It also shocks her that Tess would keep the baby's death from her. Because of this information, the search for Tess becomes less urgent.

As Bee leaves the flat, she sees a young man sitting outside with a bouquet of flowers. This boy, Simon, tells of meeting Tess in the park; he had been the last person to see her alive. As Simon talks, Bee realizes he speaks with a fake accent and is very egotistical. She finally forces him to leave the flat. She then calls DS Finborough to give him this new information, but she does not hear back from him. So she decides to head to the park to see what she can learn; as she approaches, she hears sirens. Tess' body has been found in a deserted public bathroom. Bee does not want to believe it is Tess, but when she sees a body bag being taken out with a strand of blond hair caught in the zipper, she knows Tess is dead.

In chapter four, Bee explains why she is writing this letter. She is not sure if Tess can see her or knows what is happening, but she writes this letter anyway to try to explain to Tess why she was murdered. She could simply tell who the murderer was, but that would leave Tess with many questions. By telling Tess the full story, there will be fewer questions at the end.

Bee identifies the body as her sister. Tess's arms have been slashed and she had bled to death. The grief Bee feels is unimaginable, but Mr. Wright seems to feel some of it. After spending time comforting her mother, she heads back to Tess's flat. There she finds a man going through Tess's things. Mr. Wright asks if she wants to stop there for now; it is late. He tells Bee that his wife had died in a car crash two years before. Bee and Mr. Wright have a mutual understanding of grief caused by the death of a loved one.

Bee heads to her waitressing job at the Coyote, where Tess used to work. Her boss in New York had been sympathetic for only a few weeks, so she resigned from her corporate life. Waitressing seems very out of character for her, but, surprisingly, she enjoys it. She is physically affected by her statement today, and those around her understand and support her. Bee returns home to find reporters wanting information about her sister. She says that she should still be alive and walks into the flat. She thinks about her sister and how they both dealt with their father leaving them; he could not handle his son slowly dying and his grieving wife. Bee tells of Tess' garden that she has not been able to maintain, but she has not given up on it yet.

Chapters Three and Four Analysis

Chapter three introduces a new character, Simon. He seems to have been infatuated with Tess and very upset that she had turned him down. His behavior is very strange, and Bee wonders if he might have played a role in Tess's disappearance. If nothing else, he was the last one to see her alive. Sadly, the search for Tess ends tragically. This tragedy was foreshadowed at the end of the previous chapter as Bee "mind doodles," which she does when she is avoiding difficult memories. The finding of Tess's body leads the reader to further question Simon's behavior. What is he hiding? With Tess's death, the writing of this letter makes more sense. Bee is not simply missing her sister, she is grieving for the death of her sister through this letter.

Chapter four gives the reader the purpose of this book. It is to tell Tess about her death. By writing the book in this way, the reader can either play the role of Tess or simply be an outsider reading over Bee's shoulder. An emotion on which this chapter focuses is grief. Tess had just been found dead in the previous chapter, and her mother and sister now grieve for her. Many changes have taken place in both Bee and her mother. By reminiscing about childhood memories and Tess's love of life, the reader is given the chance to grieve along with Bee. Through Bee's thoughts and emotions, the reader can get a taste of what it might be like to suffer from such trauma.

Also in this chapter, the entrance of a man into Tess's apartment is a cliffhanger, encouraging the reader to continue on to the next chapter to learn his identity and reason for being in the apartment.

Chapters Five and Six

Chapters Five and Six Summary

In chapter five, it is Wednesday, and Bee has returned to CPS to continue giving her statement. She tells of finding Emilio Codi in Tess's flat. He had come to pick up his art work. She had asked him if he killed Tess and then had screamed at him to leave. She talks to Todd, her fiancé, who she currently sees as her safety rope. She learns that Emilio was working from home the day Tess died, so she decides to confront him at his home about his alibi. He tries to close the door on her, but she stops him. Even though his wife comes to see what is the matter, Bee tells about Tess's relationship with Emilio. She sees a little girl, their child, come over to see what is going on; Tess had been lied to because she was told he had no children. Emilio finally gets the door closed on her. Before Bee leaves, though, the pregnant wife, Cynthia, comes out and tells Bee she had suspected he was having an affair. She tells Bee she can verify Emilio's whereabouts the day of the murder because she was with him. She turns around and goes back in the house. Bee stands there until the lights of the house are turned off.

In chapter six, Todd arrives from New York. Bee sees Todd as her safety rope, but he has not yet broken her fall. During her interview with Mr. Wright, he asks if she believed Mrs. Codi. At the time she did, because she seemed so honest. Later, she thinks maybe she had lied to protect her family. Bee does not tell the police about her confrontation at Emilio's house.

A couple of days later, Condi files a report against her. She meets with DS Finborough and learns that they believe Tess had committed suicide. Bee does not see this as a possibility. Tess had watched her brother struggle to survive and knew the importance of life. The police and psychiatrist believe she was suffering from postpartum psychosis and was not in her right mind when she killed herself. Bee tries to explain why Tess, no matter her state of mind, would not ever kill herself. The police do not believe her.

As Bee leaves Mr. Wright's office to cry in the bathroom, she tells Tess the rest of the story.

When she tells Todd and her mother about what the police believed, they seem relieved. They do not agree with her that Tess had been murdered and framed for her own murder. She needs to go for a walk. She returns to DS Finborough's office and they decide to break for lunch. She meets her mother for lunch and tells Tess how their mother has changed. She is much more loving and seems more like how she was when they were young girls. Bee and her mother are much closer now, and it is revealed that she wanted Tess to have committed suicide rather than have suffered at the hands of another. Todd also seems to be out of the picture. He had not supported Bee in her grief. At the end of the chapter it is learned that Xavier was buried with Tess, wrapped in her arms.

Chapters Five and Six Analysis

Chapter five seems to remove Emilio from the list of suspects, but that is only if Cynthia's support of Emilio's alibi can be trusted. With a little girl and a baby on the way, she may be protecting her family, despite Emilio's infidelity and possible role in Tess's murder. By revealing the fact that Emilio had a child and one on the way, it is shown that Tess was lied to. This reveals her innocence and trust in Emilio. It also makes him seem to be a more likely suspect.

Chapter six reveals that the police believe Tess killed herself. This is not surprising, given that earlier in the book Tess was described to be suffering from postpartum depression and had cuts all over her arms. This had foreshadowed this news. The detailed descriptions of Leo's illness and Tess's love of life also foreshadowed Bee's disbelief in Tess's suicide. This information also helps the reader to side with Bee. From what she said about Tess's personality, she would not have killed herself, no matter her state of mind after the death of her baby. She had suffered much before with the death of her brother and the abandonment by her father to consider killing herself over the death of her child. The fact that Bee is making a statement for a trial for a man who is in jail, Bee was right all along. Tess was set up to look like she had killed herself; this reveals her death to have most likely been premeditated and planned by a very intelligent man.

Chapters Seven and Eight

Chapters Seven and Eight Summary

In chapter seven, Bee leaves and heads to the park to see the site of Tess's murder. Upon arriving, she sees flowers, teddy bears, and other gifts left by strangers and friends to honor Tess's life and the life of her baby. Bee is moved by this. She goes into the bathroom and, after seeing the blood all over this disgusting bathroom, she knows for sure that Tess would never kill herself, and she would never do it in such a lonely, disgusting place. Upon leaving the bathroom, she meets a man who has brought flowers to the site. He and Tess had frequently smiled at each other as they were out walking in the park.

As she leaves the park, she sees that the Serpentine Gallery Simon had said he had met Tess at is closed for the season; this means he could never have met her there. She tells DS Finborough about this, but he does not seem concerned with the lie. She wonders if the reason is because Simon is the son of a cabinet minister and Tess is not worth the risk. She decides to interview Simon herself.

Simon is usual egotistical self and says he thought the gallery sounded nice; he liked the idea of meeting her there. The truth comes out after Bee makes Simon cry for Tess. Tess told him she was afraid and thought she had been followed into the park. She had asked him to stay with her because he did not work and could be with her all the time. She only saw him as a friend, and he was upset about being rejected. He refused to keep her company. Bee cannot tell if these are real tears and the truth or all lies.

Bee meets with those who had worked with Tess at the Coyote; this is how she ends getting job there after she resigns from her office in New York. After leaving her meeting with Mr. Wright and working at the Coyote, she returns home to Tess' flat and finds her roommate, Kasia, stopped by the press. She helps the very pregnant Kasia into the flat.

In chapter eight, Bee is headed in to continue her statement. She decides to rehearse this portion of the story in her letter to Tess. She meets Dr. Nichols', Tess' assigned therapist. He seems to believe that he misdiagnosed Tess with depression, when she really had puerperal psychosis, or postpartum psychosis. He feels he was partially to blame for her suicide because in his one meeting with her, he had misdiagnosed her. He had her paint what she was seeing, and these paintings helped him to believe she had psychosis. She feels that she trusted Dr. Nichols, because she had seen a therapist herself when dealing with her feelings of abandonment. Her own therapist had been kind and trustworthy.

After meeting with Dr. Nichols, Bee returns to the flat and finds the paintings. They are dark and violent, unlike any of her other work. This seems proof for everyone who had seen them that she was mad.

During the telling of this story, Bee becomes light-headed and almost passes out. During this episode, she thinks of Tess' paintings.

After Todd tries to convince her of this, she goes for another cold walk. Upon returning to the flat, she runs into the landlord, and he talks about his relationship with Tess. She was a kind, positive girl who used to meet him every Thursday night for drinks or dinner. He was grieving for her by planting flowers in her flower pots for her.

Bee's episode begins to subside and she returns to Mr. Wright's office. Bee knows Mr. Wright knows she is ill, but it is not that part of the story to tell Tess about her illness, because it is connected to the story. When she returns to the flat, Kasia is dancing, Amias is tapping loudly on the floor above in time with the music, and the plants she thought she had killed begin to sprout green shoots. She feels a sense of hope that those she loves who have passed away are in some beautiful heaven.

Chapters Seven and Eight Analysis

Chapter seven continues to show the changes that have taken place in Bee. She is much more like Tess now, working as a waitress and befriending the Polish, unemployed, single mother-to-be, Kasia. She confronts people without worrying about the consequences; the death of her sister has brought out a much less judgmental and much more courageous Bee. Simon continues to be on the suspect list, with his lies and his high-profile father. This second very egotistical man in Tess' life is creating a pattern. Both Emilio and Simon are selfish and self-centered. For whatever reason, Tess did not see this in them or was not bothered by this. They both used her for attention and then dumped her when she no longer served a purpose. Emilio used her for sex until she became pregnant and became a nuisance, while Simon wanted to spend time with her until he found out he stood no chance of being her boyfriend. They abandoned her in her time of need, just like her father abandoned her family when Leo was dying.

Another important theme in this chapter is the continued disbelief of the police that Tess was murdered. Nothing that Bee founds seems to be deemed worthy of proving that Tess was not capable of suicide and that others had strong motives for killing her.

Chapter eight gives Bee more reason to believe her sister was killed and more proof to the police that she committed suicide. Bee sees the therapist as ignorant but decent. It is hinted that her feelings towards him will change. Tess' scary, unTess-like paintings reveal the fear and anxiety she was feeling. It is clear why many would have believed she had gone crazy after the death of her baby. Bee does not understand what these paintings mean, simply that she was afraid and changed but not necessarily because of the death of Xavier. It is learned in this chapter that Bee is ill and it is somehow connected to Tess' story. She has become physically ill and has started to black out several times. This makes the reader wonder how this is connected to Tess and this story.

Chapters Nine, Ten, and Eleven

Chapters Nine, Ten, and Eleven Summary

In chapter nine, Bee tells Tess there are three things that have been difficult to discuss. The first is her death and the finding of her body. The second, she is about the discuss.

Bee and Todd are going through Tess' paperwork, and Bee comes across her telephone bill. She realizes that Tess had called her many times prior to her death. She called one time, and Bee had been too busy at work to talk. She later forgot to call Tess back and then was gone on vacation with Todd, not letting Tess know she was going out of town. So, Tess had called for help, and Bee had let her down. There was one up side to this; Bee knew Tess. Tess never tried to keep her delivery from Bee, it had been all Bee's fault, according to Bee, that she and Tess had not talked prior to her death.

In chapter ten, Bee remembers she woke up in the middle of the night the night after she found the phone bill. Amias is fixing some of the bulbs he had planted for Tess; as he talks, she thinks about what she must do. She knows that she must find Tess' killer.

Later in the morning, she calls the police and asks for her sister's postmortem report. Todd does not understand what Bee thinks she will do with her new-found information and the postmortem report. This is further proof that their relationship is deteriorating and was not solid to begin with. Bee leaves for St. Anne's Hospital. On the way she contacts her mother's parish priest to discuss what should be done about the funerals for Tess and Xavier. After meeting with several hospital employees, Bee is directed towards the hospital mortuary and holds Xavier. She decides she wants him buried in Tess' arms.

She returns to the present time, talking to Mr. Wright. She barely makes it to the ladies' room before she becomes violently sick. Mr. Wright comes in, helps her up, and sends her home. She realizes from the moment she held Xavier that he was more to her than her sister's baby, and she remembers the letter Tess wrote to her about him. She thinks of how helpless Tess was when her son died; this she compared to Tess' unanswered calls to her.

In chapter eleven, it is early Saturday morning, and Bee is returning to the CPS building to continue her statement. They discuss the postmortem report, which finds nothing unusual. The other lab tests are more confusing, so she sends them to an old school friend who is a doctor. With the help of a senior pathologist, much is discovered. This friend, Christina, meets Bee and tells her along with the medicine to stop the creation of breast milk, a sedative and PCP were found in her system in large doses. Bee thinks this is surely enough to prove that her sister was murdered, but the police already have this evidence, as Todd had assumed, and still see the death as a suicide. They still believe her life as a young art student and her psychosis led to this behavior. Bee is still adamant that her sister did not use drugs and was murdered.

Chapters Nine, Ten, and Eleven Analysis

Chapter nine is an apology letter to Tess. This is important information regarding Bee's flaws. She had always seen herself as the reliable older sister that Tess could always count on. This phone bill was proof that she was wrong. She had not been there for Tess when Tess needed her most. It also reveals how hectic her life was in New York that she forgot about her sister's call and then did not bother to call her for several days. This telephone bill is a wake up call for Bee. She now sees herself as partially to blame for Tess' death, which will most likely be encouragement for her to find Tess' killer. It also verifies Bee's feelings regarding her relationship with and understanding of her sister. They were close, and she knows without a doubt that Tess would never commit suicide.

Chapter ten continues to reinforce many aspects of this story. It reinforces the fact that no one seemed to agree with Bee that her sister had been murdered. It also reiterates how weak Bee's relationship is with Todd. He has his own opinions and sees no reason to support Bee in hers. It reinforces the fact that she is ill and the connection between her illness and this story. Her episodes tend to occur while she is discussing horrific parts of this story. This chapter also reinforces the importance of Xavier. He is now no longer a child that was stillborn. He is Tess' son and Bee's nephew. The physical connection between Bee and Xavier made a connection between her and Xavier and helped her to better understand how her sister must have felt before her death. This connection will most likely give her the conviction she needs to continue her search for the killer.

Chapter eleven brings in more evidence, but it is used by the police to support Tess' suicide. Bee seems to stand alone in her belief that her sister was killed, and it is suggested that DS Finborough thinks that Bee is irrational in her grief; that her grief is causing her to not trust the police and the facts that have been found. Many around Bee are growing tired of her inability to accept Tess' suicide.

Chapters Twelve, Thirteen, and Fourteen

Chapters Twelve, Thirteen, and Fourteen Summary

In chapter twelve, Mum tries to move on with life by packing up Tess' things, because she is not ready to deal with her grief. Once she leaves, Bee put Tess' things back where they belong. She then goes to Simon's to question him about the drugs. He seems to know nothing about drug use and cannot believe Tess would use drugs. But Bee does learn about his unhealthy obsession with her sister. He has photographs of her all over his bedroom that he had planned to use for an art project. They were shots taken while stalking her. Bee gathers up these photos and leaves as Simon screams at her that he needed them for his project. Arriving home, she finds Todd trying to destroy the psychotic paintings.

She returns to the present and her meeting with Mr. Wright. She tells him she did not go to the police regarding Simon and the photos because it was not enough evidence against him; he had the excuse of the art project. Bee wishes she had had more courage while growing up.

In chapter thirteen, Kasia Lewski's part of the story is told. Bee went to her flat to give her Xavier's baby clothes. Kasia's simple, present-tense English shows Bee how Kasia cares about Tess. With the arrival of her boyfriend Mitch Flanagan, Bee is reminded of why Kasia must have come to see Tess at her flat, to escape his anger and bullying. As she is getting ready to leave, Bee and Mitch get into an argument. He ends up throwing the baby clothes Kasia had purchased at Bee. Kasia and Tess had gone shopping together when they both received 300 pounds from the drug trial. Bee had not known about this money. As Bee leaves, she encourages Kasia to visit her. She now understands why Tess did not want Emilio to take part in his child's life. After Tess' own life experiences with her father, she was trying to protect Xavier from a weak father.

Bee begins looking into the payments made to Kasia and Tess when Todd finally becomes fed up with her inability to accept that Tess had committed suicide. In their first and last major fight, Bee realizes that Todd has always been invested in their relationship; she has been the one acting superficially, and she feels sorry about this. A few minutes later, he leaves the flat.

Bee returns to St. Anne's only to find that her sister's paperwork has been lost and the hospital system as a whole is fairly unreliable. They also did not find the giving of 300 pounds to be anything suspicious. Bee realizes she had no strong evidence to give to DS Finborough. Before returning home, Bee stops by the college and hangs up signs regarding Tess' funeral and a gathering to meet Tess' friends. Bee wants to see what they knew about Tess' life.

When she returns home, Todd is waiting for her to let him in to pack his things. He asks her again to come home with him, but she cannot. She had changed too much and



cannot go back to her orderly life in New York. The chapter ends with Bee meeting Kasia to ride the London Eye to give her a panoramic tour of the city. Once again, Bee has a feeling of hope and a sense of belonging.

In chapter fourteen, Bee describes her sister's funeral. The morning of the funeral is dark and dreary, and it is raining when they arrive to the church. Bee is surprised at the large crowd entering the church and is even more surprised when she realizes they are not entering; they cannot enter, because there is no room left in the church. As Bee and her mother go through the graveyard to enter a side entrance, Bee spots her father by the hole in the ground in which Tess and Xavier will be buried. He has finally come around and been the father he should have been all along. He holds Bee and her mother's hands throughout the ceremony and breaks down during the burial.

After telling Mr. Wright about the funeral, Bee then tells him why she sees Emilio as an even more likely suspect.

When Emilio comes to get his paintings, she learns that Tess had not wanted anything from Emilio regarding Xavier until Xavier died. She demands that Emilio respect his dead son and admit he was the father. As he leaves the flat, he tries to upset Bee by telling what Tess had told him about Bee, that she did not like sex and was afraid of intimacy and life. Instead of being upset, Bee is glad that her sister knew her that well and yet kept this harsh reality about Bee from her. She knew her and yet still loved her.

Chapters Twelve, Thirteen, and Fourteen Analysis

Chapter twelve continues to show the downward spiral of Bee's relationship with her mother and Simon. She stops her comments to Todd because she knows her relationship with him is ending and is not ready to be that alone yet. This clearly foreshadows an ending in the near future. Simon's obsession with Tess increases the likelihood that he was the killer. More similarities are made between Simon and Emilio, with Simon's photographs of Tess with her head always turned. Similarly, Emilio's paintings focused on her body rather than her face. It is as if they were both obsessed with her body and not with who she really was. Bee continues to change in this chapter, looking back at her life and wishing she had been more courageous.

Chapter thirteen introduces another suspicious character, Mitch Flanagan, Kasia's boyfriend. At the moment he is not a suspect, but throughout this story, Bee has been suspicious of almost anyone who had been near her sister. The foreshadowing of the ending of Todd and Bee's relationship becomes reality. Bee's lack of courage and fearfulness had led her into an easy relationship with Todd; with her change in attitude and behavior came a drastic change in her perspective of her relationship with Todd. He still wanted an orderly life, and she did not see how anything could be orderly again now that her best friend and sister had died. Tragedy often changes people and this is clearly seen in Bee. Although this chapter is full of anger, frustration, and drama, it does end with hope. Despite all that has happened and all that is happening, Bee has been

able to find moments of clarity and peace regarding her life and the deaths of her siblings.

Chapter fourteen focuses on Tess' funeral and the loss of loved ones. The weather on this day was appropriate for such a sad event. Although it was such a tragic day, with the priest talking about unrequited love, to love those who had died and could not love back, it did have its good moments. Bee and Tess' father redeemed himself by coming and grieving with his ex-wife and daughter for the child he had lost. He had shown up when he was most needed. Also, Tess' death has actually brought Bee closer to her and to herself. Through Tess' death, Bee has been forced to see her own inadequacies; searching for Tess' killer has required Bee to learn more about her sister.

Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen

Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Summary

In chapter fifteen, Mr. Wright clarifies with Bee that she got two new leads from the funeral. The first is Professor Rosen, who attended the funeral. He apologizes for the uncaring e-mail that was sent to her, but his body language is tense. Bee does not consciously notice this due to her focus being on Tess. She makes an appointment to meet with him about a week after the funeral.

At Chrom-Med, she sits through films describing their scientific endeavors, which included making humans physically stronger and more intelligent. Many protest this work inside and outside the building. Dr. Rosen agrees with them regarding this type of genetic research but sees nothing wrong with genetic research that cures disease. What is most important about this meeting is that Bee had been wrong about her impression of Dr. Rosen. He is not a humble man; he simply is not interested in communicating to the masses. He desires a more intellectual and prestigious audience. This closeness between science and biology causes Bee to be wary.

In chapter sixteen, after the meeting at Chrom-Med, Bee heads to the college campus to meet with Tess' friends. She is intimidated by the large crowd she comes upon. They all openly speak about their memories of Tess and their opinions of her relationship with Emilio, but when Bee starts asking about Tess' relationship with Simon, the atmosphere in the room changes. At first she does not understand why, but by the end of the meeting, she realizes that he has gotten to them. Although they knew he was obsessed with her, they believe him and the police that Tess had committed suicide.

Afterwards, Bee decides to face her demons and walk home through Hyde Park. While in the park, she again feels that she is being followed and a man is breathing down her neck. She begins to run towards a more populated area. After passing the public toilets where Tess had been murdered, Bee continues home through populated areas of the park. She tries to feel ridiculous, but she knows this monster of a man exists, even if he has not been following her.

Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Analysis

Chapter fifteen brings in a somewhat surprising new suspect, Dr. Rosen and Chrom-Med. They may have very well wanted to keep hidden the death of a baby who had been injected with their new chromosome, because their popularity was skyrocketing. This chapter focuses on the power of zealots. Zealots, like Dr. Rosen and others at Chrom-Med, cannot see much beyond their work and their own ideas and plans for the future. This behavior and love of power over humanity could very well have led them to kill Tess and frame her for her own murder.

In chapter sixteen, Tess' friends confirm Bee's suspicions about Simon. He is very clever and manipulative and seems to have even manipulated those who do not like or trust him. He continues to be a main suspect. Once again, Bee feels that she is being followed. Whether or not this is real, it does foreshadow horrific events to come. At some point Bee must face her sister's killer. This renews a sense of anxiety that permeates the chapters of this book.

Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen

Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen Summary

In chapter seventeen, Bee decides to not tell Mr. Wright about the man in the park because she is sure he was a figment of her imagination. She returns to telling her story.

Upon returning home after meeting with Tess' friends, she sees that the answering machine is blinking; it is an unimportant message, but Bee realizes there is a second side to the tape. She hears a lullaby; this lullaby seems vicious and evil because the message had been left the day Xavier was born. Bee assumes this had probably not been the first time this message had been left and that this was the nuisance call that was driving her sister crazy.

Bee leaves a message for DS Finborough and heads to St. Anne's to speak with Dr. Nichols. Dr Nichols, surprised to see her, still feels that he was to blame for not diagnosing Tess correctly. He sees the lullaby as a message left by a friend who did not realize her baby had died. As Bee storms out, she bumps right into Dr. Saunders. They have coffee and he says Hugo Nichols was not incompetent, which does not match up with Bee's feelings about him.

When someone from the police station returns her call, it is DI Haines', Finborough's boss. He tells Bee that she needs to stop her investigation and trust that the police have come to the right conclusion; her sister had committed suicide.

A week after Bee hears the lullaby, a student art show is planned in which Tess' work is to be displayed. Simon and Emilio are sure to be there, and Bee finds the avenue that would lead her to Tess' murderer.

In chapter eighteen, Bee attends the art show and confronts Emilio. She learns that he nor his wife has cystic fibrosis. He assumes this means he is not Xavier's father, but Bee believes this means that Chrom-Med is behind Tess' death. She meets with DS Finborough and his boss, who is arrogant and rude; afterwards, DS Finborough agrees with Bee that it is possible that Bee was killed. He has begun to take notice of holes in her case as a suicide.

Bee goes to Kasia to ask her and Mitch to get tested for cystic fibrosis. If one or both of them do not have the gene, then the police will have to do something. Mitch is aggressive and sees no reason why he should be tested. Bee encourages Kasia to live with her. Late that night, Kasia arrives at Tess' flat, bruised and beaten. After Bee finishes for the day with Mr. Wright, she returns home to her little family, Kasia and Amias.

Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen Analysis

Chapter seventeen gives Bee more evidence that her sister was being mentally tortured, but this same evidence is used against Bee by the authorities. It shows them that she is a crazy grieving sister, rather than the untrained detective who will solve her sister's case. More hints are given regarding Bee's weakness that is somehow connected to the murderer. Many questions are raised. Was she also drugged? Will she die? How is this all connected to the killer and her sister's case? The anxiety in this book continues to increase as Bee gets closer and closer to finding the murderer.

Chapter eighteen reveals the avenue that will most likely lead to Tess' killer. Chrom-Med seems to be the reason for Tess' death. Bee's intuition regarding Chrom-Med and their floating on the stock market seem to be accurate. This reveals Tess' murder to be more than that of a crazed stalker or angry lover. Her death might be covering up significant lies made by a nationally-known and well-respected company. This chapter shows how significant her death is and why this case is so important. Its importance has been foreshadowed throughout the book beginning with the importance of Bee's statement and the many lunch meetings Mr. Wright had to attend.

Chapters Nineteen and Twenty

Chapters Nineteen and Twenty Summary

In chapter nineteen, as Bee plays the lullaby for Kasia, they come across another message from someone named Hattie. Kasia, Tess, and Hattie had all met at the clinic. She does not have Hattie's number, just an address, so Bee goes to visit her. She is surprised to learn she is a Filipina nanny whose baby also died. What these three women had in common was that they were all poor and single with hardly anyone looking out for them. She contacts Prof. Rosen and Christina regarding her findings. She then decides, since it is March 12th, that she should see her mother.

In chapter twenty, Bee keeps her mother company on the anniversary of Leo's birthday. In the past she had always sent a card and talked briefly with her mother over the phone without wanting to get too emotionally involved. This day is very different. Both Mum and Bee are very different. Expressing emotion has become a normal part of life. Christina calls and tells her there should be no link between the deaths of these two babies, based on the information given, although postmortems were not done for either baby.

Bee tells Mr. Wright that she knows there had to be some connection, mostly because she could not think that she was wrong and would have to start all over again.

Bee decides to try to get more information out of Hattie. She learns that Hattie's paperwork has also been lost and that the man who gave both the injection and delivered her baby wore a mask. Bee realizes that the paintings of the man in the mask were not from hallucinations but from Tess' experiences during Xavier's birth.

Next, Bee has lunch with DS Finborough; he apologizes for having not believed her soon enough. Bee passes out and believes the attacker is getting closer to her, but she knows he is locked up in prison. DS Finborough makes sure she gets in her flat safely and leaves. Two hands pummel the window from the outside and disappear; Bee screams.

Chapters Nineteen and Twenty Analysis

Chapter nineteen brings more evidence against Chrom-Med, but as the facts continue to build up, so do the questions. What is the connection between the deaths of these babies? How did this lead to Tess' death? March 12th signifies a day of sadness. This family has suffered a great deal, so March 12th could mean any number of things from the day Leo was born or died, the end of her marriage, or Tess' birthday.

Chapter twenty shows the main character and her mother dealing with loss. Their relationship has grown stronger but much of that has to do with the fact that there are just the two of them left. Both Leo and Tess have died and Dad is out of the picture in

France. Because of all this loss, especially the most recent death of Tess, Bee and her mother have changed significantly in a short period of time. Even Dad has changed. He no longer makes empty promises he does not plan to keep. Another change in this chapter is that the figment of Bee's imagination has become more real with the man's two hands hitting the window. Also, her illness is worsening. Might there be a connection between these two things?



Chapters Twenty-One, Twenty-Two, and Twenty-Three

Chapters Twenty-One, Twenty-Two, and Twenty-Three Summary

In chapter twenty-one, Bee fears that she is going mad and does not tell anyone about the man at the window. After leaving Hattie's house, Bee heads to St. Anne's. It is after midnight, so she does not expect to get any new information. When the head nurse is not there, she asks for William Saunders. He wakes up and she tells him what she has learned about the potential killer. He also does not see the facts she has recently found as convincing. She asks him if he killed her, and he looks hurt. She apologizes and he surprisingly makes advances on her. She quickly leaves, because she is not that type of woman. As she is leaving, she senses she is being followed and gets a cab home.

Mr. Wright suggests they go for a picnic to finish her statement. As they walk to the park, they are separated for a moment, which reminds Bee of laying on her left side on the cold ground, but says that she is jumping ahead in her story and returns to the current part of the story.

Bee returns home and Kasia asks if there is anything she should know about what Bee has learned; Bee says no, because she wants to protect Kasia like she could not protect Tess or Xavier. Bee tells Mr. Wright about an e-mail she received from Prof. Rosen saying he did not see how the chromosome trial could have gone wrong or become dangerous.

Later, at work, Bee sees William coming over to her. He had learned that Mitch did not have the gene for cystic fibrosis. He then heads back to work. Bee heads home and surprises Kasia with tickets to travel home to Poland once the baby is born.

Later, Bee meets Dr. Rosen in his car; he is very agitated and learned that his trial had been hijacked at St. Anne's. He refuses to go to the police about it because it would destroy his credibility and the credibility of his research. It just is not worth the risk.

William Saunders calls and said he should know by the end of the day who had been running the clinical trials at St. Anne's. In the meantime, Bee meets Mum to pick out a plant for Tess' garden. She gets a text from William and leaves.

In chapter twenty-two, William is waiting at Tess' when Bee arrived. He has learned that Hugo Nichols' was responsible for the clinical trials at St. Anne's. He had always been interested in genetics and must have gotten a job at the hospital waiting until he could experiment on humans. Bee believes that Tess must have found out what was going on and had been killed by Nichols.

William calls DI Haines and speaks to him about what they know. William kisses Bee; she kisses him back and they make love in the flat.

As she tells this story to Mr. Wright, he produces a bottle of wine for both of them; she is glad he is not judgmental about William.

William finds a bottle of PCP pills in Tess' cabinet that could be traced back to Nichols. When it is discovered that William's bike had been stolen and only the chain remained, he suggests they walk through the park to the police station. In the park, he suggests they leave flowers at the toilets where Tess had been killed.

Bee sends a text to Kasia letting her know she is finally doing that for Tess. As they approach the toilets, William references something Tess had told Bee about daffodils, something she had never told William. When she confronts him about this, he pushes her into the toilets, puts a knife against her throat, and closes the door behind them. The bicycle chain is used to lock the doors.

Bee talks to William, asking him questions, to keep him from killing her and to learn what had happened to Tess. He had been the one behind everything. He had hijacked the trial, allowed Tess and Hattie's babies' to die, because he did not want others to find out what he was doing. He had killed Tess because if she had more children, they would have had the same unusual lung condition that Xavier had and it could have been traced back to him. Hattie had a hysterectomy.

Bee at this point has already been drugged with tea he had given her in the flat. Then, he forces her to swallow a bottle of her sleeping pills. Fortunately, she is able to stop most of them from going down her throat. As he reads a letter written by Tess to Bee in the park before he killed her, Bee secretly spits out the remaining pills. William's pager goes off and he leaves. The chapter ends exactly as the book began.

In chapter twenty-three, Bee tells Tess that the story from the time she learned of Tess' disappearance to William leaving her in the toilets is real. Mr. Wright, his secretary, and the trial are fabrications of her imagination. This helps to keep her sane and to give her some glimmer of hope. She cannot imagine just giving in and not creating some sort of ending to the story, whether it is real or not. By creating these characters, she also is able to tell the story from start to finish without missing details or mixing up information. She wants Tess to know what has happened. It keeps her somewhat sane until either she overdoses or William comes back to finish her off. As the chapter comes to an end, she thinks she hears sirens and voices, and realizes that the pages she keeps receiving are not from Kasia trying to tell her she is in labor but that she is trying to find her. They know something has happened to her. The men's voices grow louder, and Bee apologizes to Tess one more time for what has happened.



Chapters Twenty-One, Twenty-Two, and Twenty-Three Analysis

Chapter twenty-one gives the reader Bee's biggest fear, going mad. She has mentioned this at other times throughout the story. Is this fear due to the fact her sister had been drugged with PCP and had hallucinations the days before her death or because her own life had become one moment of insanity after another, compared to the calm and predictable life she had in New York? Or, is there another reason for this fear? This chapter brings more evidence against Chrom-Med, or at least someone working for them, but who? Simon and Emilio are no longer in the picture as possible suspects. Tess' murder is much bigger than that. Bee finds a friend in William Saunders, yet his flirty behavior at the hospital seems out of character. He has been kind before but never inappropriate. Also, the fact he acts this way after she has just asked him if he killed her sister seems strange. It would make sense for him to be comforting but not flirtatious. There is the possibility that he was simply being kind and she misinterpreted it for romantic interest. The fact that Bee was followed as she was leaving the hospital and William suggests either he is following her or someone who saw her at the hospital. The connection is this hospital. Grief continues to be important in this chapter as in all the chapters. With all the information given, one must remember it has only been a few months since Tess' death, so the grief Bee and her mother feel is still very new.

Chapter twenty-two throws a shocking wrench in the works of this story. The one man that Bee trusted is the same man she should fear and hate. Of all the men the character meets in this story, he is the most evil and manipulative. The others care too much about showing off their masculinity and power, while William cares only for ultimate power. He plays the part of a sweet, caring, understanding doctor so well, because the power of controlling genetics is so much more important than his own prestige. He uses this kind doctor character to lure in Tess and then Bee, although his character began to show flaws when he became romantically interested in and then involved with Bee. This behavior did not match up with the persona he had created. The ending of this chapter raises many questions. Is this story all in her head? What about the trial and her important statement? How does Bee get out of this? Or, does she actually get out of this?

Chapter twenty-two explains little seemingly insignificant details in this book, as well as important characters. Her illness and somewhat odd details of her experiences with Mr. Wright are now explained as her imagination and physical distress blending together. She tries to focus on her story for Tess, but is frequently affected by her various serious situation. This ending is very shocking and unexpected. Besides the fact that William is the killer, this entire book and her interview are completely fabricated. There was no letter written to Tess and there was to be no trial at this point in the story. What a crazy turn of events that keeps the reader reeling for awhile after finishing the book.

Characters

Tess Hemming

Tess Hemming is a care-free, loving, and somewhat wild twenty-one-year-old who has gone missing as the book begins. Within a few days of her being reported missing, her body is found in a public restroom in Hyde Park. Her sister is the narrator of the story and tells her younger sister Tess through letters what has transpired since her death.

Tess had been a college art student and talented painter when she became pregnant with her tutor's child. He wanted nothing to do with it, but she saw it as a miracle, the miracle of life. Since her brother, Leo, had died from cystic fibrosis as a child, she had her baby tested. Supposedly it tested positive for cystic fibrosis and underwent experimental gene therapy. Everything seemed to be going well, but three weeks before she was due, she went missing.

There are several possible suspects in her disappearance and death with the first being the father of her baby. He was a married man with a child and one on the way, and he had asked her to keep the paternity of her child a secret, as well as take a leave of absence from school. The second possible suspect was another art student named Simon who was obsessed with Tess and was very upset when she did not return his feelings. Other suspects included Tess' doctors and friends; almost everyone was a potential suspect.

In the end, it was Tess' doctor, whom she trusted, that was her killer. Her baby, Xavier, died due to a rare breathing problem that would have shown the medical world that something had happened to the cystic fibrosis trial at St. Anne's Hospital. Also, the same gene had been passed on to all of Tess' eggs, so any child she had would have the same breathing problem. The doctor, William Saunders, knew he would be caught if she had more children. That is why he killed her.

Tess never knew about the hijacked trial. She always thought positively of other people and only in her final days and letter to her sister did she express fear and uncertainty about her life and the world around her. She was a beautiful woman, both inside and out, who had been in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Arabella Beatrice (Bee) Hemming

Bee Hemming is the older, more subdued and conservative Hemming sister. For most of her life she played the role of big sister and thought she played it well. Her sister's disappearance took her away from her perfect urban life in New York City, with her designer clothes, well-to-do fiancé, and posh job. She hurried to London so she could be there when her sister, Tess, returned from wherever she had gone. She wanted to be one of the first to berate her for scaring everyone. In the end, she became her sister's biggest advocate as she fought to find her killer. The killer had framed her sister for her



own death, and Bee was one of the few who knew this was wrong. Tess would never kill herself; Bee knew Tess well and knew that suicide was not a possibility, no matter how upset Tess was about the death of her baby.

Throughout the course of the book, Bee tells Tess in a letter what has taken place since she heard Tess went missing. Throughout this short period of time, Bee changed greatly. She became much more like her sister. She cared less about her appearance and the appearance of others, and became more focused and enjoying life and loving those around you. Through her sister's death, she grew closer to her mother, her father, her new friends, her sister's friends, her sister, and even herself. By digging deeply into her sister's life, she learned a great deal about her sister and a great deal about herself.

Mr. Wright

Mr. Wright is the CPS lawyer that is on Bee's case. She has come to him to give her testimony regarding her investigation into her sister's murder. Only at the end of the book does the reader learn that he is a figment of Bee's imagination. He is created to help her keep her sanity while she is trapped in the Hyde Park toilets waiting to die from an overdose or from William when he returns and finds her alive. This imaginary friend helps Bee tell her sister the story of her death.

Todd

Todd is Bee's fiance. He is much like Bee prior Tess' death. He is well-off, calm, and easy-going. His relationship with Bee is drama-free but also superficial. When Bee refuses to believe her sister committed suicide, he returns to New York City and their engagement is called off. He is ready to return to their old life, but Bee knows she never can go back.

Leo Xavier Hemming

Leo Hemming is Tess and Bee's brother who died as a little boy from cystic fibrosis. Because of him having the disease and the Tess being a carrier, she had her fetus tested for this awful disease.

Xavier Hemming

Xavier Hemming is the baby that Tess has. He supposedly was stillborn, but it is later learned that he had a rare lung disorder but could have been saved.



Detective Sergeant Finborough

DS Finborough is the detective that is put on Tess' case. For most of the story, he agrees with everyone else that Tess committed suicide. Through Bee's persistence, she was able to put some doubt in his mind.

Emilio Codi

Emilio Codi is Tess' lover and the father of her baby. He is a married man and wanted nothing to do with Tess' child. He was a main suspect in her death. When he learns that neither he nor his wife carry the cystic fibrosis gene, Bee knows that the clinic is responsible somehow for her sister's death.

PC Vernon

PC Vernon was a kind female police officer who supported Bee when she learned of her sister's death.

Mum Hemming

Mum Hemming is Tess and Bee's mother who, like Bee, became more emotional and open as she began to grieve for Tess. She became much like the mother she had once been.

Dad Hemming

Dad Hemming abandoned his wife and two daughters when he could no longer stand to watch his young son suffer and die. He redeems himself when he returns for Tess' funeral.

Amias Thornton

This kind old man is Tess' landlord. He also reported her missing when she did not meet him for dinner as she had said she would.

Kasia

Kasia is Tess' Polish friend that she met in cystic fibrosis clinic. She became Bee's roommate and close friend.



Professor Rosen

Professor Rosen is the scientist responsible for the cystic fibrosis clinical trials. Although he found out that the trial at St. Anne's had been hijacked, he refused to report it for fear that his cystic fibrosis trials everywhere would be considered suspect.

Simon Greenly

Simon Greenly is an MP's son who was stalking Tess. He was a main suspect in her murder.

Bettina

Bettina is a waitress at the Coyote where Tess had worked. She kindly gave Bee a job when she resigned from her job in the states.

Mrs. Crush Secretary (Stephanie)

Mrs. Crush Secretary is Mr. Wright's secretary who has a crush on him. Later it is learned she is a creation of Bee's imagination to keep her sane while she is locked in the park toilets.

Cynthia Codi

Cynthia is Emilio's wife.

Dr. William Saunders

Dr. Saunders is Tess' murderer. It is not until the end of the book that he begins to play a larger role in the plot and it is finally discovered that he is the killer. He had hijacked the cystic fibrosis trial at St. Anne's Hospital, Tess could have unknowingly led the scientific world and authorities to him. His work would have been ended, and he desired the power of playing God.

Father Peter

Father Peter is the priest who presides over Tess and Xavier's funeral.

Christina

Christina is an old school friend that helps Bee understand her sister's postmortem results.

Mitch Flanagan

Mitch is Kasia's abusive boyfriend and father of her baby. He finds out he does not have the cystic fibrosis gene.

Hattie Sims

Hattie is a Filipina woman who is also involved in the cystic fibrosis trial. Her baby also dies. This is another clue for Bee that the clinic is responsible for her sister's death.

DI Haines

DI Haines is DS Finborough's boss. He is arrogant and rude; he keeps Bee from being able to report anymore suspects to the police.



Objects/Places

London

Most of the story takes place in London.

Hyde Park Toilets

Tess is killed in the Hyde Park toilets. Bee is poisoned and left for dead in the same place.

Tess' Flat

Bee moves into Tess' moldy, out-dated, cold flat when she comes to London to search for her sister's killer.

Crown Prosecution Service Offices

The CPS offices are a figment of Bee's imagination. They help her tell her story to Tess as she waits for help or death.

New York City

New York City is where Bee has lived for several years prior to the news of her sister's appearance.

Art School

Tess attended art school until she became pregnant with her tutor's child.

The Coyote

The Coyote is where both Tess and Bee worked.

Bee's Mind

The entire story takes place in Bee's mind as she tells her dead sister why she died and what has happened since then. This helps the time pass as Bee waits for death or help.

Chrom-Med

Chrom-Med is a scientific organization that studies gene therapy. Dr. Saunders has been hired to study the IQ gene and has been illegally testing on humans.

Tess' Garden

This garden helps Bee heal after her sister's death. As the seemingly dead plants begin to grow in the spring weather, she feels a sense of hope that her sister and brother are in some sort of heaven.

St. Anne's Hospital

This hospital is the location for the hijacked cystic fibrosis trial in which Tess is involved.

Themes

Grief

An important theme in this book is grief. Grief is felt from the moment the book begins. The reader senses that something has happened to Bee's younger sister Tess, and it is not until a few chapters in that it is confirmed that she has died. Once this is confirmed, the grief builds in the many of the characters, for Tess was greatly loved. Soon it is learned that Tess was the first to suffer from grief.

Only a few days before Tess had gone missing, she had given birth to a stillborn baby. She also had been given hallucinogenic drugs, which exacerbated the effects of her grief over the death of her child. Her dark paintings of the doctor and screaming woman revealed the emotional pain she was in. These paintings become even more significant, as well as her grief and pain, when they are compared to most of her other paintings, which are bright and cheerful. In her grief, she also writes a letter to her sister tell her of her son's death and the pain she feels.

Tess' mother also grieves, although not initially. She would rather feel anger and annoyance and then a desire to move on than stop and grieve. Her body gave her no choice but to grieve when she had to bury her child in the graveyard next to her son. That was the turning point for her. She no longer cared about outward appearances; most aspects of her life seemed insignificant in the face of all that she had suffered. Her relationship grows stronger with her daughter Bee, because she realized that relationships are what matter most, because when they are gone, they can never be retrieved.

Other characters throughout the book felt grief for the loss of Tess. Tess easily made and kept friends, so many people felt her loss. They dealt with her loss displaying her art in a student art exhibit, planting flowers in her honor, and laying flowers and teddy bears where she had been killed.

Of all the characters that grieved, Tess' sister Bee grieved the most. She had lost her best friend and confidant. It seemed to her that she had lost all purpose in life when she lost Tess. She saw one of her main jobs as Tess' big sister, and now she had been fired against her will. She dealt with this loss by spending all her energy on finding her sister's killer. At the end of the book, once it seemed the killer might get caught and Bee would be saved, it is clear how her grief has changed her for good.

Although grief is a painful and life-changing emotion, this book shows how it can change people in positive ways. Superfluous aspects of life such as social status, fashion, and impressive careers go by the wayside when one feels grief. Grief shows what really matters, one's loved ones. Human relationships are what are most important in life, and often they are taken for granted until they are ended against our will. Through the loss

of Tess, many of the characters in this book became more open, honest and loving; they became more like Tess.

Loss

An important theme in this book is loss. Loss is felt from the moment the book begins as Bee speaks to her sister Tess. Each character deals with loss differently, but they all are affected by loss.

Bee is the most affected by the loss of Tess. Her perfectly organized and safe world is shattered when she learns her sister has died. The physical changes that take place in her are extreme and sudden. She ditches her designer suits to wear her sister's worn hand-me-downs and quits her plush job in New York City to work as a waitress in London, living in her sister's meager flat. The loss of her sister has caused her grief like she has never known before. She has been changed permanently by this loss.

Like Bee, Mum has also lost her calm, cool, collected exterior for one that better matches her interior. She has become much more like Tess, who had always been loving, friendly, and an open book. Other characters reacted to the loss of Tess in similar ways by attending her funeral, gushing about her to her sister, and displaying her beautiful paintings.

Some characters, in contrast, barely seemed to notice this loss. Characters such as Simon and Emilio only cared about how the loss affected them, rather than the actual loss itself. Emilio seemed almost relieved she had died, because now he could pretend she had simply been his muse, to better promote his work. Simon was so upset that she had turned him down romantically that he could not truly grieve the loss of his obsession.

Although the characters in this book reacted differently to the loss of Tess, her loss was still felt and recognized. Loss of life, although not extremely common, does occur in everyone's lives; it is only a matter of time. Loss of the lives of loved ones is something we must all face, and these characters represent both good and bad ways to deal with loss.

Perseverance

Perseverance is an important theme. Although many characters in this book give in to what is easiest to believe regarding Tess' death, there is one character who perseveres to the end, Bee. She does not accept the police's beliefs that Tess committed suicide. She sticks to this belief in her sister's love of life until she learns the identity of the murderer. She does not allow others to dissuade her, although many try. She understands they believe she is mad with grief, but she refuses to give in. In the end, she learns the truth of what happened to her sister.

This is a great lesson or the reader. If you believe strongly in something, do not allow others to convince you otherwise. Come to your own conclusions about various events and situations based on your own intuition and research. Do not blindly believe other simply because it easier.

Style

Point of View

The point of view of this book is from that of Bee, the narrator, in first person. At times Bee remembers conversations with her sister and quotes her. At other times, various other characters speak.

Bee is the narrator of this story, and, although at the time of the telling of this story she is all-knowing, she tells it as it occurred to her prior to her having the ability to look back at the past. She also does not know the thoughts and beliefs of others, other than what they tell her.

At times Bee looks back at conversations she and Tess had over the phone, in person, and through e-mails and letters. These are given in quotes or in a different font simulating e-mails. These quotes and letters give the reader a glimpse into Tess' character through her own words. They also show the close relationship that exists between Bee and Tess.

For the most part, the reader learns of this tragic event through the eyes of Bee. Not much is known about how other characters truly feel about this tragic event, except through Bee's conversations with them and her assumptions about them. The reader uses the same clues Bee is given to solve her sister's murder, which allows the reader to play detective right alongside Bee.

Setting

The main setting of this story is London, more specifically Tess' flat, Hyde Park, St. Anne's Hospital, and the imaginary CPS offices. Other minor locations are New York City, Emilio's home, the college, the Coyote, and the police station.

For the general setting of London, language of the characters and famous sights such as the London Eye, Parliament, and major roadways add to the realism of this setting. It is modern-day London with its urban traffic and winter and spring seasons. Other specific neighborhoods within London are also parts of the setting and used to enhance this reality.

Within London, the most significant location is the Hyde Park toilets. This dirty, unused public restroom is the location of both Tess' murder and the attempted murder of Bee. A second important location is Tess' flat. Its dingy interior and contrasting beautiful garden reflect Tess' artistic personality and simple lifestyle. It is also where Bee lives and gains insight into Tess' death, including the lullaby, message from Hattie, and PCP pill bottle.

Other locations are part of Bee's adventures as she learns the identity of her sister's murder, while some are created by her imagination as she lays waiting to die or be saved.

Language and Meaning

The author uses primarily a narrator, Bee to tell this story. So, both British slang and American slang are used to make Bee a more believable British woman who has lived and worked in the states for several years. The difference between British and American terms is heightened when Bee remembers Tess teasing her about her Americanisms and when others quote Tess incorrectly to Bee, because they use American terms rather than British, and Tess did not care for Americanisms.

Analogies and references to English literature are common in this book. Bee had studied English literature, and she is the primary speaker in the book, so these references make her a more believable character. Art imagery is also used by Bee, because both she and her sister studied art, and Bee worked for a company as a designer. The language used for other characters, such as Mitch and Kasia, reflect their socio-economic backgrounds and ethnicities.

Bee's language changes as she becomes more agitated and confrontational. How she speaks early on in the book prior to knowing Tess had died is much more formal than her language at other times, especially when she is confronting potential murder suspects.

Overall, the language used in this book reflects and enhances the various backgrounds, interests, and personalities of the characters. The reader can clearly hear and imagine the characters in this book because the language is so specific and unique to each of them.

Structure

This book is divided into twenty-three chapters. Within each chapter there are jumps in time between the supposed present day as Bee is giving her statement to a lawyer and a time in the past from the time she learned of her sister's pregnancy until her Tess' killer caught Bee. After that, Bee admits that the time she spent with Mr. Wright, the lawyer, was made up. She had been drugged and left for dead by Tess' killer; so, to keep herself from panicking and to give herself a little peace of mind, she created Mr. Wright as a way of helping her to tell her sister the story that would lead to her death and Bee's entrapment in the Hyde Park toilets.

The chapters that include Mr. Wright are unemotional and direct. This helps Bee to give the facts without superfluous information. It also helps her to get through difficult sections of the story. Since these sections of the chapter are actually creations of Bee's imagination, they help her to stay rational and calm throughout these torturous hours.

The sections of chapters that include the actual series of events that led up to and after Tess' murder are much more emotional. They reflect Bee's feelings at the time these events took place, as well as how she feels now as she looks back on these memories. Often her emotions are different from what they were when the actual events took place, especially those events prior to the finding of Tess' body. Looking back, Bee often regrets how she dealt with various situations, feeling she had let her sister down. Other times she relives the emotions she felt at the time, as if the event was happening again.

Italics, bold print, underlining, quotations, and various fonts are used in this book to designate to whom Bee is talking or if someone else is talking. An interesting detail in this book is the use of e-mail correspondence between the two sisters. The e-mails simulate real e-mails including e-mail addresses and differing fonts.

Quotes

"I'd do anything to be with you, right now, right this moment, so I could hold your hand, look at your face, listen to your voice."

Chapter 1, p. 1

"She was pink cheeked and healthy, as if she'd just come in from milking cows rather than policing London streets."

Chapter 1, p. 15

"I dreamed of the color red: Pantone numbers PMS 1788 to PMS 1807 - the color of cardinals and harlots, of passion and pomp; cochineal dye from the crushed bodies of insects; crimson; scarlet; the color of life; the color of blood."

Chapter 2, p. 33

"I used to think 'stillborn' sounded peaceful...Now I think it's desperate in its lack of life, a cruel euphemism packing nails around the fact it's trying to cloak."

Chapter 3, p. 44

"I looked at him. His eyes were closed, as if asleep. His eyebrows were just a pencil line of down, barely formed and impossibly perfect, nothing crude or cruel or ugly in the world had ever been seen by his face. He was beautiful. Tess. Faultless."

Chapter 6, p. 82

"How can someone hope to treat another person's mind unless they are also a theologian and a philosopher and a poet?"

Chapter 8, p. 110

"There is no new beginning. No second chance. You turned to me and I wasn't there. You are dead. If I had taken your call, you would be alive. It's as blunt as that. I'm sorry."

Chapter 9, p. 133

"...death does leave a daunting array of practical tasks: all those possessions that you were forced to leave behind had to be sorted and packed and redistributed in the living world."

Chapter 12, p. 159

"I want to know that when I die, I have made the world a better place."

Chapter 15, p. 213

"Instead of imagining the frightening and the ugly, I will try to find the beautiful in everyday things, as you did."

Chapter 17, p. 223

"I'd always sent flowers to Mum on Leo's birthday and phoned her, thoughtfulness at a distance."

Chapter 20, p. 255

"I had learned finally, like you, to put love before truth."
Chapter 21, p. 285

"He said that his gene would one day safely get into the gene pool, and that would mean who we are as humans would be irrevocably changed for the better."
Chapter 22, p. 303

"It's taken hours of dark terror and countless thousands of words, but in the end it reduces down to so little. I'm sorry. I love you. I always will."
Chapter 23, p. 318

Topics for Discussion

Bee and Tess frequently corresponded through letters and e-mail. Why did they become accustomed to this? How is this reflected in the writing of this book? How is this important to the story itself? How is corresponding through writing important in Western culture? Why?

Bee changes a great deal throughout this story. Describe Bee at the beginning of the story. How does she change over time? What specific events lead to these changes? How does she feel about these changes in herself? How might Tess feel about the changes in Bee? Why? How have you been changed by an event or series of events? Are these good changes? Why or why not?

Bee is sure that Tess could never commit suicide. Why is she so sure of this? What ordeals does the author use to support Bee's beliefs? Do you believe that someone who had always had a positive could ever commit suicide? Why or why not? Should Bee have been so sure that her sister had been murdered? Why or why not?

Mr. Wright is a figment of Bee's imagination. Do her meetings with him ever seem out of the ordinary? If so, when? Why? If not, why not? What clues are given throughout the book that show that things are not as they seem? How does this make for an engaging book?

There are several plot twists in this story. Describe two of them. How do they affect the plot? How do they affect your opinion of various characters and information? How are these plot twists important to the book as a whole?

Tess was an artistic, loving, and honest young woman. What are her flaws? How do these flaws influence Bee's behavior towards her? How does Bee's opinion of her sister change over the course of the book? Why? How does this change in her opinion of her sister influence changes in Bee? What does this say about the relationships we have with our loved ones? How might this story affect your own relationships?

One of the last things Bee says to Tess is "I'm sorry." For what is she sorry? How does she come to feel sorry? Should she feel sorry? If so, why? If not, why not? Might Tess think that Bee should say she is sorry? Why or why not?

There are similarities in the men in Tess' life. Describe these similarities. Why might Tess allow men like this in her life? Should she have done this? Why or why not? Why might men like this be attracted to someone like Tess?

A big focus in this book is on gene therapy. What have you learned about gene therapy from this book? Should gene therapy take place? If so, when and why? If not, why not? Based on this book, what do you believe is the author's opinion of gene therapy? Explain.