

WAYS TO HIDE IN WINTER

READING GUIDE

- **1)** In many ways, this novel is about trauma, grief, and loss. How do the characters, particularly Kathleen and the mysterious stranger, cope with trauma? Is there a character you relate to more?
- **2)** Discuss how you felt reading about Kathleen and the stranger's friendship?
- **3)** The Kubler-Ross stages of grief are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Can you match these stages with any characters in this story?
- **4)** Discuss how your life been affected by grief, trauma, or forgiveness, either as the giver or the recipient.
- **5)** Discuss the flashback aspect of the narrative and how it propels the novel.
- **6)** Sarah St.Vincent is blending two different timelines together, rather than telling two separate chronological stories. Why do you think she does this? What effect does it have on the reader?
- **7)** Did your opinion of the stranger change or develop as the narrative progressed? Did you become more sympathetic or understanding in later sections of the story?

- **8)** Caregiving, nurturing, enabling, and abuse are themes of the novel. Explore the way these themes are manifested in the relationships between Kathleen and each of the supporting characters.
- **9)** In what way are the paths to redemption and freedom for Kathleen and the stranger similar? In what ways are they different?
- **10)** The past plays a strong role in Kat's life and the plot itself. How are you shaped by your own past? How is Kathleen shaped by the past? Have you ever attempted to reconcile your own past with your present life? Did you make peace? Or did you try to outrun it?