

# The First Wife's Secret

1. *The First Wife's Secret* is told from two main viewpoints: middle sister Dinah and youngest sister Lottie. What are the advantages and disadvantages of telling a story in this style? Did you relate to one of these characters more? Were there other characters you would have liked to hear from?
2. George's disapproval of Dinah's relationship is clear early on. How did you respond to George's attitude at the start of the novel? How did your feelings change when you found out more about his reasons?
3. Dinah has a difficult relationship with her stepmother Mara, who's been described as the "Ice Queen". What do you think Dinah was reacting to in choosing this nickname? Did your feelings about Mara change as you read on?
4. George, Mara and Dinah are all parents. In the novel, each of them must balance respecting their child's wishes with protecting their children. What did you think of each parent's "balancing act"? Would you have made different choices?
5. In the end "homebird" Lottie leaves the nest, while "adventurous" Dinah stays close to Birch Bend. Which experience do you relate to more? Do you have siblings who made different choices? What factors do you think shaped those choices?
6. What do you think are the biggest challenges that Lottie and Dinah have to overcome in the novel? Did they have different ways of dealing with their problems? Were there similarities?
7. How did your feelings about Jeff change as you learned more about him, and heard his side of the break-up story? In Dinah's shoes, would you have given him a second chance?
8. George, Dinah, and Lottie all report "feeling" Bonnie's presence in some way at various points in the story. Do you think this was real, or just their imagination? Have you ever experienced something similar?
9. Did you suspect Lottie's secret? What responsibility (if any) do you think she bears for what happened the night of her graduation party? What about her choice not to tell Vaughan what happened?
10. By the end of the novel, would it have been acceptable for Vaughan to stay in her marriage, knowing what she now knew? What about if she and Mitchell had already had kids?
11. Had George not collapsed on the afternoon of the anniversary party, which secrets do you think would still have come to light? Would Lottie and Dinah have made up? Would Dinah and Max still be together?
12. Some of the themes of this novel are: healing; second chances; telling the truth, and love. Which theme resonated the most with you? Which theme had more impact on the story?

