

These Still Black Waters
By Christina McDonald

Book Club Discussion Questions

1. Consider the alternating chapters between Neve, Jess and the unnamed narrator. How would the reading experience have been if the story had been told by either one narrator or from a third-person point of view?
2. Once you've finished the book, reflect back on Neve arriving at Dullahan House, her childhood summer home, at the start of the book. Why do you think she went back to this particular place after the trauma of experiencing a home invasion?
3. Neve and Jess are each isolated in their own ways. What happened in each of their pasts to cause this and how does it impact their decisions in the book?
4. The author keeps the reader guessing throughout the novel who the unnamed narrator really is. When the guilty party is revealed, was it the person you suspected? Why or why not? If not, who else did you suspect and why?
5. We know from the outset that somebody has died. Were you surprised to learn who it was? Why do you think this choice was important?
6. *These Still Black Waters* is about choices and consequences, about justice and avenging the past. Was our unnamed narrator right to try to find justice after what happened to their loved one? Would you do the same?
7. Our unnamed narrator says, 'some things can never be forgiven,' and a major theme of the book is about if we can ever make up for the worst things we've done. Do you think people are more than the worst thing they've done? That everybody has a chance to move into the light?
8. Our unnamed narrator becomes attached to a bird called Tweety. What do you think Tweety represents? Why was our unnamed narrator so attached to him?
9. Jess is suffering from grief hallucinations after the death of her daughter. Or is it more? Discuss if you think Jess really sees Isla or if it's a result of her trauma.
10. "Maybe, like Neve said, the dead cling to the living as much as the living cling to the dead. Maybe we are all haunted by our ghosts." (pg 298) Do you think Jess finally

allows herself to find happiness and redemption? To lay those ghosts to rest? How does she grow as a character?