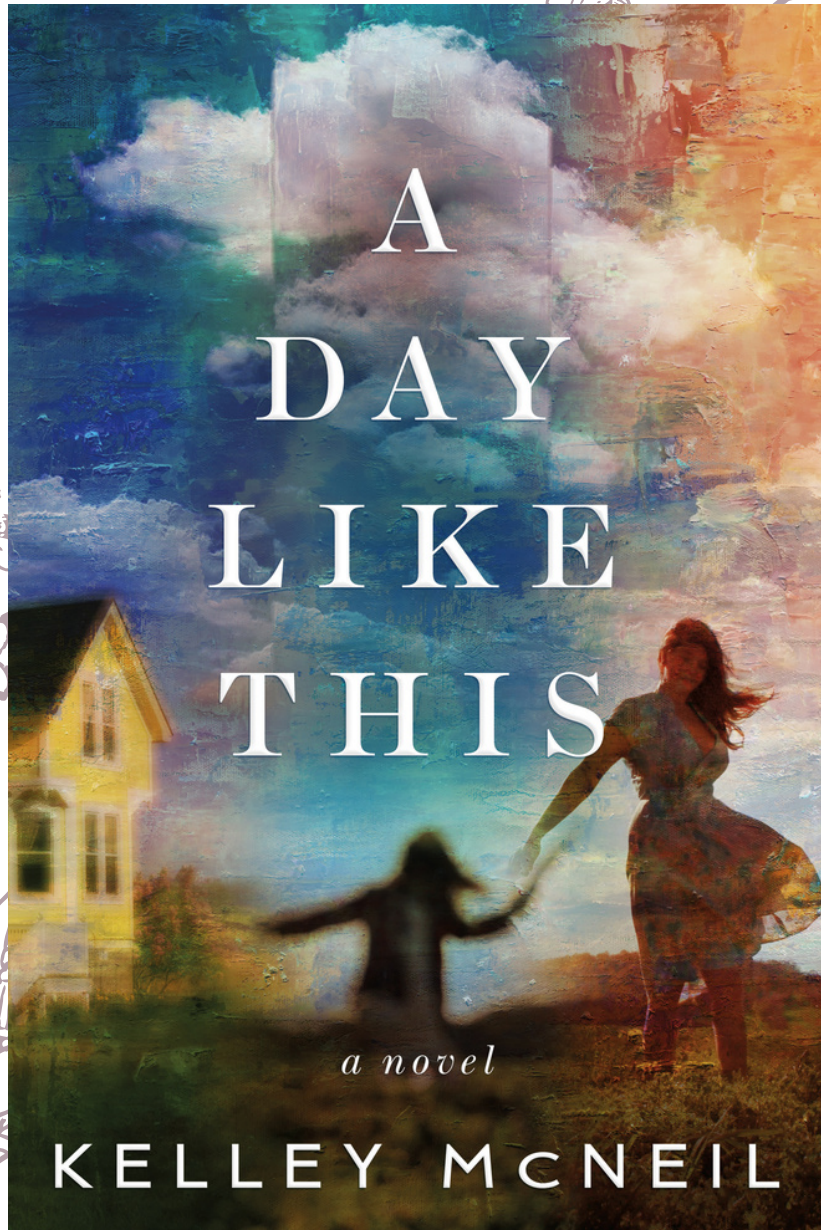


*Book Club Kit*



TO INVITE KELLEY TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR BOOK CLUB (IN-PERSON OR ZOOM) PLEASE SUBMIT A REQUEST WITH DETAILS VIA THE CONTACT FORM ON KELLEY'S WEBSITE AND SHE WILL GET BACK TO YOU.

## A LETTER FROM KELLEY

Dear Book Club Readers,

Thank you so much for choosing *A Day Like This*! I hope you have enjoyed going on Annie's journey with me, as much as I have enjoyed sharing this story with you.

I'm frequently asked what inspired me to write *A Day Like This*. The answer comes in several parts and it was only when I wove them together that Annie's story was born. It first began with an idea I had while driving with my young daughter on a rural, winding road one rainy day: "What if we were in an accident and she disappeared?" As a mother, the thought made me shiver. I often thought it would make an interesting storyline to explore and had so many possibilities.



And then there was the idea of a woman losing a beloved house, and the way we tend to develop a kind of rosy recollection about past times and places in our lives. The story is often very much like a love letter to her "Yellow House" which becomes a sort of living, breathing character in the book. I was very much inspired by the beautiful area of the Catskill mountains where I used to live, and the longing I frequently feel to return. In that way, there is a big part of my heart in this book and some healing took place for me in writing about it. Fun fact: the book was originally titled *The Yellow House*, but when a book by the same name won some very big prizes, we (sadly) had to change it!

Somewhere along the way, I came across the Welsh word *Hiraeth*, which is roughly translated to: A homesickness or longing to return to a home or place that you can't return to, or never existed. That phrase helped create the overall mood of the book and the feeling of Annie's ennui that I think many of us have felt, even in a seemingly perfect life.

Finally, I came across some very strange and compelling real-world accounts of people who claim to have experienced something similar as Annie (albeit somewhat less dramatic.) This led me down a rabbit hole into some fascinating research into the intersections of science and the supernatural. I could have written about that all day long! Fortunately, I had some talented editors keeping me in check so that the heart of Annie's story stayed on track.

I hope you enjoy *A Day Like This* and that the story helps you look at the possibilities for your own life in a meaningful way, with hope and compassion. This is a story about the way we question and second-guess the paths we choose and the voice that lives inside us, begging to be heard. It's my hope that Annie's story will inspire you to tune into this inner voice, (and maybe even start to see the magic hovering around you in everyday life.) Thank you again for reading it.

With love,

*Kelley*



A  
DAY  
LIKE  
THIS

## Topics for Discussion

1. One of the themes of the book is the idea that memory is often unreliable. Dr. Higgins explains to Annie that our memories are highly suggestible and that we fill in missing details with imagination (chapter 10). Do you think he's right?

2. Annie assigns meaning and a kind of spirit to the items that she's lost or left behind in the Yellow House, grieving them one by one. "It was as if the house were crying with me, begging me not to leave it" (chapter 29). Do you believe that objects and homes have emotional value or energetic essence beyond the practical and tangible? Talk about an item from your life that you've lost and how it affected you.

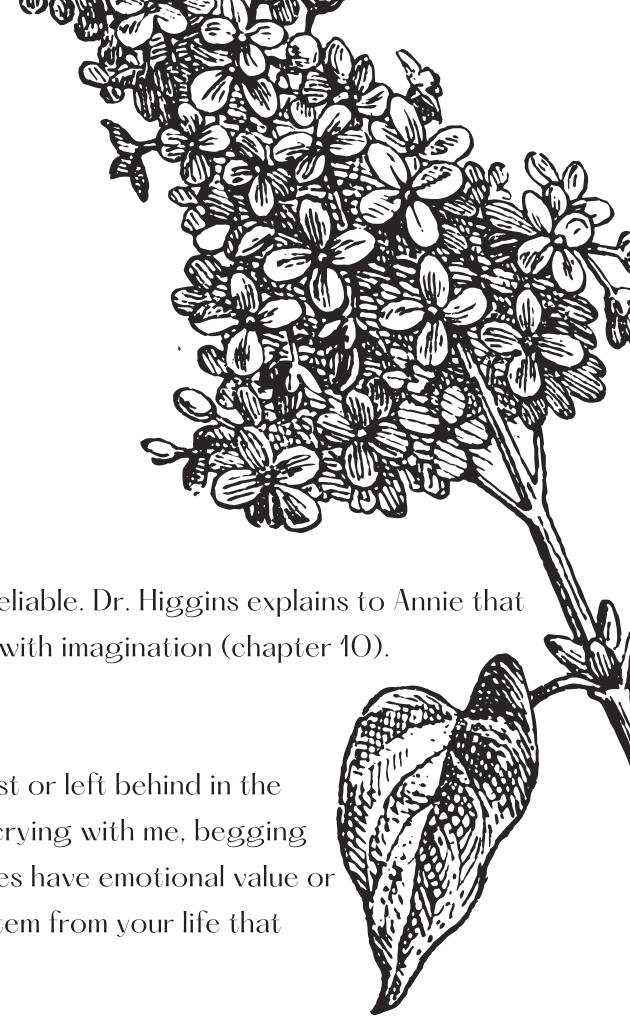
3. Annie feels pulled between the facts presented to her versus what she feels in her heart and gut is true. Have you had an experience when your instincts led you in one direction without fact or reason?

4. The structure of the novel lies in exploring two worlds for Annie—one in her memories from the Yellow House, and the other in the present settings of New York and London. Do you feel the author was successful in moving the reader between these two worlds? What kinds of imagery were used to create the feelings in one world versus the other?

5. The story explores how fate can lead us down different paths in life. "There is a very good possibility that the universe is made of many dimensions and parallel timelines other than our own," Eunice explains. Do you believe this? Has there been a defining fork in the road that altered your path and if so, explore what you might be doing right now "on a day like this" in another life.

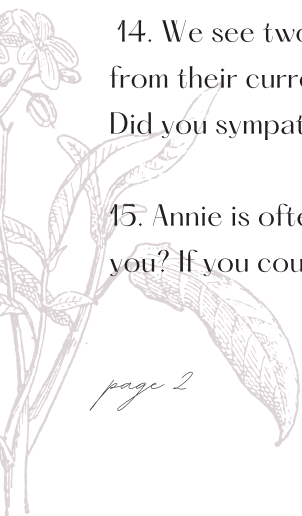
6. Annie's mother suffered from a mental illness that deeply impacted Annie's childhood experience. How did it affect Annie's confidence in herself and the way she navigated her situation?

*Did you think  
Hannah was real?*



## Topics for Discussion

7. Eunice helps Annie further understand the possibilities of her situation, citing things like déjà vu, time travel and paranormal activity that can provide insights into a world beyond the one in which we live. What is your opinion on this? Have you ever visited a psychic or had a brush with the paranormal?
8. Jonathan says to Annie, “Our history is all our own perception, anyway. Until we meet and create a new part of the story together.” Do you agree with his suggestion that the details of our past aren’t all that relevant when meeting someone new?
9. If you could magically return to a home or place from earlier in your life and find it just as it was, where would you go?
10. The story is told from Annie’s unreliable point of view, which even she has trouble trusting as fact. How did her questionable perception of reality and events affect the story? Did you believe in Hannah’s existence? Which of the characters did you trust the most?
11. A breaking point for Annie occurred when they were losing their beloved house to foreclosure as a result of the financial and housing crash of 2008 that affected countless families across the U.S. in a similar way. Discuss the cultural significance from this time.
12. Did you think Graham and Marcie were justified in hiding some facts from Annie, or do you think they should have been forthcoming from the start?
13. In an attempt to escape her fear of inheriting her mother’s illness and repeating the events of her own childhood, Annie is consumed with being a “perfect mother” making everything as “perfect” as possible for her daughter’s life; and Marcie makes a career creating perfect, flawless photos as an online influencer. Do you think the idealized standards of motherhood portrayed on social media affects today’s parents in a positive or negative way? How?
14. We see two versions of Graham — one from their life at the Yellow House and another from their current circumstances. What were some of the differences in his personality? Did you sympathize with his experience?
15. Annie is often torn between her love of the country and her love of the city. What about you? If you could choose one of Annie’s homes to live in, which would you choose?



# ANNIE'S "PROVINCIAL" LASAGNA

## SAUCE

- 1 lb lean ground beef
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 carrot
- 8 strips bacon or pancetta, fried & chopped
- 2 onions
- 1 handful chopped fresh basil (or 1 tsp dried)
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 bay leaf
- 2/3 cup white wine
- 2/3 cup milk
- 2 (14 -1/2oz) cans chopped tomatoes

Brown the ground beef in a large pan, about 10 minutes, & transfer to a bowl. (Annie likes to use vegetarian beef crumbles but either way is good!) Finely mince the onions, celery, carrot and garlic using a food processor (or by hand.) Combine the veggies & bacon in a pan & cook on medium for 10 minutes. Return the meat & add basil, tomato paste, bay leaf & wine. Simmer for 2 minutes. Stir in the milk & tomatoes, plus 1/4 cup water. Season with salt & pepper. Simmer for an hour & a half.

## LASAGNA

- 2 -1/2 cups milk
- 4 tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup flour
- 3- 1/2 oz parmesan cheese, grated
- 9 oz dry lasagna noodles (the kind that don't need to be boiled first)
- several handfuls of fresh baby spinach
- pinch nutmeg
- 4oz fresh mozzarella, torn into pieces

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Make the cheese sauce: add milk & butter to a medium pan, sift in the flour & whisk for 5 minutes until it comes to a boil & is thick & smooth. Add parmesan & nutmeg, and pinch of salt and pepper. In a large dish, layer the lasagna starting with bolognese sauce, spinach, cheese sauce, then pasta. Repeat. Top with bolognese sauce & finish with pieces of torn mozzarella. Bake for 40-50 minutes. Let rest before serving.

"Are you hungry? I made lasagna." It was his favorite - layers of spinach and cheese and the sauce I'd perfected. Cooking it had made me feel a tiny bit less homesick.

