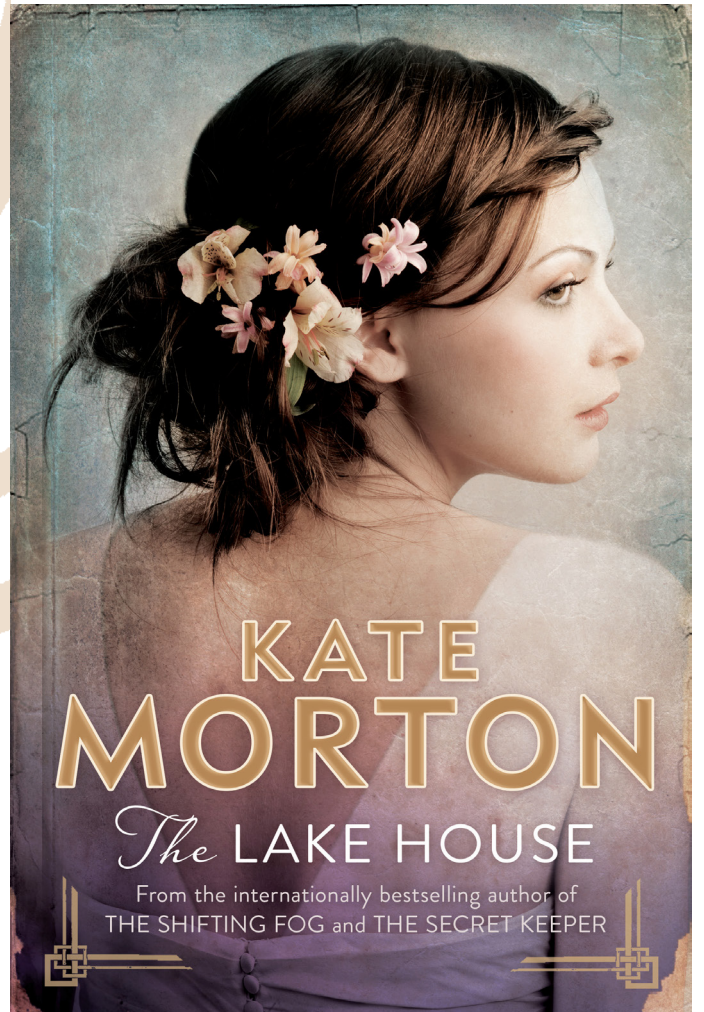


ALLEN & UNWIN



READING GROUP NOTES

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About the book

A missing child.

June 1933, and the Edevane family's country house, Loanneth, is polished and gleaming, ready for the much-anticipated Midsummer Eve party. Alice Edevane, sixteen years old and a budding writer, is especially excited. Not only has she worked out the perfect twist for her novel, she's also fallen helplessly in love with someone she shouldn't have. But by the time midnight strikes and fireworks light up the night skies, the Edevane family will have suffered a loss so great that they leave Loanneth forever.

An abandoned house.

Seventy years later, after a particularly troubling case, Sadie Sparrow is sent on an enforced break from her job with the Metropolitan Police. She retreats to her beloved grandfather's cottage in Cornwall but soon finds herself at a loose end. Until one day, Sadie stumbles upon an abandoned house surrounded by overgrown gardens and dense woods, and learns the story of a baby boy who disappeared without a trace.

An unsolved mystery.

Meanwhile, in the attic writing room of her elegant Hampstead home, the formidable Alice Edevane, now an old lady, leads a life as neatly plotted as the bestselling detective novels she writes. Until a young police detective starts asking questions about her family's past, seeking to resurrect the complex tangle of secrets Alice has spent her life trying to escape.

About the author

Kate Morton grew up in the mountains of south-east Queensland and lives now with her husband and three young sons in Brisbane. She has degrees in dramatic art and English literature, specialising in nineteenth-century tragedy and contemporary gothic novels. Kate Morton has sold over 9 million copies in 26 languages, across 38 countries. *The Shifting Fog*, published internationally as *The House at Riverton*, *The Forgotten Garden*, *The Distant Hours* and *The Secret Keeper* have all been number one bestsellers around the world. You can find more information about Kate Morton and her books at katemorton.com or [facebook.com/KateMortonAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/KateMortonAuthor), or follow Kate's Instagram, [@katemortonauthor](https://www.instagram.com/katemortonauthor).

Reviews

"Bestselling storyteller Morton (*The Secret Keeper*) excels in this mystery set against the gothic backdrop of 1930s England... Morton's plotting is impeccable, and her finely wrought characters, brought together in the end by Sparrow's investigation, are as surprised as readers will be by the astonishing conclusion." - *Publishers Weekly*

“History, mystery, a split yet deftly interlocking time frame, the complexities of family, the sweep of England’s grand country homes—of course it’s a Kate Morton novel. And once again she delivers the satisfactions of all her best sellers since debuting with *The House at Riverton* [*The Shifting Fog*].” - *Library Journal*

For discussion

- 📖 The structure of this novel lies in recreating different time periods in Cornwall and London - in the early 1930s and in 2003. Do you feel that the author was successful in seamlessly moving the reader between both the historical and more contemporary times?
- 📖 Thinking about the stories and histories in *The Lake House*, what themes did you feel were most interesting to you?
- 📖 *The Lake House* is the English translation for Loanneth, the country house’s Cornish name. Have you read other novels in which a house features within the text as vital and alive, almost as if it is another three-dimensional character?
- 📖 The main female characters, Sadie, Alice and Eleanor are all strong women with flaws. Is this the way you saw them? Did their imperfections allow you to identify or sympathise with one more than another? If so, why do you think that was?
- 📖 Sadie Sparrow’s job as a detective and Alice’s bestselling crime writing career has allowed an interesting incursion of the crime genre into *The Lake House*’s gothic mystery genre. Were you aware of this in your reading?
- 📖 Both World War I and II have tragic and far-reaching effects on the characters and narrative of *The Lake House*. Discuss.
- 📖 Mysteries, twists, family secrets, carefully placed red herrings and unexpected revelations are now compelling traditions in Kate Morton’s novels. What parts of the novel were key to your enjoyment of the story?
- 📖 The author poses the often complex question of what moral obligation each character has to another within their particular stories. Were there decisions made within the novel with which you violently disagreed? Or could you see yourself making similar decisions?

More reading from Kate Morton

The Shifting Fog

The Forgotten Garden

The Distant Hours

The Secret Keeper

Suggested reading

The Paying Guests, Sarah Waters

All the Light We Cannot See, Anthony Doerr

Rebecca, Daphne du Maurier

A Spool of Blue Thread, Anne Tyler