



NANCY: A beautifully written coming of age novel about a young girl raised by her father in the remote environment of a deserted island. A traumatic story in many ways, but as the young girl navigates the world through her heightened sense of smell, she finds a path to maturity and a place for herself in the outside world. I loved the author's use of words in this novel and her ability to craft very unusual characters.



KATHARINE: Well, this one made it into Reese Witherspoon's Hello Sunshine Book selections, so sure to be popular among the young readers in the college classes. A modern novel to be added to the American literature class list, I would suggest. Plenty of depth for discussion and interpretation. Should keep the students and professors busy for awhile.



JANE: Whew, this was a strange one. I liked the entrepreneur spirit of Emmeline's mother. What a woman. But also liked her until I didn't. Business people don't need to be so ruthless.



PRISCILLA: Oh my, I didn't find Jesus in this story, unless you want to see him in the neighborly ones. The couple who took Emmeline in, the friendship between Emmeline and Fisher. Yes, I agree with Jane, a strange story, but I do get more out of it after discussing it with all of you.



MOLLY: The domestic violence story with Fisher's family seemed very realistic and scary. I'm glad Fisher escaped, and not surprised his mother didn't. That happens so often. She did a great job with the family dynamics in Emmeline's family, too, but I don't want to spoil it for you!



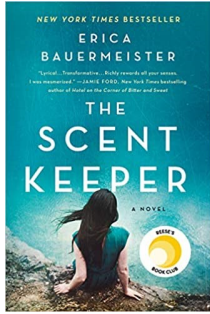
ABIGAIL: After I read this, I listened to an interview with the author and learned her goal was to write about someone who approached the world through the sense of smell. She got the idea watching her dog! It all makes much more "sense" now! That's why she isolated the girl in the story. An intriguing thought that she executed well in the telling of the story.



SALLIE: Poor child! What a life with that crazy father of her. Some of my students put up with worse though, with drug addicts, narcissists and mental health issues. I didn't really care for either of Emmeline's parents. I'm glad she put some more decent adults in the story to nurture her. And also glad for her friendship with Fisher! Sad story in many ways.



Discussion Guide



About the Book

Title: The Scent Keeper

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Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. What were your favorite parts of this book? Explain.
3. In the beginning of this book, Emmeline and her father, John, are isolated on a deserted island. What other books have you read about people alone on islands, and those growing up apart from other civilization? How did this compare to them?
4. The story involves keeping and preserving of scents. What did the scents mean to Emmeline, her father and to Emmeline's mother?
5. Why do you think that the author focused on scents for this novel? What deeper meaning might she be lifting up with this focus?
6. What were the familial relationships in this book and did you identify with any of them? Explain.
7. This is described as a coming of age novel. How did Emmeline grow and develop during the story, coming to terms with her father, the outside world and eventually her mother?
8. How did Emmeline learn to use her gift of scents in the world? What would you say your gift(s) is/are and how you use them in the world? How did you come to learn about your own gifts?
9. Read over the MAMs perspective on the book. With whom do you most agree and why?
10. In what ways, if any, will this book change your life or perspective?

Listen to Erica Bauermeister on YouTube:

"Erica Bauermeister Interview" (10:43)