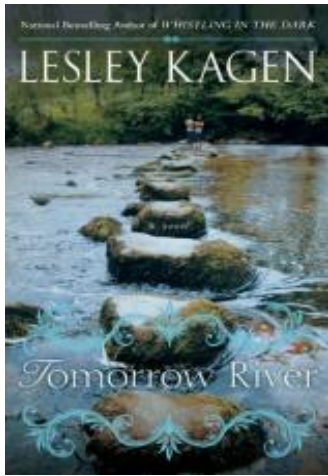


Tomorrow River

by Lesley Kagen



About the Book

During the summer of 1968, Shenandoah Carmody's mother disappeared. Her twin sister, Woody, stopped speaking, and her once-loving father slipped into a mean drunkenness unbecoming a superior court judge. Since then, Shenny --- named for the Shenandoah Valley --- has struggled to hold her world together, taking care of herself and her sister the best she can. Shenny feels certain that Woody knows something about the night their mother vanished, but her attempts to communicate with her mute twin leave her as confused as their father's efforts to confine the girls to the family's renowned Virginia estate.

As the first anniversary of their mother's disappearance nears, her father's threat to send Woody away and his hints at an impending remarriage spur a desperate Shenny to find her mother before it's too late. She is ultimately swept up in a series of heartbreaking events that force her to come to terms with the painful truth about herself and her family.

Told with the wisdom, sensitivity, and humor for which Lesley Kagen has become known, **Tomorrow River** is a stellar hardcover debut.

Discussion Guide

1. The story is told through 11-year-old Shenny's eyes. What are the limitations of an unreliable narrator's point of view? What are the advantages? Are there things that Shenny overlooks or perhaps observes that an adult narrator wouldn't?
2. *Tomorrow River* is set in a smallish southern town. Is this a story that could take place anywhere, anytime? Why do you think the author chose this setting?

3. The late 60's was a time of transition racially and socially in the South. How did the characters react to these changes?
4. Did Evelyn's Northern heritage divide the community? Did she influence any of the characters in a positive way?
5. Shenny and Woody, although identical twins, are so different. Why do you think that is?
6. Shenny has hope in the face of hopelessness. Have you ever encountered a situation in which you've had to be courageous against all odds?
7. E.J. and Shenny have a complicated relationship. How would you describe it?
8. How do you think what the twins went through will affect them later in life?
9. How did you feel about the girls' grandmother? Their grandfather? Were they victims in their own ways?
10. Of all the characters, Judge Carmody is perhaps the most conflicted. How would you describe what he was going through?
11. In life, the strong often dominate the weak. Would you say that's true in this story or is it more complicated than that?
12. What part does the character of Beezy play in the story?
13. What aspects of Shenny's personality do you admire the most?
14. Has the respect we had for people of wealth and power in the 60's diminished in any way?
15. Who is your favorite character? Your least favorite? Why?

Author Bio

Lesley Kagen is an actress, voice-over talent and restaurateur, as well as the author of two national bestselling novels. WHISTLING IN THE DARK has been translated into five languages and was a Midwest Choice Honor winner. LAND OF A HUNDRED WONDERS, an Indie Next pick, was also nominated for a Midwest Choice Award. She lives near Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Critical Praise

"This book is packed with warmth, wit, intelligence, images savory enough to taste - and deep dark places that are all the more terrible for being surrounded by so much brightness."

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