

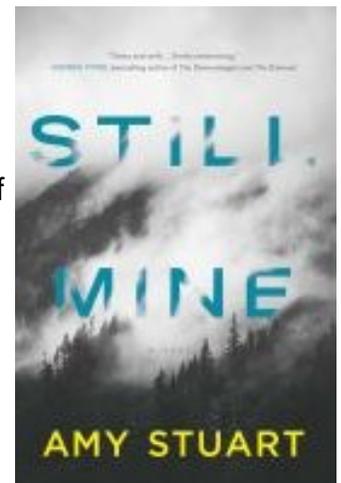


Still Mine

Amy Stuart

Discussion Questions

1. Before sending Clare into Blackmore, Malcolm Boon hastily decides that her alias will be O'Dey, meaning “servant” or “maid.” Discuss the significance of this name. What do you think Malcolm meant by it? And was he right in this choice? Why or why not?
2. As she immerses herself in the little mining town, Clare is forced to think back on past “versions” of herself. There is 19-year-old Clare, happy and on the cusp of adulthood with her best friend, Grace. There is the married Clare, close to broken at the bottom of her cellar steps. Which version of Clare do we see at the beginning of the book? At the end? How are they different?
3. Shayna writes that her mother, Louise, believes that tragedy can alter a constitution. But Shayna thinks otherwise. She posits that there is a core in each of us that can never be changed; it separates the good from the bad. Whose side do you think Clare would take? Why?
4. Clare revises history to imagine a world in which she had stayed in art school, or had forced Jason to hold their dead baby in his hand. Discuss the role of regret in the novel. How much do you think one decision can alter a life?
5. If, as Clare surmises, Shayna left a “hole” or a “vacancy” in the town of Blackmore, she is not the only one. What other holes did you see widening? And how did these characters go about filling them?
6. When Jared finally tells Clare what happened in the mine, he claims that it’s “hard to blame the dead for anything.” Discuss the scene he describes, and the interplay of grief and blame. Are they necessarily inseparable in this case? Why or why not?
7. Based on her writings, what perspectives did Shayna gain from her time in the mine? How do you think they will affect her future, now that she has survived similar traumas to Clare?





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About the Author

Amy Stuart won the 2011 Writers' Union of Canada Short Prose Competition for Developing Writers, and was a finalist for the 2012 Vanderbilt/Exile Award. She is a recent masters' graduate from the University of British Columbia. Amy lives in Toronto with her husband and her three so

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