



Flat Water Tuesday

Ron Irwin

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READING GROUP GUIDE

About the book:

Rob Carrey, the son of a working-class cabinet maker, arrives at the Fenton School with a scholarship to row and a chip on his shoulder. Generations of austere Fenton men have led the rowing team, known as the God Four, to countless victories—but none are as important or renowned as the annual Tuesday-afternoon race against their rival, Warwick.

But first Rob must complete months of preparation driven by their captain Connor Payne's vicious, competitive nature. As the race nears, the stakes rise, tempers and lusts are fueled, and no one can prevent the horrible tragedy that befalls one of them.

Fifteen years later, Rob returns home from a film shoot in Africa to end a heartbreaking relationship with his girlfriend Carolyn. But when a phone call from one of the God Four compels him to attend the reunion at Fenton, no part of Rob's past remains sequestered for long and nothing about his future is certain.

As much about the sport of rowing as it is a novel of finding oneself, not once, but again in mid-life, *Flat Water Tuesday* is a testament to the pride and passion of youth, and an ode to the journey of forgiveness.

Discussion Questions

1. How did you experience the novel? Did you feel it was a love story or a rowing story—or both?
2. The main character's voice switches often between being that of an adolescent and that of an adult. How did the author do this, and was it effective? Which did you prefer?
3. Did this novel fulfill your expectations? Why or why not?



4. Do the main characters in *Flat Water Tuesday* change throughout the novel? How does this change occur?
5. Did the actions of the main characters seem believable?
6. Many readers know nothing about the sport of rowing. Did *Flat Water Tuesday*'s rowing sequences engage you?
7. Take a moment to discuss the structure of the novel. Did you enjoy the framed narrative, which switched from the past to the present day? Which did you enjoy more and why?
8. Did you find any passages in the novel that were particularly evocative or moving? Disappointing or depressing? Take a moment to discuss your favorite scenes, background characters, even dialogue.
9. Would you recommend *Flat Water Tuesday* to other readers? What would be your one-sentence pitch?
10. We are taught, as young readers, that every story had a "moral." What, do you think, is the moral of *Flat Water Tuesday*? What can be learned from this novel—about our world, about our own selves?

Want to learn more about Ron Irwin?

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