

READING GROUP GUIDE

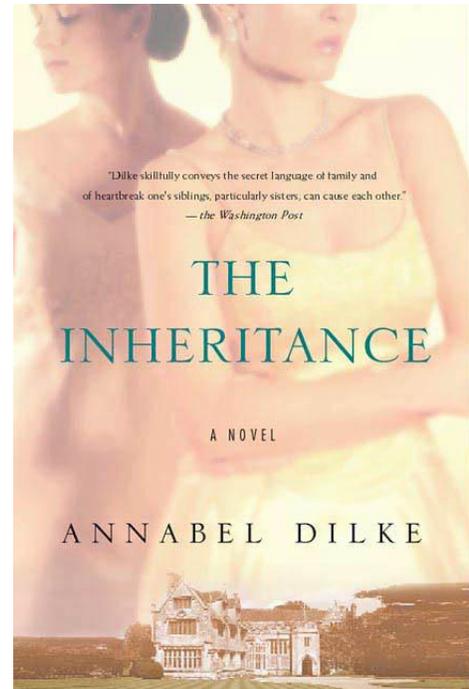
The Inheritance

A Novel

By Annabel Dilke

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About this Guide

The following author biography and list of questions about *The Inheritance* are intended as resources to aid individual readers and book groups who would like to learn more about the author and this book. We hope that this guide will provide you a starting place for discussion, and suggest a variety of perspectives from which you might approach *The Inheritance*.

About the Book

From the *New York Times* to the *Washington Post* to Rosamunde Pilcher and Elizabeth Buchan, critics cheer this sweeping, modern tale of love, betrayal, and decline among the British aristocracy.

At their magnificent estate, the Chandlers cling to the trappings of aristocracy in 1960s England. Beautiful 18-year-old Alice is marrying the heir to another fortune and her sister Eve has won a place at Oxford. But their charmed lives are not all they seem. Alice is having an affair with a handsome but disreputable lover. Her father is a philanderer whose chronic infidelity pushes his wife Felicity into the arms of another man. And Eve's academic future is cut short by an act of betrayal. Nearly forty years later, Felicity remembers that long ago wedding day when their lives changed forever.



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About the Author

Annabel Dilke is a novelist, journalist, and screenwriter whose books have been shortlisted for numerous awards. *The Inheritance* was her first book published in the United States. She lives in South London.

Discussion Questions

1. Is Harry Chandler the architect of his own misfortunes or the victim of his rarefied upbringing?
2. Alice is the beautiful sister and Eve the clever one. Who is the more envious of the other?
3. To what extent does a great house justify sacrifice? And is a family ever entitled to believe it is special because of living in such a beautiful and historic place?
4. What is the nature of Harry and Felicity's marriage? When Harry begs her not to abandon him, swearing his love, is this only because he knows he is about to lose everything else?
5. Is each of the children entitled—later in life—to blame their failures and shortcomings on their peculiar upbringing?
6. Is Eve's marriage to Edward happy or simply make-do? Why or why not?
7. Does the novel demonstrate that history is doomed to repeat itself? How or how not?
8. Does everyone who lived through the mythical decade of the sixties look back on it with a certain nostalgia?

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