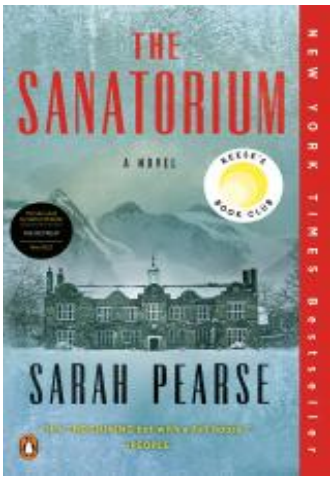
The Sanatorium

by Sarah Pearse



About the Book

You won't want to leave...until you can't.

Half-hidden by forest and overshadowed by threatening peaks, Le Sommet has always been a sinister place. Long plagued by troubling rumors, the former abandoned sanatorium has since been renovated into a five-star minimalist hotel.

An imposing, isolated getaway spot high up in the Swiss Alps is the last place Elin Warner wants to be. But Elin has taken time off from her job as a detective, so when her estranged brother, Isaac, and his fiancée, Laure, invite her to celebrate their engagement at the hotel, Elin really has no reason not to accept.

Arriving in the midst of a threatening storm, Elin immediately feels on edge --- there's something about the hotel that makes her nervous. And when they wake the following morning to discover Laure is missing, Elin must trust her instincts if they hope to find her. With the storm closing off all access to the hotel, the longer Laure stays missing, the more the remaining guests start to panic.

Elin is under pressure to find Laure, but no one has realized yet that another woman has gone missing. And she's the only one who could have warned them just how much danger they are all in.

Discussion Guide

1. The hotel at the heart of the novel, Le Sommet, was converted from a tuberculosis sanatorium. How do the building?s history and design shape the narrative? Would you choose to stay in a hotel with a history like Le Sommet?s? Why or why not?

2. How do you think the remote alpine setting helps to heighten the sense of claustrophobia and isolation both within the

novel and within Elin?s own mind?

3. In order to solve the case, Elin must overcome her fear of water and learn how to control her panic attacks. What advice would you give to someone who is struggling with a particular fear or anxiety and wants to move past it?

4. Elin and her brother, Isaac, have a difficult relationship for much of the novel. How does their dynamic change over the course of the book? Do you think they navigate their relationship successfully throughout? What could they have done differently?

5. There are several strong female characters within the novel. Do you think the choice of a female detective as the protagonist is important to the novel and the themes it covers?

6. Elin discovering the real story behind her younger brother?s death forces her to confront some uncomfortable truths. Do you think deception can have a positive impact in certain circumstances, or does it only ever have negative consequences?

7. The past haunts Elin --- in both her private and her professional spheres --- when she arrives at Le Sommet. How does her personal history affect the decisions she makes throughout the novel?

8. Did you expect any of the reveals throughout the book? Did the ending surprise you? Why or why not?

9. The hotel?s past touches on an uncomfortable subject: the suppression and control of women?s lives and how people often choose to ?look the other way? when faced with the evidence. To what extent do you think that is still true today? Discuss.

Author Bio

Sarah Pearse grew up in Devon, England, and studied English literature and creative writing at the University of Warwick before completing a postgraduate diploma in broadcast journalism. THE SANATORIUM, her debut, was an instant *New York Times* bestseller and a #1 *Sunday Times* bestseller, and was selected as a Reese?s Book Club pick. THE RETREAT, her second novel, was also a New York Times and Sunday Times bestseller.

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