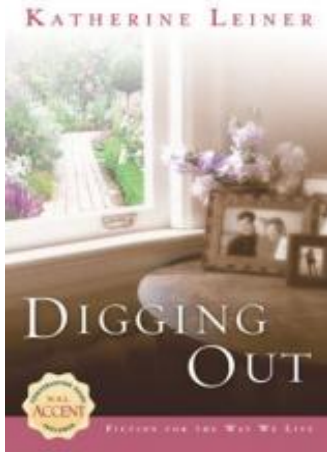


Digging Out

by Katherine Leiner



About the Book

Set against the backdrop of the magnificent Welsh landscape, this is a haunting, inspiring and heart-lifting novel of loss, family reconciliation, and the healing power of love?

When she was eight years old, Alys Davies survived a tragedy in the small Welsh town where she was born. It claimed the lives of 116 other children. It shattered the village with guilt and stunning disbelief and destroyed her family. Each sought their own private—and devastating—escape. For Alys it was to flee to the United States, far away from the memories, where she could rebuild her life, realize her budding career as a poet, and marry. Now, a new tragedy unfolds in Alys's life, forcing her to face her demons. Grieving for her past, Alys decides to return to it. Step by step, she makes the long journey back home to Wales, to her dying father, to her estranged mother, to embrace the memories of all that she lost, and to finally open herself to love...

Discussion Guide

1. What could be the various meanings of the title **Digging Out**? In what different ways was Alys buried? What tools does she use to "dig out"?
2. Alys discovers her deceased husband, Marc, has had a child out of wedlock. Based on what we learn about him in the book, what do you think this tells about his character? What does Alys' reaction say about her? Can you imagine why Marc's affair may be partly a reaction to Alys' behavior?
3. In some ways Parry is the most passionate figure in Alys' life. How does the loss of this dark "hero" color, or not color, Alys' relationship with men?

4. How does the early loss of Hallie affect Alys' ability to form strong bonds with other women her age? What role does female friendship play in her adult life? Might stronger, deeper bonds with women help her other relationships?
5. Should Alys and Evan get married? If yes, where should they live?

Author Bio

Katherine Leiner is the author of MAMA DOES THE MAMBO, FIRST CHILDREN: Growing Up in the White House, and HALLOWEEN. She has two children and enjoys cooking and yoga.

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