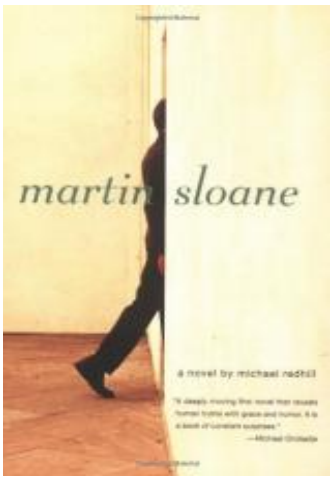
Martin Sloane

by Michael Redhill



About the Book

What does it really mean to love another person? The question hovers like a persistent wisp of fog over the story of **Martin Sloane,** an Irish-born artist who creates intricate, object-filled boxes, and Jolene Iolas, the young American woman who finds herself drawn first to Martin Sloane's art and then to the man himself. The story of their relationship across two decades, and of Jolene's search for Martin Sloane when one day he disappears from their home without warning or explanation, is told in a novel that brilliantly and movingly explores the vagaries of love and friendship, the burdens of personal history, and the enigmatic power of art.

Discussion Guide

1. Discuss Martin and Jolene's first meeting. What draws her to him and to eventually fall in love with him, both as a man and as an artist? Does their age difference affect their relationship?

2. What happens the night Molly visits Jolene in Indiana? Why does Martin then leave, never to return?

3. Why does Jolene go to Ireland to search for Martin Sloane at a point in her life when she finally moves past her relationship with Martin and is with a new love?

4. On page 177, Martin's father takes Martin to a church and tells him, "You're entitled to God's protection, no matter what your mother says, and refusing the gift of His love is as bad as succumbing to temptation. . . That's something that's between you and me and God, you understand, for always." How does this experience affect the young Martin?

5. Do you think Martin's childhood experiences - with his illness, of his move to Galway, and then to Canada while his father stayed behind - had any effect on his relationship with Jolene?

6. How has Jolene's mother's death affected Jolene's adult life? Does it relate to or influence her decision to later search for Martin Sloane?

7. Each chapter begins with a description of Martin Sloane's artwork. How do these descriptions relate to the chapters that follow and to the overall book?

8. The character and artwork of Martin Sloane was originally inspired by Joseph Cornell, a collage/sculpture artist from New York, active during the first half of the 20th century. If you have seen Cornell's art, does it affect how you read the character? How do you feel about fiction inspired by historical characters?

9. The book Martin Sloane makes references to James Joyce's writings in its settings and characterizations. How does this affect your read of Martin Sloane, if at all?

10. What was this story about for you? The search for love? For friendship? The meaning of memory? Of art? How do you feel about the author creating the character Martin Sloane as an absence in the novel?

11. Discuss the book's ending. What does it mean? Is it satisfying?

Author Bio

Michael Redhill is the managing editor of the Literary Journal "Brick." He has worked as a cultural critic, essayist, editor, ghostwriter, screenwriter, and, in leaner times, waiter, housepainter, and bookseller. **Martin Sloane** is his first novel.

Critical Praise

"**MARTIN SLOANE** is such a good novel it is hard to believe it is Michael Redhill's first. Lyrical, funny, moving, and writerly in the most engaging way, it deserves a wide readership."

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