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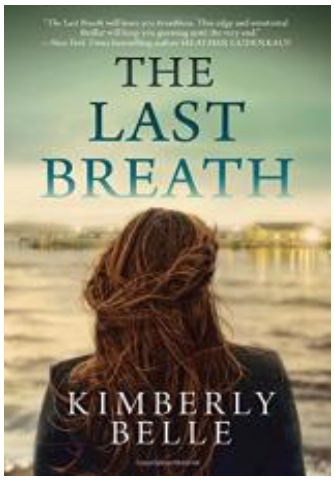
The Last Breath

by Kimberly Belle



About the Book

From a remarkable new voice in suspenseful women's fiction comes an emotionally searing drama about a woman who risks her life to discover the devastating truth about her family?

Humanitarian aid worker Gia Andrews chases disasters around the globe for a living. It?s the perfect lifestyle to keep her far away from her own personal ground zero. Sixteen years ago, Gia?s father was imprisoned for brutally killing her stepmother. Now he?s come home to die of cancer, and she?s responsible for his care --- and coming to terms with his guilt.

Gia reluctantly resumes the role of daughter to the town?s most infamous murderer, a part complete with protesters on the lawn and death threats that are turning tragedy into front-page news. Returning to life in small-town Tennessee involves rebuilding relationships that distance and turmoil have strained, though finding an emotional anchor in the attractive hometown bartender is certainly helping Gia cope.

As the past unravels before her, Gia will find herself torn between the stories that her family, their friends and neighbors, and even her long-departed stepmother have believed to be real all these years. But in the end, the truth --- and all the lies that came before --- may have deadlier consequences than she could have ever anticipated...

Discussion Guide

1. In THE LAST BREATH, the story begins with Gia returning home to care for her dying father, a man she hasn?t seen or spoken to in sixteen years. She?s not convinced he?s guilty of murdering her stepmother, but she?s not certain he?s innocent, either. Would you have returned home in this case?

2. Why do you think Gia chose a career chasing disasters around the planet? Was it to feed her wanderlust, to get away

from her past in Rogersville or something else entirely? Does it matter if her reasons were not purely altruistic, as long as she?s helping others?

3. Alternatively, do you understand Lexi?s reasons for remaining in Rogersville, and Jake?s for settling there? Are their methods of coping with their traumas better or worse than Gia?s?

4. Think about the bonds of family --- the obligations that hold them together and the secrets that can tear them apart. What do you think the author was trying to say with Gia?s story?

5. Have you or someone you know ever been caught up in a destructive and abusive relationship? How did reading about Ella Mae and Dean make you feel about that relationship? Did it change any of your thoughts or beliefs about how that relationship played out?

6. Gia keeps finding herself in situations where she?s either disappointed by her family members, or she feels she?s disappointing them. Is there anything she should have handled differently?

7. At one point, Gia realizes that Cal?s defense wasn?t accidentally shoddy, that he threw the most prominent and important case of his life on purpose. Do you understand Cal?s choice to defend his brother, while also ensuring Ray paid for what he did? What about Cal?s promise to keep Ray?s secret from his children?

8. Do you understand Jake?s reasons for keeping his true identity secret from the people in Rogersville? What about from Gia? Was he right or wrong in not telling?

9. After her father?s deathbed confession, Gia forgives her father, even if she will never be able to forgive his action. Further, according to Gia, ?And if I can?t do either of those things just yet, the least I can do is give him peace.? Could you do the same in her position?

10. Where do you think Gia and Jake end up? What do their lives look like a year or two or ten down the line?

Author Bio

Kimberly Belle is the Edgar Award-winning, *USA Today* and internationally bestselling author with more than one million copies sold worldwide, with titles including THE PARIS WIDOW; THE MARRIAGE LIE, a Goodreads Choice Awards semifinalist for Best Mystery & Thriller; and the co-authored #1 Audible Original, YOUNG RICH WIDOWS. Kimberly?s novels have been optioned for film and television and selected by LibraryReads and Amazon & Apple Books Editors as Best Books of the Month, and the International Thriller Writers as nominee for best book of the year. She divides her time between Atlanta and Amsterdam.

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