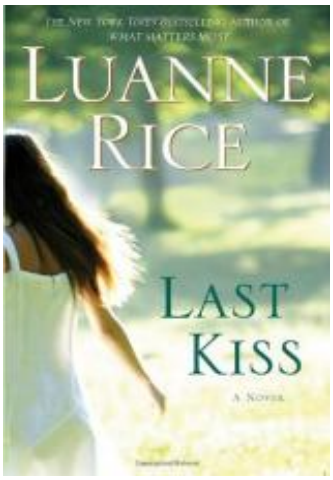
The Last Kiss

by Luanne Rice



About the Book

Returning to the characters first introduced in **Beach Girls**, which inspired a popular television miniseries, *New York Times* bestselling author Luanne Rice takes us once again to Hubbard?s Point, Connecticut. **Last Kiss**reacquaints us with Nell (now a young woman of eighteen), free-spirited author/artist Stevie, and others. A tragedy has brought them together: the handsome aspiring filmmaker who had captured Nell?s heart is found murdered in Manhattan. The search for answers leads to surprising revelations, while reuniting lovers who had given up on their future years ago. Exploring the sometimes fragile bonds between kindred souls, even parents and their children, **Last Kiss** captures the tender beauty of reconciliation and remembrance.

The questions and discussion topics that follow are intended to enhance your reading of Luanne Rice?s **Last Kiss.** We hope they will enrich your experience of this captivating novel.

Discussion Guide

1. Why was Nell able to trust Gavin, not only to investigate Charlie?s death but also to understand her grief? What made him different from the others in her life?

2. Discuss the novel?s title. What worlds were opened by Nell?s bittersweet kisses with Charlie? What changes were marked by first and last love in the other characters? lives?

3. Charlie was about to embark on a first-rate education in filmmaking. What did his promising career say about his personality? How did his perceptive eye affect his relationship with Nell?

4. Discuss the role of the Rosslare women in Hubbard?s Point. How does their mystical Irish legacy play out? What are their greatest strengths and vulnerabilities?

5. How was Charlie affected by growing up without a father? In what ways did he complete Nell, whose mother died when she was very young?

6. What turning points are reflected in the music and lyrics that are woven throughout **Last Kiss**? What does Sheridan?s career mean to her, and to those around her?

7. How do the three novel?s settings (rural Connecticut, Manhattan, and Nashville) serve as meaningful backdrops? What dreams and realities are reflected in these locales for the characters?

8. At first, how did you interpret Nell's experiences in the cemetery? Was her hope so far-fetched?

9. What were your thoughts as Jack and Stevie debated marriage in chapter fourteen? What was at the heart of their debate?

10. What gave Gavin the courage to reach out, and reclaim a connection to Sheridan? Did their shared history help or hurt their ability to feel safe with one another?

11. How did your opinion of Jeff Easton Quill shift throughout the novel?s closing chapters? What motivated Randy?s actions, in New York and throughout the years leading up to that tragic night?

12. Ultimately, who is to blame for what happened to Charlie? What would constitute justice?

13. What conclusions were reflected by the fire? What aftermaths do you imagine for Nell, Sheridan, and Stevie?

14. Discuss the significance of Gavin?s staying on his boat, near but not within the Hubbard?s Point community. Does it protect him and/or Sheridan, ultimately?

15. What themes begun in **Beach Girls** are reflected in **Last Kiss**? What new directions and unpredicted outcomes unfolded for all generations?

Author Bio

Luanne Rice is the *New York Times* bestselling author of 37 novels, including three YA novels, that have been translated into 30 languages.

Rice?s books often center on love, family, nature and the sea. THE BEAUTIFUL LOST deals with teen depression, something Rice

Several of Rice's novels have been adapted for television, including CRAZY IN LOVE for TNT, BLUE MOON for CBS, FOLLOV

In 2002, Connecticut College awarded Rice an honorary degree. Her papers are located in the college's Special Collections Library. A profile of Rice appeared in *Connecticut College Magazine*, Fall 2014.

She was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from St. Joseph College in West Hartford, Connecticut.

In June 2014, she received the 2014 Connecticut Governor?s Arts Award for excellence and lifetime achievement as a literary artist

Rice, an avid environmentalist, is honored to be a creative affiliate of the Safina Center.

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Publication Date: July 15, 2008
Hardcover: 352 pages
Publisher: Bantam
ISBN-10: 0553805126
ISBN-13: 9780553805123