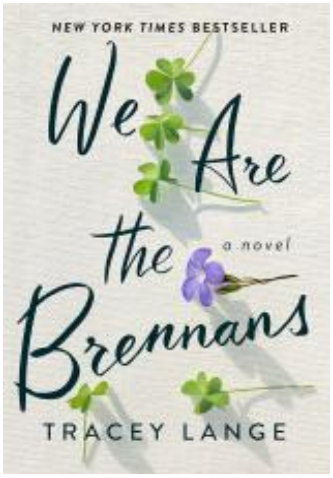
ReadingGroupGuides
The online community for reading groups

We Are the Brennans

by Tracey Lange



About the Book

In the vein of Mary Beth Keane?s ASK AGAIN, YES and Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney's THE NEST, Tracey Lange?s WE ARE THE BRENNANS explores the staying power of shame --- and the redemptive power of love --- in an Irish Catholic family torn apart by secrets.

When 29-year-old Sunday Brennan wakes up in a Los Angeles hospital, bruised and battered after a drunk driving accident she caused, she swallows her pride and goes home to her family in New York. But it?s not easy. She deserted them all --- and her high school sweetheart --- five years before with little explanation, and they have questions.

Sunday is determined to rebuild her life back on the east coast, even if it does mean tiptoeing around resentful brothers and an ex-fiancé. The longer she stays, however, the more she realizes they need her just as much as she needs them. When a dangerous man from her past brings her family?s pub business to the brink of financial ruin, the only way to protect them is to upend all their secrets --- secrets that have damaged the family for generations and will threaten everything they know about their lives. In the aftermath, the Brennan family is forced to confront painful mistakes --- and ultimately find a way forward, together.

Discussion Guide

1. Long-held secrets play a central role in the plot. Do you think important secrets can ever be kept without causing some kind of damage?

2. Do you think Maura and Mickey Brennan?s experience of the Troubles in Ireland led to their habit of secret-keeping? What caused the Brennans to be a family of secret-keepers?

3. Is your family dynamic similar to the Brennans?? In what ways is it different?

4. What is the significance of West Manor as the story?s setting? How does it differ from the other cities mentioned, like Katonah or Los Angeles?

5. Why do you think the author chose to tell each chapter from a different character?s point of view? Do you think it was effective?

6. Which member of the Brennan clan do you relate to the most?

7. What do you think are the most important themes of the book?

8. How did learning about the history between the Brennans and the Walshes change your view of Billy?

9. What roles do mothers play in this book?
Submitted by Hidden Hollow Book Club (West Chester, PA)

10. Do you think Sunday?s coming back into Kale?s life was ultimately a good thing for Kale? For Sunday?

11. What do you think about Kale?s relationship with Vivienne?

12. Did you expect the ending to unfold the way it did?

13. What do you think will happen next for these characters?
Submitted by the Kolvig Literary Club (Minneapolis, MN)

Author Bio

Tracey Lange was born and raised in New York City. She graduated from the University of New Mexico with a degree in psychology before owning and operating a behavioral healthcare company with her husband for fifteen years. She completed the Stanford University online novel writing program, and is the author of WE ARE THE BRENNANS, THE CONNELLYS OF COUNTY DOWN and WHAT HAPPENED TO THE McCRAYS? She currently lives in Bend, Oregon with her husband, two sons and beloved German Shepherd.

We Are the Brennans
by Tracey Lange

Publication Date: June 14, 2022
Genres: Fiction, Women's Fiction
Paperback: 288 pages
Publisher: Celadon Books
ISBN-10: 1250796210
ISBN-13: 9781250796219