



Sanibel Scribbles

A Novel

READER'S GUIDE

1. ISLANDS. Simon the dockmaster says everyone needs to discover an island. The island he refers to is symbolic. What does it represent? Do you believe everyone needs to discover an island of their own? What sorts of “islands” do you go to in your life?

2. VESSELS. When talking to Vicki, Denver says the staff house is a harbor full of vessels and then describes the other characters as vessels. Did you find these classifications illuminating or limiting? If you were to classify yourself, what sort of vessel would you be?

3. OUTLOOK. Vicki savors her view out a window at the staff house. What do you think the view out the window or the water represented to her?

4. TIME ALONE. Vicki tells Ben, “A tulip needs morning sun to open. And as much as that tulip needs morning sun, a woman needs time alone. She discovers immense power from within, power she never knew she had, once she spends a moment with herself.” Do you agree? What sorts of things do women do when they’re alone and without their friends or family? Do they discover this power?

Do you think women appreciate their own company and times in which they are alone? Why do you think women sometimes might feel uncomfortable being alone?

5. JOURNEYS. At one point Simon encourages Vicki not to “underestimate the journeys you’ve been on. They don’t have to be geographical or physical journeys.” What sorts of journeys do Vicki and some other characters go on? What sorts of journeys have you been on? Do you agree with Ruth who said, “Often these journeys make up the women that you are and the ones you are becoming”?

6. SIESTAS. In a letter to her grandmother, Vicki describes Spain’s siestas. Do you think siestas would work in America? Would you want them?

7. SYMPHONIES AND SILENCE. The motifs of symphonies and silence appear in different parts of the novel. What do you think symphonies symbolize in different parts of the story? What is significant about the silences?

8. MAKING TIME. Vicki promised that when she returned to the United States she would carry a blanket in her car at all times, and stop and sit in parks whenever time allowed. Oops! Time would never allow such a thing, so she would have to make time instead. And she goes on thinking of all the things she would make time to do. What sorts of things do you wish you had more time for? What is the one thing you think you could make time for in your everyday life that you aren’t currently doing? What would you scribble on a paper table cloth?