



## Mercy Point

by Anna Snoekstra

In real life, they are enemies. Emma the know-it-all, Michael the bully, Fabian the coward, Tessie the weirdo and Sam the mystery. Online they are best friends, with one big thing in common: they are all sure they are adopted.

When they finally meet, they are horrified to find that the people they have been sharing their souls with are the people they hate. They decide to never speak again.

But avoiding each other is difficult in a small mountain town with only one high school.

It's also tough to ignore one another when they each begin to realise that what their parents are hiding is much more sinister than just adoption.

The five teenagers have a choice to make. Continue to live a lie, or come together to hunt down the truth, no matter how dangerous that may be. Because the real story of their parentage is much more terrifying than they ever could have imagined.

It is a secret that goes to the very heart of the town itself.

From the author of the acclaimed debut novel *Only Daughter* comes a book about how much you'd be willing to risk to find out who you really are.

Suitable for YA Readers 14+

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## About the Author

Anna Snoekstra was born in Canberra, Australia. At the age of seventeen, Anna decided to avoid a full-time job and steady wage and moved to Melbourne and become a writer. She studied Creative Writing and Cinema at the University of Melbourne, followed by Screenwriting at RMIT University.

After finishing university, Anna wrote for independent films and fringe theatre and directed music videos. During this time, she worked as a cheesemonger, a waitress, a christmas elf, a nanny, a receptionist, a cinema attendant and a film reviewer.

Anna now lives with her husband and a tabby cat and works full-time writing. Her non-fiction has appeared in The Guardian, Filmme Fatales and she is a regular contributor to Lindsay. Her first novel *Only Daughter* was released in 2016, and her second, *Little Secrets*, is out now in bookstores and online.

## Discussion Questions

### Objectives

Students evaluate the characters, plot, and theme of a novel by examining the cover illustration.

### Book Cover

- We all judge books by their covers. How well does the book cover represent the story?
- If you were the publisher of this novel, would you have chosen this cover for the book? Why or why not?
- What changes would you have made?
- What does this cover teach us about the novel?

### Title

- Explain how the title connects to the story

### Setting

- What is the setting of the book?
- How does it contribute to the story?
- Do you think the author wants you to learn anything from reading the story?

### Themes

- How different was the character's views of themselves compared to how others saw them?

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- Do you think the character's judgements of each other were fair?
- How important do you think the theme of 'belonging' is in the story? Do you think any of the characters find that by the end?
- How important is 'identity' in the story? In what different ways is it explored?
- Do you think it is ever okay to lie?
- Trust and betrayal played important parts of the story. Do you think the characters misplaced their trust?
- Do you think social media and online interactions help or hinder when you are feeling lonely?

### Plot

- Is the plot well developed and believable?
- This novel plays with different genres, did you think this genre mash worked?
- Do you think the sci-fi elements could be exploring a metaphor? Explain.

### Character

- Do any of the main characters remind you of yourself or someone you know?
- Which character do you like the most? Why?
- Which character do you like the least? Why?
- What did each character contribute to the group?
- How do the main characters change throughout the story?
- Do you think the character's made the right choice to go to the caves? Do you think the choice was justified or wise?
- Do the characters or events connect to people or events in our world

### Conflict

- What is the main conflict in the story?
- Can you relate to any of the main character's conflicts or problems? Why or why not?
- Do you think the parents did the right by lying to their children? Why do you think they decided to lie?
- The group is betrayed by one of its own members. Do you feel any empathy for Sam and what he did?
- Why do you think the author chose to have four different narrators for this story?
- If you could interview the author, what would you want to know?
- Was the story predictable or surprising? Explain.