

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



Liane Moriarty is the Australian author of eight internationally best-selling novels: *Three Wishes*, *The Last Anniversary*, *What Alice Forgot*, *The Hypnotist's Love Story*, *Nine Perfect Strangers* and the number one *New York Times* bestsellers: *The Husband's Secret*, *Big Little Lies* and *Truly Madly Guilty*. Her books have been translated into over forty languages and sold more than 20 million copies.

*Big Little Lies* and *Truly Madly Guilty* both debuted at number one on the *New York Times* bestseller list - the first time this was ever achieved by an Australian author. *Big Little Lies* was adapted into a multiple award-winning HBO series with a star-studded cast including Nicole Kidman and Reese Witherspoon. Hulu is adapting *Nine Perfect Strangers* into a limited series starring Nicole Kidman and Melissa McCarthy for release in 2021.

Her new novel, *Apples Never Fall*, will be released in September 2021.

Liane lives in Sydney, Australia, together with her husband, son and daughter.

- Author's website

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did you think about the beginning with Yao and Masha? Let's talk about how much they changed when we meet them years later.
2. We read Frances' viewpoint the most, why do you think she felt the need to go the health resort? What was she hoping to cure? Why do you think the author placed such an emphasis on her viewpoint?
3. We meet the other "strangers," married and unhappy couple Ben and Jessica; athletic but sad Napoleon, Heather and Zoe; beautiful but quiet Lars; insecure Carmel and gruff Tony. Let's talk about why each person felt they needed to attend the health resort. What secrets were they not admitting to each other and themselves?
4. What did you think about the health resort at first? Did you think there was going to be unusual and sinister behavior behind everything?
5. Masha believes instructing the guests to commit to silence for several days will expand their horizons and such. Why did she think this was necessary? Was this a form of manipulation so that the guests would do whatever

she said next?

6. After the code of silence, Masha and her assistants give everyone smoothies that are laced with LSD. Why did she think this would be a smart move? How did it force everyone to open up in ways they might not have? But did it change anything for the good?
7. This one deals quite a bit with the suicide of Napoleon and Heather's son Zach. Each of the three family members blames themselves. Let's talk about this and how it impacted the three family members relationships with each other.
8. Why do you think Frances fell for the online scam? What do you think she was searching for?
9. We learn that after winning the lottery, Jessica decided to have a bunch of plastic surgery. Why do you think she did this? What image was she trying to convey?
10. Tony is pretty gruff to begin with but we start to get to know him better. Were you surprised that him and Frances got together or did you see it coming?
11. Why do you think Lars goes to these health resorts?
12. Masha and Yao seemingly trap the strangers together in the room with no way out. Why did Masha think this would be a good bonding experience? What does it say that the guests never thought to just try and open the door?
13. Why would Masha pretend she put the house on fire? Was she simply high and out of her mind?
14. Even though Masha's tactics were fairly insane, they kind of seemed to work on everyone, right? What do you think about that?

- <https://bookclubchat.com/books/book-club-questions-for-nine-perfect-strangers-by-liane-moriarty/>

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### Booklist

Moriarty (*Truly Madly Guilty*, 2016) continues her exploration of characters with comfortable lives who can't help but make themselves uncomfortable. This time she takes on nine guests at a wellness retreat: a romance writer who is fading in popularity; a young married couple; a very handsome lawyer; a teacher, his wife, and their adult daughter; a divorced mother; and a familiar-looking middle-aged man. Tranquillum House, a nineteenth-century mansion in the middle of nowhere in Australia, has been converted to a well-guarded sanctuary, with yoga rooms, fruit smoothies, and an aggressively beautiful leader. Masha Dmitrichenko, emboldened by past success, plans to initiate this group into her new protocol, one that will shake up the wellness world. It's hard to share details, since each reveal is a delicious surprise. Like she did in *Big Little Lies* (2014), Moriarty uses several narrators to tell the whole tale, and though some story lines get more attention than others, readers will find themselves flipping through the nearly 500 pages. But even at that length, *Nine Perfect Strangers* is so well written and slyly constructed that it won't

feel like enough. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Moriarty's considerable fan base has waited two long years for this one, so be prepared. -- Susan Maguire (Reviewed 10/1/2018) (Booklist, vol 115, number 3, p23).

### **Publisher's Weekly**

*/\* Starred Review \*/* Send a motley crew of hurting but comfortably heeled Aussies to a secluded resort for a pricey 10-day "Mind and Body Total Transformation Retreat" and what happens? In this cannily plotted, continually surprising, and frequently funny page-turner from bestseller Moriarty (*Big Little Lies*), nothing like the restorative reset they're anticipating. The nine guests at Tranquillum House include middle-aged romance writer Frances Welty, her normal spunkiness shaken by recent personal and professional setbacks, and 20-year-old Zoe Marconi, there with her parents on the anniversary of the family tragedy that shattered their lives. What they haven't reckoned on is Tranquillum House's messianic but precariously stable director, whose secret agenda could be dangerous to their health. It would be unsporting to disclose more about Moriarty's largely endearing cast, since her progressive revelations about them contribute so much toward making this such a deeply satisfying thriller. Moriarty delivers yet another surefire winner. Author tour. Agent: Faye Bender, Faye Bender Literary. (Nov.) --Staff (Reviewed 09/24/2018) (Publishers Weekly, vol 265, issue 39, p).

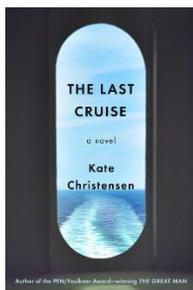
### **Kirkus Reviews**

Nine people gather at a luxurious health resort in the Australian bushland. Will they have sex, fall in love, get killed, or maybe just lose weight? Moriarty (*Truly Madly Guilty*, 2014, etc.) is known for darkly humorous novels set in the suburbs of Sydney—though her most famous book, *Big Little Lies* (2014), has been transported to Monterey, California, by Reese Witherspoon's HBO series. Her new novel moves away from the lives of prosperous parents to introduce a more eclectic group of people who've signed up for a 10-day retreat at Tranquillum House, a remote spa run by the messianic Masha, "an extraordinary-looking woman. A supermodel. An Olympic athlete. At least six feet tall, with corpse-like white skin and green eyes so striking and huge they were almost alien-like." This was the moment when the guests should probably have fled, but they all decided to stay (perhaps because their hefty payments were nonrefundable?). The book's title is slightly misleading, since not all the guests are strangers to each other. There are two family groups: Ben and Jessica Chandler, a young couple whose relationship broke down after they won the lottery, and the Marconis, Napoleon and Heather and their 20-year-old daughter, Zoe, who are trying to recover after the death of Zoe's twin brother, Zach. Carmel Schneider is a divorced housewife who wants to get her mojo back, Lars Lee is an abnormally handsome divorce lawyer who's addicted to spas, and Tony Hogburn is a former professional footballer who wants to get back into shape. Though all these people have their own chapters, the main character is Frances Welty, a romance writer who needs a pick-me-up after having had her latest novel rejected and having been taken in by an internet scam—she fell in love with a man she met on Facebook and sent money to help his (nonexistent) son, who'd been in a (nonexistent) car accident. How humiliating for a writer to fall for a fictional person, Frances thinks, in her characteristically wry way. When the guests arrive, they're given blood tests (why?) and told they're going to start off with a five-day "noble silence" in which they're not even supposed to make eye contact with each other. As you can imagine, something fishy is going on, and while Moriarty displays her usual humor and Frances in particular is an

appealing character, it's all a bit ridiculous. Fun to read, as always with Moriarty's books, but try not to think about it or it will stop making sense. (Kirkus Reviews, December 1, 2018).

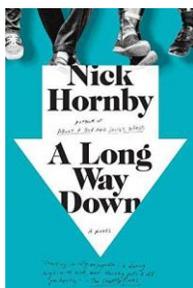
## READALIKES

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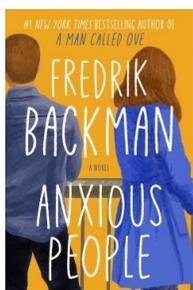
### ***The Last Cruise* by Kate Christensen**

A final voyage for a 1950s vintage ocean liner is disrupted by strife and malfunctions above and below decks, unexpectedly testing a former journalist, a sous-chef and a violinist.



### ***A Long Way Down* by Nick Hornby**

Meeting on New Year's Eve on the roof of Topper's House, a London destination infamous as a last stop for suicidal people, a talk show host, a musician, a teenage girl, and a mother share stories about their circumstances and decisions.



### ***Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman**

Taken hostage by a failed bank robber while attending an open house, eight anxiety-prone strangers—including a redemption-seeking bank director, two couples who would fix their marriages and a plucky octogenarian—discover their unexpected common traits.