



MY SISTER'S KEEPER / Jodi Picoult

About the book

Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate - a life and a role that she has never questioned... until now. Like most teenagers, Anna is beginning to question who she truly is. But unlike most teenagers, she has always been defined in terms of her sister - and so Anna makes a decision that for most would be unthinkable... a decision that will tear her family apart and have perhaps fatal consequences for the sister she loves. My

Sister's Keeper examines what it means to be a good parent, a good sister, a good person. Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life... even if that means infringing upon the rights of another? Is it worth trying to discover who you really are, if that quest makes you like yourself less?

About the Author

Jodi Picoult, 43, is the bestselling author of seventeen novels: [Songs of the Humpback Whale](#) (1992), [Harvesting the Heart](#) (1994), [Picture Perfect](#) (1995), [Mercy](#) (1996), [The Pact](#) (1998), [Keeping Faith](#) (1999), [Plain Truth](#) (2000), [Salem Falls](#) (2001), [Perfect Match](#) (2002), [Second Glance](#) (2003), [My Sister's Keeper](#) (2004), [Vanishing Acts](#) (2005), [The Tenth Circle](#) (2006), [Nineteen Minutes](#) (2007), [Change of Heart](#) (2008), [Handle With Care](#) (2009) — the last three of which debuted at number one on the New York Times bestseller list, — and her newest novel, [House Rules](#) (2010).

Picoult studied creative writing with Mary Morris at Princeton, and had two short stories published in *Seventeen* magazine while still a student. Realism - and a profound desire to be able to pay the rent - led Picoult to a series of different jobs



following her graduation: as a technical writer for a Wall Street brokerage firm, as a copywriter at an ad agency, as an editor at a textbook publisher, and as an 8th grade English teacher - before entering Harvard to pursue a master's in education. She married Tim Van Leer, whom she had known at Princeton, and it was while she was pregnant with her first child that she wrote her first novel, [Songs of the Humpback Whale](#).

In 2003 she was awarded the New England Bookseller Award for Fiction. She has also been the recipient an Alex Award from the Young Adult Library Services Association, sponsored by the Margaret Alexander Edwards Trust and Booklist, one of ten books written for adults that have special appeal for young adults; the Book Browse Diamond Award for novel of the year; a lifetime achievement award for mainstream fiction from the Romance Writers of America; Cosmopolitan magazine's 'Fearless Fiction' Award 2007; Waterstone's Author of the Year in the UK, a Vermont Green Mountain Book Award, a Virginia Reader's Choice Award, the Abraham Lincoln Illinois High School Book Award, and a Maryland Black-Eyed Susan Award. She wrote five issues of the Wonder Woman comic book series for DC Comics. Her books are translated into thirty four languages in thirty five countries. Three – The Pact, Plain Truth, and The Tenth Circle, have been made into television movies. My Sister's Keeper was a big-screen released from New Line Cinema, with Nick Cassavetes directing and Cameron Diaz starring, which is now available in DVD.

She and Tim and their three children live in Hanover, New Hampshire with three Springer spaniels, two donkeys, two geese, eight ducks, five chickens, and the occasional Holstein.

Book club discussion questions for My Sister's Keeper

1. Reread the prologue to My Sister's Keeper. Who is the speaker? Is it the same person you thought it was the first time you read it?
2. What is the metaphorical relevance of Brian's profession as a fire chief?
3. Why is Jesse's behavior so aberrant, while until now, Anna has been so compliant?
4. What might be a possible reason for Brian's fascination with astronomy?
5. On page 98, Kate is being admitted to the hospital in very serious condition. She mouths to Jesse, "tell Anna," but is unable to finish. What do you think she was trying to say?
6. On page 122, Julia says, "Even if the law says that no one is responsible for anyone else, helping someone who needs it is the right thing to do." Who understood better how to "help" Kate, Sara or Anna?
7. Did Anna do the right thing, honoring Kate's wishes?

8. Do you feel it was unfair of Kate to ask Anna to refuse to donate a kidney, even though this seemed to be the only way for her to avoid the lifesaving transplant?
9. On page 142, Brian says that when rescuing someone from a fire, that "the safety of the rescuer is of a higher priority than the safety of the victim. Always." How does this apply to his role in his own family?
10. On page 144, Brian says, "Like anything that's been confined, fire has a natural instinct to escape." How does this truth apply to Kate? to Brian himself?
11. On page 149, Brian is talking to Julia about astronomy and says, "Dark matter has a gravitational effect on other objects. You can't see it, you can't feel it, but you can watch something being pulled in its direction." How is this symbolic of Kate's illness?
12. For what reason(s) did Brian offer Anna a place to stay at the firehouse while the legal proceedings were underway?
13. How does Anna's decision to pursue medical emancipation parallel Campbell's decision to end his relationship with Julia after his accident?
14. Do you agree with Brian's decision not to turn Jesse in to the authorities for setting the fires?
15. Do you feel that it's ethical to conceive a child that meets specific genetic requirements?
16. If not, do you believe that there should be specific exceptions, such as the purpose of saving another person's life, or is this just a "slippery slope?"