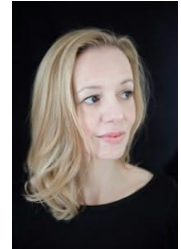


Sister Discussion Questions

by Rosamund Lupton

Author Bio: (Fantastic Fiction & RosamundLupton.com)

Rosamund Lupton was a book reviewer and screen writer. She is currently the author of **Sister**, a Sunday Times and New York Times bestseller and a bestseller in Europe. **Sister** has been translated into over thirty languages and has international sales of over 1.5 million copies. It was the fastest-selling debut of 2010 by a British author and was winner of the Richard and Judy Best Debut Novel of 2011 award and the Strand Magazine Critics First Novel Award.



Sister was Lupton's Debut novel.

Characters:

- **Arabella Beatrice Hemming:** Known to all as Beatrice. New York resident. Tess' sensible older sister. Investigates Tess' disappearance. Narrator.
- **Tess Hemming:** Missing woman. Art student in London. Pregnant. Beatrice's sister. (Baby named Xavier.)
- **Emilio Codi:** Tutor at Tess' art college. Married. Father of Tess' baby.
- **Simon Greenly:** Son of a MP's (cabinet member). Tess' friend. Last person to see Tess before she went missing at the park.
- **Detective Sergeant (DS) Finborough:** Policeman in charge of Tess' missing person's case.
- **Hatti:** Filipina woman from "Mommies with disasters clinic." Had a baby in the trial who died.
- **Dad (Hemming):** Lives in France. Left when girls were young. Remarried.
- **Mom (Hemming):** Lives in London. Seemingly cold and uptight. Was a single mother.
- **Leo Hemming:** Beatrice and Tess' little brother. Died of cystic fibrosis at age of 8.
- **Kasia Lewski:** Tess' Polish and very pregnant friend. Also part of the cystic fibrosis trial. Her boyfriend (and father of the baby) is Mitch Flanagan.
- **Dr. Nichols:** Psychiatrist who saw Tess on the day she went missing and retroactively diagnosed her with Postpartum depression/psychosis.
- **Professor Alfred Rosen:** Developed the gene replacement therapy for the Cystic Fibrosis trial at Chrom-Med.
- **Dr. William Saunders:** Handsome obstetrician at St. Anne's.
- **Todd:** Beatrice's fiancé.
- **Amias Thornton:** Tess' elderly landlord. Reported her missing.
- **P.C. Vernon:** Police Reconstructionist
- **Mr. Wright:** Lawyer for the Crown Prosecutors Services. Interviewing Beatrice.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. How would you compare Beatrice and Tess?
3. The whole story is told as a letter to Tess from Beatrice. Did you like that style? Why or why not? Was it an effective storytelling device? Did the different tenses and narrative techniques add to the overall effect of the story?
4. What were your initial theories about how Tess died? Would you have pursued the case if you had been one of the Detective Inspectors?
5. When did you first realize that there was something wrong with Beatrice's story?
6. Did you suspect any one person more than others?
7. Do you think that Beatrice changes throughout the course of the story and, if so, how?
8. In what ways does Sister explore fundamental human relationships? For example: the relationship between two sisters, a mother and a daughter, two lovers, doctor and patient etc.
9. Who is your favorite/least favorite character and how true did each of them feel?
10. Did you agree with Beatrice in her determination to discover the truth, despite it driving those she loved away from her?
11. There are a number of significant male characters in this story. In what ways did each of them aid or abet Beatrice and how suspicious of each of them were you?
12. Did the story's ending work for you? How else do you feel the story could have ended?
13. How does Bee and Tess's relationship compare to the way you and your siblings interact? What causes the most disagreement between you? What brings you together, no matter what?
14. What did the sisters' mother teach them about motherhood and being a fulfilled woman? What did she teach them about love?
15. Both sisters are involved in creative fields, even debating typefaces in their emails. What does Tess express in her paintings? Is there any room for self-expression in Bee's commercial design work?
16. Do you think Bee discovers anything new about her sister in a deep way - for example when she meets her landlord Amias and friends Kasia and Simon? How much of what Beatrice discovers is about herself?
17. What does the novel say about resilience, both physical and emotional, and where it comes from?
18. How does the memory of Leo affect the Hemming family?

19. Dr. Nichols, Professor Rosen, and Dr. William Saunders all inhabit the world of diagnosis and treatment. How do their three different roles (and mindsets) reflect the realities of modern medicine?
20. What is the difference between Genetic Therapy and Genetic Enhancement? How do you feel about genetic therapy? How do you feel about genetic enhancement?
21. Discuss the novel's closing scenes. What do you predict for the aftermath?
22. Lupton has written two other stand-alone novels. Will you read them?

Lines that caught my attention:

- "Odors are made of small particles that break away." (*sic. of a person*)
- "A siren is the sound of 21st century cavalry on its way."
- "Children are going to be able to see because of the yellow in a daffodil." (Yellow > high in vitamin A > gene added to rice > help human sight.)

References:

- Fantastic Fiction - <http://www.fantasticfiction.co.uk/rosamund-lupton/>
- Rosamund Lupton -- <http://www.rosamundlupton.com/>

If you liked Inner Circle, try...

- Precious Thing – Colette McBeth
- Swimming at Night – Lucy Clarke
- Remember Me – Mary Higgins Clark
- Land of the Living – Nicci French
- Blood Dreams – Kay Hooper

Lupton's Novels

- Sister (2010)
- Afterwards (2011)
- The Quality of Silence (2015)