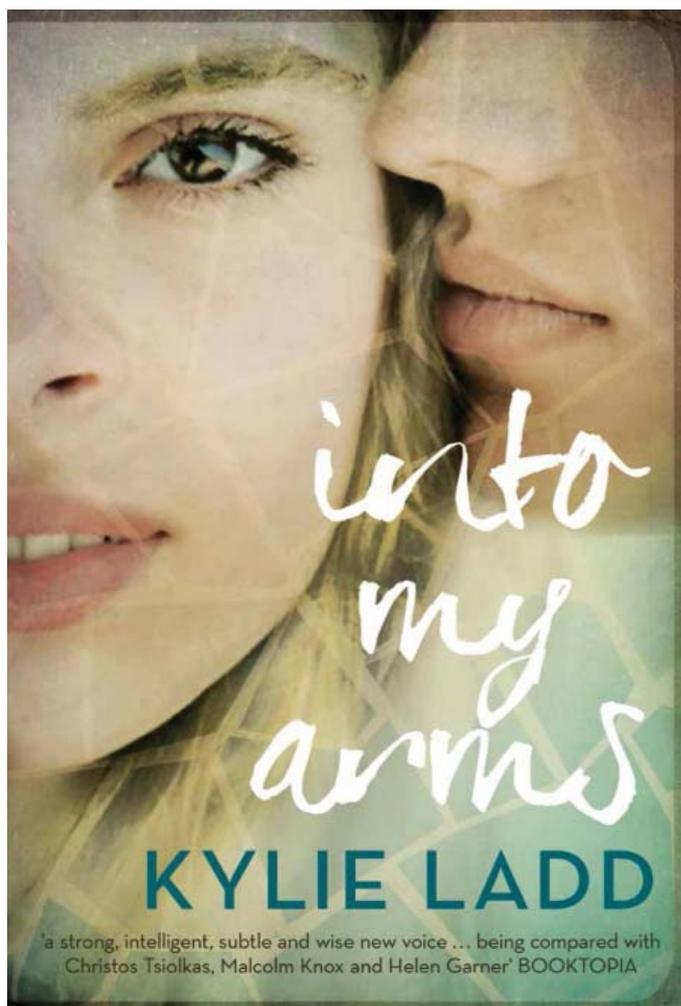


ALLEN & UNWIN



READING GROUP NOTES

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About the book

The kiss ignited something, blew it into being, and afterwards, all Skye could think about was Ben.

One day a woman meets a man and falls instantly and irrevocably in love with him. It hits her like a thunderbolt, and she has to have him, has to be with him, regardless of the cost, of the pain of breaking up her existing relationship. She has never felt more in synch - or in love - with anyone in her whole life. So this is how it feels, she thinks to herself, this is what real love feels like. It's like that for him too; he wants her in a way he's never wanted anything or anyone before: obsessively, passionately, all-consumingly.

She has found her one true love, her soulmate, and he has found his. What happens next will tear them apart and unleash havoc onto their worlds.

This brave, brilliant, electrifying novel from the acclaimed author of *After the Fall* and *Last Summer*, will move you deeply and shock you to your core. Love, lust and longing have rarely wielded such power, nor family secrets triggered such devastation

About the author

Kylie Ladd is a novelist and freelance writer. Her essays and articles have appeared in *The Age*, *Griffith Review* and *O* magazine, among others, and she is a regular contributor to the popular *MamaMia* website. Kylie's first novel, *After the Fall*, was published in Australia, the US and Turkey. Her previous books are *Naked: Confessions of Adultery and Infidelity* and *Living with Alzheimer's and Other Dementias*. She holds a PhD in neuropsychology and lives in Melbourne with her husband and two children. Her second novel, *Last Summer*, was Highly Commended in the FAW Books of the Year selection and was the receiver of much critical praise.

Reviews & Quotes

Praise for *Last Summer*

'...a strong, intelligent, subtle and wise new voice in Australian literature who is already being compared with Christos Tsiolkas, Malcolm Knox and Helen Garner.' – *Booktopia*

'...an absorbing and compelling tale about the fragility of human relationships, and how we can never know with certainty what the future holds and, when it arrives, how we will react.' – *Good Reading*

'Vivid characters as recognisable as your own family and friends, facing the challenges that affect us all, make this a very human read.' – *Caroline Baum*

'...a stunning exploration of loss, life, families and friendships ... begins with a punch and within the first few pages I had laughed, cried and held my breath as I read on. The pace never falters and I found the writing and storyline literally breathtaking ... written so beautifully and honestly.' – *Writing Out Loud*

Praise for *After the Fall*

'A subtle, moving and perceptive story of love, loss and hope.' – *Sydney Morning Herald*

'A fascinating dissection of infidelity told from the point of view of two couples. Voyeuristic in its storytelling, *After the Fall* is a gripping insight into the anatomy of an affair, in the tradition of Anita Shreve, Josephine Hart and Anne Tyler.' – *Maitland Mercury*

'Ladd illustrates just what makes human interactions so difficult.' – *Oz Baby Boomers*

'An engrossing dissection of an illicit affair. The heady passion, the stolen moments, all the clichés are there but in Ladd's hands they are anything but trite as the reader is swept along by the intensity of the character's emotions.' – *Townsville Bulletin*

'A dissection of deceit and the heady days of new love.' – *Bayside Bulletin*

For discussion

- ☞ Consider the quote from *Into My Arms* by Nick Cave, and the quote from *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje at the beginning of the novel, and discuss their correlation with the events in *Into My Arms*.
- ☞ Discuss the impact of long buried secrets being revealed in *Into My Arms*; how did the revelation make you feel?
- ☞ Think about the mosaics, tiles and sculptures in *Into My Arms*; what do they represent?
- ☞ Discuss the relationship between the siblings in *Into My Arms* – how do they change, and do you think that it is a change for the better, or worse? Why?
- ☞ Think about impulse in relation to *Into My Arms*. Are humans ever truly in control of their emotional state and subsequent actions?
- ☞ Do blood ties create a family? Why, or why not?
- ☞ How does what Zia is going through compare to the situations being faced by the other families in *Into My Arms*?

Suggested Reading

Last Summer by Kylie Ladd

After the Fall by Kylie Ladd

Tomorrow by Graham Swift

The Mother's Group by Fiona Higgins

I Came to Say Goodbye by Caroline Overington