

## **What Is *Bittersweet* About?**

*Bittersweet* is about the hunger to belong. It is also about the drive to uncover the truth, and the internal conflict between good and evil once that truth has been uncovered.

Mabel Dagmar is a nobody, or so she believes. Her finally honed mind is her ticket into an elite east coast private college, but over the books she sticks her nose into, she admires her beautiful, sophisticated roommate, Ev Winslow, and dares to dream bigger than a girl from Oregon should. When Ev invites Mabel to spend the summer at her storied family's estate on Lake Champlain, Mabel believes her dreams have come true. Suddenly, she has everything she ever wanted: friendship, a boyfriend, access to wealth, and, most of all, the sense, for the first time in her life, that she belongs. The name of Ev's own rustic cabin, overlooking the limpid lake, is Bittersweet.

At first, Mabel can't imagine anything bitter about such a place. But the Winslows have secrets. And Mabel, a scholar at heart, can't keep herself from delving deep into the family's history and coming up with an unexpected, and hideous, nugget of truth that's much more contemporary than she could guess. In spite of herself, she realizes that the Winslows are not the angels she believed them to be, and that their paradise is actually a kind of hell, built on exploitation, viciousness and megalomania. When a hideous murder is committed, perhaps because of what Mabel has stumbled across, she finally realizes how far she's in, but it may just be too late. Will she expose the Winslows for who they really are and have to leave forever? Or will she keep their secrets and finally become one of them?

*Bittersweet* is a novel of sex, betrayal, theft, love, murder, yachts, and that moment in a young woman's life when she loses her grip on what is good and what is evil, in the search for what can be hers.