



KNITTING

BY ANNE BARTLETT

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SUMMARY

This is a novel about the power of knitting and the power of women's friendship. When two women meet by chance over an unconscious body on a footpath, the contrasting threads of their lives tangle into each other. Sandra, academic, self-sufficient, conceptual, grieving the recent death of her husband, needs to work on something that will help her return to normality. Martha, single, practical, spiritual, looks like a bag lady but has visionary powers and is a talented knitter. Together, Sandra and Martha embark on a fantastical project, and the contrasting threads of their lives interweave. It's a joyful, intimate, moving story of family, loss and putting the pieces back together.

'Reading Knitting is an experience as sensual and mystical as plunging your hands into skeins of wool and colour... Anne Bartlett's language gives us words to taste, jewels to finger. Her characters are friends we need... A joyful narrative of creating and connecting.'

Sena Jeter Naslund, author of *Ahab's Wife*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anne Bartlett lives in Adelaide with her husband, three sons and one daughter. She has worked as an editor, ghost writer, columnist, biographer, feature writer and children's writer and has been writer in residence at several schools. She has a Masters, and is completing a PhD, in Creative Writing.

**“...WORDS TO TASTE,
JEWELS TO FINGER...”**



QUESTIONS

1. What is the story about besides knitting?
 2. How would Martha and Sandra each define women's 'work'?
 3. What meanings do you think 'knitting' has as a metaphor in the novel?
 4. Martha and Sandra have both experienced grief. What are their different responses to grief? Is one healthier than the other?
 5. What is Cliff's function in the novel? Would the story have worked without him?
 6. What aspects of magic realism appear in the novel? Which other authors use this technique? What is your interpretation of these passages?
 7. The author has commented that Martha and Sandra may be interpreted as different facets of the same person. Do you agree?
 8. Have Sandra and Martha changed by the end of the story? How?
 9. What techniques does the author use to build dramatic tension?
 10. What is your understanding of the white dress?
 11. How much do the different locations impact upon the story?
 12. What are the functions and significance of fire/heat and water in the novel?
 13. The characters in the novel come from a variety of social and educational backgrounds. How would each character view the others? What is the author saying in this regard?
 14. The novel is clearly set in Adelaide. How does this affect your reading of the novel?
 15. Can you imagine a prequel or a sequel? What issues could either explore?
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