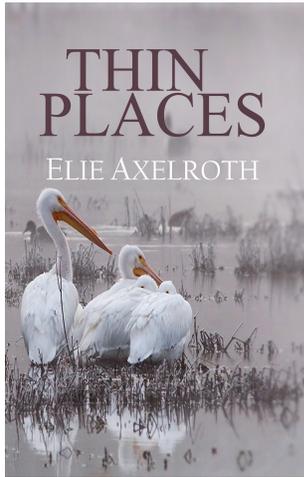


## Readers Guide for *Thin Places*



1. *Thin Places* begins with the Rumi epigraph: *Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it.* Why did the author choose this quote and how does it relate to the various characters in the book?

2. How did you react to Alix's struggle to cope with her own loss? Is it realistic to assume that mental health professionals will maintain their composure regardless of their own personal struggles?

3. Alix asks Betsy to see Skye, but Betsy refuses. Was she right to tell Alix, "Whether you like it or not, sometimes clients give us what we need."

4. In Skye's philosophy class, Dr. Morris suggests, "Either I have free will. Or my actions are pre-determined. Both cannot be true," What role does personal responsibility and choice vs. destiny have in the trajectory of the characters' lives?

5. Matt tells Skye, "I know it's selfish, but honestly I don't care if my parents are happy. I just don't want them to split up." Do you think most children feel this way?

6. Why might Grace and Mrs. McNulty have been reluctant to tell Skye about her mother's whereabouts? Was Grace protecting herself? Skye? If Grace wasn't going to share what she knew, should Jackson have been more forthcoming?

7. Was Eva's confession to Skye believable? What might have motivated Eva to keep a photo of Skye's father?

8. Do you believe some people are stronger and some weaker? In her "research," Alix found a handful of characteristics that fostered resilience, one being persistence or *grit*. Does the notion of *grit* explain anything? Do you know anyone personally who suffered a trauma they were able to overcome?

9. At the end of the book, Alix's gift to Skye represents more than just a gift. What life changing events might it represent for each of them?

10. The author worked as a psychologist in a university counseling center for many years. Does knowing this influence your reading of the novel?

11. The title *Thin Places* refers to "sacred moments when the distance between heaven and earth narrows and anything is possible." Does the term "thin places" resonant for you? What thin moments or places have you experienced?