



The Amish Quilter

By Mindy Starns Clark and Leslie Gould

1. Linda's older sisters call her "Little Sister." At the beginning of the story she realizes it started as a term of endearment but that now she sees it as an insult. Why does she? Do you agree with Linda? Why or not?
2. What drives Linda to discover the story of *Mammi Nettie's* artwork? What does she have in common with her grandmother? In what ways is her life very different from her grandmother's?
3. Linda doesn't understand Sadie's willingness to get on with her life so quickly after Robert dies. Did you sympathize with Sadie? Why or why not? What do you think is the next chapter of her life, after the end of this story?
4. Every time Linda learns some important fact about her family that she should have known but didn't, she feels hurt and betrayed—not because people were keeping secrets from her, but because no one ever thought to tell her. Which would upset you more, important secrets that were intentionally hidden from you or important secrets that no one cared if you knew or not?
5. Isaac explains to Linda that he made the decision *not* to join the Amish one step at a time. And then, a few years later, he did the same in deciding *to* join the Amish. How does this contradict Linda's preconceptions? What does she ultimately learn from Isaac?
6. How does quilting fit into Linda's idealistic worldview? What challenges her idealism? How do her thinking and her quilting change in the course of the story?
7. Tabitha and Ezra both like to have fun but ultimately end up having a difficult time communicating. Have you ever had a relationship built on fun, only to realize it wasn't enough? Were you surprised that Tabitha and Ezra worked things out? Do you think they make a good couple? Why or why not?
8. Natasha is a complex character. What decision did she make as a child that changed the course of her life? If you were in her shoes, would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?
9. Later in life, Natasha's quilting changes because she's inspired by Nettie's paintings. Do you think she had the right to emulate her twin's art? What did the process do for Natasha? Have you ever "copied" someone else's work? What were the results?
10. The Muellers establish relationships with several important relatives in the story. Have you ever reconnected with long-lost kin? Or developed a closer relationship with a relative as you've grown older? What was the impact on your life? To what extent would you go to find a long-lost relative or establish a relationship?