



Ask Again, Yes

Mary Beth Keane

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Ask Again, Yes

Mary Beth Keane

Ask Again, Yes Mary Beth Keane

A profoundly moving novel about two neighboring families in a suburban town, the friendship between their children, a tragedy that reverberates over four decades, and the power of forgiveness.

Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope are two NYPD rookies assigned to the same Bronx precinct in 1973. They aren't close friends on the job, but end up living next door to each other outside the city. What goes on behind closed doors in both houses—the loneliness of Francis's wife, Lena, and the instability of Brian's wife, Anne, sets the stage for the stunning events to come.

Ask Again, Yes by award-winning author Mary Beth Keane, is a beautifully moving exploration of the friendship and love that blossoms between Francis's youngest daughter, Kate, and Brian's son, Peter, who are born six months apart. In the spring of Kate and Peter's eighth grade year a violent event divides the neighbors, the Stanhopes are forced to move away, and the children are forbidden to have any further contact.

But Kate and Peter find a way back to each other, and their relationship is tested by the echoes from their past. *Ask Again, Yes* reveals how the events of childhood look different when reexamined from the distance of adulthood—villains lose their menace, and those who appeared innocent seem less so. Kate and Peter's love story is marked by tenderness, generosity, and grace.

"I devoured this astonishing tale of two families linked by chance, love, and tragedy. Mary Beth Keane gives us characters so complex and alive that I find myself still thinking of them days after turning the final page. A must-read." —**J. Courtney Sullivan, author of *Saints for All Occasions***

"Mary Beth Keane is at the height of her powers in this novel about the sacrifices we make when we choose to build a life with someone. In *Ask Again, Yes* Keane tells a story about the fragility of happiness, the violence lurking beneath everyday life, and, ultimately, the power of love. If you've ever loved someone beyond reason, you will love this wise, tender, and beautiful book." —**Eleanor Henderson, author of *Ten Thousand Saints***

Ask Again, Yes Details

Date : Expected publication: June 4th 2019 by Scribner
ISBN : 9781982106980
Author : Mary Beth Keane
Format : Hardcover 400 pages
Genre : Fiction, Literary Fiction, Contemporary, Adult Fiction

 [Download Ask Again, Yes ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Ask Again, Yes ...pdf](#)



Download and Read Free Online Ask Again, Yes Mary Beth Keane

From Reader Review Ask Again, Yes for online ebook

Michelle says

4.5 stars rounded up!

Thank you to Scribner and Netgalley for the opportunity to read this book and provide an honest review.

Ask Again, Yes was a really great piece of fiction writing. If I could compare it to another author's work I would say this is for fans of Celeste Ng or Ann Patchett. Family sagas are something that I look for because they almost always end up being my favorite stories. I think there is a lot to be said for an author who can build an entire story out of one or two families and weave everything together. Mary Beth Keane wrote this absolutely beautiful story with such care and concern for the journey they all take that anyone who reads it will fall in love with each person's faults as well as their strengths in what is a journey of friendship and love.

You know you are reading something amazing when you can't wait to get back to it. When I wasn't reading it, all I did was think about what was going to come next. Ask Again, Yes is that book. Besides the story, it was the WAY the author told the story. I thought switching perspectives and giving us insight into not only the main characters (Kate & Peter), but the other characters directly impacted by "the event" helped make the story stronger. It provided the opportunity to follow each character through their life and see WHY they were able to feel and act based on where you were in the book. It made the conclusion bittersweet and believable.

With that said, I do have one slight concern, which is why I downgraded it slightly. (view spoiler) With that being said, I still plan to buy this book when it is published (June 2019) and make it part of my permanent library. Anyone looking for their next great book club pick; this is it!

Jessica Sullivan says

This is a beautifully written and deeply nuanced family drama that'll almost certainly have wide appeal when it hits shelves in a few months.

In the summer of 1973, Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope are assigned as partners with the NYPD and wind up moving to the same suburban neighborhood. One night, a shocking act of violence occurs, dividing the families.

But Francis's daughter Kate and Brian's son Peter are already close friends at this point, and over the years to come they remain drawn to each other despite their families' fraught relationship.

Ask Again, Yes follows the members of both families over the course of decades, as they confront difficult issues such as mental illness, alcoholism and adultery. The character development is deep and poignant, at times reminding me of Emily Ruskovich's brilliant novel Idaho.

The legacies of pain and resentment accompany the Gleesons and the Stanhopes, ultimately paving the way for healing and forgiveness. There are no "good" characters or "bad" characters—just flawed people in difficult situations. The major success of the novel, and Keane's intricate writing, is that everything that happens feels earned.

Debi Hawkes says

Such a lovely book, deftly and subtly written, portraying the many challenges, different faces and forms, and rewards of family, marriage, parenthood, life and mostly love.

Very well done author Mary Beth Keane. I will need to seek out your other books. Highly recommended.

Thank you NetGalley and publisher Simon & Schuster for the ARC in exchange for my honest opinion.

Aimee Dars says

The Gleasons and Stanhopes lived next door to each other in the small town Gillam, outside New York City where Brian and Francis were both police officers. Though the men briefly were partners, their paths diverged, and living on the same street didn't bring them closer together. Lena, Francis's wife, lonely outside of the city and away from her friends and family, unsuccessfully tried to befriend Brian's wife, Anne. But, Gleeson's youngest daughter, Kate, and Stanhope's only son, Peter, were born six months apart and became the best of friends, as close as siblings, until their teenage hormones shifted their relationship.

The families lived in a precarious balance until Kate and Peter became eighth graders. That year, tensions flared until an unimaginable act of violence tore the two families apart and shifted the relationships within each family forever. The Stanhopes left Gillam, and the families and individual family members tried to heal, making mistakes along the way, but the events of the fateful night were a fulcrum against which they all pivoted. Even as Kate and Peter found each other again, the ghosts of the past threatened them and their loved ones unless they could find the strength to forgive.

Overall, I enjoyed *Ask Again, Yes*. The story captivated my attention and I thought the language was lovely. Some of the characters, too, particularly stood out as unusual--Anne--or lovable--George, Brian's brother. Francis's journey, too, was a valuable window into his situation. Despite the dark turns the novel takes, it ultimately promotes a message of forgiveness and compassion.

Some things I liked less about the novel included reliance on what I think are overdone conflicts, for example alcoholism and infidelity, though they are perhaps overdone because so common and then deserve attention. The novel shifted perspective among characters, sometimes leaping forward in time, and while I don't mind that in general, at times in this novel it felt a little jerky. Kate, who is a spitfire as a child, becomes rather passive as she becomes an adult, perhaps because of her circumstances, but it's a shame she lost her moxy. Finally, the tone of the novel was one of reporting which served a bit to distance me from the emotions of the characters.

Ask Again, Yes should appeal to readers who like contemporary fiction in general or who enjoy family dramas and coming of age novels, and I would encourage those in these categories to read it.

Thank you to NetGally and Scribner for providing an advance readers copy in exchange for an honest review.

...aka darzy... | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

Angela says

Very good story and great character development. Really enjoyed the thought that went into telling this story over many decades. That can be difficult to do! Excellent characters and depth of characters that enhance the great story. The only negative would be the length, it could have been a little shorter and still complete.

Claudia Silk says

I need more time to think about my review. Loved this book.

Janet says

Oh, how I didn't want AS AGAIN, YES to end! Think Ann Patchett's COMMONWEALTH meets Sally Rooney's NORMAL PEOPLE.

Michelle Beckwith says

Two rookie cops on the beat in the Bronx ...what could go wrong? The impending doom shadowing young romance, fresh starts, and new neighborhoods had me on the edge of my seat from the first page. The following passage in particular cues the reader to buckle in: "The quiet of the house when she kept to her room was not the peaceful silence of a library, or anywhere near as tranquil. It was, Peter imagined, more like the held-breath interlude between when a button gets pushed and the bomb either detonates or is defused."

Love and kindness try (and fail) to separate in this well-researched novel and I surprised myself how my allegiances shifted throughout my reading. The relationship of Peter and Kate was written with truth and intensity, and anchored the story in a beautiful and heartbreaking way.

ARC was provided by the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Tammy says

The cover of this book is remarkable and behind the cover is a remarkable book. At first glance, the cover appears to be an example of a painting technique known as impasto (I think). Closer scrutiny reveals a typical suburban neighborhood that could be Anywhere, USA. And so it is with this novel. At first glance, Ask Again, Yes seems to be an American dream or coming of age novel and in some ways it is but beneath these obvious themes lie much more. A violent act leaves two families forever changed and another event leaves them forever linked. You will live the decades of these characters' lives right along with them. Mental illness, stoicism, alcoholism, achievement, love and forgiveness mark this marvelous novel and the author treats her characters with great tenderness. You won't forget them.

Misty says

Very recently a question came up in a Goodreads group of which I am a member—what is literature? Definitions were bandied about and although there was some consensus, it was still fairly ethereal and ambiguous. An online dictionary, however, offers this:

Literature: written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit.

Ask Again, Yes is most certainly “literature”—a novel that will not only assuredly be splashed across dozens of “Best of 2019” lists, but one that will also be read, explicated and analyzed for years to come. This is the birth of a classic.

The book begins in 1973, as two rookie NYPD officers, Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope, are partnered. Though it is only a six week stint, their meeting sets the course for the future of not only the two men, but also their families. For the next four decades, their lives intersect and collide as they face friendships lost and found, mental illness, and alcoholism—with eventual self-awareness that can only be achieved through the survival of horrific events and crisis.

Author Mary Beth Keane is on point as not only a skilled storyteller but also a brilliant wordsmith. Her prose is absolutely poetic, ebbing and flowing with phrasing and rich imagery that steals the reader’s breath. It’s not just the language, though, that makes this such a gorgeous book. Through Keane’s writing, each character is given life that lifts them off of the page and into existence. They are tragic and flawed, beautiful and real, each with hopes and dreams that transcend the obstacles with which they are faced. The reader KNOWS them and can’t help but to laugh, cry and cheer as their lives unfold.

Melancholy and even sometimes morose, the familial themes explored by Keane are at once uplifting and painful. At what cost do we cling to our past? How much energy do we expend in the name of vengeance? When does forgiveness become a noble pursuit? What, exactly, constitutes a life well-lived?

Ask Again, Yes is, without question, a must read for those who value family and the ties that bind; for those who expect good writing in exchange for the valuable time spent immersed in the pages; and for those who can appreciate the joy of a story well-told.

Thanks to both NetGalley and Scribner for allowing me access to an ARC in exchange for my review. The book is slated for a June 2019 release.

Staci says

Easy 5-star rating!

The Gleeson family and the Stanhope family are neighbors. Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope are both New York City cops that had partnered for a short while early in their careers. Brian’s son, Peter, and Francis’ youngest daughter, Kate, are six months apart. They’re best friends that have seen each other every single day of their lives for as long as they can remember, until one night tragedy strikes and changes everything they thought they knew about the present and the future.

This book was a coming of age story but it was also a family saga with mental illness, alcoholism, and infidelity testing the bonds within and between the Gleeson and Stanhope families. Fortunately, there is acceptance and forgiveness to build and strengthen those bonds as well. The writing is subtle and powerful. The story is emotional and insightful. I was on the edge of my seat for that last 30% or so of the book and at other times throughout ... it was very tense! And the characters were just so well done, they all felt so real and believable. Peter's entire story just broke my heart ... and George ... I loved George. Thank goodness for George ... such a good man!

I can't recommend this one enough ... just really, REALLY well done. This ARC was provided by NetGalley and Scribner ... thanks so much for the opportunity to read and review this novel.

Karen says

Two families live next door to each other in a quiet town just outside New York City. Francis Gleeson and Brian Stanhope are both police officers and want the American dream. A few kids, a yard and dinner on the table when they get home from a long shift. Francis's wife Lena quickly has three girls and it takes every ounce of her energy to get through the day. Anne, Brian's wife watches her closely and pushes away any attempt at friendship. After an awful lot of bad luck Anne finally has a little boy Peter and he and Kate, the youngest daughter next door, become the very best of friends. Becoming a parent does not warm Anne to Lena. The close friendship their children share she deems as suspicious and threatening. Obviously unstable and equally unhappy Anne's act of violence years later is both unimaginable and unforgivable tearing the families completely apart. Peter and Kate are only 14 when their world is torn to pieces. Years pass and as destiny unravels, Peter and Kate find each other again. The difficult choices they repeatedly have to make are painful and will either set them on a path to freedom or destruction. Deep, complicated family dynamics. This realistic novel is beautifully written but sad and often hopeless. Even though the threads of love are strong, the alcoholism and mental illness is extremely depressing. Great writer, difficult book to recommend.

Cassidy says

This book was good! A long generational story about two families and a violent incident that follows them forever. Seeing Kate and Peter grow up and have a family despite all the obstacles is the main story. I felt Anne's mental illness was an important role and was disappointed Peter's father disappeared from the plot line so early on. George was my favourite character, I thought he was funny and respectable and deserved more appreciation from Peter. At times I did think to myself that the book was too long, almost as if more pages should have gone by for the amount that had happened. Any contemporary fiction lover will enjoy this one.

Bandit says

It's such a pure pleasure to get completely immersed in a proper novel. This was very much a proper novel. Exceptionally well written, large, multigenerational tale of families and obstacles. No, actually, that's way too generic. Try again. Ok, how about a Romeo and Juliet style story middle class American style about two children from wrong families who fall and stay in love irrespective of their parents' wishes. Yes, that's more like it. The Gleesons and Stanhopes are neighbors, but not friends and eventually get intertwined together in

a terrible tragedy that changes all of their lives. Their children, despite all that, seem fated to be together. That is, at least, until the trials and tribulations of marriage set in, things woven into one's essential being via genetics and past traumas that come to haunt them. Because no matter what Gleesons are basically a happy family and Stanhopes are resolutely not and so the union of their children is bound to be fraught with difficulties. The story follows these families, essentially three marriages, for decades from the early 70s until the present day, alternating perspectives to give the readers a more profound understanding of the characters and their motivations. In this the novel shines, even difficult ones to like or care about, like Anne Stanhope, are all fleshed out so cleverly and humanely, it really contributes to how engaging the reading experience becomes. At first it seems like the moral of the story was forgiveness and there's certainly a lot of that motif in here, but then I realized it's more about love and specifically marriage. I always thought the reason divorce rates are so high is because no one takes their vows seriously. I mean, they do at the time, but after a while things come up and words get forgotten and the thing is the words are very specific, marriage isn't a fairweather affair, it's all seasons, rain or shine, etc. And so this seems very much a story of marriages that get tested to see if they withstand the vicissitudes of life and come through, hence the title...to be able to, if asked again, say yes, to still say yes after all the years together and all the challenges. Very romantic, really, but not at all a romance. Realistic, tragic at times, poignant drama about families you have, chose and make. Not sure if I'm doing it justice with my review, but it was a terrific book and a very enjoyable read. Recommended. Thanks Netgalley.

Genevieve Trono says

Ask Again, Yes was my first book by Mary Beth Keane. It was a wonderful introduction to her amazing writing and storytelling abilities. This book would best be described as a family saga and is told over multiple decades. Two families meet and their lives will never be the same. Many themes are introduced as Gleeson presents the lives of the Stanhope and Gleeson families and how they both intersect and collide over the years.

This was not an easy book to read and it may be triggering for some as there are many painful issues that are part of this powerful story. Friendship, loss, marriage, mental illness, alcoholism are all strong themes of this book and are exposed as the lives of these two families unfold. The past and how it affects how we move forward today, forgiveness and what makes a family were strong themes of this novel. The most powerful part of this book was the writing itself which was just amazingly done and very thought-provoking. Her character development was spot on and I felt immersed in the lives in these families while reading. I look forward to reading more of Keane's work in the future.

A big thank you to NetGalley and Scribner Books for providing me with a copy of this book. All opinions are my own.
