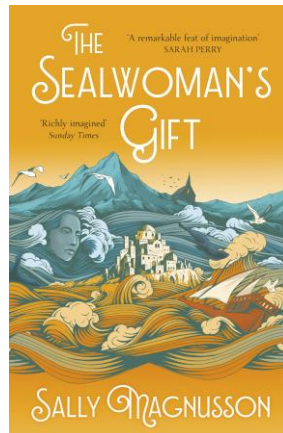




stories . . . voices . . . places . . . lives . . .

The Sealwoman's Gift
Suggestions for book club discussions



- ∞ The importance of storytelling is crucial to the novel – from the stories Ásta tells to keep herself safe from Cilleby, to the Icelandic sagas she carries with her from her homeland. What other stories does she tell? How important is storytelling to her sense of self and survival?
- ∞ The author deftly describes the contrasts between two worlds: the austere Christianity of Iceland and the more complex, sophisticated aspects of the Islamic culture Ásta encounters in Algiers. While both societies favoured men, which might have given women more freedom?
- ∞ Most accounts of this period of history were written by men. Does *The Sealwoman's Gift* provide a realistic portrait of what life would have been like for the women and children, both before and after captivity?
- ∞ It is hard to ignore the modern parallels between the displaced people of Iceland and today's refugees, with people smugglers and traffickers acting as modern-day slavers. What other parallels are there?
- ∞ What do you think is meant by the title – *The Sealwoman's Gift* – and the prophecy?
- ∞ Why might some of the slaves have chosen to become slavers themselves?



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