

# Say You Love Me

by Marion Husband

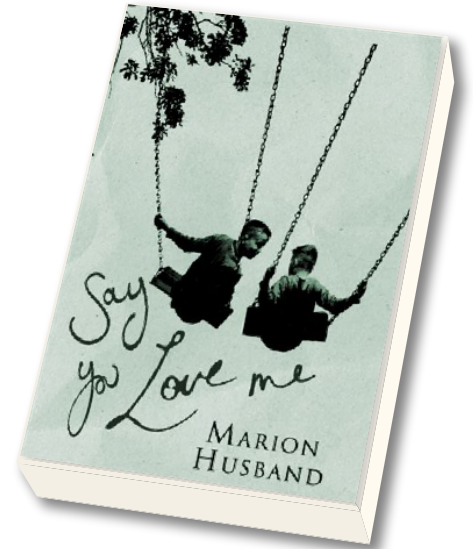
## A READING GUIDE

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## SUMMARY

Ben Walker sets out to trace his father and discover the truth about his adoption in 1968. But the past holds secrets that his brother Mark is desperate to keep. Old hatreds between the brothers are rekindled and their adopted father is made to face his own guilt over the events of that spring of 1968.

*Say You Love Me* explores how Mark took on the responsibility of the events in his childhood and how that feeling of responsibility stayed with him with disastrous results.

## EXTRACT from Say You Love Me

“She thought how Danny hated cats, seemed actually to be afraid of them. He hated dogs too. If he heard a dog barking he would say how much he wished he had a gun so that he could shoot it and shut it up for good. She had laughed the first time he said this and he had looked at her as though he wanted to shoot her as well.

“Last night, when he had stopped crying, he had said, ‘They hate me don’t they?’

She’d thought he meant the boys and so she said gently,

‘No – you’re their Daddy, they love you – ‘

‘No! Not them! The neighbours. *They* hate me.’”

She’d held him tighter, wishing he would sleep. She wished she hadn’t mentioned the boys, she tried to keep them out of his sight and mind because it seemed to her he could forget he had children quite easily if only they weren’t around to remind him. She stroked his head, afraid to speak even to comfort him. He was right anyway – their neighbours despised him.”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marion Husband graduated with distinction from the MA in Creative Writing at Northumbria University in 2003 and won the first Andrea Badenoch Prize for Fiction in 2005 for *Paper Moon*. Her first novel, *The Boy I Love*, was published in July 2005 and was followed by *Paper Moon*, *Say You Love Me* and most recently *The Good Father*. Marion is 45, married with two children and lives in the Tees Valley in the North East of England. She also teaches creative writing through the Open College.



## FOR DISCUSSION

- What motivates Ben to seek out Danny on his return to Thorp?
- Ben and Mark are not at all close despite their shared trauma, why does Ben resent Mark for the treatment he could not control.
- Does Annette act like a loving mother? She is not blamed by her sons or Simon and is only remembered in a positive light, is this justified?
- Do you feel that having both lost their first loves Simon and Joy settled for a second best marriage and the second best kind of family?
- Considering the diverse characters of Ben's wives is his second wife Kitty a safe option and will this secure a happy marriage?

## OTHER BOOKS BY MARION HUSBAND

*The Boy I Love* (June 2005) ISBN 978-1905170005 £6.99  
*Paper Moon* (March 2006) ISBN 978-1905170142 £6.99  
*Say You Love Me* (Jan 2007) ISBN 9781905170869 £7.99  
*The Good Father* (October 2007) ISBN 9781906125035 £7.99

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